

# DOLLY SODS





This management proposal and trail guide was prepared by the Wilderness Preservation Committee of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. The management proposal is divided into three parts. The first part discusses the geography, history and natural history of the Dolly Sods area as a whole. The second part describes the proposed 10,215 acre wilderness area and discusses the conservation problems besetting it. The third part is concerned with the rest of the Dolly Sods area, which is not presently qualified for formal designation as wilderness but is wild and scenic country nonetheless; it is the target of a number of development proposals which would destroy its undeveloped character and severely limit enjoyment of the entire Dolly Sods area. The management proposal is directed to the U. S. Forest Service, the State of West Virginia, the Federal Power Commission, and the Congress of the United States. The responsibility for determining the wisest long-term disposition of the resources of the Dolly Sods is theirs.

The trail guide is directed to the hunter, hiker, or fisherman who might wish to use the existing wilderness resources of this fascinating area. The proposal and guide have been combined to acquaint all who use the area with the perilous future facing the Dolly Sods and to encourage the people of West Virginia and all those who love the Mountain State Highlands to raise their voices in support of wilderness protection for Dolly Sods.

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is dedicated to the preservation and conservation of natural, scenic, and historic areas of significance within the West Virginia Highlands. The Conservancy's address is c/o Mrs. Carolyn Killoran, 407 Circle Drive, Hurricane, W. Va. 25526. Members receive The Highlands Voice, a newsletter of conservation news affecting the Highlands. The Conservancy stages the West Virginia Highlands Weekend Review in the fall of each year to publicize the outdoor resources of the state, and a Conservation Workshop in the winter. Dues for individual members are \$5.00 a year. You are cordially invited to join.

Cover photograph: The "huckleberry plains", typical of much of the country along the eastern edge of the Dolly Sods area.

The Dolly Sods Area--32,000 Acres  
in and adjacent to the  
Monongahela National Forest, West Virginia

Part I: Wilderness Proposal and Management Suggestions

Part II: Trail Guide (with a brief guide to the contiguous  
upper Stony River-northern Canaan Valley area)

Prepared by the Wilderness Committee  
of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

Revised edition, July, 1971



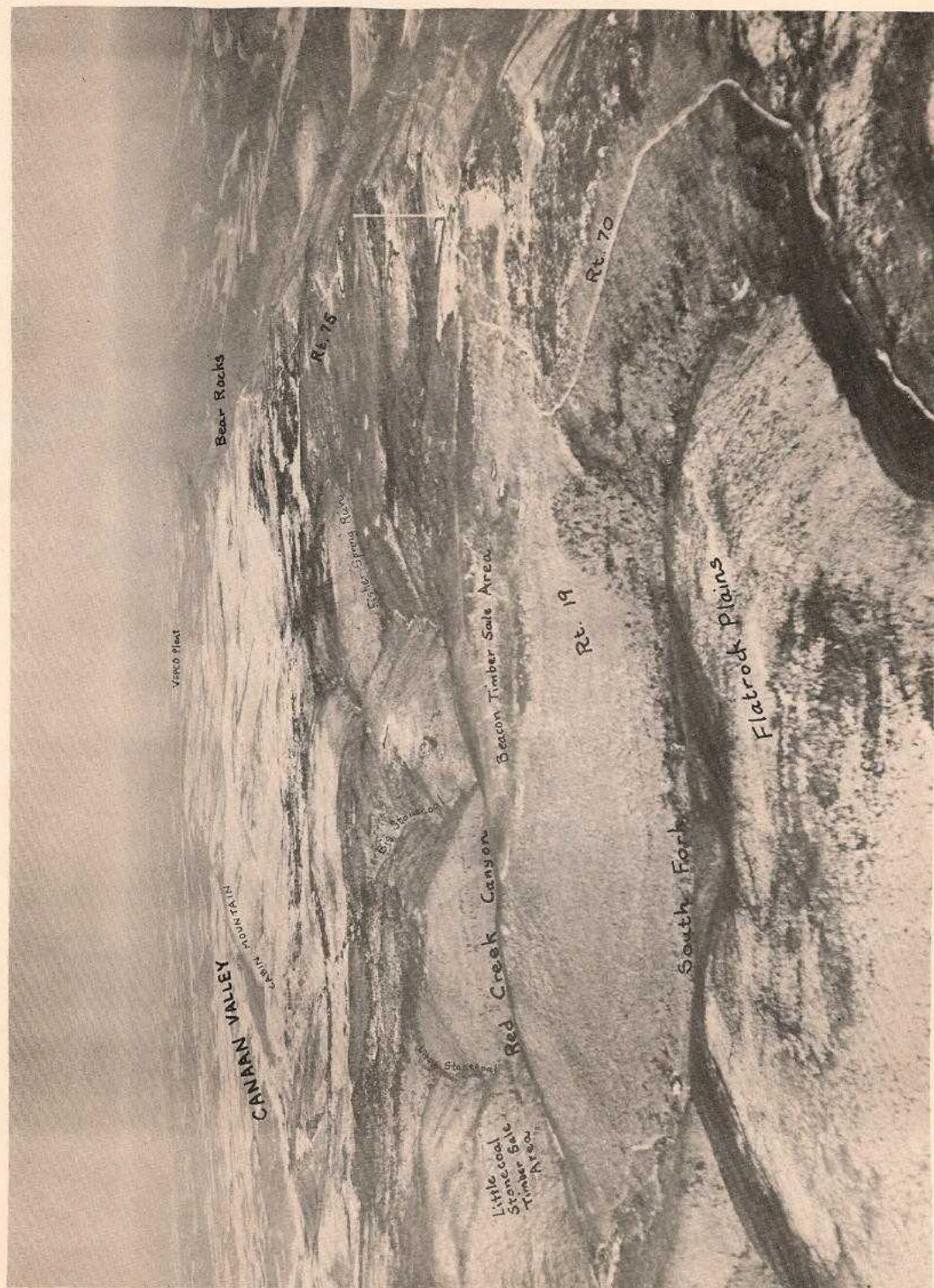


Figure 1. Aerial view of the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness Area and vicinity, looking toward the north. Photograph courtesy of the U. S. Forest Service.



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## PART I

### PROPOSAL AND MANAGEMENT SUGGESTIONS

#### SUMMARY

The Dolly Sods area is a high, uninhabited 32,000 acre section of the Allegheny Plateau in the Highlands of northeastern West Virginia in and adjacent to the Monongahela National Forest. Most of it is drained by Red Creek, but portions of the southern end are in the Seneca Creek-Potomac River drainage. The area is becoming well known for its open country with sphagnum bogs, extensive mats of heath shrubs and scattered spruce - a landscape reminiscent of areas much farther north. Thickets of young spruce and northern hardwoods occupy other portions of the plateau; waterfalls, cascades, rhododendron thickets and cove hardwood forests are found in the canyons of the major tributaries of Red Creek. Almost all of the original forests were removed near the turn of the century, and fires burned away much of the soil. Today many stages of ecologic succession make the area unusually interesting to botanists.

Only three dirt or gravel roads open to public automobiles penetrate the area. They are attracting growing numbers of sightseers. The outstanding vistas and unusual variety of scenery make the rest of the area attractive for hiking, backpacking and other forms of primitive recreation.

Two thirds of the Dolly Sods area lies north of Forest Service Route 19. Drained mostly by the north (or main) fork of Red Creek, it includes about 12,940 acres of federal land and 7680 acres in private ownership, of which 6530 acres are just outside the proclamation boundary of the Monongahela National Forest. The Dolly Sods Scenic Area encompasses 10,200 acres of federal land. Within the Scenic Area, the Forest Service plans to develop and improve simple interpretive recreational facilities along Rt. 75, a gravel road that follows the eastern edge of the area, leaving the remainder of the area undeveloped. The Dolly Sods Wilderness Area proposed in this publication also contains about 10,200 acres; it overlaps but does not coincide with the Scenic Area. Giving the undeveloped portion of the Scenic Area formal protection as a Wilderness will help the Forest Service protect its wilderness values, but will not interfere with development of visitor facilities along Rt. 75. Included in the Scenic Area but not in the proposed Wilderness are Rt. 75, the strip of land to the east of it, and the half mile wide strip of federal land west of the road and north of the watershed of Fisher Spring Run. The proposed Wilderness takes in about 2740 acres between Rt. 19 and the southern boundary of the Scenic Area which the Forest Service excluded because it contains commercial quality timber. Because the attractiveness of the Dolly Sods area is in large part due to the variety of plant communities, which includes large trees as well as treeless plains; because there is so little remaining wilderness in the East; and because the wilderness quality of the privately owned portion of the north fork drainage may be destroyed, this 2740 acre area has greater value as wilderness than as a tree farm. The southern edge of the proposed Wilderness contains two timber sale areas that are not of wilderness quality now. The decision as to whether to delete them or let them remain undisturbed so that Nature can restore them will be up to Congress.

The Dolly Sods area contains as many as six mineable coal seams. Much of the coal is recoverable by strip mining. Although this coal is probably relatively thin bedded and of poor quality, the Mt. Storm coal-burning electric power gener-



ating plant just 9 1/2 miles away has created a demand that could easily lead to mining on the Dolly Sods. Although the federal government owns the surface rights to much of the Dolly Sods, most of the minerals are privately owned. The Forest Service believes it has the authority to prevent strip mining, but uncontrolled deep mining would also be detrimental to the scenic, wild character of the area. The federal government should purchase the minerals under all the land to which it owns the surface, not just the Scenic Area.

The Western Maryland Railway Company owns the surface and minerals of all the private land except 130 acres at the Bear Rocks, which belong to the Virginia Electric and Power Company. This land includes some of the most scenic parts of the Dolly Sods. A considerable portion is visible to sightseers driving on Rt. 75. The area is threatened with several developments which will impair or destroy the wilderness resource and which are likely to have adverse effects on the Scenic Area. Extensive strip mining is taking place to the north and northwest of the Dolly Sods area to within 4 1/2 miles of the Red Creek-Stony River divide, much of it on land held by the two companies mentioned above. A highway - either the Allegheny Parkway or the Highland Scenic Highway - has been tentatively routed through the area. Traffic would be highly visible in this open country and would destroy much of the wilderness appeal of the north fork drainage. The Highland Scenic Highway would be a multiple purpose road that would provide a paved route to the Mt. Storm plant, hastening the time when it will be profitable to strip mine the Dolly Sods. The Davis Power Project as now planned will replace the largest bog in the Dolly Sods with a lifeless reservoir in the northwest corner of the Red Creek watershed. Without proper controls, it could lead to bulldozing elsewhere in the Red Creek drainage and could open the Cabin Mountain portion to subdivision for summer homes. If these developments are carried out, Red Creek within the Scenic Area would be threatened with pollution from siltation, acid mine drainage and sewage, and the area could be overwhelmed with recreation seekers with whom the Forest Service is ill-equipped to cope.

The Director of the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources should declare the entire Red Creek drainage, not just the portion within the Monongahela National Forest, off limits to strip mining. Public acquisition of this land is essential if the preservation of its wild character is a desirable goal. As a first step in this direction, the boundary of the Monongahela National Forest should be changed by Congressional action so that it includes the entire drainage of Red Creek. The Forest Service should be given funds to acquire both the surface and minerals and add the area to the Scenic Area and the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness Area. The land is assessed at only \$8.00 an acre, but its real value is certainly higher. One objection to public acquisition is that Tucker County would be deprived of needed tax dollars. In 1970 the Railway Company paid \$870 in county taxes. If Tucker County is to realize its full potential as a tourist attraction, every effort must be made to preserve its scenic beauty. Rising land values and new recreational developments on land in the general vicinity of the Dolly Sods may soon offset the temporary loss in county revenue if the remainder of the north fork watershed is acquired by the federal government.

The southern third of the region - the Roaring Plains-Flatrock Plains area south of Forest Service Ft. 19 - is very scenic and mostly undeveloped, but a gaspipe swath, microwave relay tower and access road probably disqualify it as a potential Wilderness Area under the provisions of the Wilderness Act. The pros and cons of adding it to the Dolly Sods Scenic Area should be carefully weighed.



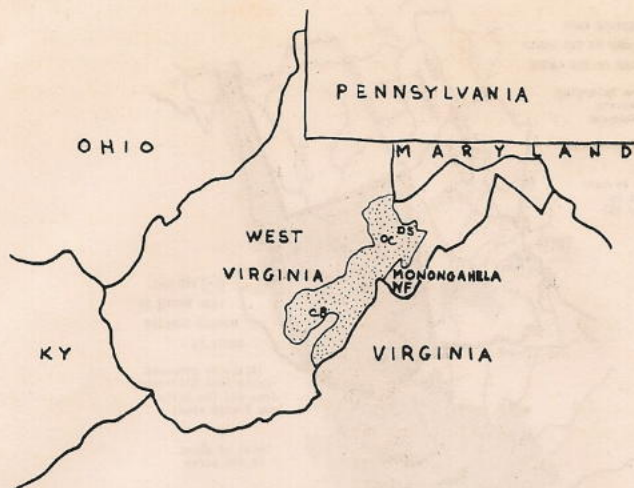


Figure 2. West Virginia and the surrounding states, showing the location of the Monongahela National Forest and the three wilderness areas proposed by the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. DS=Dolly Sods (10,215 acres); OC=Otter Creek (20,000 acres); CB=Cranberry Backcountry (proposed Pocahontas Wilderness: 36,300 acres).

#### GENERAL REVIEW OF THE DOLLY SODS AREA

**Geography:** The Dolly Sods area is a high, uninhabited portion of the Allegheny Plateau in the Highlands of northeastern West Virginia. The northern and largest part is in eastern Tucker County; the southern end lies in Randolph and Pendleton counties. Most of it is drained by Red Creek, a tributary of the Dry Fork-Cheat River-Ohio River system. Red Creek has two major tributaries, the north (or main) fork and the South Fork.

The Allegheny Plateau, here averaging about 4000 feet in elevation, is well preserved in the upper reaches of the north fork drainage. Low cliffs of sandstone and conglomerate at the edge of the Rohrbaugh Plains form its eastern boundary. From the cliff tops, the east face of Allegheny Mountain, known as the Allegheny Front, drops 2500 feet to the North Fork of the South Branch of the Potomac River and its tributary, Jordan Run. The western edge of the plateau, known as Cabin Mountain, is of comparable height and is bounded by a 900 foot descent to the floor of the Canaan Valley. (See aerial photograph, Figure 1.)

The central portion of the Dolly Sods area is deeply incised by the canyons of Red Creek and its main branches. The southern part of the plateau is so deeply eroded that only flat-topped ridges remain - the Roaring Plains, Flatrock Plains,



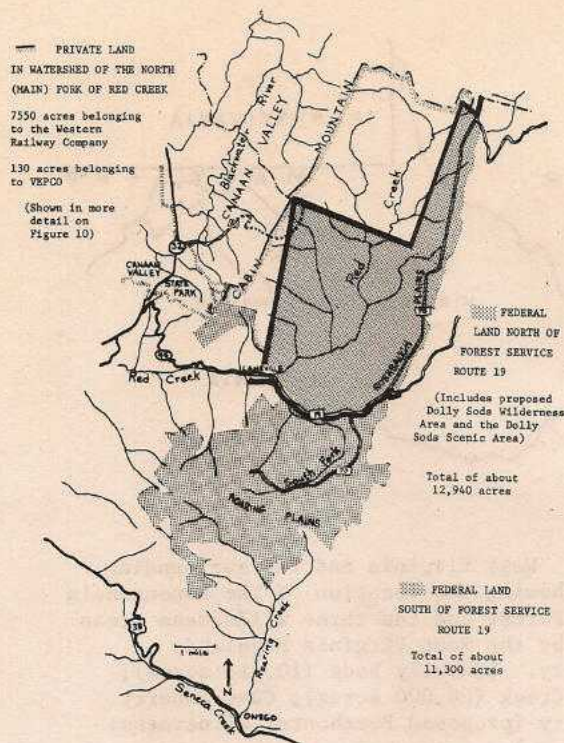


Figure 3. The Dolly Sods area.

and the Red Creek Plains. The highest knob in the Dolly Sods area is 4760-foot Mt. Porte Crayon at the western edge of the Roaring Plains; it is only 100 feet lower than Spruce Knob, West Virginia's highest point.

**Climate:** Precipitation in the Dolly Sods area averages between 45 and 55 inches a year, and falls year-round. As would be expected at high elevations, temperatures in the summer are cooler than those in the lowlands, although sometimes they reach the 80's. Frost is possible any month of the year, and snowstorms can occur as late as June or as early as September. Winter temperatures fluctuate rapidly but frequently are well below zero. The "high country" is often shrouded in fog, and many hunters and hikers have become lost in such weather. Snowfall may reach 150 inches a year, and drifts often persist into late spring. The thick accumulations of snow makes beautiful winter scenery but inhibits the growth of plants not adapted to severe weather. Ice storms deposit heavy burdens of glaze on vegetation. Prevailing winds from the West blow almost constantly. Spruce in exposed positions are "flagged"; growth of branches on the west sides of the trees is inhibited by the constant drying force of the wind and by abrasion of buds by windblown ice crystals.



Water: The water in Red Creek and most of its tributaries, especially those on the plateau, is tea colored, ranging from a yellowish color to deep red-orange. It is clear and drinkable, although a bit too acidic to support an abundant fish population. The color and acidity originates in the underlying rocks, from tannic acid derived from spruce needles, and from the numerous sphagnum bogs. The Blackwater River in the adjacent Canaan Valley is also discolored.

History: Until less than ten years ago, the Dolly Sods area received little attention from writers. The members of the Fairfax Boundary Surveying Party of 1746 may have been the first white men to see the area. They climbed the Allegheny Front and camped on the summit, which was clear of timber in a strip about 1/4 mile wide and covered with large, flat rocks. Cranberries abounded in marshy areas. The next day they proceeded westward across the plateau through spruce forests so dense that sunlight rarely reached the ground. Rhododendron thickets presented occasional barriers. Underfoot were thick deposits of peaty soil derived from decomposing spruce needles and moss, which formed a brilliant green carpet. They reached Cabin Mountain and descended to the Canaan Valley, where a four-day struggle through bogs, tangled spruce forest, and dense rhododendron thickets awaited them.

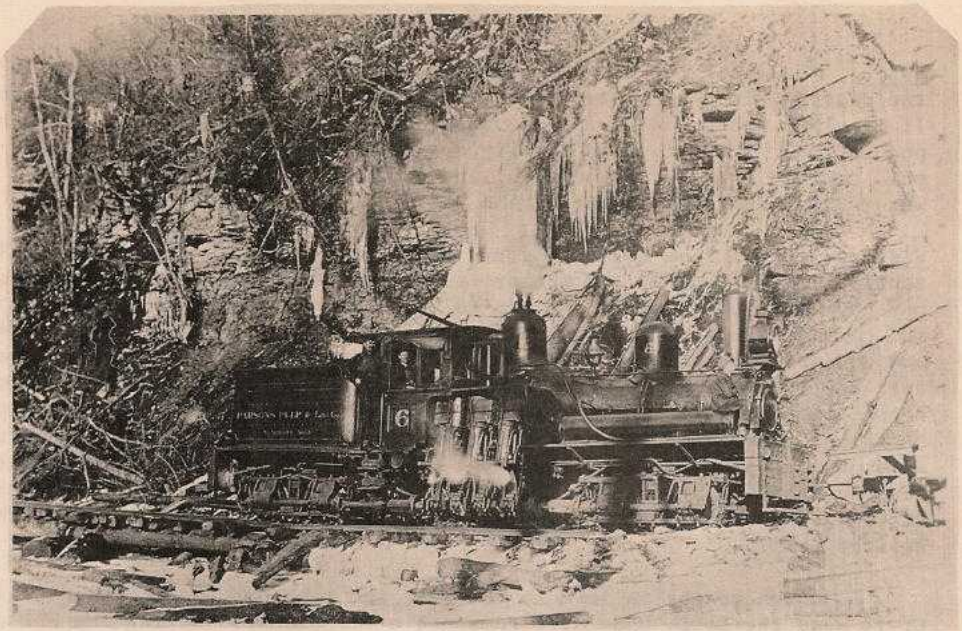
Although nearby valleys to the west and east had been settled well before the Civil War, the Dolly Sods area remained a wilderness. During the War a fire built by Confederate scouts got out of control and reputedly denuded the Roaring Plains. During the summers, families visited the high, open rocky flat-topped ridges, (the "huckleberry plains"), to pick blueberries and cranberries, just as they do today. They drove their sheep and cattle to the meadows that are possibly analogous to the better known balds of the southern Appalachians. In local terminology, these are "sods". The Dolly family used the sods at the southern end of the Rohrbaugh Plains; hence, the name "Dolly Sods". Probably the spruce forests sheltered some of the last big game animals that are now extinct in this portion of the East -- elk, wolves, and mountain lions -- as did the adjacent Canaan Valley.

In 1884 the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad completed a line connecting the infant community of Davis, about seven miles west of the Dolly Sods area, with the eastern seaboard. Exploitation of the region's magnificent virgin forests began immediately. In 1902 the Parsons Pulp and Lumber Company installed a band saw mill on Red Creek. Laneville, a community of more than 300 people, grew up around it. The mill closed in 1920 after all the surrounding forests had been cut, and Laneville has dwindled away to fewer than 50 residents today. Most of the timber in the southern two-thirds of the Dolly Sods area was sawed in the Laneville mill. In 1899, the same company had established another large mill at Dobbin, which is along the North Branch of the Potomac River in Grant County. The forests in the northern half of the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek disappeared into this mill.

Temporary railroads led from the mills to the forests, and back country camps were set up along them. After all the commercially valuable lumber nearby had been removed and dragged by teams of draft horses to the nearest railroad tracks, the camps were moved on to unexploited forests. The railroad grades were usually built laboriously by hand. When the timber was exhausted, the rails were removed and reused elsewhere.

Most of the timber was removed in these logging operations, leaving a barren landscape cluttered with slash. In such a setting fires were almost inevitable. Some were set accidentally by sparks from the logging trains. Others were started on purpose in hopes of converting the entire logged-over area to one great pasture.





#### SCENES IN THE DOLLY SODS AREA--1910

Figure 4. This Shay engine was used to haul logs to the mill at Laneville. Some of the grades it ran on are used as hiking trails today; others have almost disappeared.

Figure 5. Elmer Cole and his team of draft horses with a "trail" of logs on Red Creek. Logs were dragged to the railroad tracks. If the Dolly Sods forests are protected in a Wilderness Area, people in the next century will be able to enjoy a mature spruce forest like this one.

These photographs were published in Tumult on the Mountains (1964) and were made available by the author, Dr. Roy B. Clarkson, who received them from Frank Harr. They are reprinted here with the permission of Ken McClain of the McClain Printing Company.





This technique had worked where the soil was underlain by limestone, which wasn't the case in the Dolly Sods. The peaty soil burned away to bedrock, killing many of the uncut trees and leaving the stumps perched on top of jumbles of boulders. Other fires were set by local berry pickers to improve the blueberry crop; the Forest Service still has trouble with this kind of fire. One of the largest was the Dobbin Slashings Fire, which burned 24,800 acres in the northern Red Creek and southern Stony River watershed in late July, 1930.

With the tree cover gone and the absorbent soils burned away, floods followed. The lower canyon of Red Creek has been scoured by flash floods, the latest severe ones occurring in the 1950's. By the time that logging was at its height in the Dolly Sods, people had begun to recognize that floods caused by uncontrolled logging were a severe problem throughout the East, and that some kind of government control was necessary. In 1911 the U. S. Congress passed the Weeks Act, enabling the federal government to acquire privately owned lands "for the purpose of conserving the navigability of navigable rivers". The underlying purpose was to protect watersheds from unwise timbering practices and forest fires and to protect downstream areas from the resulting floods. Immediately after the bill was passed, the government began purchasing cut-over timberlands in West Virginia, and in 1915 the Monongahela National Forest was officially established. Most of the Dolly Sods area currently under Forest Service control was purchased from the Bridges Estate in 1916. Only the surface was acquired; the minerals remained in private ownership. The National Forest boundary was drawn so that it zigzagged across the drainage of the north fork of Red Creek. The land north of the boundary as well as the summit of Cabin Mountain within the National Forest, has remained in private hands, principally the Western Maryland Railway Company.

The Dolly Sods Today: Today all stages of ecologic succession can be observed, from pure stands of rather large spruce to boulder fields showing little change since the devastating fires that occurred at least forty years ago. The Dolly Sods is noteworthy botanically because of the variety of plant communities it supports, many of them similar to those found at sea level in eastern Canada. The high plateau country is becoming well known because of its resemblance to country near the Arctic circle, and because the scarcity of trees provides many outstanding scenic vistas.

Much of the high plateau region is occupied by what botanists call heath barrens, known locally as "huckleberry plains". Exposed rocks are covered by a variety of shrubs, including blueberries, huckleberries, azalea, laurel, chokeberry and speckled alder with scattered red spruce. Meadows cover other portions of the "high country". The well known Dolly Sods is about one mile square, but larger meadows are found in the northern half of the north fork watershed and the southern end of the Roaring Plains.

Bogs dominated by hummocks of sphagnum and polytrichum moss occupy poorly drained portions of the plateau, especially in the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek. The largest is about a mile long and up to a half mile wide. Many of the plants found in these bogs are the same species as those found in the tundras of the Arctic. Cranberries, tiny carnivorous sundew plants, and orchids grow in them; a variety of ferns, sedges and occasional balsam fir occupy the margins. Usually beaver ponds are associated with these bogs.

Compared with the pre-logging days, red spruce occupy a smaller portion of the land, but they are responsible for much of its beauty. Pure stands on the



highest knobs--Mt. Porte Crayon, Bald Knob, Weiss Knob and the two other highest points on Cabin Mountain--are coming to resemble the primeval forests. The canyons of Red Creek and its tributaries, as well as some portions of the "high country", are covered with second growth northern hardwoods, including yellow birch, beech, and maples, as well as hemlocks. Some of the largest hardwoods, as well as a scattering of oaks, are found in the vicinity of Little Stonecoal Run.

The Recent History of the Dolly Sods Area: For the first forty years after its acquisition, the Forest Service's role in the management of that portion of the Dolly Sods under federal control was one of fire protection and restoration. A network of trails was established and roads were built along the Allegheny Front and to the top of Cabin Mountain. A fire lookout tower was built on Dolly Sods and later transferred to Bell Knob. Small plantations of conifers were scattered throughout the area. Deer had been exterminated from the area by the time that the loggers had finished destroying the virgin forests. A temporary refuge for deer imported from other states was established on the Flatrock Plains. By the early 1950's they had done so well that they were overbrowsing the vegetation, and a special hunting season was called to reduce their numbers.

In the last fifteen years the area has been discovered by more and more people seeking recreational relief, many of them from out-of-state urban regions. At the same time, the demand for its exploitable resources has been mounting. The forests have recovered in some parts of the Dolly Sods to the point that full-scale timbering is again possible. The Forest Service has begun making timber sales involving heavy selective cutting and more recently, clearcutting. The Virginia Electric and Power Company has constructed a huge coal-fired plant only 9 1/2 miles away, and a wave of strip mining spreads out from it, creeping toward the Red Creek watershed. A gaspipe swath has been sliced across the Roaring and Flatrock Plains and a microwave relay station has been erected alongside it.

Nor has there been consensus among those who realize the recreational importance of the Dolly Sods. A proposed highway, alternately called the Allegheny Parkway and the Highland Scenic Highway, has been tentatively routed through the area. Those who value the Dolly Sods because of its remoteness from civilization are protesting vigorously. There are definite plans for an impoundment on the high plateau to serve as the upper reservoir for a pumped storage electric facility to be used in conjunction with a proposed 7,200 acre reservoir in the Canaan Valley. Many people believe this "lake" will have great recreational potential, and the crest of Cabin Mountain has been suggested as an ideal site for vacation homes. At the other extreme, conservationists have urged the Forest Service to set the Dolly Sods aside as a potential wilderness area.

In answer to the growing concern over the future of the Dolly Sods, Forest Supervisor Frederick A. Dorrell appointed an Ad Hoc Committee in the spring of 1969 to advise the Forest Service on the management of the area. The 24 members represented such diverse interests as conservation organizations, hikers, naturalists, the nearby community of Petersburg, local representatives in the state legislature, the mining and lumbering industries, the Western Maryland Railway Company, the State Road Commission, the West Virginia Departments of Commerce and Natural Resources, and the Monongahela Power Company. The committee met on a weekend in August 1969 for a field review and discussion. Recommendations were made at this meeting and subsequent to it, although Dorrell made it clear that the Forest Service would be responsible for the final decisions. There was a general consensus that a Scenic or Botanical Area should be established in the drainage of the north fork of Red Creek. In October 1970 the Chief of the Forest Service announced that a 10,200 acre Dolly Sods Scenic Area had been created. The boundary of the Scenic Area, which lies entirely in the north fork watershed, is out-



lined in Fig. 10 (page 15) and in the topographic maps at the end of this booklet.

Geology: The geologic formations exposed in the Dolly Sods area were deposited in the Mississippian and Pennsylvanian Periods, approximately 330 to 290 million years ago. After deposition ceased, they were uplifted and gently folded. The axis of a downfold, the Stony River Syncline, runs approximately northeast--southwest through the area. A parallel upwarp, the Horton Anticline, appears on the western half of the Roaring Plains.

The oldest geologic series in the immediate vicinity of the Dolly Sods is the Greenbrier Limestone, which underlies the pastures in the vicinity of Laneville. Above it is an alternating series of green and red shales and beds of sandstone--the Mauch Chunk. This series also contains the thick Princeton Conglomerate. The Mauch Chunk is exposed in the canyon of the north fork of Red Creek and comprises a major portion of the steep slopes leading up to the Roaring and Flatrock Plains.

Following a long hiatus in deposition that marks the boundary between the Mississippian and Pennsylvanian Periods, deposition resumed. Masses of sand and gravel were alternately layed down with layers of mud (now transformed to shale) thin, impure limestones and peat derived from dense swamp forests. Millions of years of intense pressure transformed the peat into coal seams.

These Pennsylvanian deposits are divided into three geologic series. The lowest is the Pottsville Series, whose uppermost formation, the Homewood Sandstone and conglomerate, is exposed along the tops of Allegheny Mountain and Cabin Mountain. It often forms small cliffs that are eroded into weird shapes--notably at the Bear Rocks and "Rocky Knob" on Cabin Mountain. On the Rohrbaugh Plains it is responsible for the extensive boulder fields of the "huckleberry plains". Because it is downwarped, it also is exposed in the canyon below, where it causes the series of waterfalls and cataracts just below the Forks of Red Creek. Plant fossils--the impressions of leaves and hardened sandstone preserving the inner cores of ancient branches, roots, and trunks--are common in certain beds. The Pottsville Series contains three coal seams of possible economic value: the Fire Creek, Sewell and Hughes Ferry. These will be discussed in more detail in the sections on the resources of the various portions of the Dolly Sods area.

The Pottsville is overlain by the Allegheny Series. The only important coal seam it contains, the Upper Freeport, is also the thickest in the area.

The youngest rocks in the Dolly Sods are assigned to the Conemaugh Series. This series underlies most of the extensive grassland in the northern end of the north fork watershed and also much of the Roaring and Flatrock Plains. It includes the Bakerstown and Harlem coal seams.

Deposition of sediments in the region ceased in the Permian Period. The primeval Appalachians were uplifted in stages, and erosion began to cut steep walled canyons in the newly raised land. When there was a long period of quiescence when no uplift occurred, erosion widened the canyons and the remnants in between became mountains, which were themselves gradually worn away. The plateau in the watershed of the north fork is a well preserved remnant of a long period of such quiescence, marking a time when the Appalachians had been eroded down to low hills and rolling plains. This ancient landscape, known as



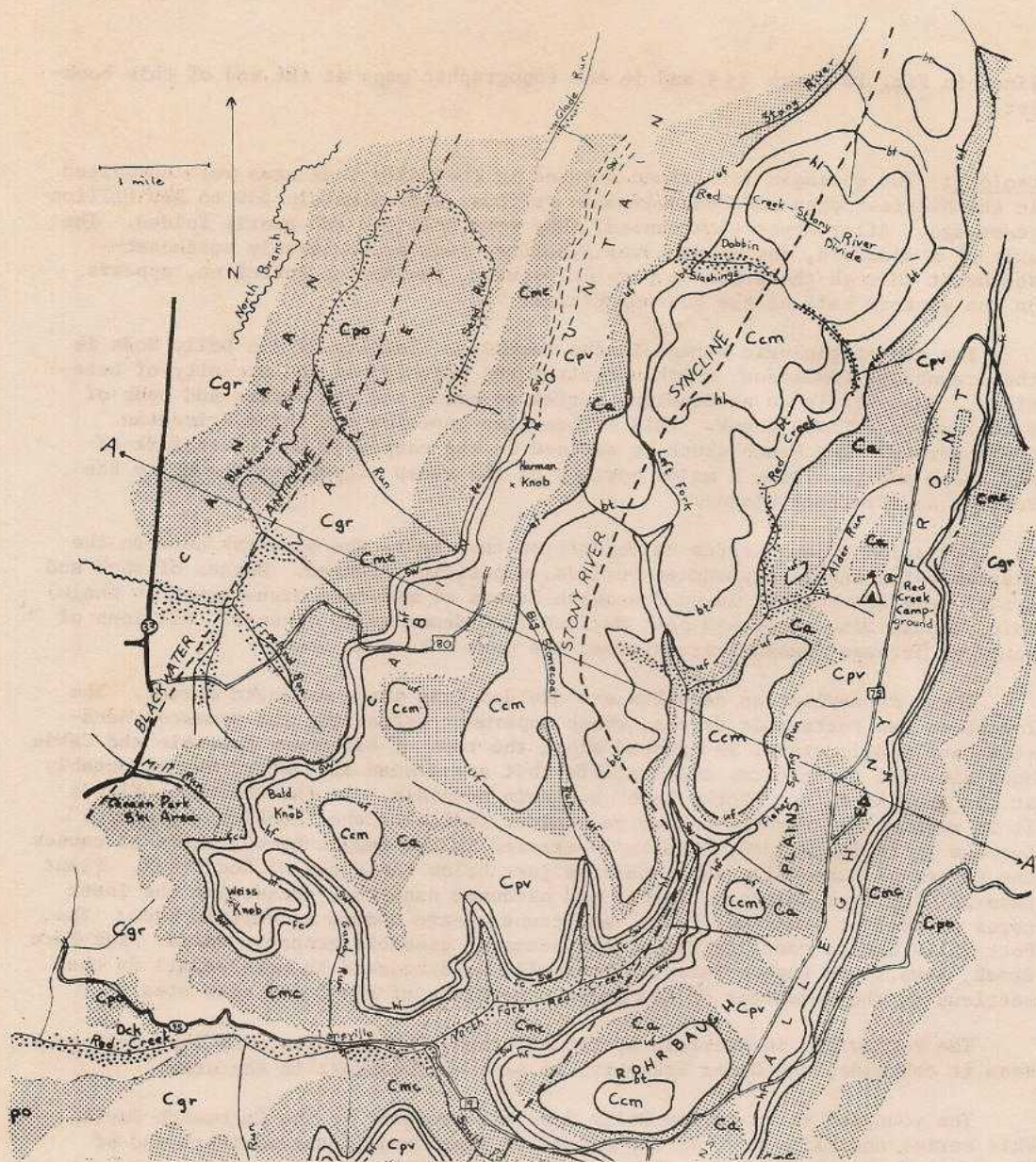


Figure 6. Geologic map of the drainage of the north (main) fork of Red Creek and adjacent portion of the Canaan Valley. Alternate geologic series are stippled. Principal coal seams are shown as heavy black lines. (From the West Virginia Geological Survey reports on Tucker, Grant, and Randolph counties.)

#### Principal Coal Seams

— h/ —	Harlem	— hf —	Hughes Ferry (laeger)
— bt —	Bakerstown	— sw —	Sewell
— uf —	Upper Freeport	— fc —	Fire Creek



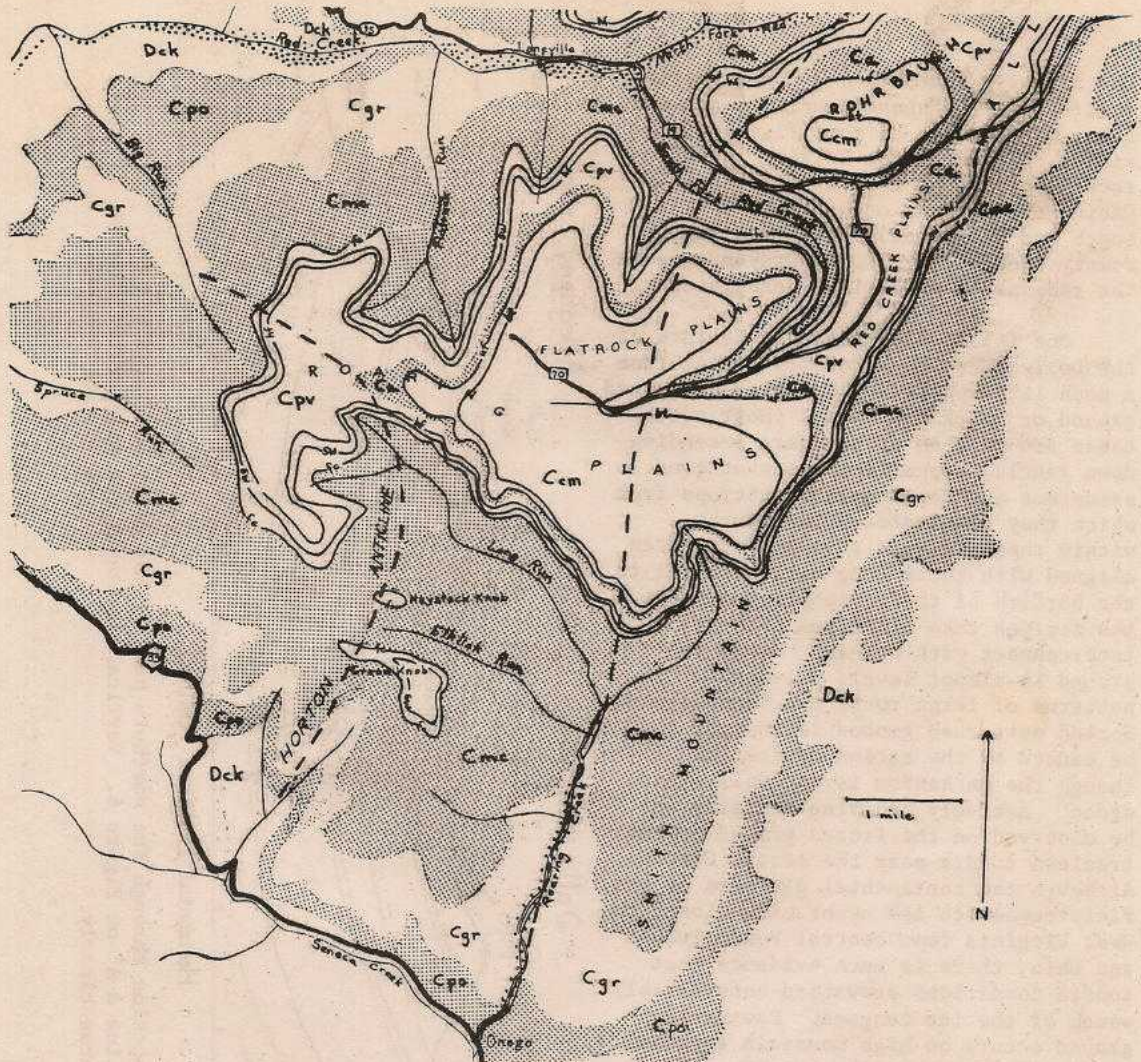










Figure 7. Geologic map of the Dolly Sods area south of Forest Service Route 19. Alternate geologic series are stippled, and principal coal seams are shown as heavy black lines. (Adapted from the West Virginia Geological Survey reports on Randolph and Pendleton counties.)

Abbreviation	Series	Geologic Period
 Qal	(alluvium) [sand, gravel, silt and clay]	Quaternary (3 million years ago to recent)
 Ccm	Conemaugh	Pennsylvanian
 Ca	Allegheny	Pennsylvanian
 Cpv	Pottsville	Pennsylvanian
 Cmc	Mauch Chunk	Mississippian
 Cgr	Greenbrier Limestone	Mississippian
 Cpo	Pocono Sandstone	Mississippian
 Dck	Catskill	Devonian

} Carboniferous



the Schooley Peneplain, has been mostly destroyed by subsequent uplifts and erosion, but persist on some flat topped ridges, including the Roaring and Flat-rock Plains. The tops of Bald Knob on Cabin Mountain and other knobs to the south and west, including Weiss Knob, Pointy Knob and Mt. Porte Crayon, may be the remains of an earlier peneplain.

One interesting geologic feature of the Dolly Sods "high country" dates from a much later period--the sorted patterned ground or "rock glaciers". Most often these are tongues of boulders extending down gentle slopes from the shattered sandstone and conglomerate outcrops from which they originated. The blocks within these "sorted stripes" are often aligned with their long axes parallel to the borders of the stripes. Sometimes the stripes take a sinuous path or interconnect with others. Where the ground is almost level, polygonal patterns of large rocks may be observed. Sorted patterned ground is thought to be caused by the action of ice, although the mechanism is not well understood. Actively evolving patterns can be observed on the frozen ground of the treeless tundra near the Arctic Circle. Although the continental glaciers of the Pleistocene Ice Age never came closer to West Virginia than central Pennsylvania and Ohio, there is much evidence that tundra conditions prevailed considerably south of the ice tongues. Patterned ground occurs on high mountain tops in the Appalachians as far south as the Virginia-North Carolina border. The larger features appear to be inactive today, and may have originated in the cold periods of the Pleistocene, which may have lasted until 9,000 years ago at lower elevations in northern West Virginia and even longer in the high mountains. However, more research is needed.

Marketable Timber: Much of the Dolly Sods area, particularly at higher altitudes, is covered with acid, stony soils that are often poorly drained. Most of it was severely burned during

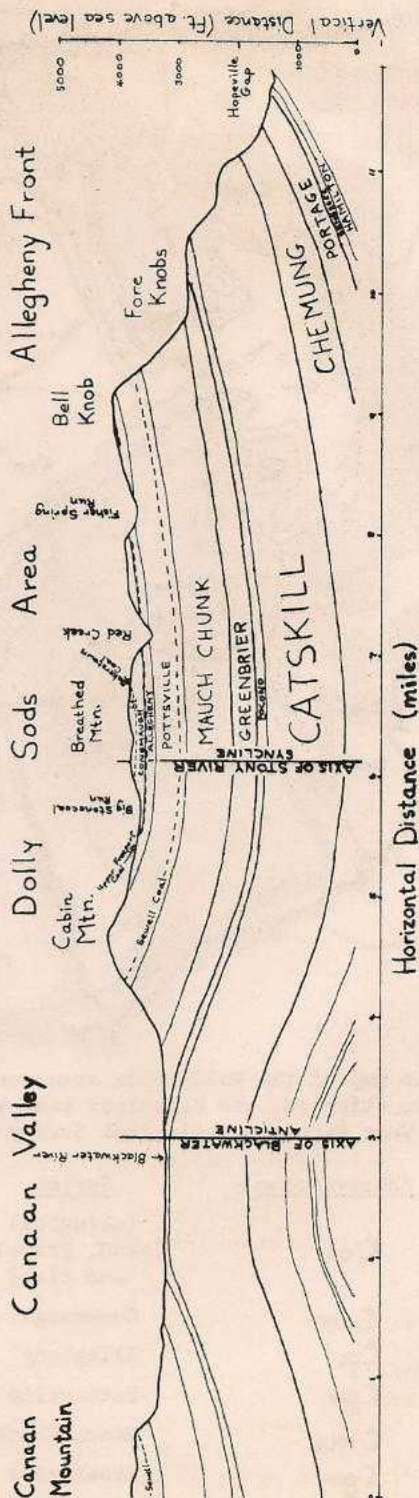


Figure 8. Diagrammatic cross section through the northern part of the Dolly Sods area and the adjacent Canaan Valley along line A-A' on Figure 6. Vertical distances are exaggerated to show geologic and topographic features clearly.






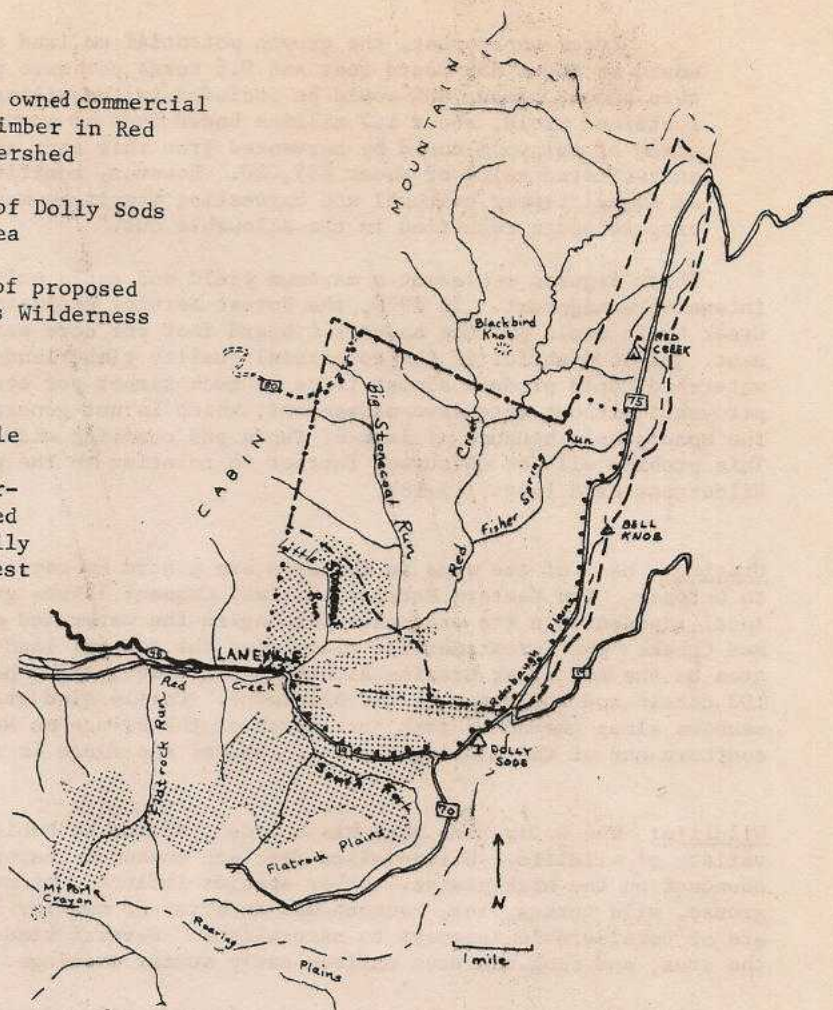
-  Federally owned commercial quality timber in Red Creek watershed
-  Boundary of Dolly Sods Scenic Area
-  Boundary of proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness

Figure 9. Extent of land in federal ownership capable of growing commercial quality timber in the watershed of Red Creek. (Adapted from map in "A Study of Dolly Sods", prepared by the Forest Service in 1969.)



and after the early logging days, and is not capable of growing commercial quality timber today. However, the Forest Service estimates that approximately 6,000 acres in the Red Creek watershed are well suited for timber harvesting. There are also commercial timberlands in the drainage of Long Run.

According to the report prepared by the Forest Service for the members of the 1969 Dolly Sods Ad Hoc Committee,

"... about 1,000 acres of the 6,000 acres are in private ownership. The privately owned land and Forest Service land have had similar histories and are assumed to have similar volumes and growth potential. Limited inventories indicates a present volume of about 26.5 million board feet of sawtimber and 36,000 cords of pulpwood on the 6,000 acres. Using the stumpage rates of the closest Forest Service timber sale, this volume would have a total value on the stump of about \$863,000. In the form of rough lumber and pulpwood, the value would approach \$3,500,000.



"Under management, the growth potential on land of this quality would be about 350 board feet and 0.5 cords per acre per year. Of this amount, about 80% would be included in the allowable cut. Under sustained yield, about 1.7 million board feet of sawtimber and 2,400 cords of pulpwood could be harvested from this area annually with an estimated value of about \$55,000. However, modifications of normal timber cultural and harvesting practices may cause a proportionate reduction in the allowable cut."

These figures represent a maximum yield and could only be realized under intensive management. In 1970, the Forest Service estimated that the Otter Creek basin could produce about 140 board feet per acre per year under management. It is doubtful if the commercial quality timberlands in the Red Creek watershed could produce almost twice as much timber per acre (350 board feet per year) without intensive management, which is not generally practiced in the Monongahela because of lack of funds and conflict with other forest uses. This problem will be discussed further in relation to the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness Area (pages 17-18).

Grazing: Many of the sods in the area are grazed by cattle and sheep from May to October. The Western Maryland Railway Company issues grazing permits to local residents in its extensive holdings in the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek. The Forest Service classifies the federal land adjacent to this area as the Red Creek Grazing Allotment. In 1969, eight permittees grazed 108 cattle and 258 sheep on the Allotment. Cattle also graze in the small meadows along the north fork just north of the bridge on Rt. 19 and at the southern end of the Roaring Plains. None of the range is fenced.

Wildlife: The Dolly Sods area has a wide spectrum of habitats and supports a variety of wildlife. White-tailed deer and snowshoe hares are particularly abundant on the high plains. Other species include cottontail rabbit, ruffed grouse, wild turkey, fox, raccoon, and an array of smaller birds and mammals that are of considerable interest to naturalists. Several kinds of snakes inhabit the area, and frog choruses enliven early summer evenings.

Black bear inhabit the area, and a few are taken during the hunting season, but the population has been declining--possibly as a result of poaching, overkill during legitimate hunting seasons, and the increasing accessibility and popularity of the area. As alleged sheep killers, they are constantly harassed by West Virginians, to the point that the State Department of Natural Resources considers them an endangered species. (In Pennsylvania, bears are less persecuted and thrive in semi-rural areas.) They have been able to survive in West Virginia only because they are extremely shy and avoid people as much as possible.

Beavers are numerous in the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek, and are present but much less common in the South Fork drainage. For the average backcountry hiker, their ponds, dams, lodges, trails, and canals are among the more fascinating features of the Dolly Sods. Ducks frequently make use of their ponds, and fish are found in some.

Both main forks of Red Creek are rather acid due to natural causes--the South Fork to the extent that it cannot easily support fish. The north fork is a moderately good fishing stream and is stocked with brook trout once a year.



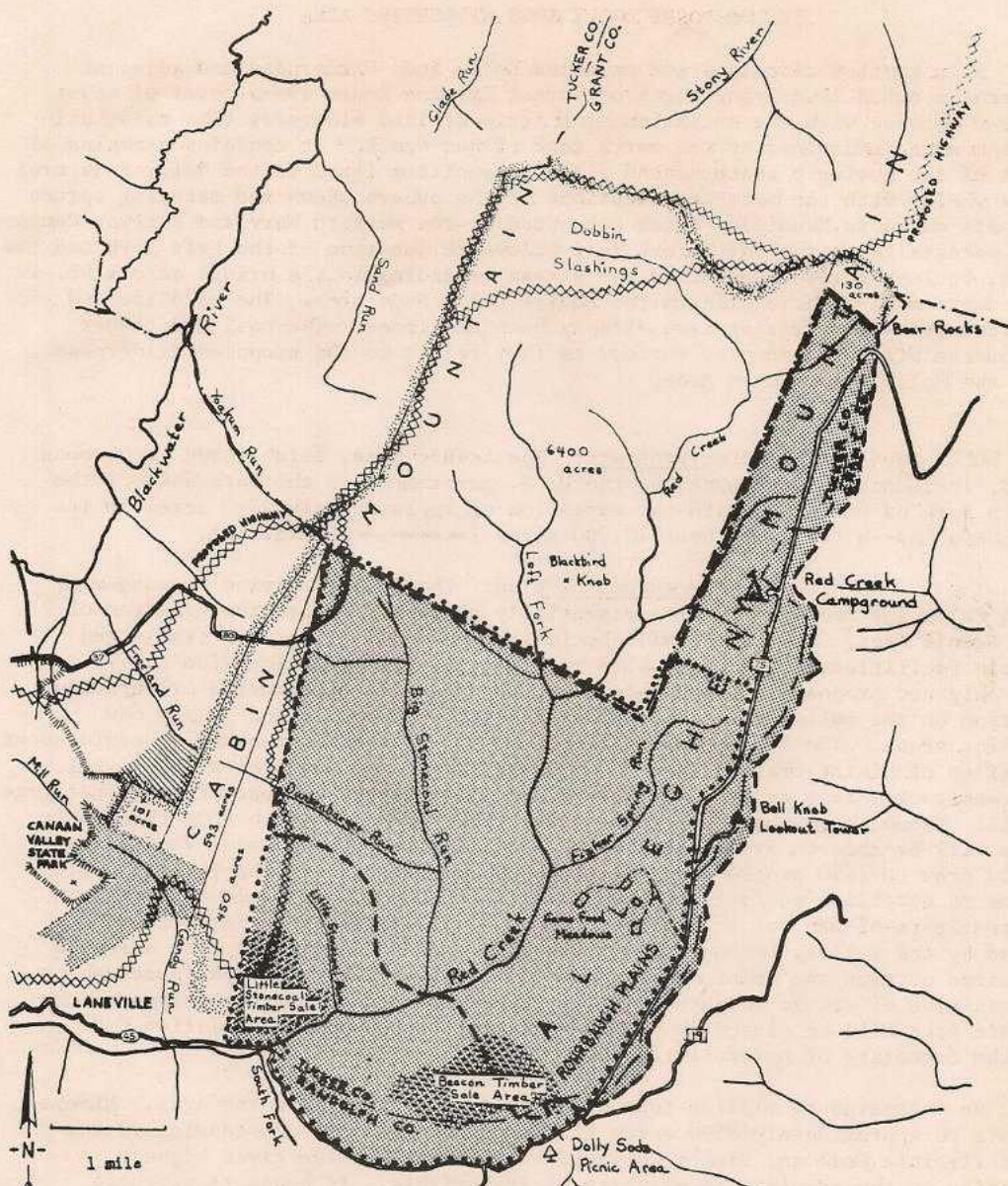


Figure 10. The Dolly Sods area north of Forest Service Route 19, showing the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness, the Dolly Sods Scenic Area, the 7680 acres of privately owned land proposed for federal acquisition (with acreages of individual tracts), and two possible routes for the proposed Highlands Scenic Highway and/or Allegheny Parkway.

#### LEGEND

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Federally owned land                              | Tentative highway route   |
| Boundary of land proposed for federal acquisition | Part of tract belonging to Davis Elkins et al; site of possible ski resort. |
| Boundary of Canaan Valley State Park              | Forest Service timber sale area   |
| proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness                    | Dolly Sods Scenic Area  |



## THE PROPOSED DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS AREA

This section discusses the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness and adjacent federally owned land lying north of Forest Service Route 19--a total of about 12,940 acres. With the exception of a strip of land alongside this road, all of the area is drained by the north fork of Red Creek. It contains examples of most of the geologic features and plant communities found in the Dolly Sods area as a whole, with the notable exceptions of the superb views and maturing spruce forests on Cabin Mountain, which are owned by the Western Maryland Railway Company. The waterfalls on the north fork just below the junction of the Left Fork and the open, boulder strewn segment of the stream extending to the bridge across Rt. 19 are duplicated nowhere else in the entire Dolly Sods area. The wildlife and opportunities for grazing have already been mentioned. The coal and timber resources will be discussed further as they relate to the proposed Wilderness and the Dolly Sods Scenic Area.

**THE DOLLY SODS SCENIC AREA--Boundary:** The Scenic Area, established in October 1970, includes all land owned by the U. S. government in the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek with the exception of approximately 2740 acres at its southern end--a total of about 10,200 acres (----- in Fig. 10).

**--Management Plan:** The Forest Service's management plan calls for keeping the area essentially as it was before the creation of the Scenic Area. Most of it will be left undeveloped except for trails and simple facilities to enhance public enjoyment of the area alongside Rt. 75. The only new proposed developments along this road are a roadside orientation station on the Dolly Sods near the intersection of Rts. 19 and 75 and new parking areas. The Forest Service hopes to add to its maintenance schedule about 35 miles of hiking trails, some of which already exist and others which will be constructed from scratch, including a segment of the proposed Potomac Heritage Trail. These improvements will be completed by 1980, at which time the Scenic Area will be able to accommodate up to 625 visitors at one time. Visitation could grow to 1250 people at one time by the year 2000, but the Forest Service plans to establish controls to keep the number at 625. It would like to purchase rights-of-way for trails in those portions of the north fork watershed owned by the Railway Company, and recommends that an additional 1500 acres be acquired outside the Scenic Area as buffer zones. Either outright purchase or acquisition of scenic easements is contemplated. The roadless portions of the Scenic Area will be closed to public vehicular travel under Regulation U-6 of the Secretary of Agriculture.

An estimated 66 million tons of mineable coal underlies the area. Mineral rights to approximately 8500 acres of the Scenic Area are outstanding to the West Virginia Coal and Timber Company. The Forest Service gives highest priority to the acquisition of these mineral rights. It hopes to purchase them by 1977 with monies from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The Forest Service estimates that the Scenic Area contains about 1,000 acres of good commercial forestlands. It concludes that "For the most part, Dolly Sods has greater value for nature study, sightseeing, and undeveloped forms of recreation than it does as an area devoted to the production of timber products." Hunting and grazing will continue. Prescribed burning may be employed to maintain different stages of ecologic succession, scenic vistas, and grasslands for grazing.

There are two major flaws in the Forest Service's Scenic Area plan. First: 2740 acres that should be protected from commercial exploitation are omitted from the Scenic Area. This problem will be discussed in detail on pages 22-23.



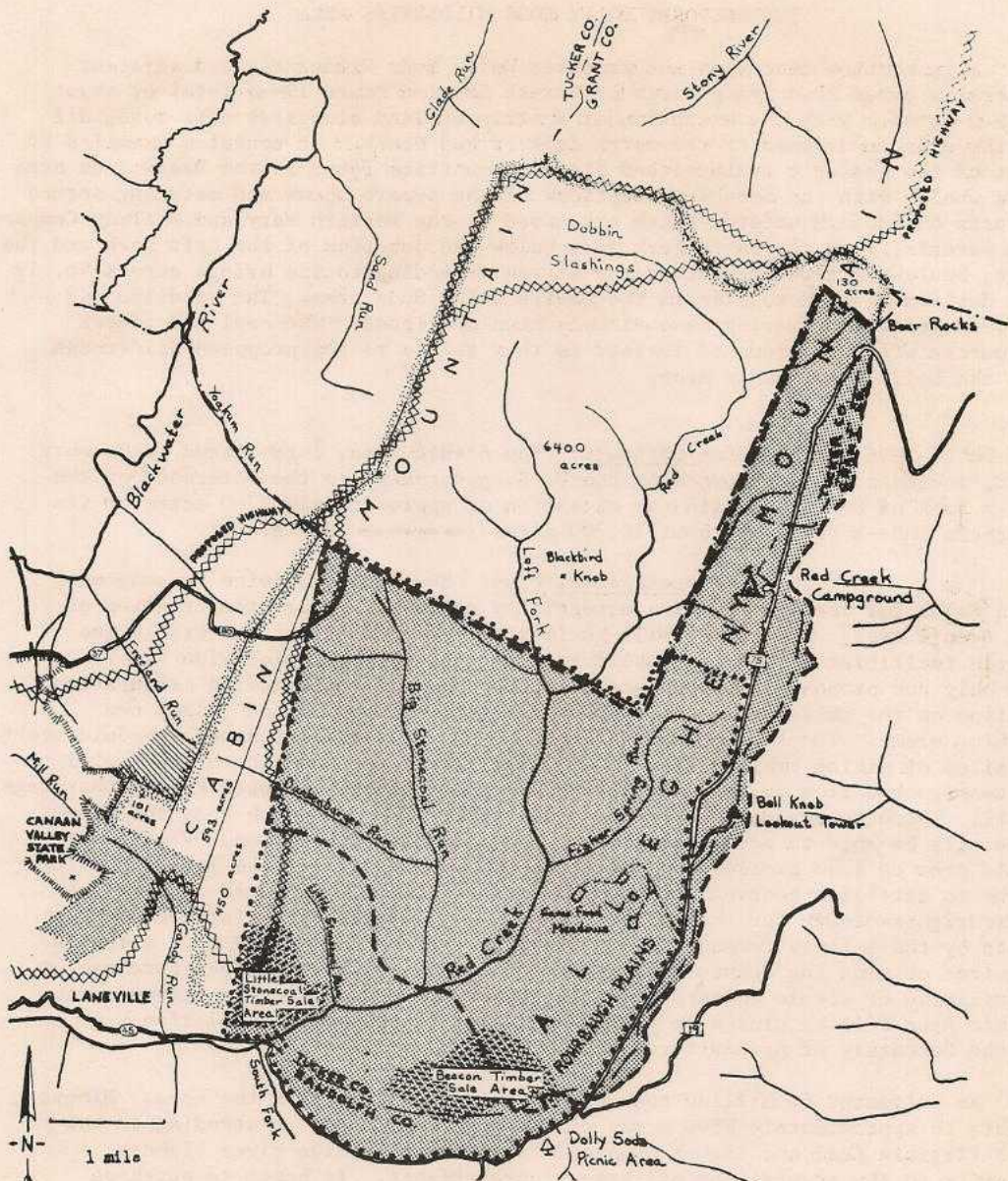


Figure 10. The Dolly Sods area north of Forest Service Route 19, showing the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness, the Dolly Sods Scenic Area, the 7680 acres of privately owned land proposed for federal acquisition (with acreages of individual tracts), and two possible routes for the proposed Highlands Scenic Highway and/or Allegheny Parkway.

#### LEGEND

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Federally owned land                              | Tentative highway route   |
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This section discusses the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness and adjacent federally owned land lying north of Forest Service Route 19--a total of about 12,940 acres. With the exception of a strip of land alongside this road, all of the area is drained by the north fork of Red Creek. It contains examples of most of the geologic features and plant communities found in the Dolly Sods area as a whole, with the notable exceptions of the superb views and maturing spruce forests on Cabin Mountain, which are owned by the Western Maryland Railway Company. The waterfalls on the north fork just below the junction of the Left Fork and the open, boulder strewn segment of the stream extending to the bridge across Rt. 19 are duplicated nowhere else in the entire Dolly Sods area. The wildlife and opportunities for grazing have already been mentioned. The coal and timber resources will be discussed further as they relate to the proposed Wilderness and the Dolly Sods Scenic Area.

THE DOLLY SODS SCENIC AREA--Boundary: The Scenic Area, established in October 1970, includes all land owned by the U. S. government in the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek with the exception of approximately 2740 acres at its southern end--a total of about 10,200 acres (----- in Fig. 10).

--Management Plan: The Forest Service's management plan calls for keeping the area essentially as it was before the creation of the Scenic Area. Most of it will be left undeveloped except for trails and simple facilities to enhance public enjoyment of the area alongside Rt. 75. The only new proposed developments along this road are a roadside orientation station on the Dolly Sods near the intersection of Rts. 19 and 75 and new parking areas. The Forest Service hopes to add to its maintenance schedule about 35 miles of hiking trails, some of which already exist and others which will be constructed from scratch, including a segment of the proposed Potomac Heritage Trail. These improvements will be completed by 1980, at which time the Scenic Area will be able to accommodate up to 625 visitors at one time. Visitation could grow to 1250 people at one time by the year 2000, but the Forest Service plans to establish controls to keep the number at 625. It would like to purchase rights-of-way for trails in those portions of the north fork watershed owned by the Railway Company, and recommends that an additional 1500 acres be acquired outside the Scenic Area as buffer zones. Either outright purchase or acquisition of scenic easements is contemplated. The roadless portions of the Scenic Area will be closed to public vehicular travel under Regulation U-6 of the Secretary of Agriculture.

An estimated 66 million tons of mineable coal underlies the area. Mineral rights to approximately 8500 acres of the Scenic Area are outstanding to the West Virginia Coal and Timber Company. The Forest Service gives highest priority to the acquisition of these mineral rights. It hopes to purchase them by 1977 with monies from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

The Forest Service estimates that the Scenic Area contains about 1,000 acres of good commercial forestlands. It concludes that "For the most part, Dolly Sods has greater value for nature study, sightseeing, and undeveloped forms of recreation than it does as an area devoted to the production of timber products." Hunting and grazing will continue. Prescribed burning may be employed to maintain different stages of ecologic succession, scenic vistas, and grasslands for grazing.

There are two major flaws in the Forest Service's Scenic Area plan. First: 2740 acres that should be protected from commercial exploitation are omitted from the Scenic Area. This problem will be discussed in detail on pages 22-23.



Second: the Scenic Area, having been administratively created, can be administratively abolished under the impact of commercial or developmental pressures. Thus, while the plan has some commendable aspects of wilderness-type management, it offers very little of the protection that can be accorded by an act of Congress under the Wilderness Act of 1964.

THE PROPOSED DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS AREA--Background: The history of the area, leading to the Forest Service's designation of a Scenic Area in 1970, has already been reviewed. While public interest in the preservation of the Dolly Sods mounted, the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and others were studying two other potential wilderness areas in the Monongahela National Forest: the Otter Creek basin and the Cranberry Backcountry. In 1964 the Forest Service switched from all-aged management (selection cutting) to even-aged management (including clear cutting) as the predominant logging policy in the Monongahela. Complaints mounted as the public viewed the results. Recreationists were particularly disturbed about the Cranberry Backcountry and vicinity, where clearcuts as large as 549 acres appeared (technically, this was a "removal cut"). In the spring of 1970 the Forest Service announced that it planned to make several new timber sales in the Backcountry that involved large clearcuts. Because previous efforts to persuade the Forest Service to defer or modify its timber sales had failed, conservationists went to U. S. Representative Ken Hechler (W. Va.), who agreed to introduce a bill in the 91st Congress that would make the Backcountry a wilderness area. With such a bill before Congress, conservationists hoped that the Forest Service would defer the timber sales until Congress could act on the bill.

Mr. Hechler's bill, introduced in May 1970 and again in February 1971 in the 92nd Congress, also proposed that Otter Creek and part of the Dolly Sods area be designated as wilderness areas. In response to strong public interest, Senator Jennings Randolph introduced a similar bill to the Senate in June of 1970. In October 1970, Rep. Harley O. Staggers, in whose congressional district all three areas are located, introduced a bill. Mr. Staggers also sponsored an omnibus de facto wilderness bill filed by Rep. John Saylor (Pa.) on March 22, 1971, which includes the three West Virginia areas. Thus Mr. Hechler and Mr. Staggers have both aided the wilderness process in the 92nd Congress.

Boundary of the Proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness: The proposed 10,215 acre Dolly Sods Wilderness includes all federally owned land in the drainage of Red Creek more than 100 feet north of Forest Service Rt. 19 and west of Rt. 75, with the exception of the game keeper's cabin and outbuildings near the bridge across the north fork, and the strip of land paralleling Rt. 75 north of the drainage of Fisher Spring Run. A detailed verbal description of the boundary is printed in Appendix I on page 42. It is outlined with a heavy dotted line (.....) on Fig. 10. It overlaps about 7460 acres of the 10,200 acre Scenic Area.

Timber Resources: The proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness contains about 2000 acres of commercial quality timber, about 40% of the federally owned acreage of



good timber-growing sites in the Red Creek drainage (Fig. 9).<sup>1</sup> The boundary of the Scenic Area has been drawn to exclude most of this acreage.

On page 14 the Forest Service's rough estimates of the total value of all the commercial timberlands in the Red Creek drainage are quoted, including 1,000 acres of privately owned land. Assuming that the 2000 acres within the proposed wilderness are of approximately the same value as the 4000 outside it, the proposed wilderness contains a volume of about 8.8 million board feet of sawtimber and 12,000 cords of pulpwood, for a total value on the stump of about \$288,000. In the form of rough lumber and pulpwood, the value would be about \$1,700,000. Under sustained yield management, an average of about .6 million board board of sawtimber and 800 cords of pulpwood could be harvested annually--an estimated value of about \$18,300.

As has already been discussed on page 14, this would be close to the maximum yield of 350 board feet per acre per year and could be realized only under intensive management for timber production. At the rate that the trees are actually growing now, the yield would be much less. No figures are available, but we may assume it is no more than the anticipated growth rate of the trees in the Otter Creek basin under less intense management: 140 board feet per acre per year. If this is true, the estimated value of the annual harvest would be no more than \$7300. The Forest Service lacks funds to practice this kind of management in most of the Monongahela. If it did not use the limited funds in the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness, they could be applied elsewhere at another site in the National Forest. Even if the funds were available to manage most of the Monongahela for maximum timber yields, there is doubt that the Forest Service would find it advisable to turn an area contiguous to a scenic area where primitive types of recreation are encouraged into a tree farm laced with access roads.

One fourth of the receipts of Forest Service timber sales are pooled in a fund to help support schools in counties in the Monongahela National Forest. The money is divided among the individual counties on the basis of the amount of federal land in each. Tucker County's share is 1/8 of the total. Timber sales in the proposed Wilderness would contribute an average of about \$200 annually to the Tucker County schools assuming a growth rate of 140 board feet per acre per year.

Coal Resources: According to reports released by the West Virginia Geological Survey (the latest in 1940), the proposed 10,215 acre Wilderness contains three coal seams that are potentially mineable: the Bakerstown, Upper Freeport and Sewell seams. (See Fig. 6, page 10.) In Appendix II (page 43), the estimated thicknesses of each are given. These figures are guesses based on data in the Tucker County geological report (1923), based on four core samples taken by the Bridges Estate in the west-central portion of the north fork watershed and several temporary deep mines and prospects that were opened before 1915 to supply the logging trains. A small amount of Sewell Coal was also mined along Rt. in the early part of this century.

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<sup>1</sup>The acreage is estimated from a map in the binder of facts prepared by the Forest Service in 1969 for the Dolly Sods Ad Hoc Committee. The management plan for the Scenic Area released in April 1971 states that it includes about 1,000 acres of commercial timber, considerably more than the 1969 map shows. Presumably the additions are along the north fork just upstream from the mouth of Big Stonecoal Run. To be consistent, the additional timber acreage is not included in this discussion because undoubtedly additional timber acreage could be added to that part of the Red Creek watershed south of Rt. 19.



SCENES IN THE PROPOSED DOLLY SODS WILDERNESS AREA



Figure 11 (upper left). A beaver dam, pond, and lodge along Big Stonecoal Run.

Figure 12 (upper right). One of several waterfalls on Red Creek between the junctions of the Left Fork and Fisher Spring Run.

Figure 13 (lower left). Maturing forest of cove hardwoods and hemlock along Red Creek just below the mouth of Little Stonecoal Run. The Forest Service omitted 2740 acres of potential wilderness from the Dolly Sods Scenic Area because forests like this can be profitably logged.

Figure 14 (lower right). Waterfall on Little Stonecoal Run after a heavy summer downpour. A timber sale, originally planned for 1970 but now suspended indefinitely, would have opened up a clearcut area 150 feet from this fall.



All but 780 acres in the proposed Wilderness were purchased by the federal government in 1916 from the Bridges Estate. The Estate kept the mineral rights; the government acquired only the surface. Today an estimated 59 million tons of mineable coal underlying 9435 acres of the 10,215 acre proposed Wilderness Area, belong to the West Virginia Coal and Timber Company. The Forest Service recently purchased the coal under the existing segment of the Highlands Scenic Highway in Pocahontas County for about 1/2 cent per ton. Assuming that the coal in the proposed Wilderness, which is probably of much lower quality, has the same unmined value, it is worth about \$184,000.

The Forest Service hopes to purchase the mineral rights to the Dolly Sods Scenic Area, which contains an estimated 66 million tons of mineable coal. This is a desirable goal whether or not part of it is eventually designated a wilderness area. However, its management plan does not put high priority on purchasing the mineral rights to the 2740 acres excluded from the Scenic Area but included in the proposed Wilderness. The area contains about 9 million tons of mineable coal with an estimated in-the-ground value of about \$45,000.

Although it would be most convenient to strip mine some of the Bakerstown and Upper Freeport coal, the Forest Service believes that the deed drawn up at the time the government purchased the surface rights gives it the authority to prohibit strip mining. Uncontrolled deep mining, requiring a network of access roads and power lines and threatening Red Creek with acid mine drainage, would also be extremely detrimental to the wilderness qualities of the Dolly Sods. In comparison to coal elsewhere in West Virginia, the coal under the Dolly Sods is thin-seamed and probably of poor quality. However, as the more valuable seams are depleted, the value of Dolly Sods coal will increase along with the likelihood that it will be mined. The Forest Service should be given funds to purchase the coal in the proposed Wilderness as soon as possible.

What is a Wilderness Area? The Wilderness Act of 1964 defines a wilderness area as:

"A wilderness in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value." (Section 1c)

A wilderness area can be established only by the U. S. Congress and the President and only on federally owned lands in National Forests, National Parks and Monuments, National Wildlife Refuges and lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. To preserve the primitive character of these areas, all travel by motor vehicles is forbidden except in emergencies.

Wilderness designations have no effect on hunting regulations. Wilderness status does not prohibit this activity nor permit it where it is otherwise not



allowed, as in a National Park. Fishing and grazing of livestock are also allowed in wilderness areas.

When the Wilderness Act was passed, approximately nine million acres of national forest land that the Forest Service had previously set aside as Wild or Wilderness Areas were immediately made part of the National Wilderness Preservation System. Only 26,455 acres are in the eastern national forests--the Great Gulf Wilderness (5400 acres) in the White Mountain National Forest, New Hampshire, and the Linville Gorge (7,655 acres) and Shining Rock (13,400 acres) wilderness areas in the Pisgah National Forest, North Carolina.

Under the Wilderness Act the Forest Service is required to review only areas designated as "Primitive Areas", none of which are in the eastern national forests. However, many national forests--East and West--contain wild, roadless areas (known as de facto wilderness) which are not designated "Primitive". The de facto wildernesses possess all of the outstanding recreational and aesthetic attributes common to statutory wilderness. The Forest Service is not obligated under the Wilderness Act to study them for possible wilderness designation. Instead, it appears to have generally adopted a policy of "no wilderness" for these areas in order that road building, timber harvesting and other extractive uses will be unimpeded. (Recently, however, the Chief of the Forest Service called for protection of all areas in national forests which "might qualify as wilderness", "protection" meaning no timber sales. Presumably this includes Dolly Sods, Otter Creek and part of the Cranberry Backcountry, since bills have been introduced to Congress.)

Why Preserve Wilderness Areas? Many eloquent pieces of literature have been written on the diverse reasons for preserving wilderness. From a strictly utilitarian viewpoint, we can say that wilderness areas have a wide spectrum of uses. Fragile watersheds that would be severely eroded by road building, lumbering or rough-terrain motor vehicles are protected. Species of wildlife which need extensive areas relatively free of man are provided with habitat. (In West Virginia, the state Department of Natural Resources considers the black bear an endangered species.) Wilderness areas provide environmental relief for human beings forced to live and work in crowded, polluted, mechanized surroundings. There is opportunity for solitude or to renew and strengthen ties with family and friends away from the sights and sounds of man. Wilderness preservation is essential if we are ever to understand the interrelationships between living things and their physical environment. The ecology of the Appalachian forests is especially complex, and in comparison with western forests, few have been set aside free from continuing human disturbance. Wilderness serves as a reservoir where species and varieties of plants and animals of no obvious value to man today may persist; uses may be found for them in the future. Wilderness areas are standards by which we can gauge the success of management programs in non-wilderness areas.

Probably more important than any of these is the knowledge that some fragments of untrammelled wilderness still persist on the Earth. Many people who never actually set foot in a wilderness area seem to find the thought comforting. Perhaps we have a moral obligation to set aside a few areas where plants and animals can live or perish in response to the laws of Nature without regard to their immediate usefulness to man as food or fiber. The fact that preservation of the diversity of life and scenery on Earth enriches the quality of individual human lives is only a side product.



Effect of Wilderness Designation on Present Management of the Area: If Congress approves the 10,215 acre Dolly Sods Wilderness proposed by conservationists and Representatives Staggers and Hechler, the Forest Service will be aided in carrying out its announced management objectives for the Scenic Area. This is because statutory wilderness protection will enable the Forest Service to resist development pressures which otherwise might occur. None of the existing or planned facilities for non-wilderness-oriented visitors would be affected. The half-mile-wide strip of federally owned land west of Rt. 75 and north of the watershed of Fisher Spring Run has been omitted from the wilderness boundary to avoid conflict with the Red Creek Campground and the Northland Loop Interpretive Trail, where the Forest Service plans to build a boardwalk. Controlled burning could be carried out here and east of Rt. 75 to maintain open areas and to preserve various stages of ecologic succession. Hunting, fishing and grazing would continue.

The major change in Forest Service plans for the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek would be that 2740 acres of forested land between the southern boundary of the Scenic Area and Rt. 19 would be closed to all timber harvesting, road building and vehicular travel. This is one of the two major reasons that the Highlands Conservancy is proposing the Dolly Sods as a Wilderness Area. If the 2740 acres are managed as most portions of the General Forest Zone are, the wilderness atmosphere will disappear as it is laced with miles of logging roads and all large trees are cut. If the privately owned land in the north fork drainage is strip mined or built up with vacation homes, only 7460 acres would remain wild in the Dolly Sods area out of the 17,895 acres now undeveloped.

Designation of the Wilderness might require some modification of the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources' game management policies in the north fork drainage. It maintains five meadows on the Rohrbaugh Plains, connected by a jeep road seeded with grass and closed to public vehicles. They are mowed yearly and are occasionally plowed and fertilized. If the area is designated a Wilderness they could be abandoned or alternatively, mowed or plowed with horse or mule drawn equipment. We understand that their primary purpose is to encourage wild turkeys. There is some doubt that such artificial clearings are truly beneficial to turkeys (Bailey and Rinell, 1967). If the north fork watershed is not managed, it could serve as an experimental control against which the Department could gauge the success of its habitat manipulation programs elsewhere. Nest boxes for wood ducks have been posted on trees near several beaver ponds. They are minor pre-existing intrusions which could remain.

The lower two miles of the north fork of Red Creek--the only part accessible by truck--is stocked with brook trout once a year. If the proposed Wilderness is established, all vehicular traffic would be banned, and stocking would have to be done on foot or with the assistance of horses or mules. The north fork is a marginal fishing stream because of its natural acidity. Some game managers have suggested that installing revolving limestone drums would improve it as a fishery. We do not believe this should be encouraged because the roads that would be required for access would harm the undeveloped character of the region. (If the upper drainage is polluted by acid mine drainage from future strip mines or sewage disposal, then such drums could be installed using roads built by the miners. There will be more than enough people who come to the Dolly Sods to enjoy what is there naturally. Altering the stream to enable it to support more fish would add an artificial attraction. There are many streams in the general vicinity more suitable for intensive management for fishing.

Developments in the Proposed Wilderness: Unquestionably man has altered the appearance of the Dolly Sods. However, traces of his work are relatively unnoticeable and are rapidly being obliterated by natural processes.



Except where they have been kept clear for use as trails, the abandoned railroad grades in wooded portions of the area are often so overgrown that they are impassable to hikers. In open meadows some have nearly disappeared. Here and there along the grades a sharp-eyed hiker can discern the remnants of old logging camps--a broken wood-burning stove, shoes of draft horses, an apple tree slowly being shaded out of existence by its wild competitors. Some small deep mines were opened to supply the logging engines--most have completely disappeared; the rest are unobtrusive. The Wilderness Act recognizes that a wilderness may have historic value, and these remnants of a bygone way of life are another interesting feature of the Dolly Sods area.

It is true that fires caused by man have greatly enlarged the treeless areas that the Fairfax Party first saw in 1746. However, without prior knowledge of the history of the area, it would be difficult to know that man was the direct cause; fires are a part of Nature's scheme as well. Here and there the decaying stumps of the virgin trees can still be seen. However, by comparison with pictures taken in the 1930's, it can be demonstrated that trees and shrubs are rapidly reclaiming the region.

Intrusions dating from later years may be cause for more concern. A patch of birch along Red Creek was girdled to control a disease outbreak; new trees are filling in the gap. There are two low standard roads passable to four wheeled vehicles. Both are gated to public travel. The Red Creek Trail is negotiable by ordinary automobiles with difficulty for about a mile beyond the gate, and by "jeeps" to the mouth of Big Stonecoal Run, but definitely not beyond it. The game food meadows and access lane are discussed in the section on the effects of wilderness designation on the management of the area (page 22).

The Forest Service has made several small plantations in the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek--many of them outside the proposed Wilderness. Red spruce (the predominant high altitude native tree) and red pine (native to West Virginia but not to the Dolly Sods) are the main species planted, but there are also a few non-native Fraser fir and Norway spruce. These plantations are not obviously artificial and do not militate in any way against wilderness designation.

The intrusions which have caused the most damage to the wilderness character of the area are two timber sale plots. (See Fig. 10, page 15.) The Beacon Sale Area, 390 acres at the southern end of the Rohrbaugh Plains, was heavily selectively cut in the mid 1960's to the extent that few trees were left standing in places. In 1969-1970 four patches, averaging about 20 acres, were clearcut. If left undisturbed, forest will again reclaim the area. It could be eliminated from the proposed Wilderness, but the wild and scenic value of the entire Dolly Sods-Roaring Plains backcountry would be enhanced if it were allowed to remain. Here is an opportunity to permit an area to regenerate under wilderness protection for the benefit of future generations of Americans.

The Little Stonecoal Sale Area includes 400 acres just west of that stream. It was selectively cut in the early 1960's. After the logging was finished the Department of Natural Resources planted the access roads with grass. The aesthetic damage is not as severe as in the Beacon Sale but exists. In the summer of 1970 the Forest Service advertised a new sale in the Little Stonecoal plot which would have involved five clearcuts ranging from 18 to 90 acres. One of the clearcuts would have come to within 100 feet of the waterfall in Fig. 14 (page 19). By the time the sale was announced, bills that would make this area part of the proposed Wilderness had already been introduced to both houses of Congress. Lawyers



representing the Conservancy threatened to take the matter to court, and the sale was postponed indefinitely. Omission of the Little Stonecoal Sale Area from the proposed Wilderness would degrade the wilderness quality of adjacent parts of the Red Creek Canyon which definitely should be protected. The noise of trucks and chain saws would carry through the canyon when logging is in progress. Also, there is a problem in finding an access route for the logging trucks. There are two old roads into the sale area. One is through a private sheep pasture in Laneville. If the owner chooses not to have logging trucks disturbing his sheep, the only alternative would be the road used in the earlier timber sale, which fords Red Creek just below the outlet of Little Stonecoal Run and then follows the lower part of the Red Creek Trail. If trucks used this route, the lower mile of the north fork canyon would also have to be eliminated from the proposed Wilderness. In between the two possible access roads are cliffs alongside Rt. 19-45; no road could be built there.

Is the Dolly Sods Qualified as a Wilderness Area? According to the Forest Service, areas that were once logged, burned by man-caused fires, or which contain jeep roads or abandoned railroad grades can never qualify for protection under the Wilderness Act. This is despite the fact the Act states that traces of man's activity need only be substantially unnoticeable. The Forest Service's manual adds the criteria of need and availability, stating that areas containing marketable timber or economically valuable minerals should not be set aside as Wilderness, even if they otherwise qualify.

The Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and the National Park Service have more liberal interpretations of the Act. The latter has proposed wilderness areas in Shenandoah National Park, the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, and Cumberland Gap National Historical Park which contain all or mostly second growth timber. Some were even farmed as late as the 1930's. President Nixon has announced his support of the Shenandoah wilderness proposal. Congress has designated a 3,700 acre Wilderness in the Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge of New Jersey that has only fragments of virgin timber. The proposed Okefenokee Wilderness of Georgia--more than 300,000 acres in the National Wildlife Refuge--was logged and burned near the turn of the century and likewise has only remnants of its original forests.

A public hearing on Forest Service management practices held in April 1971 by Senator Frank Church, chairman of the Public Lands Subcommittee of the Senate Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, made it clear that the Forest Service's opposition to setting aside de facto wilderness areas is not limited to second growth eastern forests, but is nationwide. Western conservationists have asked the Forest Service to set aside certain roadless areas containing old growth or virgin timber until Congress can review their wilderness qualifications. These requests generally have been ignored as the agency continues its program of accelerated timbering and road building. (There are some notable exceptions. For example, de facto wilderness in the Chattahoochee National Forest in Georgia and the George Washington National Forest in Virginia are being studied--and left unroaded and unlogged--for possible protection as wilderness.)

The Forest Service's reluctance to set aside additional portions of our rapidly vanishing wilderness is puzzling when first encountered. The idea of setting aside sizable roadless areas originated in the Forest Service in the late 1920's, and it had designated most of the formally protected wilderness which Congress swept into the National Wilderness Preservation System with the passage of the Wilderness Act. (However, the Forest Service also declassified wilderness lands when it suited timber harvesting or road building purposes.) In establishing the 13,600 acre Shining Rock Wild Area in the Pisgah National Forest of



North Carolina, the Forest Service recognized the wilderness qualifications of an area in strikingly similar condition to the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness. Like the Sods, its uplands were severely burned and today are scenic and of unusual botanical interest. The steep slopes and streamsides are clothed with second growth timber which is obliterating abandoned railroad grades and logging roads. An area that had been logged five months before the area was set aside was included within the Wild Area boundary. There are some abandoned mine shafts. The Forest Service insists that this area does not qualify as a Wilderness as defined in the Act, and that it is now in the Wilderness System only because all Wild and Wilderness Areas previously designated by the Forest Service were automatically included when the Act passed. This excuse is suspect because the Shining Rock Area was set aside in May 1964, only four months before the Act finally passed. The Wilderness Bill had been debated in Congress for many years, and the Forest Service was fully aware of the definition of wilderness it contained.

The April 1971 hearings were called by Senator Church to investigate allegations that the Forest Service is violating the Multiple Use and Sustained Yield Act of 1960, which states that the national forests are to be managed to provide a continuous supply of timber, wildlife, water, recreation and forage, and that wilderness preservation is consistent with these aims. Witnesses from Alaska to Georgia testified that other forest values are being sacrificed to logging, and that logging practices permitted in many portions of the national forests are inconsistent with sustained yield principles. West Virginians testifying on clear-cutting in the Monongahela were prominent in numbers and scope of testimony. The Forest Service's decision to exclude almost all the commercial timberlands from the Dolly Sods Scenic Area is another symptom of its preoccupation with logging to the detriment of other public values.

The Wilderness Act puts the Forest Service under no obligation to study or set aside any de facto wilderness areas. Conservationists are discovering it is often useless to plead with Forest Service officials to protect these areas, and are learning to bypass the agency and go directly to the public and their Congressmen or to the courts. West Virginians have done this in the case of the Dolly Sods, Otter Creek basin and the Cranberry Backcountry. Bills to protect at least 15 national forest de facto wildernesses have now been introduced to Congress.

#### THE REMAINDER OF THE DOLLY SODS AREA

The proposed 10,215 acre Dolly Sods Wilderness is only one third of what is considered as the Dolly Sods area in this publication. (See Fig. 3, page 4.) Although it is desirable to protect the areas adjacent to the proposed Wilderness, it is not essential and should not delay prompt action to protect it. The rest of the 31,920 acre region is not now qualified for protection under the Wilderness Act because of existing developments on federal land and the fact that the remainder of the north fork watershed, although in wilderness condition, is in private ownership. Despite these problems, it is wild, scenic country. Its loss to commercial exploitation would impair the attractiveness of the entire area as a place for primitive forms of recreation. Exploitation of the upper watershed of the north fork of Red Creek could have a direct physical effect on the Dolly Sods Scenic Area and the proposed Wilderness through pollution of the headwaters of Red Creek and its major tributaries, and might also bring so many people into the area that its wilderness character would be destroyed.





SCENES IN THE DOLLY SODS  
AREA NORTH OF THE PRESENT  
BOUNDARY OF THE MONONGAHELA  
NATIONAL FOREST

Figure 15. Hummocks of Polytrichum moss in the Dobbin Slashings bog, largest of the sphagnum bogs for which the area is noted. If the Davis Power Project is approved as now planned, this bog will be obliterated in 1973 by a reservoir with a daily drawdown zone of up to 57 feet.



Figure 16. Backpackers on the north side of Blackbird Knob, looking up the drainage of the Left Fork of Red Creek. Open, wild country like this, rare in the East, makes the Dolly Sods ideal for crosscountry hiking.



Figure 17. View south along the crest of Cabin Mountain, which forms the western edge of the Dolly Sods area. In the foreground is Bald Knob, partially in Canaan Valley State Park. The Highlands Scenic Highway is tentatively routed along this ridge, now an exceptionally scenic hiking route.



PRIVATE LAND IN THE WATERSHED OF THE NORTH FORK OF RED CREEK--General Description: Approximately 7680 acres in the drainage of the north fork are privately owned--all but 130 acres by the Western Maryland Railway Company. Today the north fork area is a wilderness of about 19,500 acres composed of about 11,400 acres of national forest land and 7680 acres of private land. Probably a majority of the people who come to the Dolly Sods to enjoy its wilderness character by hiking or backpacking more than a mile or two spend part of their time on Railway land. Two of the most popular hiking trails in the Dolly Sods--the Blackbird Knob Trail and the Red Creek Trail--are partly on Railway land, and several others, including the Cabin Mountain Trail, the "Harmon Trail", and the Cabin Mountain crosscountry route, are entirely outside federal land.

The private land in the north watershed is separated into two sections by the wedge of federal property that reaches just over the summit of Cabin Mountain at Yoakum Run. The largest section is a roughly square block of 6400 acres bounded on the south and east by the boundary of the Monongahela National Forest, on the west by the crest of Cabin Mountain, and on the north by the divide separating the watersheds of Red Creek and the Stony River. It is part of Western Maryland's C-1 tract. A 130 acre appendage on the Bear Rocks at the northeastern corner of the 6400 acre tract belongs to the Virginia Electric and Power Company (VEPCO). All of the 6530 acres have been severely burned and is predominantly grassland and heath barren today, with scattered small spruce and hardwoods. Sphagnum bogs and beaver ponds are numerous. Although the area contains a network of jeep and foot trails, the open country invites hikers to explore it crosscountry. The only other developments are two tarpaper hunters' shacks built with the permission of the Railway Company.

The other section of privately owned land is a triangular strip of 1150 acres along the southern edge of Cabin Mountain within the national forest boundary. It includes all of two tracts and part of another, all the property of the Railway Company. It has been less affected by fire than the northern section, and more than half is forested with spruce and northern hardwoods. The forests have little immediate commercial value, although logging might become feasible in the distant future. Only the northern part of one tract, 1037 acres reaching to Laneville, is included in this discussion so as to exclude timberlands of undoubted commercial value. (See table on page 38.) The only developments are the last mile of the dirt road, Forest Service Rt. 80; two hunters' shacks; and abandoned railroad grades, one of which is maintained as the Cabin Mountain Trail.

Coal Resources and the Possibility of Strip Mining: The private land in the north fork drainage is underlain by as many as four coal seams of possible economic value--the Harlem, Bakerstown, Upper Freeport, and Sewell seams (Fig. 6, page 10). Using the inadequate data in the Tucker and Grant County geological surveys, published in 1923 and 1924, it is estimated that the area contains about 48 million tons of coal, with an in-the-ground value of \$239,000 (Appendix II, page 43). The owners of the surface also control the minerals; thus, practically all the coal under the area belongs to the Western Maryland Railway Company.

In the mid 1960's the Railway Company took core samples on the 6400 acre tract, but the detailed data are not available to the public. In answer to a request for more information, G. M. Leilich, Vice President-Operations, wrote in 1968 that the "tract is not scheduled for strip operations in the near future because at the present moment it would appear to be what is classified as a want area. Essentially, this means that the coal resources are not known to be economically suited for development." Core samples taken for the Allegheny Power



System in 1969 corroborated this conclusion. The coal seams underlying the proposed upper reservoir site of the Davis Power Project in the northwest corner of the 6400 acre tract were found to be "erratic in thickness and lateral extent."

Although the seams in the northern Red Creek drainage are thin and erratic, and the coal probably of low quality, the possibility that it will be strip mined is a very real danger. VEPCO's 1100 megawatt Mt. Storm generating plant is located only 9 1/2 miles to the north of the Red Creek-Stony River divide. It requires about 3 1/2 million tons of coal annually. A third 555 megawatt generator is being installed that will boost consumption to 5 1/3 million tons by 1973.

If the coal in the Dolly Sods is mined, much of the Harlem, Bakerstown and Upper Freeport seams could be recovered by stripping. The greatest amount of strippable coal is in the Upper Freeport, which would probably have a very acid spoil. The strip mining operation closest to the Dolly Sods area at the time this is being written (July 1971) is on land owned by the Railway Company on a tributary of the Stony River about 4 1/2 miles northeast of the Red Creek divide. Preliminary bulldozing that may be a prelude to more strip mining has been done along the Upper Freeport seam within 1 1/2 miles of the Bear Rocks. In the future roads and strip mining may extend northward up the rest of the Stony River watershed and down into the upper Red Creek watershed unless the decision is made to prohibit it there.

The Mt. Storm plant is designed to consume low grade coal. The price of coal rose in 1970, and the trend will continue as the demand for electricity increases, making it feasible to mine low grade, thin-seamed coal. If the coal in the north fork drainage is strip mined, a network of gravel roads would have to be constructed. While mining proceeds, the sounds of heavy machinery will carry into the Scenic Area, and the north fork of Red Creek will be threatened by acid runoff and sedimentation. Restoration of the relatively gentle slopes of the plateau would be less expensive than many areas now being strip mined, but even so, the present wilderness character of the mined land would be gone forever.

The Proposed Highland Scenic Highway: If present plans are carried through, the Highland Scenic Highway (State Hwy. 150) will eventually connect the Cranberry Visitor Center on State Hwy. 39 east of Richwood with U. S. Hwy. 50 at Gorman, a distance of 160 miles. So far only the southernmost 13.4 miles, from the Visitor Center to the Williams River, have been completed. A definite route north of U. S. Hwy. 33 has not yet been decided; two possible alternatives through the Dolly Sods area are shown on Fig. 10 (page 15). The entire route stays on top of high ridges as much as possible, passing through areas that are almost roadless now. The purpose of the highway is twofold: first, to provide a scenic drive through the Highlands, attracting more tourists to West Virginia; and second, to make the Monongahela National Forest more accessible for the use and management of all its resources. There is no doubt that the highway will be scenic, but the impact of the second purpose cannot be overlooked. As an article in the May 1970 issue of Wonderful West Virginia states: "... the highway will open previously inaccessible hardwood forests. It has been estimated that at least 270,000 acres of potential timber-producing land are within the Monongahela National Forest near the proposed location of the highway." The highway will also be very useful to coal miners. Some erosion and stream sedimentation problems are inevitable in a highway such as this, especially where extensive cut and fill is necessary when it leaves the ridgetops to cross streams and rivers.

The plan for the Highland Scenic Highway is interchangeable with the proposed Allegheny Parkway, a 632-mile road that would start at Harpers Ferry and continue



## WINTER ON THE DOLLY SODS

Figure 18 (right). Severe winter weather makes the Dolly Sods a beautiful area for experienced winter hikers and backpackers. This picture was taken on Cabin Mountain near Rt. 80 in late December, 1969, after an ice storm followed by heavy snow.

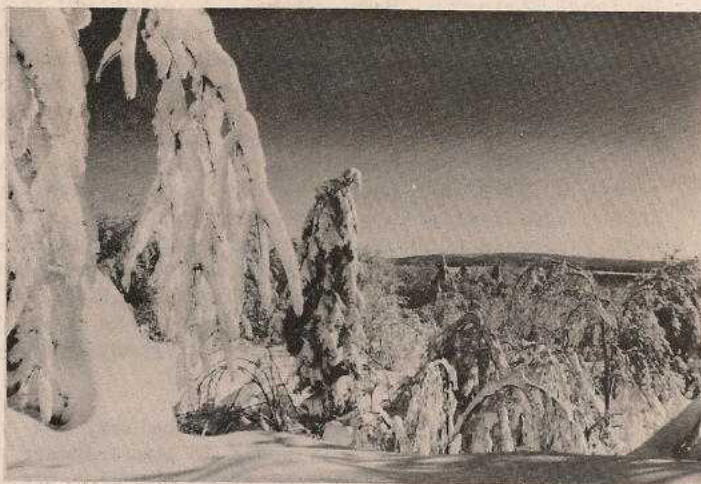


Figure 19 (left). Red spruce laden with wind-blown snow on Bald Knob. Early December, 1969.

Figure 20 (lower left). A backpacker's campsite in deep snow. Note use of snowshoes and ski poles as tent pegs. This picture was taken in the Sierra Nevada of California; on Dolly Sods snow does not often accumulate to such depths. A tent fly should be used in West Virginia because snow can alternate with rain even in the coldest months of the year.

Figure 21 (lower right). Backpackers on snowshoes climb up Rt. 80 from the Canaan Valley on their way to the top of Cabin Mountain. Early March, 1969.





southwest through West Virginia, Virginia and Kentucky to Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. A bill to establish the Parkway was first introduced to the U. S. Congress in 1961 by Senator Robert Byrd (W. Va.) and others. Although the National Park Service has made preliminary studies (estimated cost in 1964--210 million dollars), funds to carry out the project have not been appropriated. There is little chance that construction will begin before 1975, if ever. The Parkway was originally routed along the Allegheny Front past the Bear Rocks, southward down Rt. 75, onto the Red Creek and Roaring Plains, across U. S. 33 and thence to the top of Spruce Mountain and the top of Spruce Knob. Conservationists objected strenuously, and in 1967 it was rerouted to the west through a portion of the Red Creek drainage few of them were familiar with--the Red Creek-Stony River divide and the crest of Cabin Mountain. About a year ago supporters of a highway north of U. S. 33 apparently gave up hope on the Allegheny Parkway and proposed the same route for the Highland Scenic Highway. (South of U. S. 33, the Allegheny Parkway, if built, would follow ridgetops east of the Scenic Highway.)

No matter what it is eventually called, the construction of any paved highway through the Dolly Sods area would do great damage to its wilderness character. The Parkway would be patterned after the Blue Ridge Parkway--speed limit 45 mph with trucks and other commercial vehicles prohibited. The Highland Scenic Highway would be posted at 55-60 mph and would be open to all vehicles. It would invite strip mining by providing a paved route to the Mt. Storm power plant and, in conjunction with the Davis Power Project, encourage subdivision of the privately owned lands through which it passes.

Most of the proposed Scenic Highway route is on private land and rights-of-way will have to be acquired. Between 1970 and 1975 it is expected that \$998,000 will be spent on this purpose (SCORP, 1970). Money will come almost entirely from funds provided by the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965. Its stated purpose in the national forests is:

"(a) Money appropriated from the Fund for Federal purposes shall . . . be allotted by the President to the following purposes and sub-purposes . . . :

(1) For the acquisition of land, waters, or interests in land or waters as follows:

\* \* \*

NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM--Inholdings within (a) wilderness areas of the National Forest System, and (b) other areas of national forests as the boundaries of those forests exist on January 1, 1965, which other areas are primarily of value for outdoor recreation purposes."

There is considerable reason to doubt that the Highland Scenic Highway is primarily of value for recreational purposes, and that use of Land and Water Conservation Fund monies for acquisition of a right-of-way is a legitimate use for them.

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has concluded that the Highland Scenic Highway will do considerable damage to the undeveloped areas through which it passes, and has recommended that it be terminated when it reaches U. S. Hwy. 219, about eight miles beyond its present end. The advisability of either the Scenic Highway or the Parkway as a means of attracting more tourist revenue to the state should be carefully examined. Statistics show that recreational developments that keep people in one general area for several days, such as parks, resorts, and places to hunt, fish, hike and swim, bring in much more money than scenic drives, on which motorists might traverse the





Figure 22. The fragile soils of the Dolly Sods area are easily eroded, and uncontrolled use of off-road vehicles is causing problems, especially on Western Maryland Railway Company land. This jeep trail, originally built to take core samples, grows wider and wider as driver try to avoid the ruts that have already formed.

Figure 23. A strip mined area along State Highway 93 about 10 miles north-east of the Dolly Sods area. The northern part of the Dolly Sods is threatened with a similar fate.

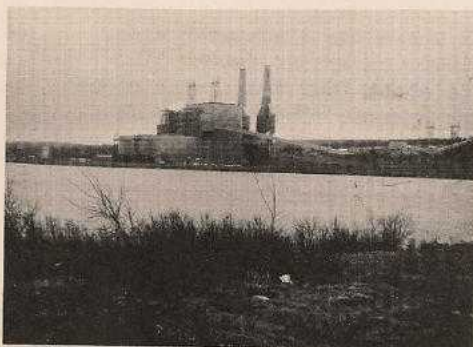


Figure 24. The Virginia Electric and Power Company's Mt. Storm electric generating plant about 9 1/2 miles northeast of the Dolly Sods area. This huge coal-burning installation is indirectly responsible for most of the strip mining in the vicinity and is a major source of air pollution.



entire state in a day, buying nothing more than a tank of gas. West Virginia already has many scenic roads--many of them little known county routes. Some of these could be upgraded, resurfaced, signed, provided with roadside parks and scenic turnouts, and marked on maps distributed to tourists. These roads would cost less, bring the tourists directly past business establishments in small towns, assist the counties in road maintenance, and do no harm to the undeveloped portions of West Virginia. Another proposal that would offer tourists a memorable ride through some of the national forest's most inaccessible areas with harming them is the proposed Webster-Randolph Scenic Railroad, which would use existing tracks on a 119.4 mile run between Webster Springs and Elkins, following the Shaver's Fork and Elk Rivers. The tourist potential of such a railroad is considerable. The "Silverton", which follows an undeveloped river of comparable beauty in southern Colorado on a 45-mile round trip, attracted 91,000 tourists in 1968.

The Davis Power Project: In June 1970, the Allegheny Power System (APS) filed an application with the Federal Power Commission (FPC) requesting a license to build a pumped storage installation that would create a 7,200 acre reservoir in the Canaan Valley, to be called "Blackwater Lake". A year later, on June 1, 1971, APS filed an "Applicants' Initial Statement of Environmental Factors" with the FPC; it modifies the original plan in several respects. As the proposal now stands, APS wishes to enclose the Dobbin Slashings basin at the very headwaters of the north fork of Red Creek in the northwest corner of the Dolly Sods area with two rock-fill dikes totaling about 7,800 feet in length and up to 90 feet high, creating an upper reservoir of about 600 acres. An intake channel and tunnel would be drilled through Cabin Mountain at the western edge of the basin, emerging on the west side of the mountain at 3800 feet elevation. A penstock, a giant ground-level pipe 27 feet in diameter, would connect the mouth of the tunnel with a power station and switchyard at the edge of Blackwater Lake, branching into four 14-foot wide penstocks on the way down. The powerhouse would contain four reversible pump turbine units, each with a capacity of 266 megawatts. The total cost of the project, scheduled to be in operation by 1976, is estimated to be 141 million dollars.

The installation will provide 1000 megawatts of peaking power to customers of the three electric utilities in the System--Monongahela Power Company, West Penn Power and the Potomac Edison Company--which provide electricity to portions of northern West Virginia, western Pennsylvania, western Maryland, Virginia and Ohio. During late evening and early morning hours when demand for electricity is relatively low, water would be pumped from the lower reservoir to the upper, to be released when demand is at its peak, generally in late afternoon and early evening on weekdays. The same reversible pump turbines would be used to generate electricity. The energy needed to pump the water uphill would be provided by power stations elsewhere in the five-state area.

A dam located about three miles east of Davis where the Blackwater River leaves the Canaan Valley would back water in the lower reservoir to the 3182 foot level. The maximum daily fluctuation would be about four feet. The upper reservoir would have a 57 foot drawdown. With such drastic fluctuations, it will be incapable of supporting fish or most other higher forms of life, and will be an ugly, lifeless scar. Monongahela Power is already improving abandoned railroad grades (now jeep roads) for access to the upper reservoir site. One of these roads climbs up Cabin Mountain from Glade Run in the Canaan; the other comes in from the north at State Highway 93. It has built an entirely new, low



[illegible]

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- Proposed reservoirs
- Proposed recreation areas (parking lots, boat launching, picnicking, camping, fishing, and visitor information center and overlook)
- Proposed access roads
- For other symbols see legend accompanying topographic maps at the end of this publication.



standard access road and a network of core sampling roads on the side of Cabin Mountain directly west of the Dobbin Slashings. It would not be safe for the public to visit the upper reservoir once it is completed, although how they would be kept away is not specified. The site is part of the 6400 acre tract owned by the Western Maryland Railway Company. Presumably APS will purchase part of that tract if the FPC approves the project.

The Davis Project has gained widespread support among local people because the taxes on the installation are expected to more than double the income of Tucker County, making much more money available for county roads and schools. It is expected that Blackwater Lake will add opportunity for water-based recreation to the golf and ski facilities being developed in nearby Canaan Valley State Park. Combined with the lodge at Blackwater Falls State Park and existing and proposed campgrounds, and, of course, the relatively unspoiled scenic beauty of the area, it is expected that thousands of tourists will bring their money to the area. Land values are already escalating in the Davis-Canaan Valley region in anticipation of the vacation homes, resorts, motels, etc., that will be built to accommodate these people. These rising land values are also adding to the county's tax base.

Opponents of the project believe that the beauty and recreational value of Blackwater Lake has been exaggerated--that the daily drawdown on the relatively flat floor of the valley will expose extensive mudflats. If it does turn out to be attractive for recreation, uncontrolled subdivision and construction could destroy the beauty of the valley as well as creating sewage disposal and erosion problems. They point out that the portion of the Canaan to be flooded is an important wildlife area, providing habitat for woodcock, beaver, ducks, geese, trout, deer, bear and a variety of non-game species. They suspect that approval of the "Lake" for use as part of a pumped storage project may be only a "foot in the door" leading to its eventual use as a cooling pond for a thermal generating plant, either nuclear or coal-fired. This in turn might attract industry to the valley and to Davis--undeniably creating more jobs in Tucker County but also profoundly altering the character of the entire region, which is now attractive to "outsiders" precisely because it is a place to get away from crowded, polluted urban areas.

The question as to whether society as a whole will benefit in the long run from the Davis Project is too involved to discuss here. The FPC will have to resolve this question in deciding if the license should be granted. Hearings are expected in the early fall of 1971. If the license is granted, both reservoirs will probably be filled in 1973.

For the remainder of this section only the possible effects on the Dolly Sods area will be considered. No matter whether the proponents who predict an attractive recreation area or the opponents prove to be correct, the effect on the Dolly Sods area is likely to be adverse (presuming, of course, that keeping it in an undeveloped, wild condition is desirable).

At the very least, the proposed upper reservoir will totally destroy the sphagnum bog in the Dobbin Slashings basin--the largest in the Dolly Sods area (Fig. 15, page 26). The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has suggested that the upper reservoir be constructed outside the Red Creek drainage if possible, but clearly the presently proposed site would require less diking than any other. The only alternative that APS has studied is on Big Stonecoal Run in the Scenic Area, an even less acceptable site.



The dikes enclosing the proposed upper reservoir will have inner cores of earth, relatively impervious to water, and a protective outer shell of rock. In the fall of 1969 employees of a consultant to APS bulldozed around the Dobbin Slashings and analyzed soil samples. They concluded that adequate rock for the shells is available from the "rock glaciers" in the vicinity, and that earth for the inner cores could be obtained from borrow pits farther down Red Creek. If the recommendations are carried out, the destruction of the Dolly Sods area will extend beyond the actual reservoir site. The surrounding hillsides could be scalped for surface rock and pits gouged along Red Creek. All of this would lead to siltation of Red Creek within the Scenic Area. The June 1971 "Statement", however, says that "It is anticipated that all borrow and fill areas will be within the reservoirs themselves." Hopefully, this anticipation will be realized.

Assuming that the dikes enclosing the proposed upper reservoir in the Dobbin Slashings basin are watertight, Red Creek will be deprived of some of its water supply. If precipitation in the north fork watershed is evenly distributed and an insignificant amount of water is lost through underground water systems, it should be possible to estimate the effect on any point of the main stream by calculating the percentage of its watershed occupied by the reservoir and the land draining into it (about 1000 acres). The site occupies 5% of the drainage of Red Creek where it passes under the bridge on Rt. 19; probably the effect would scarcely be noticeable here. Upstream, the north fork of Red Creek just above the junction with the Left Fork would be expected to contain 16% less water on the average than it does now. About 2 1/3 miles farther upstream, where the unnamed tributary that parallels the "Dobbin Grade" joins Red Creek, it may lose an average of 26% of its flow. However, the effect might be more drastic here than averages suggest. The sphagnum bog that occupies the Dobbin Slashings basin now is a giant sponge that retains water and maintains a flow even in periods of relative drought. There are no other sizable bogs above this point, although there are springs. With the bog eliminated, the remaining water may run off more quickly, leaving the stream more than 26% lower most of the time. More study is needed on this problem and the possible effects on the plants and animals living in and alongside the upper part of Red Creek.

If Blackwater Lake does draw vacationers to the area in large numbers, the slopes and summit of Cabin Mountain will become attractive as homesites overlooking the reservoir. All this land is privately owned, and there are no zoning laws to control such developments. A confidential report prepared for the APS by Scruggs and Hammond in 1968 envisioned a population of over 24,000 in and around the Canaan Valley by the year 2000, and regarded the summit of Cabin Mountain just north of the Dobbin Slashings as a potential subdivision site. Besides the "visual pollution" of tracts of vacation homes along the top of Cabin Mountain in the Dolly Sods area, associated road building, bulldozing of home sites and sewage could pollute Red Creek downstream.

The effects on the Dolly Sods could be disastrous if a coal-burning electric power plant is built in the Canaan Valley. This plant would be in competition with VEPCO's Mt. Storm plant for coal. The access roads to the upper reservoir could easily be extended farther into the Red Creek watershed and used as haul roads for strip mined coal. Even if the Dolly Sods is not strip mined, the prevailing west winds would carry much of the pollution from the plant across the area. (Sulfur dioxide emissions from the Mt. Storm plant have been accused of weakening nearby vegetation.) The 1971 "Statement" modifies the original plan for the dam on the Blackwater River, making it less suitable for use with a coal-burning plant. However, the possibility that a nuclear plant may eventually be



installed remains. Without cooling towers, a nuclear plant would raise the temperature of the lower reservoir significantly and might affect the climate of the Dolly Sods area.

Recommendations: Strip mining could have a devastating effect on the wilderness character of the entire north fork drainage, including the Scenic Area. Although ultimately the federal government should acquire the mineral rights to the area, there is an easier, short-range solution requiring no money. The West Virginia Surface Mining Act of 1967 states that the Director of the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources has the authority to delete certain areas from all surface mining operations, including those where aesthetic or recreation values would be destroyed (Sec. 20-6-11). The Department has "red-lined" certain areas, including all of the Monongahela National Forest, where applications to strip mine will be denied. In the Dolly Sods area, the red line follows the boundary of the National Forest. Thus most of the northern part of the north fork watershed remains potentially open to strip mining. In 1969 the West Virginia Reclamation Board of Review upheld the right of the Director to refuse a permit to strip mine in full view of the scenic overlook in Grandview State Park. However, the "aesthetics clause" has yet to be tested in court, and the Director must be cautious in refusing to grant permits because if the courts do not uphold his decisions, all protected scenic areas would be endangered.

Although the Western Maryland Railway Company and VEPCO have been very lenient in allowing the public on their lands in the Red Creek watershed, eventual acquisition by the federal or state government is essential if the area is to remain in its present near-wilderness condition. Assuming that these companies will manage or dispose of their lands in such a way as to maximize profits, it is unlikely that they will be content with paying taxes and issuing free grazing permits indefinitely without realizing any income from them. Strip mining and/or development of tracts of vacation homes or other recreational facilities are two possibilities for the future.

In its management plan for the Scenic Area, the Forest Service proposes acquiring rights-of-way for about 14 miles of trails on Western Maryland land. It suggests that it would be desirable to purchase 1500 acres (location not specified) as buffer zones, or at least to purchase scenic easements. The plan further states "It is anticipated that needed interests will be obtained through a willing buyer and seller relationship. If interests vital to the protection of the Scenic Area are not obtained through initial negotiations, a recommendation for negotiations under threat of condemnation will be made to the Chief of the Forest Service." The Forest Service deserves full support in these efforts, but its proposal is completely inadequate to protect the wilderness quality of the Dolly Sods area, including the Scenic Area itself. Only outright public acquisition can accomplish this.

The logical way to realize this goal would be for the Forest Service to acquire the land with money from the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965 (Public Law 90-401; see statement of purposes on page 30), and add it to the Scenic Area and the proposed Wilderness. Lack of sufficient federal funds is the major obstacle. Another problem is that Western Maryland is said to be unwilling to sell. Perhaps the company would be if the price was right, but the danger is that developers of housing tracts, etc., will be able to offer more.

Most of the land (6530 acres out of 7680) that should be acquired lies outside the boundary of the Monongahela National Forest. According to a letter from Rolland B. Handley, Regional Director of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in Philadelphia:



" . . . the Forest Service is permitted to acquire lands outside but adjacent to an existing national forest boundary, not to exceed 500 acres in the case of any one forest, which would comprise an integral part of a forest recreational management area.

"To date, slightly over 400 acres have been purchased outside the existing Monongahela National Forest boundary with Land and Water Conservation Fund monies. And most likely, the remaining acreage allowance under the 500 acre limitation will be depleted in the 1973 Federal Budget Year Program. Thus, there appears to be little to no opportunity under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act as amended for the Forest Service to acquire any of the Dolly Sods area located outside the Monongahela National Forest boundary. This situation could change should Federal legislation be enacted that either would extend the proclamation boundary to include the entire Dolly Sods area or would increase the 500 acre limitation specified under Public Law 90-401." (Correspondence dated June 10, 1971.)

Extending the boundary of the Monongahela National Forest to include the entire Red Creek watershed would also make it easier for the Forest Service to acquire trail rights-of-way or make other purchases as outlined in the Scenic Area management plan.

Another possibility would be for the state to purchase the land as part of a state system of primitive areas. The Land and Water Conservation Fund can provide 50% of the money for such purposes, with the state putting up the remainder. The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) does not mention such a system, although it does recommend that primitive areas, including the Dolly Sods, be preserved in the national forests. Most of the state outdoor recreation funds today are being spent on developing intensive recreation facilities, such as campgrounds, cabins, and golf courses, on land that it already owns. With its greater experience in managing wilderness, the Forest Service is a more logical choice for acquiring and managing these lands.

Scenic Easements on Adjacent Land: Designation of a Wilderness Area in the north fork watershed plus federal acquisition of tracts belonging to the Western Maryland Railway Company and VEPCO in the drainage would not be completely adequate to protect the wilderness resource of the area. The property boundaries of the Railway Company's tracts on Cabin Mountain roughly follow the divide between Red Creek and tributaries of the Blackwater River. Because Cabin Mountain north of Yoakum Run is open and rather flat-topped (see Fig. 17, page 26), houses, roads, and other developments could be located on top of it on any of several tracts extending from the floor of the Canaan Valley to the top of the ridge. They would be in view from much of the north fork watershed and would severely damage the illusion of wilderness. Another area where similar problems could arise is farther south on Cabin Mountain, on the north side of Bald Knob above 3900 feet elevation and in the meadow which occupies the saddle between it and Cabin Knob. Much of the area drains into the Canaan but is contiguous with the high plateau country of the Dolly Sods area. It is part of a 753 acre tract owned by Davis Elkins et al, and has been studied as a potential ski resort area. (////// on Fig. 10, page 15) Outright acquisition of this land would be desirable, but the purchase of scenic easements just wide enough to keep the plateau undeveloped might be sufficient.



Estimated Land Value: It is difficult to put a price on the 7680 acres of private land in the north fork watershed. Tucker County assesses them as follows:

Tract Acreage	Assessed Value	Value per Acre	Tucker County Taxes in 1970	Owner
6400 <sup>1</sup>	\$51,200	\$8.00	\$619.00	Western Md. Railway Co.
130 <sup>1</sup>	est. \$1040	est. \$8.00	taxed in Grant Co.	VEPCO
593	\$4740	\$8.00	114.62	Western Md. Railway Co.
108 <sup>2</sup>	\$860	\$8.00	48.36	"
450 <sup>2</sup>	est. \$4000	\$8.00	est. 87.09	"
7681	est. \$61,840		est. \$869.07	

<sup>1</sup> Part of a much larger tract lying mostly in Grant County in the Upper Stony River watershed. Estimated value based on \$8.00 per acre.

<sup>2</sup> Part of a 1037 acre tract with an assessed value of \$8300, taxed \$200.70 in 1970.

Certainly the actual value of the land is much more than \$8.00 an acre. Land values in the entire West Virginia Highlands region are climbing as owners are becoming aware of its recreational potential. This is particularly true in the Canaan Valley, where individual tracts along Rt. 32 have sold for as much as \$1500 an acre, and some landowners are asking as much as \$4000 an acre. If Blackwater Lake is built and becomes a recreational attraction, land prices will rise even higher and will affect remote areas such as the fringes of the northern Canaan Valley and the northern slopes of Cabin Mountain. Even now, the crest of Cabin Mountain is probably worth more than land farther east closer to the Allegheny Front. In February 1971 the Tucker County Clerk announced that an 875.42 acre tract on the east side of the Canaan Valley had been sold to the Monongahela Power Company for \$283,000, or about \$323 per acre. This tract is directly west of the proposed upper reservoir site in the Dobbin Slashings basin, adjoining the 6400-acre tract, and is the site of the proposed tunnel, penstocks, and power station of the Davis Project. The designation of the Dolly Sods Scenic Area probably is another factor that has increased the value of adjacent private land.

Tax Loss to Tucker County: One of the frequently voiced arguments against government acquisition of the private land in the Red Creek drainage is that Tucker County would be deprived of badly needed tax revenue for its schools and roads, because neither the state or federal government pays taxes. As shown in the table at the top of this page, the Western Maryland Railway Company contributed \$869 in county taxes (including the tax on mineral ownership) in 1970 on the land proposed here for federal acquisition. If the land is mined, the county would get additional revenue during the years that mining is in progress. The amount is variable, depending on the value of the seams being mined, but in the Dolly Sods area might be between \$100 and \$200 an acre (only in the year that the acre is mined).

Practically everyone agrees that Tucker County needs additional tax revenue. Almost half the county belongs to the federal government as part of the Monongahela National Forest and is not taxed, although some of the revenue from Forest Service timber sales is given to the county's school fund. (See page 18.) Tens of thousands of acres in the county belong to three large corporations--the Allegheny Power System, Western Maryland Railway Company and VEPCO. Most of this land is



classified as wasteland and taxes are minimal. (Of course, few people requiring schools, roads, and other county services live on Forest Service and large corporation-owned tracts.) However, with the "discovery" of the potential of the county as a tourist attraction, land values and taxes are rising. The state's multi-million dollar investment in Blackwater Falls and Canaan Valley State Parks is largely responsible for the dramatic escalation of land prices in the southern Canaan. If Blackwater Lake is built and proves attractive to tourists, assessed land values and taxes will rise even more. (Not to mention the tax revenue from the power installation.) Thus there is reason to believe that increasing property values will more than offset the loss in revenue that the county would sustain if the entire north fork watershed of Red Creek were acquired by the federal government. Perpetuation of the Canaan Valley-Davis area as a major tourist center that must attract urban residents 100 miles or more away will depend on preserving its scenic beauty. Hopefully setting aside wilderness areas and taking steps to prevent the top of Cabin Mountain from coming to resemble the built-up areas from which these tourists will be seeking a temporary escape will be one step in the right direction.

The author is not an economist, and the foregoing paragraphs are not intended to be an analysis of the economic problems of Tucker County. Hopefully a professional, unbiased economic study will be made before irrevocable commitments are made in any direction.

THE DOLLY SODS AREA SOUTH OF RT. 19 (ROARING PLAINS-FLATROCK PLAINS AREA)--  
General Description: This area encompasses about 11,300 acres of federal land in Randolph and Pendleton counties (Fig. 3, page 4). The largest portion is drained by the South Fork and other tributaries of Red Creek, notably Flatrock Run and Big Run, but streams in the southeastern part flow into the Dry Fork River, Roaring Creek and Seneca Creek. Like the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek, this area contains a great diversity of plant communities and is its equal in scenic beauty. Mt. Porte Crayon (4670 feet high) is the highest point on the Dolly Sods area. Adjacent lands in private ownership are mainly open pastures.

Developments: The wild character of this area is marred by a 66-foot wide gaspipe swath that cuts across the Roaring and Flatrock Plains. Rt. 70, a 7-mile long gravel road that is gated to public vehicular travel, provides access to the swath and a microwave relay station on the Flatrock Plains. These facilities were built by the Atlantic Seaboard Corporation under lease arrangements with the Forest Service. They probably make this part of the Dolly Sods ineligible for consideration as a wilderness area under the provisions of the Wilderness Act. The only recreation facilities are hiking trails and the Dolly Sods Picnic Area.

Resources: The area contains about 60% (2900 acres) of the federally owned commercial quality timber in the Red Creek drainage. An intermediate cut has just been completed along the lower part of the South Fork below Rt. 19 and logging and timber stand improvement (girdling of undesirable trees) has been carried out in the drainage of Flatrock Run. There is also commercial timber in the watershed of Long Run, a tributary of Roaring Creek, and the Forest Service plans a timber sale there.

The area is underlain by as many as five potentially mineable coal seams--the Bakerstown, Upper Freeport, Hughes Ferry (laeger), Sewell, and Fire Creek (Fig. 7, page 11). The Forest Service controls the mineral rights under much of



the surface in federal ownership, but a large tract in the northeastern part containing an estimated 53 million tons of coal with an in-the-ground value of \$265,000 (Appendix II, page 44) is reserved to the West Virginia Coal and Timber Company. The coal under another part of the area is partly owned by the government and partly outstanding to a third party; presumably the government can control the mining there. Probably it would be most economical to recover much of the Bakerstown and Upper Freeport coal by strip mining, but fortunately the Forest Service has the authority to prohibit this kind of mining. The remainder of the coal, including all of the Hughes Ferry, Sewell, and Fire Creek seams, would have to be deep mined.

Recommendations: Uncontrolled deep mining could destroy much of the natural beauty of the area, lacing it with access roads and power lines and possibly introducing more acid into Red Creek. It would be desirable for the Forest Service to have complete control of the mineral rights. Fortunately, the area is remote from the biggest source of immediate demand for coal, VEPCO's Mt. Storm plant, and the need for federal purchase of the minerals is not as urgent as in the watershed of the north fork of Red Creek, including the Dolly Sods Scenic Area.

Although the Atlantic Seaboard Corporation's facilities probably disqualify this region as a potential Wilderness, it is still extremely scenic and wild and worthy of special protection. The Forest Service should seriously consider adding the high plains above 4000 feet elevation to the Scenic Area. Such a designation would give the Forest Service more authority and incentive to resist pressure for additional intrusions such as mining access roads, but publicizing the area might also have undesirable consequences. The federal government owns enough of the area that its natural values can be preserved to a considerable extent, but this is not true in the vicinity of Haystack Knob and Green Knob, where much of the land is privately owned. Developers of summer home tracts are already interested in the Roaring Creek valley because of its proximity to the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area, and putting the Roaring Plains area on the map as a Scenic Area could hasten the time when the beautiful pastures near Green Knob are developed.

Logging could continue at the lower elevations, but special attention should be paid to the recreational and aesthetic attributes of the area. Trails should not be obliterated by logging roads and should be kept clear of slash. Corridors of "overmature" big trees should be left along portions of the trails and along the streams. No roads open to public motor vehicles should be built, and motorcycles and snowmobiles should be formally banned from the hiking trails.

#### CONCLUSIONS

##### Relating to the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness Area:

1. A 10,215 acre Wilderness Area should be established by an act of Congress in the Dolly Sods area north of Forest Service Route 19, overlapping much of the Dolly Sods Scenic Area and including 2740 acres just south of the Scenic Area boundary.
2. The Forest Service should be granted the funds to purchase the mineral rights to both the Scenic Area and the proposed Wilderness Area.



Relating to the remainder of the Dolly Sods area:

3. The entire drainage of Red Creek, including that portion outside the present boundary of the Monongahela National Forest, should be declared off limits to strip mining by the Director of the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources under the authority of the "aesthetics clause" of the West Virginia Surface Mining Act of 1967.
4. The proposed Highland Scenic Highway should not be built in or adjacent to the Red Creek watershed.
5. The upper reservoir of the Davis Power Project should be located outside the Red Creek watershed if at all possible. If it must be located there, disturbances should be limited to the area draining into the proposed reservoir.
6. Zoning or scenic easements should be imposed to protect the privately owned land in the Dolly Sods area in the vicinity of the Canaan Valley from subdivision or other development associated with the Davis Project.
7. Legislation should be introduced before the U. S. Congress that would change the boundary of the Monongahela National Forest to include the entire watershed of Red Creek, with the possible exception of the area needed for the upper reservoir of the Davis Project in the extreme northwestern corner of the watershed.
8. The Forest Service should be granted funds to purchase all the surface and mineral rights to the approximately 7680 acres in the drainage of the north fork of Red Creek not now owned by the U. S. government. This land should be added to the Dolly Sods Scenic Area and the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness.
9. That portion of the Dolly Sods area in federal ownership south of Forest Service Route 19 is not qualified for wilderness protection but should be given special management to protect its scenic and natural values.
10. The Forest Service should be given the funds to purchase the mineral rights to those portions of the Dolly Sods area south of Route 19 to which it owns the surface.

REFERENCES

Many of the books and articles that provided information on the history and ecology of the Dolly Sods area are listed on pages 59 to 60. Among several other publications consulted, the following were particularly useful in preparing this report:

- Monongahela Power Company, The Potomac Edison Company, and West Penn Power Company. June 1, 1971. Davis Power Project (F.P.C. Project No. 2709): Applicants' Initial Statement of Environmental Factors. 31 pp., fold-out map.
- U. S. Forest Service. June 1969. A Study of Dolly Sods. (A binder of facts on the area and management alternatives, prepared for the Ad Hoc Committee on the Dolly Sods Study Area.)



U. S. Forest Service. April 1971. Management Plan for Dolly Sods. 62 pp.

West Virginia Geological Survey.

Headlee, A. J. W., and John R. Nolting. 1940. Characteristics of minable coals of West Virginia. W. Va. Geol. Surv., Vol. XXXI, viii + 272 pp., 18 pls., maps.

Reger, David B. 1931. Randolph County. xxiii + 989 pp., 30 figs., 74 pls., 2 separate maps.

Reger, David B., W. Armstrong Price, and R. C. Tucker. 1923. Tucker County. xvii + 542 pp., 11 figs., 16 pls., 2 separate maps.

Reger, David B., and R. C. Tucker. 1924. Mineral and Grant Counties. xxiv + 866 pp., 31 figs., 43 pls., 4 separate maps.

Tilton, John L., William F. Prouty, and Paul H. Price. 1927. Pendleton County. 384 pp., 25 figs., 80 pls., 2 separate maps.

Other cited references:

Bailey, R. Wayne, and Kermit T. Rinell. 1967. Management of the eastern turkey in the northern hardwoods. Chapter 10, pp. 261-302 in The Wild Turkey and Its Management, edited by Oliver W. Hewitt. Washington, D. C.: The Wildlife Society, 589 pp., illustr.

West Virginia (State). 1970. Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). 188 pp., illustr.

Other information was derived from correspondence, newspaper clippings and conversations with Forest Service personnel and other knowledgeable people.

APPENDIX I

Detailed Verbal Description of the Boundary of the  
Proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness

The proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness Area includes those national forest lands containing approximately 10,215 acres in the Monongahela National Forest in the watershed of Red Creek, known as part of the Dolly Sods area, specifically described as bounded by a line beginning on the north bank of Red Creek 500 feet upstream (east) of the bridge on Forest Route 19, following this bank in a westerly direction to a point 100 feet from the bridge; then paralleling Forest Route 19.1 to the boundary of the land owned by the U. S. government; thence following this boundary northeast to a point 100 feet southwest of Forest Route 80.2; thence paralleling this road in a northeasterly direction to the boundary of the Monongahela National Forest; thence following this boundary to the southeast and then to the northeast to the low divide between the headwaters of Fisher Spring Run and the south branch of Alder Run; thence following this divide southeasterly to a point 100 feet northwest of Forest Route 75.1; thence paralleling this road in a southerly and southwesterly direction to a point 100 feet northwest of the intersection of Forest Route 19; thence paralleling Forest Route 19.2 in a southwesterly, westerly and northwesterly direction to a point 100 feet south of Forest Route 37; thence paralleling Route 37 to a point 500 feet from Route 19 (thus excluding the game warden's cabin and outbuildings maintained by the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources); thence northwesterly across Red Creek to its northern bank and the point of beginning.



## APPENDIX II

### Estimated Quantity and Value of Privately Owned Coal in the Dolly Sods Area

The estimated thicknesses of the coal seams listed in the following tables are based on the inadequate data in the geological surveys of Tucker, Grant, Randolph and Pendleton counties published between 1923 and 1931. The acreages were measured with a planimeter on the geologic maps accompanying the county surveys.

It is difficult to estimate the value of coal in the ground. Most of the price received for mined coal pays for the labor and machinery required to extract it. A few years ago the federal government purchased the coal underlying the Highland Scenic Highway in Pocahontas County before construction began for \$23,310, or about \$50 per acre for the combined Hughes Ferry and Sewell seams, each of which was assumed to be three feet thick. This is equivalent to 1/2 cent per ton, there being about 5,000 tons of coal per acre in each seam. The estimated values below are based on a price of 1/2 cent per ton.

#### Coal Underlying the Proposed 10,215 Acre Dolly Sods Wilderness

<u>Seam</u>	<u>Estimated Average Thickness (Feet)</u>	<u>Acreage Privately Owned</u>	<u>Estimated Tons Privately Owned</u>
Bakerstown	2	630	2,016,000
Upper Freeport	4	2960	18,944,000
Hughes Ferry (Iaeger)	probably of	negligible value ?	
Sewell	2 1/2	9490	37,960,000
Fire Creek	of little	commercial value?	
		<u>Total Tons</u>	58,920,000
		Estimated Value in the Ground	\$184,000

#### Coal Underlying the 2740 Acres Excluded from the Scenic Area but Included in the Proposed Wilderness

<u>Seam</u>	<u>Acreage Privately Owned</u>	<u>Estimated Tons Privately Owned</u>
Bakerstown	90	288,000
Upper Freeport	360	1,728,000
Sewell	1740	6,960,000
	<u>Total Tons</u>	8,976,000
	Estimated Value in the Ground	\$44,880

#### Coal Underlying the 6530 Acres Owned by the Western Maryland Railway Company and VEPCO in the Northern Part of the Watershed of Red Creek

<u>Seam</u>	<u>Possible Average Thickness (Feet)</u>	<u>Possible Extent (Acres)</u>	<u>Estimated Quantity (Tons)</u>
Harlem	2	1500	4,800,000
Bakerstown	2	3760	12,032,000
Upper Freeport	2 1/2	5760	23,040,000
Hughes Ferry (Iaeger)	probably of	negligible value	
Sewell	" "	" "	
Fire Creek	" "	" "	
		<u>Total Tons</u>	39,872,000



Coal Underlying the 1150 Acres Owned by the Western Maryland Railway Company  
at the Southern End of Cabin Mountain

<u>Seam</u>	<u>Possible Average Thickness (Feet)</u>	<u>Possible Extent (Acres)</u>	<u>Estimated Quantity (Tons)</u>
Upper Freeport	4	250	1,600,000
Hughes Ferry (Iaeger)	probably	of negligible value	
Sewell	2 1/2	1590	6,360,000
Fire Creek	probably	of negligible value	
		<u>Total Tons</u>	<u>7,960,000</u>

Total Tons Underlying the 7680 Acres Owned by the Western  
Maryland Railway Company and VEPCO in the Drainage of the  
North Fork of Red Creek 47,832,000

Estimated Value in the Ground \$239,160

Coal Owned by the West Virginia Coal and Timber Company  
in the Dolly Sods Area South of Rt. 19

<u>Seam</u>	<u>Average Thickness (Feet)</u>	<u>Total Acres Owned by W. Va. Coal &amp; Timber</u>	<u>Estimated Tons Owned by W. Va. Coal &amp; Timber</u>
Bakerstown	2	1340	4,288,000
Upper Freeport	2 1/2	2080	8,320,000
Hughes Ferry (Iaeger)	2	3640	11,648,000
Sewell	2 1/2	3900	15,600,000
Fire Creek	2	4180	13,376,000
		<u>Total Tons</u>	<u>53,232,000</u>
		Estimated Value in the Ground	\$265,000



## PART II

### A GUIDE FOR HIKERS, HUNTERS, BACKPACKERS AND OTHER OUTDOOR PEOPLE

#### When To Visit the Dolly Sods Area

The relatively high altitude of the Red Creek area is responsible for its resemblance to sea-level areas in Canada. Visitors should take this fact into consideration when planning trips there. Spring comes late. Snowdrifts may block Rt. 75 as late as April. Not until May do the first new green leaves and flower buds show on the plains. Red Creek runs high as snow melts from the highlands. In early June the high plains are dotted with azalea bushes blooming in pink and orange, making this period a favorite time with visitors.

The sphagnum bogs are at their best in early summer. Summer is also berry-picking time. Summer temperatures are mild, although decidedly cooler than at lower elevations. You will probably be more comfortable in a light-weight, not-too-warm sleeping bag than you will be in a down-filled bag. At other times of the year, however, down bags are strongly recommended for backpackers.

Fall colors reach their height in late September and early October. At times the plains seem almost to be on fire. The bogs nearly dry up, and it is easy to walk through spots that were completely water-logged in late spring and summer. Hikers who visit the area in late fall should remember that this is the hunting season and wear bright colored clothing. They should also be prepared for the possibility of snow storms. The back country receives its heaviest use during the hunting season.

The area is subjected to some of the most severe winter weather in the state. Below zero temperatures are common, and considerable depths of snow may accumulate. Snowshoers and cross-country skiers will find their visits rewarding if they are prepared for the cold. Rts. 75 and 19 are not kept clear of snow. Rt. 75 will generally be impassable in the winter, and is gated then and on into the spring. Rt. 19 remains open longer but may be icy and dangerous.

The level of Red Creek fluctuates considerably. In winter, spring, or after unusually heavy downpours at other times of the year it may be difficult or even dangerous to cross either main fork below the 3000-foot level. During these times it is safer to plan hiking routes that take advantage of bridges, especially if there are children along. In the fall and frequently during the summer the water level is so low that one can walk all the way up the bed of the north fork to its source in the Dobbin Slashings Bog.

#### Roads and Campgrounds

Most visitors to the Dolly Sods area get there via Forest Service Rts. 19 and 75. Rt. 19 is a gravel road extending from Rt. 4 (Jordan Run Road) on the east to a bridge across the north fork of Red Creek on the west. Beyond the bridge Tucker County maintains it as Rt. 45, a narrow paved road that goes through Laneville and on to State Rt. 32.

Rt. 75 branches off from Rt. 19 at the crest of Allegheny Mountain and proceeds north through the Rohrbaugh Plains just west of the Allegheny Front 7 1/2 miles to the Bear Rocks, where it drops down Allegheny Front to Jordan Run



Road. The portion between the Bear Rocks and Jordan Run Road is not yet gravelled. Rt. 75 is gated in the winter and on into the spring as late as mid April. There are two gates: one north of Bell Knob; the other near the Monongahela National Forest boundary below the Bear Rocks. Most people have the scenery along this road in mind when they think of the Dolly Sods--the "huckleberry plains" with its flagged spruce, dense mats of berry bushes and thick stands of young hardwoods. There are no views from an automobile along this road except at the Bear Rocks, where one can look down the Allegheny Front to Jordan Run 2200 feet below. This is a favorite spot for watching fall hawk migrations (best in late September). There are also excellent views from the Bell Knob Fire Tower, at the end of a 1/2 mile spur road branching off from Rt. 75.

F.S. Rt. 70 is closed to public vehicles. Rt. 80 (County Rt. 37) provides access to the crest of Cabin Mountain. It begins at State Route 32 in the Canaan Valley near the Buena church, about 1 1/2 miles north of the sign announcing the southern end of the valley, and ends at the headwaters of Yoakum Run on the northern boundary of the National Forest. It is a dirt road that can be impassable to passenger cars when the snow is melting or after periods of prolonged rainfall.

The scenic chairlift of the new ski resort developed in Canaan Valley State Park will provide another, more interesting way to get to the top of Cabin Mountain. It is scheduled to begin operation in the summer of 1971. From the top of Weiss Knob (elevation 4420 feet) you can walk down the grassy gaspise swath to Bald Knob, enjoying superb views. More experienced and/or ambitious hikers can get into the Dolly Sods backcountry via the "Gandy Run Trail" and the Bald Knob crosscountry route (see detailed descriptions of hiking routes farther on in this section).

Developed automobile campgrounds in the vicinity include:

Red Creek Campground: On F.S. Rt. 75. 12 units. (The campground is not on Red Creek, but on a spring feeding one of its tributaries, Alder Run.) Free.

Seneca Campground: On County Rt. 7 (Whites Run Road) off U.S. Hwy. 33 about 2 1/2 miles west of Oingo. 6 units. Free.

Canaan State Park: In the southern Canaan Valley off Rt. 32. A campground designed primarily for trailers is scheduled to open in the summer of 1971. Fee.

Blackwater Falls State Park: 2 miles west of Davis. 65 units. Flush toilets, hot showers, laundry, and other amenities. Fee, \$2.00 daily per carload.

On weekends during the peak tourist season from Memorial Day to Labor Day all of these campgrounds may fill up Friday evening. They are available on a first-come, first-served basis; no advance reservations are accepted. The Forest Service has planned several new campgrounds in the nearby Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area, but they have yet to be constructed.

Motels, hotels, and cabins are available at Petersburg, along State Rt. 28 north and south of Mouth of Seneca, at Davis, and in Blackwater Falls State Park. A lodge and cabins are planned in Canaan State Park but have not yet been built. For further information on the lodges and cabins in the state parks, write to the Division of Parks and Recreation, Department of Natural Resources, State Capitol, Charleston, W.Va. 25305. The West Virginia Department of Commerce, Travel Division, State Capitol Complex, Charleston, W.Va. 25305, issues free pamphlets describing



motels, hotels, and campgrounds in West Virginia.

### Hunting and Fishing

The fish and wildlife of the Dolly Sods area have already been mentioned in the wilderness proposal (page 14). The backcountry is more densely populated during the deer (gun) season, which begins the first Monday after Thanksgiving, than at any other time of the year. The bear hunting season(s) are also very popular with hunters. The north fork of Red Creek is stocked with brook trout once a year below the mouth of Big Stonecoal Run. It is not an outstanding trout stream, and is not one of the most popular with fishermen. Much of the watershed of Roaring Creek is private property. Do not hunt, fish or drive motor vehicles on posted land without permission. The local people are particularly touchy about unauthorized fishing. The West Virginia Department of Natural Resources issues brochures on hunting and fishing regulations and seasons. They are available free from the Department, State Capitol, Charleston, W.Va. 25305, from Forest Service offices, and from many retail stores in the vicinity.

### Hints for Hikers

The Dolly Sods Scenic Area, with the exception of Rt. 75 along the Allegheny Front, is closed to public vehicular travel (including motorcycles, snowmobiles, and ATV's) to protect its tranquility and primitive character as well as to prevent erosion of trails, destruction of bogs, etc. Violators are subject to fines of up to \$500 or six months imprisonment under Regulation U-6 of the Secretary of Agriculture.

Much of the area described in this booklet is either very rocky, swampy, or both. Most hikers consider hiking boots a must. The area is remarkably free of mosquitoes for such a poorly drained region, probably because the bogs and beaver ponds are too acidic for them to breed in readily. However, deer flies can be an annoyance on hot summer days in the open country, so it is wise to have insect repellent along. Locally, the Dolly Sods is noted as a haven for rattlesnakes. In actuality, they are rarely seen, and the chances of your being bitten are remote.

The water in the area tends to be yellowish, tea colored, or even a deep red color (hence, the name Red Creek), although perfectly clear. It is quite palatable, but you should bear in mind that livestock grazes in the headwaters of the north fork of Red Creek, Flatrock Run, and the tributaries of Roaring Creek (but not generally on Big Stonecoal Run, Little Stonecoal Run or the South Fork of Red Creek). Many hikers drink freely out of all the streams, and I have never heard of anyone getting sick from doing so except for some mild cases of diarrhea.

It is easy to get a sunburn on the open ridgetops, so a wide brimmed hat or suntan ointment is recommended for susceptible people. If there is a lot of snow you should have goggles or sunglasses to avoid the possibility of becoming snow blind.

Although you can reach any point in the Dolly Sods area in a one day hike, the best way to appreciate its wilderness character is to backpack for several days into the more remote reaches of the area. There are several excellent publications on backpacking. One of the most detailed and entertaining is Colin Fletcher's The Complete Walker: The Joys and Techniques of Hiking and Backpacking (350 pages, \$7.95). You can buy inexpensive packs and other supplies from many sporting goods stores, but top quality gear is more difficult to come by. The Seattle "Co-op" is one of the best and cheapest sources, even though



you must pay the mailing costs from Washington State. It carries Fletcher's book and many others. To become a member of the Co-op and obtain a copy of its catalog, send \$1.00 to Recreational Equipment, Inc., 1525 11th Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98122. You will be issued a membership number and be entitled to rebates on your annual purchases.

There are no shelters in the Dolly Sods area, so be sure to carry a tent, plastic tarp, or other rain shelter. Some of the better campsites for backpackers are marked on the topographic trail maps. Hunters have built four shacks in the North Fork watershed with the permission of the landowner, the Western Maryland Railway Company. These are private property and should not be used.

In June, July and August, night-time temperatures are mild enough that you will probably be comfortable in an ordinary, light-weight dacron sleeping bag. In the spring and fall, a down-filled bag is recommended. For winter backpacking, it is an absolute necessity.

The best way to approach the north fork drainage in the winter is via Rt. 80. Cars can generally be parked near the cluster of farmhouses and the Forest Service sign about 2 miles from Hwy 32. Be sure not to block the cars and trucks of the people who live there. If there has recently been a heavy snowfall, you will not be able to drive beyond the Buena Church on State Hwy. 32, and will have to walk from there. If it snows while you are in the backcountry, you might have to wait back at the farmhouses until the road leading to Hwy. 32 is plowed.

The trail maps at the end of this publication are reproductions of portions of two topographic maps: Onego 15' (1920) and Davis 15' (1919), with new roads and trails added. The U.S. Geological Survey is preparing new 7 1/2 minute maps of the region, but the final versions are not yet available as this is being written. For up-to-date information, write to the U.S. Geological Survey, 1200 South Eads Street, Arlington, Virginia 22202. Topo maps are also sold in the Survey's office on the 4th floor of the Mineral Industries Building at West Virginia University in Morgantown.

We assume that people who use the following trail notes and maps know how to read a compass and topo maps. This is important, because it is very easy to get lost in the Dolly Sods. The U.S. Geological Survey publishes two free leaflets that are strongly recommended if topo maps are new to you: Topographic Maps (24pp) and Topographic Maps--Silent Guides for Outdoorsmen (8 pp.). Write to the Information Office, U.S. Geological Survey, Washington, D.C. 20242.

The U.S. Forest Service publishes two free maps that are helpful in getting around in the Monongahela National Forest and vicinity--a color topographic map of the entire national forest (scale about 1/4 inch to a mile) and another of the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area (includes also the Dolly Sods area at a scale of 1/2 inch to the mile, not topographic). Both can be ordered from the U.S. Forest Service, Box 1231, Elkins, W.Va. 26241.

For additional information, including the Forest Service maps mentioned above and other literature, you can inquire in the Potomac District Ranger's office on Rt. 4-28 just west of Petersburg (zip code 26847; phone 304-257-7111). It is open from 8 to 5 on weekdays only. Some people might want to call here to check on snow conditions before planning trips in the late fall, winter, and early spring.



### General Trail Notes

On the following pages is an alphabetical list of established trails in the Dolly Sods area. Where they are presently unsigned, I have made up names for them (put in quotes) so that they can easily be referred to in the guide.

Most of the trails in the area are poorly marked--both the system (presently on the Forest Service's maintenance schedule; numbered on the attached topographic maps) and nonsystem trails. The Forest Service recently decided to mark the system trails in the Monongahela National Forest with bright blue paint, but so far, to the best of my knowledge, none of the Dolly Sods trails have been done. When they are, they will be much easier to find than the nonsystem trails. Until that time, hikers will have to depend on other clues. Large rock cairns mark certain foot trails that cross large meadows, such as the northern end of the Red Creek Trail and part of the Big Stonecoal Run Trail. Many difficult-to-find sections in the woods are marked with pieces of blue plastic surveyors' tape tied to trees and bushes. Several trails are blazed with crude slashes made with a hatchet. They have weathered and now may closely match the color of the bark, so they aren't easy to see unless you are specifically watching for them. Other clues for following little used trails are branches, saplings, shrubs and logs sawed or chopped through (don't confuse this with beaver work!) to allow a man to pass through easily standing upright. If you find yourself ducking under sizable living branches, be suspicious, even if there is a worn pathway--you are probably on an animal trail. If in doubt as to whether you are on the right track, backtrack to the last spot you are sure about and take a second look.

In the trail notes, I have tried to pinpoint some spots where I have found it is particularly easy to get off route. Undoubtedly you will find others; there isn't room in a guide of this length to mention them all.

The Forest Service plans to construct some new trails in the area eventually, although it presently is allotted very little money for such work. It also intends to add some of the "nonsystem" trails to its maintenance schedule; presumably missing signs will be replaced then.

The map on page 4 shows the boundaries of federal property. Notice that many of the trails and recommended crosscountry routes are on private lands. South of Rt. 19, these belong to several ranchers. Most of them are willing to let you hike across their properties if they know you will observe certain basic courtesies. Before starting, try to locate the owner and ask permission. Never hunt, drive motor vehicles on private property, or fish without permission. Leave gates as you find them--open or closed--and take care to avoid damaging any fences you may cross. Don't disturb the livestock. Backpackers should camp on Forest Service property unless they have asked first. These suggestions shouldn't be hard to follow, but they are important. The damage done by one inconsiderate person could lead to an entire tract being closed to everyone.

More than 7,000 acres in the drainage of the north fork of Red Creek belong to the Western Maryland Railway Company. A portion of the Bear Rocks belongs to VEPCO. These companies have been very lenient in allowing the public access to their lands. Treat it with the same respect as the National Forest land.

### Alphabetical Descriptions of Trails

The "Bear Rocks Trail" is an unsigned jeep trail that begins about 1,000 feet south of the parking lot near the Bear Rocks. It has been severely



eroded by trucks and motorcycles and the Forest Service plans to close it to public motor vehicles. It goes through the open meadows and scattered trees typical of this part of the Dolly Sods area. There are many beaver ponds along the way.

The Big Stonecoal Trail is signed at both ends. It begins at a footbridge across the north fork of Red Creek, follows a long-abandoned logging trail through hardwood forest, climbs up to a railroad grade lined with spruce past beautiful falls and cascades on Big Stonecoal Run, and then enters the open plateau country, where you will see many beaver ponds.

Easy to lose spots, going uphill: The trail crosses the stream to the west side about 50 feet after it leaves the spruce-lined railroad grade (at the site of a logging camp) and enters the open plateau country. It crosses back to the east side at the lower edge of a beaver pond about 1/4 mile beyond the junction of the Dunkenbarger Run Trail and remains there, well above Big Stonecoal Run, for about a mile and a half, following a railroad grade much of the way. It skirts the edge of a stand of small red pine for about 1/3 mile, then makes a right angle turn, descends to the creek and crosses beside a large spruce, and climbs up to another railroad grade.

Coming downhill: The trail makes a right angle turn to the left, leaving the railroad grade just beyond a grove of large spruce (partially flooded by a beaver pond in 1969-1970), crosses to the east side of the creek, turns right and follows the edge of the red pine grove.

Black Trail. This old trail leads from the "Red Creek Plains Trail" down the Allegheny Front to a farm on the Fore Knobs. Although its lower half is steep, easy to lose, and involves scrambling over some fallen trees, it is worth doing because it passes through a mature forest with large oaks, quite unlike those found elsewhere in the Dolly Sods area.

The trail forks near the top of the Allegheny Front; both forks meet the "Red Creek Plains Trail". The north fork is still signed. The first quarter mile or so below the sign is overgrown with rhododendrons, but beyond that point the route is lined with rocks and fairly obvious. The south fork begins at the edge of a small bog. It is unsigned but a painted white wooden arrow nailed on a spruce points the way. (Also see description of the "Red Creek Plains Trail".) It crosses the bog, enters the woods on the far side, and begins a gradual descent, passing by some large oaks.

The lower end of the trail is unsigned. It begins on the north side of a barbed wire fence, where it crosses an abandoned, overgrown road that is at the upper edge of the large cleared area. The dirt road from the farm ultimately leads down to State Highway 28.

Blackbird Knob Trail. The eastern half leads through open country near beaver ponds on Alder Run. It apparently ends just beyond the upper end of the Red Creek Trail on the south side of Blackbird Knob and resumes again on the east slope of Cabin Mountain. The western end is marked by a painted white sign, "Trail".

Easy to lose spot, going west from Red Creek Campground: The trail parallels Alder Run for a hundred feet or more, then crosses it and angles up the hill on the other side.

The Boars Nest Trail is signed at both ends. It follows a logging skid road straight downhill from Rt. 19 and crosses a temporary logging road and a game food meadow to the banks of the South Fork of Red Creek. It goes upstream along the bank of the creek for about 1/4 mile, crosses on a footbridge, and begins a steep climb through hardwood forest to the Flatrock Plains, roughly paralleling a large tributary of the South Fork. Selective cutting was in progress in late 1970 on the south side of the South Fork, and the trail was partially



blocked by slash near the bottom of the canyon. From Rt. 70 to the edge of the Flatrock Plains the route is fairly obvious, and the views are splendid.

Easy to loose spots, coming downhill: Between the edge of the Plains and the South Fork, it would be easy to make a wrong turn on the old railroad grade and abandoned log trails that the route intersects. At the bottom of the canyon, you will almost certainly miss the footbridge the first time. If you find yourself at the South Fork with no bridge in sight and would like to cross on it, back-track about 30 feet to a vague path heading left. It leads upstream over the top of vertical sandstone outcrops and down to the bridge. Note: Watch for switchbacks!

The Breathed Mountain Trail leads through open meadows, mats of blueberry bushes, shady stands of young hardwoods, and alongside several beaver ponds. Pieces of plastic tape mark the route. The sign on the upper end has been removed; it starts at the same point as the Big Stonecoal Trail, which is signed. Stand at the sign facing east and look to your left somewhat more than 90° from the direction of the Big Stonecoal Trail. You will see a larger-than-average hardwood with a horizontal branch. The trail passes under this branch. About 30 feet beyond it makes an abrupt turn to the right across a jumble of boulders and enters a grove of trees. The lower end of the trail is signed.

Easy to miss spot, going downhill (east): About 2 1/4 miles from F.S. Rt. 80 the trail parallels a small stream blocked by many beaver dams. It crosses a rocky, brushy level area and drops off the plateau beside a larger than average hardwood.

Cabin Mountain Trail. Both ends are unsigned. The upper end is about 200 feet southeast of the large sign announcing the Flatrock Plains Cooperative Wildlife Management area, where F.S. Rt. 80 makes a sharp turn upon reaching the crest of Cabin Mountain. There is a disintegrating shack beside the road; jeep tracks lead across a meadow to an abandoned railroad grade and another shack in good condition (private property). The trail follows this grade, which soon becomes impassable to jeeps, almost all the way to the edge of the plateau above Gandy Run. About 1/2 mile beyond the unsigned intersection of the "Gandy Run Trail", the railroad grade has been converted into a logging road used in selectively logging the slope in the early 1960's. The lower end is in Laneville on the property of Leon Joy. It is a gated jeep road beginning on the east side of Gandy Run. This is private property; do not enter without permission. You can avoid crossing his farm by using the temporary logging road described on page 53 (Timber Sale Areas: Little Stonecoal Run Sale Area).

Easy to miss spots, coming downhill: About one mile beyond Rt. 80 the railroad grade becomes too overgrown with spruce to walk on. Here is a sign, "Trail" & arrow pointing downhill. The trail descends through the brush, turns to the right, enters the woods, crosses Dunkenberg Run (mostly underground, flowing between moss-covered boulders), climbs the opposite side (veering to the left) and rejoins the railroad grade. It is easy to turn onto the wrong logging road in the lower part of the selective cut area. Watch the trail map and take the most direct road downhill.

Coming uphill: In the selectively cut area above Laneville, watch the trail map and choose the main road going most directly uphill. Watch for the unsigned turnoff where the "Gandy Run Trail" joins the Cabin Mountain Trail. The former goes straight ahead (see trail description); the latter switchbacks to the right and climbs gradually uphill.

The "Dobbin Grade" is an old railroad grade that once led to the lumber mill at Dobbin on the North Branch of the Potomac. It is now a jeep road that is quite obvious and easy to follow. It passes through open country, with many beaver ponds along the way. It has been disturbed by bulldozing in the vicinity of the Dobbin Slashings by investigations of the area as the site of the upper reser-



voir for the Davis Power Project. The western end peters out in the bogs at the headwaters of the Left Fork of the north fork of Red Creek.

Dunkenbarger Run Trail. Although it offers no views, many consider this one of the most beautiful trails in the Dolly Sods area. It is signed at both ends. The eastern end follows a railroad grade lined with relatively large spruce. The central portion, in the vicinity of Dunkenbarger Run, is easy to loose. Watch for old, crude blazes and pieces of blue plastic tape tied on trees and shrubs.

The "Elklick Trail" is mostly on private property. The trail starts out as a jeep road (gated to public vehicles) about three miles from Onego, and is marked only by a "No Trespassing" sign. Most of the trail is no longer usable by vehicles. The upper end is a jeep road on the southwest side of the flat-topped ridge; there are splendid views. A side trip along knife-edged Hay-stack Knob is highly recommended. The route is said to roughly follow an Indian trail that led from Mouth of Seneca across Allegheny Mountain.

Easy to miss spots, coming uphill: Starting at the Roaring Creek Road, the jeep road crosses Elklick Run four times. About 300 feet beyond the fourth crossing the road forks. Take the right fork, which goes through a gate and crosses the creek a fifth and final time. Two switchbacks and a steep climb later, the trail reaches the spine of the grassy divide between Elklick and Long Run. Follow the ridge straight uphill to an old gate. The old road is more obvious beyond this gate.

Coming downhill: After the old gate just mentioned, the trail goes down the spine of the ridge to a relatively level spot. Here it swings abruptly to the right and enters the woods.

The Fisher Spring Run Trail is one of the more heavily used in the Dolly Sods area and is relatively easy to follow. It passes through hardwood forests and skirts the upper edge of a rather spectacular embankment where Fisher Spring Run drops down to Red Creek. The lower end is signed, but only the Red Creek Trail is mentioned. The Red Creek Trail drops down to the stream, while the Fisher Spring Run Trail stays almost level, going slightly uphill to the north.

The Flatrock Run Trail begins in a privately owned pasture (note sinkholes in the Greenbrier Limestone), climbs through hardwood forests past the falls and cascades on the Right Fork of Flatrock Run and ends on top of the Roaring Plains. There are fine views near the top. The route involves a greater change in elevation (2600 feet) than any other trail in the Dolly Sods area. The middle portion, which cuts steeply across the switchbacks of a railroad grade, is difficult to follow. Cattle are driven up onto the Plains to graze in the late spring; their tracks help in keeping on the trail.

The lower end is signed, beginning at a wide dirt road (Rt. 32-2) on the south side of Red Creek. If you are coming from the east, this road curves down from Rt. 45, which is narrow but paved, about 100 feet west of the point where the Gaspipe Swath, marked by upright pipes painted orange and white, crosses Rt. 45. There is no bridge for automobiles across Red Creek, and it cannot be forded by conventional vehicles, so you will have to park your car and cross Red Creek on foot. (There is a swinging footbridge just upstream.) If you are coming from Harman on State Hwy. 32, 32-2 begins about four miles north of the junction of U. S. Hwy. 33.

The upper end is not signed. It is a continuation of the Roaring Plains Trail.

Easy to miss spot, coming uphill: Watch for the point where the trail leaves the abandoned railroad grade, about 1/4 mile beyond the Right Fork of Flatrock Run.



The "Gandy Run Trail" no doubt once served as a shortcut between Laneville and the Canaan Valley. All of the route is heavily forested. Both ends are without signs. The lower end is a switchback of the railroad grade designated at the Cabin Mountain Trail. It is obvious and easy to follow (you can miss the Cabin Mtn. Trail turnoff if you aren't watching), but very boggy in spots. In about 3/5 mile the grade is interrupted by a relatively large stream (Gandy Run), which the railroad once crossed on a bridge. The trail leaves the grade, climbs up around the gap and crosses the creek. About 30 feet on the other side, without coming back down the grade, it begins to climb uphill parallel to Gandy Run. (The railroad grade comes to a dead end in about 1/4 mile.) At first it is very difficult to see, but farther on it becomes more obvious.

The upper end is at the east edge of the Gaspipe Swath about 1/3 of the way up Weiss Knob from the low point between Weiss and Bald Knobs. It is easy to miss, but is marked with black (painted over red) paint blazes and plastic tape.

Easy to miss spot, going downhill: Watch for the point where the trail crosses Gandy Run and descends to the railroad grade. If you miss it, you should cross the railroad grade just below. The slope is very steep below the grade.

The "Harmon Trail" is a jeep road going through mostly open country. There are splendid views from the top of Harmon Knob. The Blackbird Knob Trail, another jeep road, forks to the east about 1/2 mile from the end of Rt. 80 at the Big Stonecoal Trail sign. In the gap between Harmon Knob and "Rocky Knob" the "Harmon Trail" forks. The more heavily used branch continues along the main ridge, swings around the east side of "Rocky Knob", and ends at two hunters' shacks (private property). The other branch turns east and descends to the Left Fork of the north fork of Red Creek, petering out before it actually reaches the creek. This end of the trail is difficult to if you are coming from the east and have never followed the route before. If you are on the "Dobbin Grade", a railroad grade with occasional spruce alongside, you will come to the site of logging Camp No. 9, now marked by some apple trees and a small meadow with clover heavily grazed by cattle and sheep. The grade swings to the northwest to follow the Left Fork. From the old camp site look across the creek and somewhat downstream. You should see a larger-than-average dead hardwood and two or three living shrubs on the other side of the creek, downstream from a bare outcrop of sandstone slabs. Cross the creek, heading toward the tree, and climb the hill behind it. Soon you should see the jeep tracks, which become more pronounced the farther uphill you go.

The Little Stonecoal Trail follows a beautiful tributary of the north fork of Red Creek. There are some large hemlock and beech along the way and a small tinkling waterfall (not visible from the trail). Below the junction of the Dunkenbarger Run Trail sign, it goes along an old log trail and is easy to follow. It is somewhat less so above, where it passes through spruce and rhododendron thickets. The lower end is presently unsigned, but the sturdy post that once held the sign is still in place on the south side of the Red Creek Trail about 1/2 mile from the "Seeded to Game Food" sign blocking the trail to public vehicles. The Little Stonecoal Trail heads toward Red Creek across an upper small meadow with apple trees, drops down an embankment, goes through woods on the east edge of a larger, lower meadow, and temporarily disappears at the bank of the creek. Cross the creek and climb the opposite bank, upstream from the mouth of Little Stonecoal Run (quite inconspicuous in comparison with the north fork). Walk across a flat area occupied by a very nice stand of yellow poplar to the point where the side canyon narrows. The trail will become obvious here.

Crossing Red Creek can be difficult or even dangerous when the water is high. For an alternate route to the lower end of the trail, follow the old logging road from near the bridge across Rt. 19 to the point where it curves to the southeast in an open area just before crossing Red Creek. Leave the road here and walk about 1/4 mile through relatively open woods to Little Stonecoal Run, cross it,



and pick up the trail on the other side. (See description of Little Stonecoal Run Timber Sale Area, page 23.)

The upper end does have signs but they are very old and are falling off the tree to which they are attached. You will have to stay on the lookout for them.

The Forest Service plans to eventually put this trail back on its maintenance schedule. Presumably the signs will be replaced then.

"Long Run Trail". This a dirt road gated to public vehicles. Much of it goes through privately owned pastures. Hikers should ask the permission of Mrs. Arbogast (first house down the road), before using it. For all practical purposes the road ends about two miles from Roaring Creek, just before a major fork enters Long Run from the south. Actually it continues uphill along the south side of this tributary, but is so overgrown that it is easier to go crosscountry.

Northland Loop Trail. This 1/3 mile long trail starts at the parking area on Rt. 75 about 1/3 mile south of the Red Creek Campground, skirts the edge of the Alder Run bog, and ends back at the road a short distance north. The Forest Service plans to construct a boardwalk into the bog and erect interpretive signs along the way.

The "Porte Canyon Grade": is an abandoned railroad grade that begins on the Roaring Plains and winds around the south side of Mt. Porte Crayon. There are some good views near the upper end, but most of the route is heavily forested and parts are boggy. The upper end is not signed. If you are walking west on the Roaring Plains Trail (here an abandoned railroad grade), you will come to a grassy area. The trail begins to swing to the north, beginning to descend to Laneville. Leave it here, heading through the grass toward Porte Crayon, the hump to the southwest. Where the brush begins to get thick, cut off to the south. About 40 feet down the side of the ridge you should come across the old grade. It switchbacks about 2 1/2 miles farther on, and is said to parallel Long Run for some distance beyond that point. Although a much overgrown road comes almost up to the grade beyond the switchback (see "Long Run Trail" description), it is easier to cut crosscountry downhill on the south side of the stream.

The Red Creek Trail is signed at both ends. Below the Forks, it goes through hardwood forest past some attractive little falls on the three tributaries downstream from Fisher Spring Run. North of the Big Stonecoal Trail, it stays high above the creek except at the one crossing. Above the Forks, it parallels the left Fork for about 1/3 mile, then climbs out of the canyon onto the grassy, spruce-studded plateau below Blackbird Knob.

Easy to miss spots, going uphill: As of 1971, the new Forest Service sign about one mile east of the sign blocking the trail to public vehicles was misleading; continue straight ahead along the creek bed for both the Red Creek and Big Stonecoal trails. The footbridge, about 1/2 mile farther on, leads to the Big Stonecoal Trail. To continue on the Red Creek Trail, make an abrupt turn to the right and regain the old railroad grade, which has been washed out downstream. About 1/4 mile beyond the Big Stonecoal Trail, the grade suddenly ends at an embankment overlooking Red Creek. If you come to this spot, you have missed the trail. Backtrack and watch for the old sign marking the spot where the trail, now a narrow footpath, climbs up the side of the canyon. The trail remains high above the creek up to the junction of the Fisher Spring Run Trail (only the Red Creek Trail is mentioned on the sign), where it descends to the creek and crosses it. It ascends the west side of the canyon, cutting across switchbacks of the railroad grade. When it reaches the highest switchback, it continues almost level to the Forks and crosses the Left Fork just upstream from the junction of the two streams.



Coming downhill: The first 2/3 mile is marked by large cairns, but the route is easy to lose where it drops off the west side of the plateau. Look for small cairns and plastic tape on trees.

The "Red Creek Plains Trail" is an old trail not currently maintained by the Forest Service. It is extremely scenic, with blueberry patches, small bogs, and good views from conglomerate outcroppings. Portions are becoming overgrown. Neither end is signed. The lower end begins at Rt. 70 opposite the end of the South Prong Trail, which is marked by a sign. The "Red Creek Plains Trail" is an obvious "tunnel" through trees and rhododendron. The upper end is about a half mile southwest of the Dolly Sods Picnic Area in an open meadow. Beyond this point, if you are headed toward Laneville, Rt. 19 leaves the open country and begins its descent to Laneville. (If you are driving uphill on Rt. 19, it is about 1/4 mile from the intersection of Rt. 70) There is room for one or two cars to park on a spur on the left side of the road. The trail begins just east of the parking spot in the boggy meadow. It is not obvious until after you cross a small streamlet.

Easy to loose spots, going uphill from Rt. 70: If you are not on the lookout, you may get sidetracked on to the Black Trail (see description of that trail). The "Red Creek Plains Trail" does not cross the bog, but swings to the left through the brush and begins to climb uphill. It is marked by a routed Forest Service arrow and a cairn.

"Roaring Creek Trail" This gated jeep road is entirely on private property, and passes through open pastures. The point where it crosses Roaring Creek, beyond a fallen-down abandoned farm house, is easy to miss.

The Roaring Plains Trail passes through beautiful stands of young spruce, rhododendron thickets, meadows, and small bogs. In late June there are spectacular displays of pink mountain laurel. It begins where Rt. 70 reaches the Gaspipe Swath. The road turns northwest along the swath; the trail begins straight ahead through a "tunnel" hacked through the rhododendrons. Once it reaches the top of the Plains, it makes a right angle turn in a flat, boggy area and follows an obscure railroad grade. At the western edge of the Plains, the old grade, now the Flat-rock Plains Trail but unsigned except for arrows and a "Trail" sign nailed in begins the descent to Laneville.

Easy to miss spot, going either way: the point mentioned above, near the middle of the Roaring Plains, where the trail makes a right angle turn. A small sign should mark this spot.

The Rocky Point Trail follows an old railroad grade. It is very easy to follow, although it may be somewhat overgrown. Both ends are signed. The bare, 6-inch rocks used as ballast are hard on tennis shoes and blistered feet. Rocky Point is an impressing outcrop of Pottsville sandstone above the grade. It is well worth the scramble to the top of the cliffs for a magnificent view of the canyon of Red Creek.

The South Prong Trail leads through hardwood-hemlock forests and rhododendron thickets and alongside the cool, moss-covered rocks beside the South Fork of Red Creek. It begins at the same spot on Rt. 19 as the Boars Nest Trail. The sign marking it has been removed, hopefully only temporarily. The Boars Nest Trail heads straight downhill; the South Prong Trail goes off to the left (southeast) at about a 70° angle to the other trail. It is not obvious for the first 30 to 40 feet, but beyond there is rather easy to see. It gradually descends the slope, meeting a logging road. Follow the road upstream to a turn-around point where the road crosses the South Fork. Just upstream a footbridge crosses the creek. The upper end of the trail is well marked on Rt. 70.



Easy to miss spot, coming uphill: The middle segment of the trail between the two crossings of the South Fork is easy to lose. It cuts across the switchbacks of a railroad grade. About half way up it comes to the edge of a patch of girdled trees (killed to control disease), and passes through the middle in a narrow corridor of living trees left on either side of the path. It does not go abruptly uphill through the dead trees. In about another half mile it gains and follows the highest switchback. Just beyond the grade forks, follow the uphill fork. Watch for the pilings where the railroad once crossed the South Fork on a bridge; the trail crosses the creek here.

Coming downhill: After crossing the South Fork for the first time, the trail goes almost level along an abandoned grade for about 1/2 mile. A switchback joins the grade near a clump of small hemlocks, coming in from the downhill side. The trail leaves the grade soon afterwards; watch for cairns, old blazes and blue plastic tape in the trees.

"Stack Rock Trail" Although in the watershed of the Stony River and hence not in what is defined as the Dolly Sods area in this publication, this scenic trail is worth mentioning. It is an informal foot path leading from just below the Bear Rocks through the "huckleberry plains" to Stack Rock about 1 1/2 miles to the north. The views from this isolated prominence on the edge of the Allegheny Front are superb.

#### Some Crosscountry Routes

Hikers can choose an infinity of crosscountry routes in the Dolly Sods area. The ease with which experienced outdoorsmen can ignore trails in the northern half of the watershed of the main fork of Red Creek is one of the reasons this area is so exceptional for hiking and backpacking. Elsewhere, in the more heavily forested portions, occasional rhododendron thickets challenge the bushwacker; less intrepid hikers may choose to stick to established trails here. The following routes are singled out because of the scenery and because they tie in with established trails, making a number of interesting circuit hikes possible. Several other short crosscountry routes are shown on the topographic maps but are not described here.

Bald Knob. This route is described from northeast to southwest because it is easier to orient yourself when hiking in this direction. It begins at the point where the Cabin Mountain Trail temporarily leaves the railroad grade about one mile south of F.S. Rt. 80 (see description of that trail). Follow alongside the grade (it is too overgrown with spruce at first to actually walk on it) until you come to a meadow and a small sphagnum bog in the saddle between Bald Knob and Cabin Knob. Cross the meadow and Dunkenbarger Run and climb the slope leading to the top of Bald Knob. Be sure to angle off well to the west; if you go straight uphill or are too far to the south, you will encounter some challenging bushwalking. If you are on the correct route, there is only a little brush and rhododendron to crash through, just beyond a band of mature spruce below the top of the knob, before you break into the open country on top. On your way up the slope observe how young spruce, the progeny of the mature trees near the top, are displacing the predominant yellow birch.

The north slope of Bald Knob (the residents of the Canaan Valley know it as "Cabin Mountain") is privately owned and could be developed in the future.

Cabin Mountain. This is one of the outstanding scenic walks in the Dolly Sods area, with magnificent views of the Canaan Valley as well as the plateau drained by the north fork of Red Creek. The ridge is open most of the way, and the route is obvious. Blueberries are plentiful in season. Small cliffs and



interesting outcroppings of Pottsville Sandstone are found at "Rocky Knob" and immediately north. Heavy use has worn a foot path, usually marked with a cairn at its beginning at the "Harmon Trail". It leads just to the east of the low cliffs on "Rocky Knob", gradually fading out and disappearing about a mile and half beyond. The summit of Cabin Mountain has been disrupted in the vicinity of Dobbin Slashings bog by core drilling and test excavations carried on in conjunction with the proposed upper reservoir of the Davis Power Project. (A slashing is an area littered with branches, fallen trees and other debris after a logging operation. The spruce cut in the basin were transported by rail to the lumber mill at Dobbin. Hence the name "Dobbin Slashings". The stumps of the virgin spruce are still well preserved here, more than fifty years after they were cut. People interested in bogs may enjoy crossing the bog in warm weather. Wear tennis shoes and be prepared to get wet up to the knees in the center.)

Long Run. The northern side of the valley drained by this stream is entirely in federal ownership. Although there are no formal trails, cow paths link a series of attractive small pastures. Upstream from the junction of the South Fork, the North Fork flows through some beautiful maturing forests. A walk along the banks of Long Run is also recommended, especially below the forks.

Mt. Porte Crayon. This knob, elevation 4760 feet, is the highest point in the Dolly Sods area--only 100 feet lower than Spruce Knob, the highest mountain in West Virginia. Porte Crayon ("pencil carrier") was the pseudonym of David Strother, who wrote and illustrated several entertaining articles on West Virginia in the middle 1800's. There are no views from the top (unless you care to climb a very rickety observation tower--not recommended!), just a beautiful stand of maturing spruce. Brilliant green moss and patches of yellowish-white reindeer moss carpet the ground. It is easy to get disoriented on the way down, so keep your compass handy.

"Raven Ridge". The open, rounded ridges to the north and east of the headwaters of the Left Fork of the north fork of Red Creek are ideal for crosscountry hiking. However, it is easy to get confused, even in the best weather, because all these hills look much alike. So, once again, have a compass handy.

Red Creek. The walk up or down the bed of the north fork of Red Creek is an attractive alternative to the Red Creek Trail and is much more scenic and interesting, particularly upstream from the point where the trail crosses the creek near the lower end of the Fisher Spring Run Trail. The stretch between this crossing and the Forks is especially worth while--there are waterfalls, cascades and swimming holes. The portion between the Forks and the crossing of the Blackbird Knob Trail is also very nice, although not as spectacular. Coal seams are clearly exposed in the stream banks and under waterfalls.

It probably is unwise to attempt this route when rocks are icy or Red Creek is unusually high.

Red Creek - Stony River Divide. The comments on the "Raven Ridge" routes also apply here. The divide in the vicinity of the Dobbin Slashings Bog has been bulldozed and core drilled.

Roaring Plains. The meadow at the eastern end of the Roaring Plains, with scattered groves of small spruce, overlooks the valley of the North Fork of the South Branch of the Potomac and North Mountain beyond. It is a longer, but much more scenic, and interesting hiking route to the Roaring Plains Trail than Rt. 70. Begin at the junction of the "Red Creek Plains Trail" and the south fork of the Black Trail. (See descriptions of these two trails.) Cut across the small bog and follow the ridge line through a forest of small oaks and a chin-high thicket



of blackberries (the only significant bushwacking) to the open plains above. (Keep your compass out to avoid getting confused on the way up.) In about 2 1/2 miles you will meet the Gaspipe Swath. If you plan to continue the walk along the Roaring Plains, it is best to follow the swath to the beginning of the Roaring Plains Trail, unless you enjoy the challenge of fighting your way through thickets of rhododendron and mountain laurel.

U.S. Highway 33 to Haystack Knob and Mt. Porte Crayon. The shortest way to these knobs is via the summit of Allegheny Mountain, beginning in the pasture at the highest point reached by the highway. The crosscountry route leads through a succession of meadows and woodlands. Keep curving around to your left. The summit of Green Knob is covered with brush and offers no view, but there are splendid vistas from Haystack Knob and the unnamed 4655-foot-high knob to the northwest. (Much of this route is on private property.)

#### Other Hiking Routes

The Gaspipe Swath is 66 feet wide. The pipes, which convey natural gas from the west to metropolitan areas on the eastern seaboard, are buried underground, and only occasional gauges and bright orange and white upright pipes to aid in climbing over fences project above the ground. Although it is too steep for pleasant hiking where it plunges in and out of valleys, it is a grassy hiking route on top of the highest ridges. Scenic portions in the Dolly Sods area include Smith Mountain (excellent views of the Seneca Rocks and North Mountain), the Roaring Plains southeast of Rt. 70, and the segment between Weiss and Bald Knobs. The steep climb from the saddle between Smith Mountain to the top of the Roaring Plains is an excellent place to find fragmentary fossil plant remains.

F. S. Rt. 70 is a gravel road, gated to public vehicular travel, built and maintained by the gas company, the Atlantic Seaboard Corporation. It is not scenic, but is the easiest and fastest way to get to and from the Roaring Plains Trail. If time is not the object, the "Red Creek Plains Trail"- Roaring Plains crosscountry route is more interesting.

Game Food Swath. This grassy lane on the Rohrbaugh Plains is gated to public vehicles and is a rather pleasant hiking route. Just beyond the westernmost meadow is a short path leading to cliffs of Pottsville Sandstone, an excellent overlook across the Red Creek canyon.

#### Timber Sale Areas (See map on page 15 .)

1) Beacon Sale Area: Although the deer hunting may be excellent, the logging road leading through the area has nothing to offer from the aesthetic standpoint, and the slash and brush make crosscountry travel very difficult.

2) Little Stonecoal Run Sale Area: All of the haul roads have been seeded to grass, but are not especially scenic. Blackberries are abundant alongside them in late summer.

The lowest segment of the switchbacking, interconnecting log roads shown on the topographic map link the Cabin Mountain Trail with the Red Creek and Little Stonecoal Run trails, and can be used as an alternative to the lowest part of the Cabin Mountain Trail to avoid passing through the farm in Laneville. On the west it meets the Cabin Mountain Trail just before the jeep road begins an abrupt descent down to a locked gate. It contours east-west around the side of the canyon, then gradually descends and crosses the north fork of Red Creek about 1/4 mile below the signless post marking the end of the Little Stonecoal Run Trail. (The junction is not obvious from the Red Creek Trail unless you are looking for it.) A foot trail climbs from the north end of the bridge across Red Creek on Rt. 19 to this grassy lane, which is frequently used



by cattle in the summer.

Additional Information on the Dolly Sods-Canaan Valley-Upper Stony River Area

BOOKS: The following are available in many libraries, or you can order them directly from the publishers. (Price et al is out of print.) The Hermitage Motor Inn in Petersburg and Blackwater Lodge in Blackwater Falls State Park sell these books and others of interest to outdoor people.

Brooks, Maurice. 1965. The Appalachians. Boston:Houghton Mifflin Co.,xvii + 346 pp., illustr. (An excellent, very readable introduction to the natural history of the Appalachians, including descriptions of the Dolly Sods-Canaan Valley area.)

Brown,Stuart E.,Jr. 1959. Annals of Blackwater and the Land of Canaan(1746-1880). Berryville, Va.: Chesapeake Book Co.,42 pp.,illustr. (Quotes from contemporary writers on what the area was like before the logging days.)

Clarkson, Roy B. 1964. Tumult on the mountains: lumbering in West Virginia - 1770-1920. Parsons, W.Va.: McClain Printing Co.,410 pp., 256 photographs, 1 foldout map. (Many pictures taken along Red Creek and on Cabin Mountain during and immediately following the logging days.)

Core, Earl L. 1966. Vegetation of West Virginia. Parsons, W.Va.: McClain Printing Co.,217 pp.,66 figs. (Describes plant communities you will encounter in the area.)

Fansler, Homer Floyd. 1962. History of Tucker County,West Virginia. Parsons, W.Va.:McClain Printing Co.,702 pp.,pls.

Price, Paul H., Rietz C. Tucker, and Oscar L. Haught. 1938. Geology and natural history of West Virginia. West Virginia Geological Survey, Vol. 10: xi + 462 pp.,61 figs., 231 pls., 1 separate geological map. (An introduction to the geology of West Virginia.)

ARTICLES IN MAGAZINES AND SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS. You will probably have to visit a college or university library to find the technical journals.

Allard,H.A.,and E.C. Leonard. 1952. The Canaan and Stony River valleys of West Virginia: their former magnificent spruce forests, their vegetation and floristics today. Castanea (The Journal of the Southern Appalachian Botanical Club), Vol.17, no.1, pp. 1-60, 12 figs.

Brooks, Maurice. 1969-1970. Remarkable Dolly Sods. Outdoor West Virginia (title changed to Wonderful West Virginia in 1970): Nov. 1969, pp.10-13; Jan. 1970, pp. 10-13; Feb. 1970, pp.10-13. (A series of articles on the natural history of the area.)

Clark,G. Michael. 1968. Sorted patterned ground: new Appalachian localities south of the glacial border. Science, Vol. 161, 355-356, 2 figs. (Briefly describes the phenomenon and sites known as of 1968. Since then Dr. Clark has studied the Dolly Sods area.)

Clarkson, Roy B. 1966. The vascular flora of the Monongahela National Forest, West Virginia. Castanea, Vol. 31, no. 1, 120 pp.,7 figs.



- Core, Earl L. 1938. The flora of Roaring Plains, West Virginia. Proceedings of the West Virginia Academy of Science, 1938, pp. 33-35. (Besides a list of species, the article includes an interesting contemporary description of the Roaring Plains in 1886 before logging began. Apparently the country looked rather similar on the high plains to what it does today.)
- Evans, George B. 1964. Blackwater paradise. Field and Stream, Nov. 1964, pp. 29-31, 126-129, illustr. (Hunting in the Dolly Sods-Canaan Valley region.)
- Gibson, Joan R. 1970. The flora of Alder Run Bog, Tucker County, West Virginia. Castanea, Vol. 35, pp. 81-98, 1 fig. (This is the bog to which the Northland Loop Trail leads. Includes climatic and historical information.)
- Turner, Milly. 1968. Land of three-sided trees. Outdoor West Virginia, July 1968, pp. 12-18, illustr. (A popular account of the natural history of the area along Rt. 75.)

### What Can You Do to Help Preserve the Dolly Sods?

Your role in the preservation of the wild character of the Dolly Sods is two-fold:

1) Your role as a visitor: The Wilderness Act defines a wilderness " as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain". The goal of conscientious wilderness users is to leave no trace of their visit. Modern wilderness areas have been described as outdoor museums, because it is no longer "natural" for the land to remain untrammelled. Areas like the Dolly Sods--of unique beauty and scientific interest and close to several urban regions--are in danger of being "loved to death" by visitors in the not-too-distant future.

The Forest Service has taken steps to control one potentially serious problem--the uncontrolled use of "jeeps", trail bikes and other rough terrain vehicles. They have already caused erosion on land owned by the Western Maryland Railway Company in the north fork watershed. (See Fig. 22, page 31 .) Although the Forest Service has closed the Scenic Area to such use, it still is theoretically possible to ride them elsewhere in the Dolly Sods area. We hope that you will leave your crosscountry vehicle at home when you come to the Dolly Sods and take the time to appreciate it on foot. (If you must ride, there are many suitable abandoned railroad grades and low standard roads in the watersheds of the Stony River and Beaver Creek to the north and northwest.) Actual damage to land and vegetation is only one aspect of the problem. One of the reasons that the Dolly Sods is so attractive is that it offers a temporary escape from the noise and pollution of modern civilization--noisy vehicles quickly destroy that illusion.

There are many ways that hikers can minimize their impact on the area. Campsites used by backpackers are particularly subject to overuse. Good campsites---level, relatively free of rocks and well drained---are scarce in the Dolly Sods and deserve special care. Fires should be built away from overhanging branches. Do not build fireplaces over the decomposing moss and needles found under spruce; a slow burning fire may be started. If a fireplace has already been built in the vicinity of your chosen campsite, use it as is or modify it, but try to avoid building a new one, which inevitably becomes a new man-made scar. Better yet, consider dispensing with a campfire altogether and using one of the small stoves made especially for backpackers.

Emulate the cat--dig a hole with your boot or a stick and bury your excrement (or at least lift up a rock). Nothing spoils the scene for the next party as quickly as unburied toilet paper and worse. Carry out all trash that isn't



burned in the campfire, including aluminum foil. Burying of trash is not a satisfactory alternative.

2) Your role as an informed citizen: Even if you and most other hikers and backpackers who explore the Dolly Sods area go to great pains to avoid damaging it, your efforts will be to no avail if bulldozers arrive on the scene to open up a new strip mine, a vacation home subdivision, a highway or a new logging road. It is possible to avoid such tragedies if enough people keep informed and make effective use of their most powerful weapons--their voices, their typewriters and their pens. The concerns interested in the economic exploitation of the area are very influential. They can be counteracted only if large numbers of people who believe that the area should not be sacrificed for short term economic gain exert their collective political influence.

A periodically updated supplement on the constantly changing political-legislative scene has been inserted in this guide.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Helen J. McGinnis  
July 1971



APPENDIX- Notes for Hikers on the Upper Stony River Drainage and the Northern Canaan Valley. (Topographic Maps No. 3 & 4.)

Although outside the Red Creek drainage and not part of the Dolly Sods area, this region is contiguous with it and is largely undeveloped. Within the next few years, however, its remoteness may be lost to society's demands for more and more electricity. Strip mining operations to feed the voracious Mt. Storm generating plant are creeping up the Stony River watershed, and in 1973 the Allegheny Power System hopes to turn the northern Canaan into a many-armed lake for the production of peaking power.

Before 1880 almost all of the area was covered with dense forests of red spruce, fir and hemlock. Great thickets of rhododendron and extensive bogs created formidable barriers to man and his horses in the northern Canaan. But by 1923 all the virgin forests were gone--cut and transported by rail to lumber mills at Davis and Dobbin. Fires accompanied and followed the logging operations, burning through peat accumulation of centuries. The great Dobbin Slashings Fire of 1930 burned almost 25,000 acres on the upper drainage of the north fork of Red Creek and the Stony River. With all deference to Smokey the Bear and his message, hikers owe some gratitude to whoever set this fire. Those portions that were presumably untouched by this last great fire are now filled with logging roads built to harvest the second growth timber, and have lost much of their wilderness appeal.

The northern Canaan Valley contains some of the most extensive sphagnum bogs in the state. Much of it is uninhabitable and useless even for grazing, and thus remains almost a wilderness. Naturalists are fascinated by the tundra-like flora. Beaver thrive; ducks, woodcock, and other birds make their homes in the ponds and surrounding willow and alder thickets. Young spruce and balsam fir are slowly reclaiming the valley. There is good trout fishing in the Blackwater and its major tributaries upstream from the mouth of Yellow Creek, and bass have been introduced into some of the beaver ponds.

All of the land is privately owned, most of it by the Western Maryland Railway Company and power companies. They have been very lenient in allowing the public access to their lands. If people observe the same courtesies expected of them on publicly owned lands, this policy should continue.

Many of the roads, few of which are negotiable by passenger cars, are located along abandoned railroad grades. Many make good hiking trails. Few if any of the railroad bridges in the northern Canaan are left. The main fork of the Blackwater River may be too deep at times for fording. It is possible to get across on a gaspipe that crosses the just downstream from the junction of Sand Run. Portions of the abandoned railroad grades are too boggy and overgrown with willows to permit travel by vehicles. It should be obvious to the reader by now that it is almost impossible to explore the valley without getting wet feet unless you wear hip boots. In the summer, it is probably easiest for hikers to bring a pair of sneakers and use them for wading. Good campsites for backpackers are easier to find in the northern Canaan and the upper Stony River watershed than they are in the Dolly Sods area.

The slopes facing the Canaan Valley are forested with hardwoods, some selectively logged in recent years. The top of Brown Mountain (3730') is bare and worth the short, steep climb from the jeep road on its east slope.

The Canaan can be approached from Davis via a poor road that formerly was the main railroad line between the lumber mills at Davis and the forests in the valley. To get on it, drive over the bridge across Beaver Creek just east of Davis. From there it can be followed by passenger cars, using considerable care, for 4 1/2 miles. Beyond that point, the left (north) fork is suitable only for more rugged vehicles. The right fork of the road crosses a gated bridge unsafe for all but hikers.

Another way to drive into the northern Canaan is via a dirt road that begins in Cortland (off State Rt. 32) near the Roscoe Beall farm. It crosses the Black-



water River and proceeds north, following the low ridge separating Sand Run and Glade Run from the Blackwater River, and ends at an abandoned railroad grade (now a jeep road) that runs east-west across the valley and crosses Glade Run. Except in very wet weather, it is possible to take a passenger car almost all the way to this jeep trail. The road is gated at Cortland, but generally it should be possible to get a permit to enter from the Beall's.

A third way to approach both the Stony River drainage and the northern Canaan is by way of a dirt road that begins at Rt. 93 seven miles east of Rt. 32 and ten miles west of Rt. 42. If you follow the right, well traveled fork, you will arrive at the rim of the valley near an A-frame cabin. The road leading to the east around the rim of the valley is just barely passable to ordinary cars; hiker types will prefer to walk. In dry weather, it may be possible to drive a Volkswagen-sized car into the Big Cove, one of the most interesting parts of the northern Canaan. Take the west fork of the road near the A-frame and work your way down into the valley. (See topographic Map No. 3 for details.)

The upper Stony River drainage is a continuation of the kind of open, rocky country found in the northern Red Creek drainage, but the average elevation is less, spruce are fewer, and overall it is less scenic and will become even less if strip mining operations advance south. One easy way to get into it is via Rt. 75 where it turns off the plateau at the Bear Rocks. An informal but well established foot trail leads from the parking lot about 1 1/2 miles through blueberry and huckleberry bushes (best berry picking in July) to Stack Rock, an isolated conglomerate outcropping with fine views. The "huckleberry plains" type of country extends about three miles beyond the Bear Rocks. Because the country is open or only sparsely forested, hiking trails are hardly necessary. At the other edge of the plateau, hikers no doubt could walk along the crest of Cabin Mountain all the way to its northern end at Snow Knob (elevation 4082'), which affords a 360° degree view. The gap marked 3687' is especially interesting botanically because two species of Scotch heather grow there. No doubt they were introduced by some unknown logger.

Note: The jeep roads leading from State Rt. 93 to the Dobbin Slashings and the site of the proposed power installation site near Glade Run in the Canaan are now (June, 1971) being bulldozed and upgraded by Monongahela Power as part of the Davis Project. The roads to be improved are shown as heavy dotted lines on Fig. 25 (page 33).



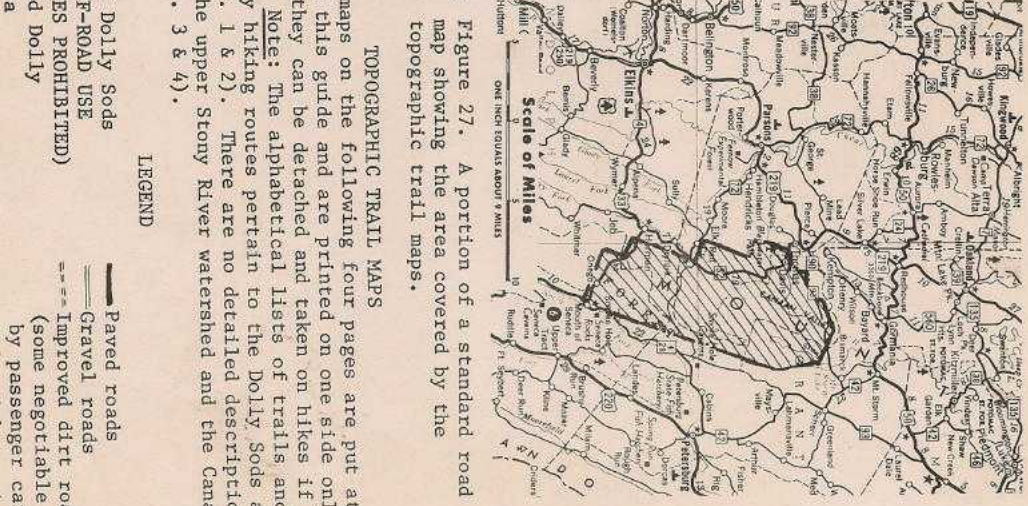
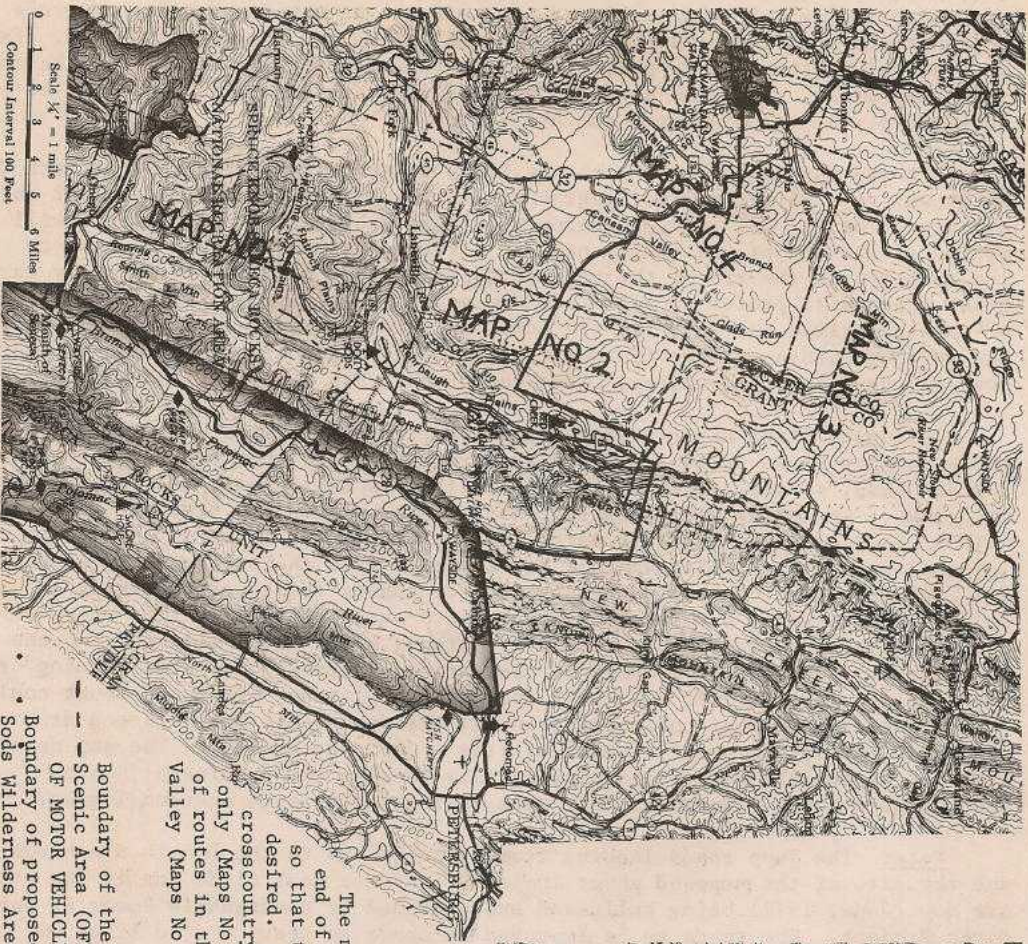


Figure 27. A portion of a standard road map showing the area covered by the topographic trail maps.

#### TOPOGRAPHIC TRAIL MAPS

The maps on the following four pages are put at the end of this guide and are printed on one side only so that they can be detached and taken on hikes if desired. Note: The alphabetical lists of trails and crosscountry hiking routes pertain to the Dolly Sods area only (Maps No. 1 & 2). There are no detailed descriptions of routes in the upper Stony River watershed and the Canaan Valley (Maps No. 3 & 4).

#### LEGEND

- Boundary of the Dolly Sods
- Scenic Area (OFF-ROAD USE OF MOTOR VEHICLES PROHIBITED)
- Boundary of proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness Area
- Proclamation boundary of Monongahela National Forest
- State park boundary
- Paved roads
- Gravel roads
- Improved dirt roads (some negotiable by passenger car only with great difficulty)

Figure 26. A portion of the Forest Service's map of the Monongahela National Forest, showing the area covered by the topographic maps on the following four pages.

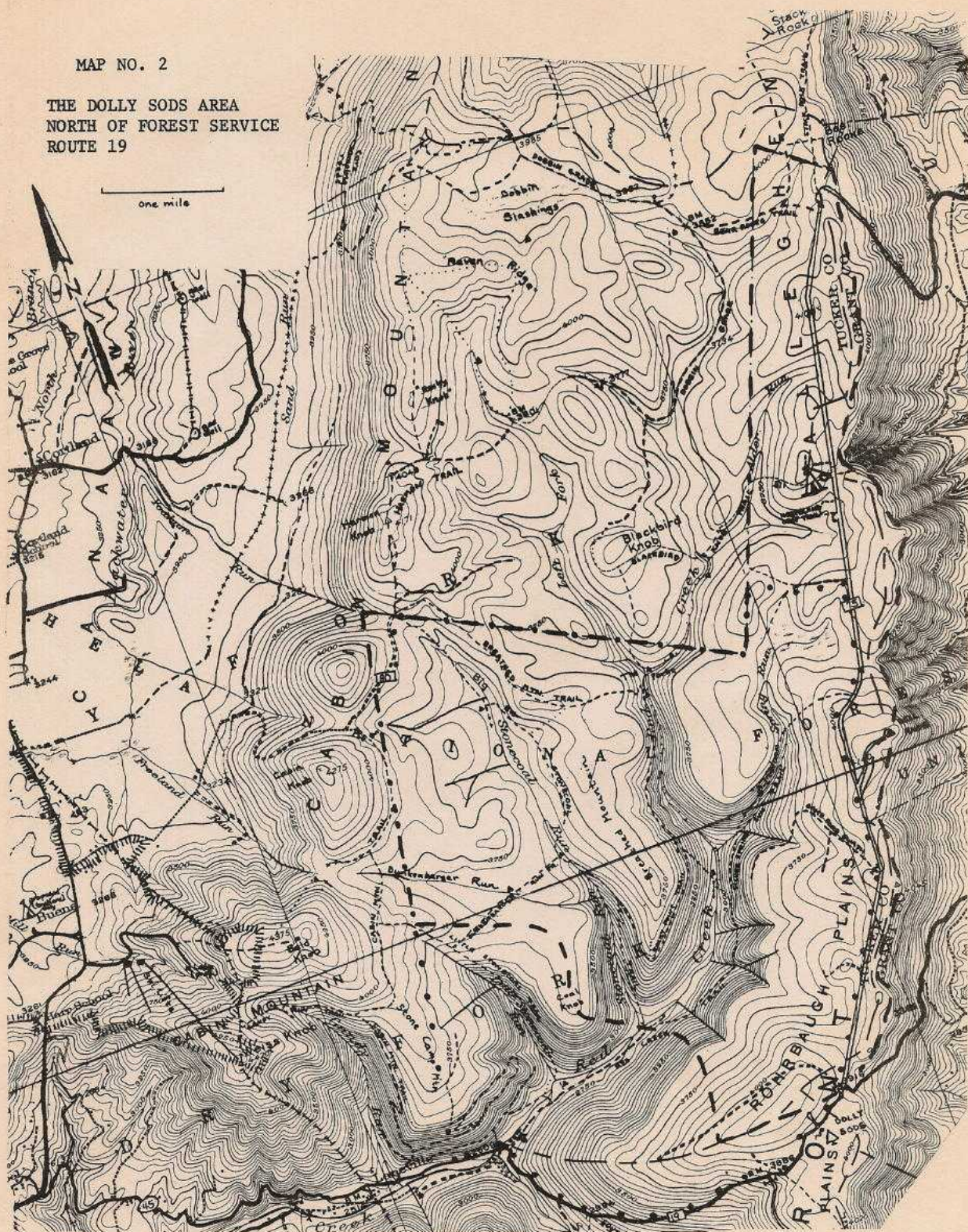






MAP NO. 2

THE DOLLY SODS AREA  
NORTH OF FOREST SERVICE  
ROUTE 19





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- This is a detailed topographic map of the Canaan Valley State Park area in West Virginia. The map shows the Canaan Valley, Canaan River, and surrounding mountains. Key features include the Canaan Valley State Park, Canaan River, Canaan Mountain, and various peaks and ridges. The map is labeled with 'CANAN VALLEY STATE PARK' and 'CANAN RIVER'. It also shows the 'CANAN MOUNTAIN' and 'CANAN RIVER'.



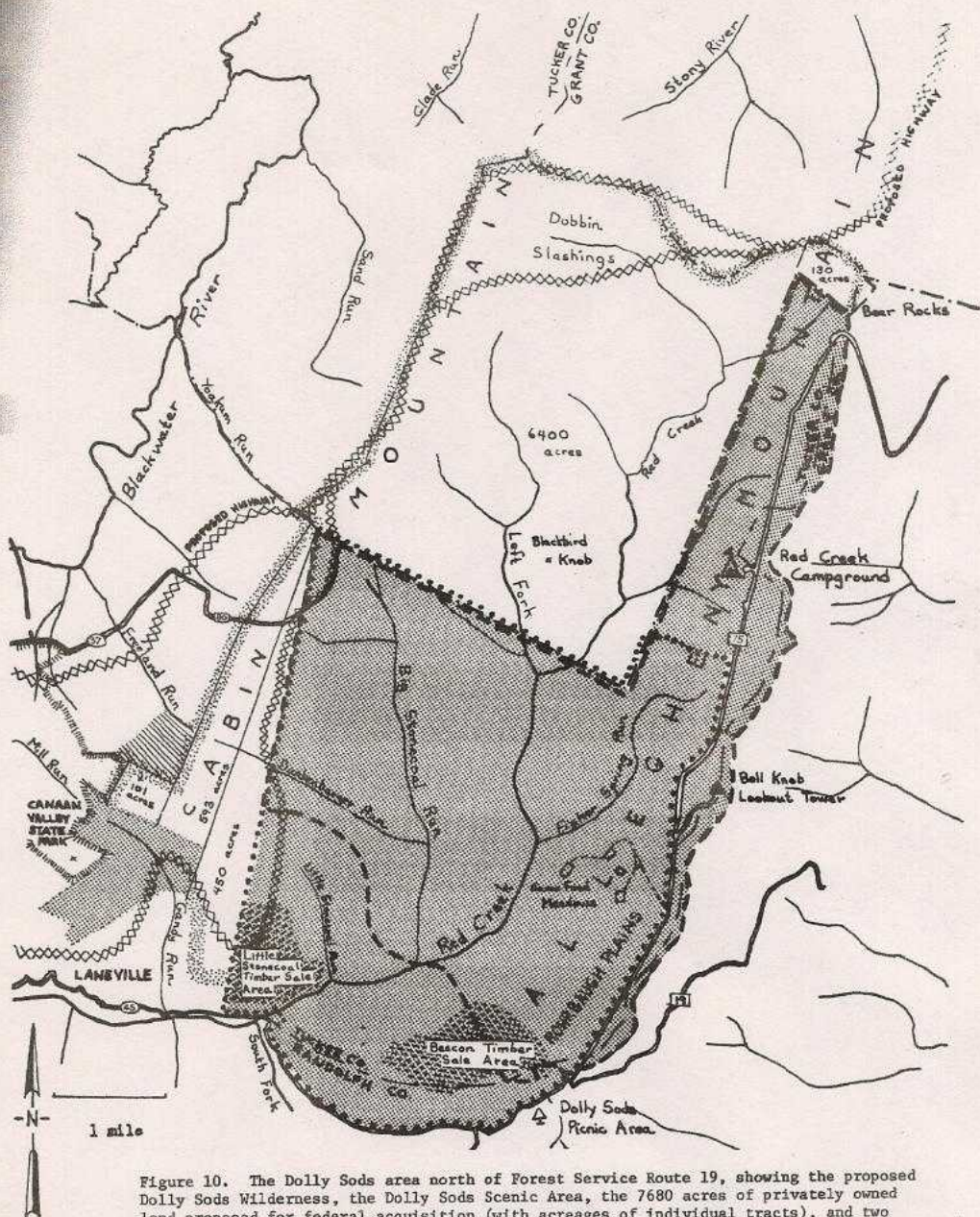


Figure 10. The Dolly Sods area north of Forest Service Route 19, showing the proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness, the Dolly Sods Scenic Area, the 7680 acres of privately owned land proposed for federal acquisition (with acreages of individual tracts), and two possible routes for the proposed Highlands Scenic Highway and/or Allegheny Parkway.

#### LEGEND

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| Federally owned land                              | Tentative highway route   |
| Boundary of land proposed for federal acquisition | Part of tract belonging to Davis Elkins et al; site of possible ski resort. |
| Boundary of Canaan Valley State Park              | Forest Service timber sale area   |
| proposed Dolly Sods Wilderness                    | Dolly Sods Scenic Area  |



#### WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP SAVE THE DOLLY SODS

The Dolly Sods area is beset with many problems that could lead to its destruction as a wild, undeveloped area. The concerned citizen can do much to keep this from happening. If you are so inclined, visit the Dolly Sods and become better acquainted with it. Even more important, discuss the problems of the area with others. Letters to key government officials are the final goal of all this however. Elected public officials are very sensitive to public opinion and letters are probably the best way to make your opinions known to them. Employees of state and federal agencies such as the Forest Service and the West Va. Dept. of Natural Resources are also sensitive to public opinion - both directly and through pressure exerted by legislators. Letters should normally be brief and to the point. They are most effective if they are in your own words, although petitions and coupons are better than nothing.

I) Highest priority among people interested in preserving wilderness on federal lands is a proposed Executive Order that would halt all developments and commercial exploitation in areas up for review under the Wilderness Act-- which includes Forest Service Primitive areas and undeveloped portions of the National Parks and Monuments until such time that Congress has time to consider their qualifications. It would also halt road building, logging, and mining in de facto wilderness areas such as Dolly Sods, Otter Creek, and Cranberry Back Country. Write to President Richard M. Nixon, The White House, Washington, D.C. 20500. Ask him to sign the Executive Order for the Preservation of Wilderness. If you would like more information on this important issue, write to the Wilderness Society, 729 Fifteenth St. NW Washington, D.C. 20005.

II) Senator Randolph has not yet reintroduced the bill to the Senate that would make Dolly Sods, Otter Creek, and part of the Cranberry Back Country Wilderness Areas. Write to Senator Jennings Randolph, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510. This is a job for West Virginians. People from outside West Va. should write to their own U.S. Representatives (Address: House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515). Ask them to co-sponsor or otherwise support the West Va. Wilderness bills introduced by Rep. Ken Hechler and Rep. Harley O. Staggers and also the omnibus de facto wilderness bill introduced by Rep. John Saylor.

III) Strip mining is another problem facing the Dolly Sods Area. Many West Virginians have become convinced that the only way that strip mining can be adequately controlled is to abolish it. Rep. Ken Hechler has introduced a bill (H.R.4556) that would ban strip mining nation-wide and would also prohibit coal mining in wilderness areas. Even if his bill has little chance of passing in the near future, strong public support may lead to the passage of another strong strip-mining control bill. Write to your own Representative asking him to join the 61 co-sponsors of the Hechler bill.

IV) The Davis Power project is another very controversial issue that could have a major bearing on the future of Dolly Sods. So far, almost all letters from the public on file in the Federal Power Commission Office are in favor of the project, thanks to an intensive public relations campaign waged by the Allegheny Power System in the area. If you have an opinion on the project in general or on its effect on Dolly Sods in particular, write to: Mr. Gordon Grant, Secretary, Federal Power Commission 441 G Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20001. (Refer to Project number 2709.)

V) Although there is an informal understanding between the W.Va. Dept. of Natural Resources and the Western Md. RR Company to the effect that strip mining will not extend farther south than the dam on the Upper Stony River Reservoir or into the Red Creek drainage (Dolly Sods area), there is no guarantee that Western Md. RR will hold to this understanding when the more readily exploitable sources of coal near the VEPCC Power Plant are exhausted. It is important that the Director of the W.Va. Dept. of Natural Resources hear from citizens who are concerned about the threat of strip mining in the Dolly Sods Area. When the time comes he will have to "Red Line" the area so as to outlaw strip mining in the area under the "esthetics" clause of the W.Va. Strip Mining Control Law- but he will need full public support to do this. Write to: Ira S. Latimer, Jr., Director, Department of Natural Resources, State Capitol, Charleston, West Va. 25305.

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There will be other issues involving the future of the Dolly Sods coming up in the future - especially concerning the proposed route of the Highlands Scenic Highway and public acquisition of private land in the northern Dolly Sods area. One of the best ways to keep informed is to join the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. Dues for individual members are \$5.00/yr. (regular), \$10.00 (associate), or \$25.00 (sustaining). Organizations may also join for \$20.00, \$30.00, or \$50.00 (regular, associate, sustaining). The membership chairman is Mrs. Carolyn Killoran, 407 Circle Drive, Hurricane, West Virginia 25526.

If you do not care to join the Conservancy but would like to keep informed of important developments where your help will be needed, you can send in the enclosed coupon. You can also use it to order additional copies of the Dolly Sods Guide or the Otter Creek Guide or the Cranberry Backcountry Guide.

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\_\_\_\_\_ Please send \_\_\_\_\_ additional copies of the Dolly Sods Guide at \$1.00 each.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please send \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the Otter Creek Guide at \$.50 each.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please send \_\_\_\_\_ copies of the Guide to the Cranberry Backcountry at \$.90 each.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like information on becoming a member of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please keep me informed of new developments concerning the Dolly Sods Area.

Mail coupon to Mrs. Carolyn Killoran, 407 Circle Drive, Hurricane, West Virginia 25526.