WASHINGTON

Wilderness Watch

The chances for wilderness in West Virginia may be linked not only to energy development but to the political future of Robert Byrd as well.

Staffers for U.S. Congressman Cleve Benedict of West Virginia's Second Congressional District said late last month that there will be "no backtracking" by the congressman on the issue of wilderness in the Mountain State — despite the fact that the Reagan administration has left his office "figuratively "out in the cold" by opposing the so-called Cranberry bill.

That bill, slated for Congressional hearings in early February, proposes wilderness status for the Cranberry backcountry as well as Laurel Fork North and Laurel Fork South.

All three areas — comprising some 50,000 acres of land in the West Virginia Highlands — are among five "RARE II" roadless areas which were intended to be studied for their wilderness potential. All five were located with the Monongahela National Forest, but after the Secretary of Interior Act had been approved by Congress, the carefully crafted plan was reversed through an environmental impact statement.

An attachment indicated that the Reagan administration was inclined to reject the idea that wilderness status should be granted to Cranberry or either of the Laurel Fork areas. As noted in the statement, the idea was that the proposal had been "revived" by the Forest Service.

Not so, said Monongahela staffer Gil Churchill. He said for such a change in recommendation to occur, and another series of public hearings held. He said he believed that Melcher and McClure were "betting" that wilderness would eventually be the recommendation, and the current administration had concurred.

Also included, however, was an indication that the recommendation had been "revised" by the Forest Service.

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VOICE EDITOR

Judy Frank, P.O. Box 1121, Elkins, WV 26241 (304-1622)

Convention

(Continued from page 1)

the W. Va. Highlands Conservancy must be submitted no later than Friday, Jan. 15, according to Larry George, chairman of the Conservancy’s nominating committee. Each of the terms begin in January and expire in January of 1984.

Nominations may be submitted by both individual and organizational members of the Conservancy. George noted. The deadline coincides with the opening of the Conservancy’s mid-winter workshop.

Members may nominate up to five individuals, including themselves, and must determine and indicate that they are willing to serve as a director-at-large. All nominees must presently be Conservancy members or submit a membership application prior to the certification of candidates by the nominating committee on Jan. 15. George noted.

The election will be held during the Conservancy’s annual meeting on Saturday, Jan. 16, 1982 at Jackson’s Mill Camp in Weston.

All individual and organizational members may participate in the election by casting one vote for each candidate (approval system voting), with the five candidates receiving the largest number of votes being elected.

Ties will be broken by lot.

No individual may vote twice for one candidate, or vote on behalf of both himself and an organizational member.

Nominations should be mailed to: Larry W. George, Chairman, W.V. Highlands Conservancy, 1700 Crestridge Drive; Huntington, W.V. 25702 (304-736-1323)

Purbaugh Nominated

Nominated for a slot on the board of directors has been W. Va. Legal Services attorney John Purbaugh. Nominated by the Conservancy’s Charleston vice-president, Perry Bryant, Purbaugh writes.

“I would like to serve as a member of the Jackson County and work as a lawyer for the W. Va. Legal Services Plan. I’ve been a Conservancy member for several years, but only in the last couple have I become personally active in environmental organizations. My recent work includes representation of the Upper West Fork River Watershed Association, acid water pollution cases caused by underground mining, landslides and hazardous wastes. My personal interests include cross-country skiing, backpacking, canoeing and auto mechanics.

“As a member of the Conservancy board, I would emphasize full participation in lobbying, rule-making and public education as well as continuation of the Conservancy’s aggressive guardianship of the highlands area of the state.”

Description of membership categories.

Individual membership: Regular—$20 from those able and willing to give larger amounts. Associate—$30 from a larger organization whose membership approves the efforts of the Conservancy.

Organizational membership: Regular—$20 from a smaller organization anxious to help the Conservancy score conservation gains in the Mountain State. Associate—$30 from those who can afford it. Sustaining—in the larger national organization which appreciates the importance of a highlands area to the people of the eastern seaboard.

$10 Senior $20 Regular $20 Associate $30 Sustaining $60 Sustaining $80 Sustaining

New: Renewal

Name Address City State Zip

Organization you represent (any)

Membership category (see descriptions opposite)

Individual Organizational

THE W. VA. HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY

Don’t Miss

SF Gas Well Convocation - Jan. 7

Scenic Trails Meeting - Jan 8-10

Conservancy Workshop - Jan 13-15

Callaghan Speaking - 10 a.m.; Jan. 16

Callaghan Union - 11 a.m., Jan. 16

Elections - 3:30 p.m., Jan. 16

OSM Recs Comment Deadline - Feb. 1

Wilderness Hearing - early February

Allegheny Trail Work-Hike - June 19-26

The Highlands Voice

MOVING?

ATTACH OLD LABEL HERE

New Address:

W. Va. Highlands Conservancy

P.O. Box 506

FAIRMONT, W. VA. 26554

SEND TO:

The Highlands Voice

W. VA. HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY

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Individual Organizational

$10 Regular $20 Regular $20 Associate $30 Associate $30 Sustaining $60 Sustaining $80 Sustaining

Brief statement of present position, interest, or activities in conservation activities (optional).

Make checks payable to The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.
WASHINGTON
Rights Rollback
OSM regulations face changes.

BY PERRY BRYANT
Proposed changes in federal surface mine regulations may significantly weaken citizen oversight of the industry.

Interior Secretary James Watt and James Harris, the director of the U.S. Office of Surface Mining, have proposed to eliminate the requirement that a citizen have the right to accompany a state inspector into a mine site when the inspection is a result of a citizen's request. However, citizens would be able to request a copy of the file at 20 cents per page for a total limit of access by those persons who live outside the Charleston area.

Watt and Harris are also proposing to drop the requirement that states provide for citizen suits — despite the fact that federal law clearly mandates that citizen suits be allowed in federal court and clearly implies that Congress intended for citizen suits in state courts after a state has assumed primary control over the situation.

In conclusion at this point what effect these proposed changes, if adopted by OSM, would have on West Virginia's regulations. Currently West Virginia's regulations have been joined by a federal court. The judgment of the DNR will review the state's regulations at that time in order to adopt some of the "positive" changes made in the federal regulations. Whether the DNR considers these rollbacks of citizen participation to be a "positive" change remains to be seen.

Citizens are being asked to send a copy of the draft at 20 cents per page, and five dollars per hour for the cost of copying and filing records after the first half-hour. "If course, industry and their consultants will not have any difficulty in paying these exorbitant prices," commented Highlands Conservancy board member Kate Long, "but the majority of Mountaineers wants to protect their landscape from a repeat of the days when there were "no accountability standards.""

CHARLESTON
People for Clean Air

The W. Va. Clean Air Coalition seeks to spread itself across the state and generate a fire-storm of protest.

BY JOHN C. HEAVENER, Jr.
Director, American Lung Association of W. Va.

W. Va. Chapter of the National Audubon Society

The Clean Air Act, as you probably have heard, is under attack at the national level. It has been recently reported that the auto industry is pushing for quick action so that they can retool to make changes — for the worse — in next year's models. Congresspeople, fearing the stench of a "dirty air" vote, also want the blood to be let early on, so that votes will be forgotten by the November elections. This means an earlier vote than we expected.

We must act now to make sure the W. Va. delegation votes the way the vast majority of Mountainites wants them to vote — for strong protection of the Clean Air Act. The next three to five months may well determine the quality of our air for years to come.

U. S. Sen. Jennings Randolph has been the best of our delegation. The others have been either entertaining or doing damage to the defense or downright awful. We need to thank Sen. Randolph and forcefully remind the others where we stand.

But writing one letter isn't enough. Writing both Senators and your Congressman isn't enough. We need your help to mobilize tens of thousands of West Virginians. We need to deliver a fire-storm of protest to Washington, objecting to the proposed slaughter of the Clean Air law, which may well happen unless you act immediately.

We need.

WASHINGTON
Closing the Files

Access to information may be made more difficult.

BY PERRY BRYANT
Two state agencies, the water resources board (WRB) and the division of water resources (DWR), have proposed regulations which will make it more difficult for citizens to receive information from these agencies.

The majoi reason for the changes was to provide that free copies be available to citizens and public interest groups, and to limit access to the files of State Public Servants.

The proposed regulations also came under fire from another board member, Linda Elkinton of Morgantown. Mrs. Elkinton heads the W. Va. office of the National Audubon Society.

"In today's world, information means power," she commented. "To deny citizens information is, in essence, to deny them the tools needed to affect decisions.

The regulations will hit hardest at those who live outside the state capital where the files will be located. Also, while public participation policies will provide for copies to be supplied to citizens and public interest groups with limited funds. Persons interested in commenting on the proposed regulations should send their comments to the Water Resources Board at 1206 Greenbrier Street in Charleston, W. V. 25311. No public hearings have been scheduled.

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THE SHAVERS FORK

Drill Bits on the Fork

Significant new oil and gas well drilling is forecast in the wake of geological probes all the way to the 'basement' of the Monongahela National Forest.

A proposal by Union Drilling of Buckhannon to probe 4,000 feet beneath the Shavers Fork of the Cheat River for natural gas deposits may be the start of a flurry — if not a flood — of similar applications.

On the other hand, it may not be. "If you want my personal opinion," said Manley, "I don't know what's going on."

What he does know, he said, is that surrounding states have been "swamped" by drillers pledging their bits into the earth as they attempt to tap the vast reserves beneath the ground.

The problem, admits U.S. Forest Service ranger Dave Stack, is that the Forest Service and other regulatory agencies charged with the task of controlling development do not have the staff they need to be able to process applications as rapidly and thoroughly as some feel is required.

But Stack said that the level of activity anticipated should enable the local ranger stations and the headquarters of the Monongahela National Forest in Elkins. "I don't know what's going on," he pointed out.

On the other hand, Union Drilling is clearly exploratory in nature, he and geologist Manley agree. They point out that there are currently no plans to lay pipeline through the area. However, there are clear indications that the second, similar well will be planned for next year — and could be followed with many more if either or both of them are successful or indicate large deposits.

Manley in Elkins pointed out that most of the forest has already been explored by at least one firm — Amoco — but parts of the forest have been prospected by other firms as well. Foresters are currently monitoring drilling in progress near Neola in Greenbrier County; foresters in Marlinton are currently processing applications for sites on Gauley Mountain in Pocahontas County; and Amoco recently shut down a well in Canaan Valley. Industry and Forest Service scuttlebutt says that Amoco got nothing — but geologist Manley's not so sure.

"All I really know is they came in with nothing" equipment," Manley said. "But you never know what they'll do. Even if they're dry, they may have found something significant. Companies just don't talk."

It gives (their competitors) an advantage.

He explained that both the prospecting and the drilling are done under a cloud of secrecy. The "in-the-field" prospecting is done with half-million-dollar truck-mounted computers and other sophisticated monitoring equipment while the brute force of other trucks is used to literally stomp the sendingsite to debris that is bounced back by rock layers and monitored. But Manley says that even if they had nothing, he couldn't tell what was going on. The field results are sent to a central office where they are processed again through a "mainframe" computer — and only then can conclusions be drawn, if at all.

Industry sources say all such prospecting really yields are "hazards" — hints which are followed up with exploratory wells like Amoco's Canaan venture and the ones now being proposed for the Shavers Fork.

What Manley does believe is that Amoco and others who have prospected the Monongahela are "going for the basement." That is, the information they are gathering is designed to locate any faults off the path to the basin of sedimentary rock in which gas and oil deposits may lie.

"That's the goal," he says. "They want to get a total picture down to as deep as 20,000 feet and beyond."

For their part in the process, foresters are approaching the whole thing cautiously. Back in Bartow, district ranger Stack has already set up a Jan. 7 meeting with the Forest's inter-disciplinary team along with state oil and gas officials, the state's Department of Natural Resources as well as representatives of the primary conservation groups which have expressed an interest in the preservation of the Shavers Fork. That members of the W. Va. Highlands Conservancy as well as the West Virginia-based chapter of Trout Unlimited.

"This is something new really," Stack admitted, a procedure that has not really been tried before. The idea is that a virtual earliest stages, everybody who is likely to raise a significant objection will be involved.

"We want to get together with the people who want the forest protected and hammer out some reasonable compromises," Stack explained.

"I'm optimistic," he said, "that most of the objections can be dealt with."

FRENCH CREEK

Sterile Streams

The chairman of the Conservancy's acid rain committee suggests that stream conditions — not socio-economics — should define the proper response to acid rain.

By DON GASPER

The U.S. Forest Service recently released figures showing that some 1,300 miles of streams are in the Monongahela National Forest large enough to support a fish population of one-tenth to one-fifth of the species habitat in the region. Thus, the streams are "too pure to support trout."

Streams too pure to support trout have an alkalinity (to pH 5.4) averaging only 3.5 parts per million and an electrical pH averaging 5.3. This has been added to a "susceptibility curve" (developed by the Environmental Protection Agency for lakes in the Minnesota-Canadian Boundary Waters Canoe Area) in the form of a "+1" value.

This is just how far some very important W. Va. trout streams have to go to become too sterile or pure for trout. It is not far!

The term "W. Va. endangered streams" always has meant those with less than 15 ppm alkalinity. The average of this group is shown on the curve with an arrow. The average pH is 5.6 and the alkalinity is 3 ppm.

West Virginia's endangered streams consist of well over one-quarter of the state's brook trout streams, over one-quarter of those are now and could be stockable with a susceptible-sized trout, and over one-quarter of the state's potential wild trout water (see map).

This is an enormous portion of W. Va. trout heritage that is at risk. The present atmospheric acid inputs average pH 4.5 and total over 500 net metric tons per year to every 35-foot wide stream on the western face of the Alleghenies. This is resulting in the further impoverishment of intolerable forest watersheds (see the December issue of the VOICE). Finally, so few nutrients and alkalinity are left that some of the trout populations will be lost forever.

Legislators in Washington are now considering weakening the Clean Air Act. That would permit more of the sulphur in the air — sulphur that cause or acid rain.

The best effort to reduce sulphur in the air is contained in the Mitchell Bill which suggests that a 40 per cent reduction can be accomplished in ten years. This is all that is widely considered practical and possible. It will take very conservation-minded citizen's active support to accomplish this.

This bill, though, may not be enough. Perhaps little will be done for five or even up. While I would suggest a 20 per cent reduction in three years and another 20 per cent reduction in the next two years.

An adequate response not is what socio-economics indicates, but what those watersheds indicate. We must recognize this as a "biological imperative" that permits no compromise. We cannot stand like the mountain Millennials in the face of extinction. Must be another "environmental issue" that is comfortably stated — or they will all be lost forever. Watershed and water quality studies indicated acid rain reducing is urgently needed.

One More Round

The Highlands Conservancy has also requested an extension of the comment period. The OSM study of proposed mining on the Shavers Fork is available at the Charleston office as well as at the headquarters of the Monongahela National Forest headquarter in Elkins.

The Conservancy is also requesting that OSM schedule a conference to give interested parties an opportunity to discuss new data emerging from the permit review process. Such a conference would also be a forum for rendering a decision on the permits. Federal regulations require that a decision be published within 60 days of the conference.
THE ALLEGHENIES' SLOPES

Saving the Salamander

Enviro Energy spends some dollars rescuing a rare species hemmed in by its environment and beset by man.

BY DR. THOMAS PAULEY

EDITOR'S NOTE: One of the world's few populations of a little salamander—a species that apparently is found in 27 unique places in the world, all clustered together high up in the western slopes of the Alleghenies— was transplanted one warm summer night this year.

Gathered up in the dead of night from the rocks and rills and forest fauna that spring out of the mountainsides were 45 Cheat Mountain Salamanders. Each, without doubt, would have died as a result of the development of the first of what are expected to be 30 underground mines in the heart of the Monongahela National Forest, on the banks of the Shavers Fork of the Cheat River in Randolph County. The mines, scheduled to carve millions of dollars worth of high grade "compliance steam" coal, are being developed on national forest lands by Enviro Energy, Inc., a sister company to the mineral owner, Mower Lumber Co.

Salamander Survey

One provision of the mining permit agreement with the Office of Surface Mining (OSM) to Enviro Energy was to survey all proposed core-drilling sites, hard rock and mine sites for the Cheat Mountain Salamander.

Dr. Thomas Pauley, chairman of the department of natural science at Salem College, was employed by Enviro during the summer of 1981 to examine these proposed areas. His report follows:

"I surveyed 28 proposed core-drilling sites and access roads, three proposed haul roads, and two proposed mine sites for the Cheat Mountain Salamander in four proposed access roads.

I determined that each road be re-routed around the salamander sites. In each case the new route was superior to ensure that the area was free of the salamander. The salamander was not found in any of the proposed core-drilling sites or mine sites except Linan Number Three mine site on Shavers Mountain.

Since the species has not been declared endangered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, it would probably have been difficult to prevent the development of this mine site.

After consultation with representatives of the West Virginia DNR, U.S. Forest Service, Office of Surface Mining, W.Va. Highlands Conservancy, and the Sierra Club, it was decided to attempt to relocate the salamander to a suitable habitat where the species was not found.

A suitable habitat would be one that has the relative humidity, soil moisture, and soil temperature similar to that of known Cheat Mountain Salamander populations.

After examining several areas, a site was selected. Since the Cheat Mountain Salamander is nocturnal, careful systematic collections were made in the Linan site during nights as well as two days. A total of 45 individuals were removed during these collections and released on the night of June 25, 1981....

"It is my intent to visit this area in the spring and fall of each year for the next five years in an attempt to ascertain the success of this transfer. In this regard, I submitted a grant proposal to Enviro Energy on Sept. 2, 1981 to sponsor this research endeavor, but as of this date have not had a reply.

"If this population transfer is successful, the data gathered will be invaluable to the transfer, and thus the protection of non-game as well as game species maintains habitat distributions and population transfers.

History

"The Cheat Mountain Salamander has been of great interest to biologists since it was described in 1938 by Dr. J.B. Green. This interest is due to its limited range and distribution, and what appears to be a rather precise altitudinal distribution for the CM Salamander. The greatest such distribution ranges from 4,328 to 4,926 feet, or a total of 596 feet."

"The question arises as to why the Cheat Mountain Salamander is restricted in distribution. According to the US Department of Commerce, the greatest wild population of the Allegheny Mountains is 50.9 hours, and 45.4 inches in the Allegheny Plateau. Relevant information collected on the moisture requirements of the CM Salamander, is not known if this precipitation difference is a major factor in limiting its distribution.

"A tentative hypothesis that should be considered is that the factor is the competition for moist sites between the CM Salamander and the Mountain Dusky Salamander. It may be that the MD Salamander prevents the survival of moist sites between the CM Salamander and the Mountain Dusky Salamander."

"In 1948 Maurice Brooks defined the range of the Cheat Mountain Salamander to be from a point along the headwaters of Condon Run, near Bickle's Knob, Randolph County, to the southern end of the Cheat Range at Thorny Flat, Pocahontas County."

"In 1971 Richard Highton of the University of Maryland found that the range of the CM Salamander extended in the northern area of the range described by Brooks, east to the highest elevations of the Allegheny Front. During this study and two subsequent studies, I surveyed 11 sites above 3,400 feet throughout the Monongahela National Forest but found no CM Salamander in just 27..."

"All 27 of these populations are disjoint; that is, they are separate or discontinuous. As a result of these surveys, the total range of this salamander has been determined to consist of an area 30 by 80 km, extending from McGowan Mountain to Dolly Sods, south to Spruce Mountain, southwest to Back Allegheny Mountain, and north to McGowan Mountain."

The salamander's survival is precarious partly because the known populations exist independently of each other.

Competing Species

"A second population species that inhabits the same area and habitat as the CM Salamander is the Mountain Dusky Salamander. These species have moisture requirements that are nearly the same, and are therefore most likely in competition for living space. There is a very interesting vertical or altitudinal distribution between both of these species and the red-backed salamander. In most of the CM Salamander populations, the red-backed and the CM Salamanders are sympatric (co-exist in the same area) while the Mountain Dusky is found at or near the low altitudinal limit of the CM Salamander.

"This results in a restricted altitudinal distribution for the CM Salamander. The greatest such distribution ranges from 4,328 to 4,926 feet, or a total of 596 feet."

"The question arises as to why the Cheat Mountain Salamander is restricted in distribution. According to the US Department of Commerce, the greatest wild population of the Allegheny Mountains is 50.9 hours, and 45.4 inches in the Allegheny Plateau. Relevant information collected on the moisture requirements of the CM Salamander, is not known if this precipitation difference is a major factor in limiting its distribution."

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Environmentalist Rick Webb believes the coal industry and the DNR may be pinioning themselves needlessly.

One of the Mountain State's most active environmentalists, Rick Webb, believes the state's coal industry is doing itself a disservice by playing politics with the issue of the W. Va.-Riverhead Coalition's unsuitability petition.

And the state is doing itself a disservice.

In fact, Webb said in the wake of state reclamation commission hearings in Buchanan last month, the state's coal industry's leaders have lined up so solidly behind what is really a minor issue in terms of the state's total coal production that it may have blown the problem all out of proportion.

"If foreign investors feel confident," he asked, "then why not rip into some of these issues and media coverage of the event? Probably not.

Yet most of West Virginia's coal doesn't have to provide proof of producing acid with today's reclamation technologies, it noted. "It doesn't mean economic sense to promote your worst product and jeopardize your best product," he said.

The fact is, Webb added, most of the state's coal reserves can be mined under the current laws without severe environmental damage. That assertion matches squarely with the views of the state's Department of Natural Resources, Dave Callahan. Early in 1981, he summarized the problems with acid production in the Kattanning coals in Upshur, Randolph and Sumner counties.

"I believe the state's coal industry is probably the least, unresolved problem for coal mining in West Virginia. Callahan's belief is that it was an unsolved problem resulting in his announcement that he would issue no new permits to strip out the remaining west side coals because of the environmental damage.

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"I believe the state's coal industry is probably the least, unresolved problem for coal mining in West Virginia.

But the reclamation commission's handling of that petition itself has been peculiar, Webb said last month. Handling has been so peculiar, he believes it is "probable that the commission is deliberately attempting to provoke an appeal into the state's court system."

What the commission has failed to do, he said, is supply the public with a description of the area which the reclamation commission will use in determining whether or not the petition should be granted or denied. In addition, Webb said that the commission has requested a chance to review the administrative record in the case in order to determine what information was used to reach the conclusion that the commission would use in denying the petition.

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That request, Webb said, was made in a letter to the 21st Annual Meeting of the Coal Reclamation of Inactive Mines Act. Despite the five-day response requirement under the act, it was reexecutor at the state's court system.

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The effect is that not supplying the information, Webb said, is to simply lengthen the entire process, and "it's really hurting people to make this thing drag out like this."

In a Dec. 21 letter to Callahan in his capacity as chairman of the state's reclamation commission, Webb said the commission's failure to respond to "precludes relevant comments," and he requested an extension of the comment period until at least 20 days after the commission responds to the FOIA request.

The reclamation commission and the governor, Webb agreed, "have got a hard decision to make." He said he believed that Rockefeller's long-term ambitions urge him to "be a responsible governor" while the short-term, politically sensible course of action is to permit mining to continue despite the lack of available technology for successful reclamation.

But in any case, shutting it into the court system only delays the process. "It'll just put it right back in their laps again," he said.

What Webb views as the political goals of the government and the coal industry clearly aggravate him. "I wish they would just decide the issue on its technical merits," he says.

On the other hand, Webb did say he was encouraged by the admission of several major coal companies that there was, in fact, a problem. He noted that DLM Coal Company had been attempting to solve their acid drainage problems by covering vast areas with a thick plastic sheeting (see the December, 1981 issue of the Highsides Voice). He said another tactic they believed would be of the kind similar to the one that was recorded in a grid sized at the "whole philosophy" of the Reagan administration.

Hearings on the wilderness bill are expected shortly after the Congress reconvenes, the staffer said — and he added that Benedict would not back away from support of the measure.

"It'll be tough to get it passed," he said. "They'll come up with something. That's been the pattern for the last ten to 15 years." A pattern he said was most recently reiterated in the Holly Grove decision. There, he said, DNR director Terrell Callaghan reversed an earlier position and said the survey was based on a handful of new core samples which, he believes, did not present enough information to indicate that acid mine drainage would not occur. And, he adds, Callaghan's original, correct decision to deny the permit was upheld by the evidence adduced in the Holly Grove study, processed by the Environmental Protection Agency.

Webb believes the same thing may happen again. Callaghan, he said, "always pulls a reason out of his hat."

Webb predicted that each mining operation probing the Kattanning seams would develop a new — and in the state's eyes — promising method to prevent acid mine drainage.

Each, he believes, will fail.

"They'll just go on until there's nothing left," he said.

The Highlands Voice
The Highlands Voice

CANAAN VALLEY

Canaan Contumely

The head of the W. Va. Office of the National Audubon Society deplores the state's lackadaisical attitude toward the destruction of trout fisheries in Canaan -- and seeks contributions for a court suit.

By LINDA COOPER ELKINTON

W. Va. Office
National Audubon Society

Large, healthy brown trout and brook trout have long been popular and distinctive features of Canaan Valley's streams. They hatch from the eggs laid down by the big monastery wiggling through the ripples and around the rocks to the headwaters of the some of the smallest tributaries of the Blackwater in the southern part of the state and they are the target of the faltering fingers by the W. Va. Department of Natural Resources, then nourished to thrive in the Valley's cool, dark waters.

They are a thrill to see and provide the finest sport known to the fisherman.

Over the years, the number of tributary streams in the valley has shrunk for these priceless creatures has dwindled dramatically, and, of the eight or so streams where they once lived, it is now the opinion of fishery professionals that only two or three remain today.

As a result of fast-paced second-home and condominium developments, these remaining ones are in serious jeopardy.

This past summer, the DNR's water resources division granted a permit to a developer for the discharge of treated sewage water from one condominium development. Land of Canaan runs into a tributary of Freeland Run, by far the best of these streams and the only remaining one where trout naturally spawn.

The sewage treatment plant of Land of Canaan accommodates the discharge from the initial 24, two-bedroom condo units in this development. It is located on Freeland Run Road, one-half mile north of the ski-slope construction. Construction has begun in a few of the buildings already completed. The addition of this new development means that the water quality along Freeland Run will be compromised.

The sewage treatment plant of Land of Canaan accommodates the discharge from the initial 24, two-bedroom condo units in this development. It is located on Freeland Run Road, one-half mile north of the ski-slope construction. Construction has begun in a few of the buildings already completed. The addition of this new development means that the water quality along Freeland Run will be compromised.

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NEW YORK
The 'Doomsday Chic' Assault
A journal of international affairs interviews an Illinois economist who is debunking the doomsayers.

The following article is reprinted — at the suggestion of the Conservancy's Washington vice-president, Judi Darby — from The Interdependent, a New York-based journal supported by the Overseas Development Council, the U.N. Association and the Experiment in International Living.

by Alan Tonelson

"Here I am sitting in central Illinois. I'll have to depend on you to tell me what impact my work is having in Washington."

Julian L. Simon's modesty is admirable but slightly suspect. For the University of Illinois economist has started policymakers and academics across the country by savaging the view that Spacetime Earth is rocketing toward a Mahatian crack-up.

In a series of articles and in a new book called The Ultimate Resource, Simon argues that the physical constraints widely cited as threats or even barriers to continued worldwide economic growth — finite supplies of nonrenewable and non-fuel minerals, of overpopulation, of exhaustible soils, forests and fisheries, and of industrial pollution — are either illusory or surmountable.

Indeed, a small but increasingly influential band of researchers is arguing that the global-resources picture is brighter than commonly believed. Thus, University of Chicago demographers Donald Bogue and Amy Ong Tsui generated news and controversy in 1978 by announcing that the world population explosion had slowed markedly. Nick Eberstadt, a Harvard development economist, claims that UN and World Bank hunger estimates are widely exaggerated and that they ignore large-scale increases in per capita nutritional needs.

An Arlington, Virginia think tank, the Melton Institute, has published a report contending that market forces alone can stabilize U.S. energy demands and costs and can virtually eliminate imports by the turn of the century. And libertarian such as R.J. Smith, a Washington environmental consultant, argues that private ownership of resources can ensure the wise use of resources because entrepreneurs cannot exhaust their stocks without threatening future income.

After years of relative obscurity, Simon himself is now publishing in popular magazines such as The Atlantic Monthly. His book has drawn raves in Business Week and Fortune. He recently appeared on William F. Buckley's TV show, Firing Line. And the prestigious American Association for the Advancement of Science placed panels on The Ultimate Resource and on Global 2000 at its annual meeting in Washington in January 1982.

Says Davidson Gwatin, a demographer at Washington's Overseas Development Council, Simon's book "certainly is arousing a lot of attention in the population community... My own sense is that it will be quite influential... for better or worse."

And according to John O'Sullivan, editor of the Heritage Foundation's quarterly Policy Review, "In the general conservative community, books like Simon's are generating excitement and interest. They will be reviewed and generate more articles and discussion."

Yet Lester R. Brown of WorldWatch Institute disagrees. The author of the newly published Building a Sustainable Society, who warns that current human demands are consuming Earth's "productive resource base," predicts that Simon's works "will be forgotten very quickly once they come under critical review."

However, the views of the "optimists" are likely to have a big political impact. As O'Sullivan notes, "Their arguments do tend to justify what the Reagan Administration is trying to do, and the intellectual underpinning they provide makes policymakers more confident."

Simon emphasizes that man's secret weapon is human ingenuity (the ultimate resource), which can "forever continue to respond to impending shortages and existing problems" and leave mankind "better off than before the problem arose." Contrary to his critics, Simon insists, "I am not saying that all is well now, and I do not promise that all will be rosy in the future... What I am saying is that... the trends are positive, rather than negative."

And as he explained in an interview, he believes that many environmental activists are "guilty of excesses and exaggerations," which may guarantee that people "will lose hope, will lose will, will not use their talents to the fullest." A prime example of the "defeatists" Simon opposes is the Global 2000 Report, a weighty government study that warns of a world "more crowded, more polluted, less stable ecologically, and more vulnerable to disruption" by the turn of the century.

Facts about the dangers of growth date to the dawn of the Industrial Revolution in the late 18th century. The Rev. Thomas Malthus won lasting fame by predicting that population will forever grow geometrically and thus will outstrip increases in food production, which is destined to grow arithmetically. (Less well-known are Malthus' later concerns that birth control would slow population growth too much.)

But amid the often stunning economic growth and scientific progress of the next century and a half, such scenarios seemed far-fetched. Indeed, the US Government's first comprehensive post-World War II study of the country's resource stocks, the 1952 Paley Commission report, found no danger that any key raw materials would run out during the next 25 years.

In 1963, economists Harold Barnett and Chandler Morse (now of Washington University in St. Louis and Cornell University in Ithaca, New York, respectively) came to even more encouraging conclusions: since the end of the Civil War, the real costs of extracting most raw materials had steadily fallen, thanks to the innovations and adjustments that all modern "efficiency seeking" an economic device.

Then, the economic ills, environmental threats, famines and resource bottlenecks of the early and mid-1970s undermined traditional faith in continued growth. Several glossy studies reinforced the new pessimism, notably The Limits to Growth (1972), the Club of Rome study that argued that the dangers of "overshoot and collapse" are built into expanding modern economies and urged that all such growth halt within 30 years.

Dissenting voices, such as London University economist Walfrid Beckerman and Hudson Institute futurist Herman Kahn, struggled to be heard. But their words were drowned out — and seemingly belied — by a continuing flood of bad news.

Why are their views catching on now? Brown characterizes Simon's work as "a yearning for the kind of world that used to be but no longer is."

But O'Sullivan ventures that many Americans need to know that environmentalist thinking has condemned the lower and middle classes to their current shares of an inadequate economic pie. He also points to a "revival in popular Wealth of Nations thinking...a supply-side...which means of course a revival of interest in price questions."

Yet Simon is no mouthpiece for the Reagan Administration or for conservatism in general. He backs greater Government research and expenditure in many areas, such as nuclear fusion and pollution control. A revigoned space program, currently a prime target of Reagan budget-cutters, is also high on his priority list. In fact, the debate between resource optimists and pessimists is a debate over a surprisingly complex concept — resource availability.

At first glance, the problem seems purely arithmetic: the finite Earth must have a finite endowment of resources. But some resources are renewable, such as trees and fish. Still others are recyclable. And neoclassical economic theory long insisted that physical considerations are all but meaningless. Between man's imperfect knowledge of natural systems and mineral deposits and his ability to subsidize abundant materials for scarce, they argue, resource availability varies with price and technological progress.

These complexities emerge in sharp relief in the assumptions and methods behind Simon's The Ultimate Resource and Brown and 3Brown's Building a Sustainable Society.

Time frames are a major bone of contention. As Simon explains, "It's a question of how long you want to look back. He [Brown] wants to look back ten years, I want to look back one hundred years..." He regards the "diminishing returns" and higher resource prices of the recent past as a short plateau in the middle of a long curve of increasing abundance and declining costs. Brown sees the 1970s as a turning point revealing the first signs of long-term decay. (Both claim that the latest data support their views.)

They differ, too, in evaluating the importance of human decisions on resource availability. Asked about declining per capita food production and soaring populations, which will be "the most critical trap" in black Africa, Simon responded, "The problem is, Africa has practically nothing to do with underlying resource issues. The problem is government policies. Even the Sahel, he contends, is "no more ecologically fragile than Israel." Brown grants the "human factor," but argues, "The important issue is overpopulation and policy..." What he fears is that "if it's not arrested, changing the other factors won't compensate.

And they clash in population policy — the locus of Simon's major heresy. Simon wants a picture drawn strikingly different from the dangerously overcrowded world struggling to provide for millions of new mouths each year. He not only argues (correctly, Brown believes) that birth control will stabilize growth. He insists that population growth is ultimately beneficial. More people mean more producers as well as consumers. And since most humans produce more than they consume, living standards rise.

Even in poor third world countries, Simon maintains, higher population density will ensure that the economies of scale, transportation networks will able to distribute food during lean years and greater amounts of "human capital" capable of alleviating poverty and suffering. And he specifically disparages as "ridiculous" and "sterile" the notion that the planet has a "finite carrying capacity" that population levels will strain in the foreseeable future. ("I don't know about ten thousand years from now," he adds, arguing that the distant future is not worth worrying about."

From another hand, contends that "in focusing on growth rates, we miss a crucial consideration. From 1960 to 1976, world population grew from three to four billion. The fourth billion was very critical. It pushed human demand above sustainable yields of farms, grasslands, forests and fisheries.

As bottom, Simon is challenging not only the substance of doomsaying, but its very wisdom. An endless flow of bad news, he believes, generates despair, not resolve. But could stressing the positive breed apathy and complacency? Simon answered, "I think there are enough problems in our communal and national lives to promote longer for longer."

But such arguments are inherently less convincing than his charts, tables and statistics. For if the human mind is the ultimate resource, it is the ultimate mystery as well.

Alan Tonelson, Consulting Editor for The Interdependent, writes on foreign affairs from Washington.