Pied Piper

The U. S. Forest Service decides it is unable to stop gas pipelines from being laid across the national forest.

U.S. Forest Service officials in Elkins have already decided they do not have the power to control the placement of oil and gas well corridors in the Monongahela National Forest — despite the impending, multi-million dollar exploration program about to be mounted by the Houston-based Cabot Oil and Gas of Charleston.

That statement of forest policy was outlined during a late-July meeting of a forest interdisciplinary team held in Elkins.

"The Forest Service does not have the privilege to say 'No, you can't put a pipeline in,' because the mineral rights are not owned by the United States," explained Gil Churchill of the Monongahela's staff in Elkins. He noted that the mineral rights which Cabot hopes to develop are owned by private individuals and companies who have paid taxes on them for years and have the right to the minerals. Cabot has planned a five-year-long, $30 million exploration of 110,000 acres of the Monongahela and some surrounding private lands (See VOICE, April 1982). The meeting in Elkins at the Monongahela's headquarters was designed to pull together all available information for Cabot's first 11 wells. Expected by the middle of August is a decision by Monongahela supervisor Ralph Mummert on what constraints Cabot should be placed under as it begins its exploration efforts.

The interdisciplinary team that met in Elkins was not of a single mind about what controls Cabot should be straddled with. While few objections were raised to the proposed operating plans for the individual wells, a biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bill Tolin, said he believed that the Forest Service's refusal to deal directly with the problem of future gas well corridors was clearly a circumvention of the legal process.

"Our job is to reduce the impact on the forest's environment and other resources," said Churchill, who asked Cabot if it had a distribution plan to market the gas they hope to find. "You have to know where you are going to sell the gas — we have no purchase contract, so we can't address that," replied a spokesman for Cabot. He said Cabot could develop several generalized corridors, but couldn't be more specific because the distance to major pipelines is considerable and the success rate for drilling is only 10 to 15 percent.

Listening, Cabot's procedure for "building cars with no roads," Fish and Wildlife's Tolin said, "you must have a general idea of where the corridors may go. We should iron this thing out way ahead of time, so if there is no way to get the gas out, somebody could save a lot of money by not drilling some of those holes."

"We want a modified Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)," said Tolin, who stated that he considered it a circumvention of the legal process to not do the whole process.

But district ranger Bob Bodine of Webster Springs said he "would object to spending a bunch of money to analyze a bunch of corridors that might never come to pass, considering the low success rate of drilling."

Cabot concurred, saying, "We'd like to come in and tell you we have this gas buyer, and we will put this pipeline in, but we don't know who we will be selling to or if the drill will be successful."

(See turn to page 8)
Promises, Promises

(Continued from page 7) . . .pany, much the same as if for the snail darter — with the shoene on the other foot this time, hopefully. But if American Power System (APS), who has been trying for years to start a power project in Canaan Valley, wanted to quibble further, they would learn that we know they have a great deal of power with their current 48 percent reserve margin; but last we heard, Congress did have more.

While we’re on the subject of what Congress can and can’t do, since when does a company having to choose among orders from James Watt? This year’s crop of letters indicates Watt’s Congress — shouldn’t it be the other way around?

Despite our meetings, our letters, our work and our words; our Senators, let alone our Congressmen, for whatever reasons, are not exercising their considerable combined, or even singular, influence to protect Canaan Valley.

The 30,000 W. Va. constituents (the combined membership of the organizations represented by the joint letter to Senator Byrd) and the expertise of innumerable public agencies are not known to our decision-making political leaders will be made aware of this fact, even though demeans by Congressional default is not all Watt has going against it right now.

Stay tuned for the next exciting chapter as Democracy, Chauncey Browning, cashes in Canaan for political hay now sprouting on the back forty.

Gob Forest

(Continued from page 1) proposed area, information on the size, location and water quality of these seeps was not provided, nor was the information presented which will prevent these seeps from infiltrating the gob.

The application had no provision for long-term maintenance of diversion ditches, which will be constructed around the perimeter of the gob pile to prevent surface water from running across and eroding the face of the fills. While we understand that the Sodium Hydroxide or Soda Ash treatments for acidic discharges from the gob piles could be controlled well enough during varying flow extremes to maintain an acceptable discharge to a lightly buffered stream, such as the Shavers Fork.

The application in Webb’s words provides “no clear answer to the question of who will be responsible for maintaining and developing a treatment system if the pile becomes a long-term source of acid mine drain.”

In addition, Webb notes that Ingram Coal has not received a Water Pollution Control Permit from the Division of Water Resources for the construction and operation of their proposed disposal area.

In short, if they plan to enforce upon Ingram the State Water Pollution Control Act, which prohibits construction and operation of a refuse disposal area without a permit.

Clamoring his letter, Webb requested an informal, one-on-one conference with representation of the Conservancy Mining Committee, notification if the application or permit is in anyway modified, and the opportunity to submit additional comments prior to issuance of the permit.

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Cranberry Bill Faces Uphill Fight in Senate

By C. Stark Biddle

For the second time in two years a Cranberry wilderness bill has passed the House of Representatives. The bill, if passed by the Senate and later enacted by the congress, would protect 35,000 acres of the Cranberry back country located in Pocahontas and Webster counties plus 12,000 acres along the Laurel Fork river in Randolph county.

The Cranberry bill implements the bulk of the Forest Service's RARE II wilderness proposals for the state. Passage in the House was a major victory for environmentalists since the bill raised a number of issues of national significance and it was unclear until the final vote whether the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, working with other national organizations could avoid a destructive floor debate that might have led to defeat.

The Cranberry Bill was crafted and introduced by freshman congressman Cleve Benedict who had promised support for the Cranberry during his campaign. The Benedict bill is similar in basic respects to a bill that had passed the House two years ago. Neither Sen. Randolph nor Sen. Byrd have yet pledged support for the bill, and unless their support is gained, it is certain that the Cranberry will not receive wilderness designation this year. The process of getting the area declared wilderness would have to begin all over again.

Everyone interested in seeing the area receive wilderness designation should write to both Senators Randolph and Byrd urging them to support the Cranberry bill. The current controversy elements.

The new Cranberry bill is the culmination of ten years of work by the Conservancy, Cranberry friends and the Cranberry in West Virginia and elsewhere. In addition to placing the Cranberry area and the Laurel Fork areas under the protection of the Eastern Wilderness Act, the bill contains a series of provisions that are intended to provide equitable compensation to the CSX Corporation for the coal and gas rights that they own in the area. This has been a particularly hard issue to resolve since the true market value of the coal is not known and a federal cash payment was opposed by the Administration and county financial groups.

The final compromise involves an exchange of CSX mineral rights for Federally owned mineral rights elsewhere. Negotiations over the exchange must start three months after the bill is passed and the government must identify suitable exchange sites within six months. Should negotiations break down, the bill provides for binding arbitration.

A second major issue involved the so called "release" language. (See story on page 3) For some time, opponents of wilderness designation have tried to attach language to individual bills that would have the effect of preventing any further consideration of wilderness in that state. This has become a national issue since if the so called "hard" release language was attached to the West Virginia bill it would set an unfortunate precedent for all other wilderness bills. Congressman Don Young from Alaska had taken the lead in trying to attach the "hard" language. He has failed in Committee but opposition from the floor of the House was a distinct possibility and a floor fight would have seriously endangered passage of the bill. The "release" issue is a fundamental emotional issue with far reaching implications and Young had chosen the West Virginia bill for tactical reasons in the hopes that it might be a successful vehicle to carry the anti-wilderness language.

Cranberry Bill Resolves Controversy

Though the Cranberry has long been considered a prime candidate for wilderness designation, the issue has long been controversial. Underlying the publicly-owned surface resource are privately-owned mineral rights, including rights to a major coal deposit. If the area is to be added to the National Wilderness Preservation System, the owner of the coal, the CSX Corporation, must be compensated for the loss of access to its subsurface resources.

HR50 would resolve the controversy through an exchange of these resources for federally-owned mineral resources of comparable value elsewhere. The CSX Corporation would have access to an alternative mineral deposit, and the Cranberry would provide the ecological and recreational benefits of a large undeveloped area. However, the benefits of developing the Cranberry's coal deposit would be lost.

A recent study by Gloria Hefland and Kenneth Erikson of the Wilderness Society analyzes the tradeoffs between allowing development of the coal resource and preserving the Cranberry for the benefits of its wilderness values, especially for recreation. The methodology focuses on the relative scarcity of wilderness recreation versus coal. If the supply of one of the resources is in relative demand, while supplies of the other resource are ample to meet demand, then provision of the scarcer resource would provide greater benefits to society. The study aims to identify the more valuable use of the Cranberry.

Recreation in the Cranberry. Wilderness in the densely-populated eastern U.S. is a scarce commodity. Only one eastern national forest wilderness area is larger than the Cranberry — the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Minnesota — and only one is of comparable size, the Cohutta in Georgia and Tennessee. Only four roadless areas identified in the Forest Service's second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation are larger than the Cranberry — three in New Hampshire, one in Georgia. No national forest wilderness of comparable size lies within a 300-mile radius. Thus, the Cranberry is unique for its size alone. In addition, it provides habitat for species dependent on large undeveloped areas — black bear and wild turkey, for example — in addition to many other

(End of story on page 4)
Wilderness Spawns Many Myths - Few Are True

By Judith King Norgaard with Tom King

To George Stanley of the Region One Office, U.S. Forest Service
Have you ever heard someone say, “You locked up a wilderness!” It is just one of the myriad of myths concerning wilderness which are persistent and perpetuated - year after year.

How about “locking up the land!” We have all heard this is what happens when an area becomes a wilderness. While it’s true that activities such as logging or snowmobiling for pleasure are not permitted in wilderness, does their absence really “lock up” the land? Isn’t it also true that where these activities are permitted, because of the presence of wilderness is “locked out”?

Some claim that the areas made into wilderness could be improved by timber management practices. Obviously, since some areas in wilderness are by definition of forest lands with timber productivity potential, timber management practices could possibly improve the area for both timber and wildlife. But the attendant facilities, roads, machinery and vehicles are simply not compatible with the basic concept of wilderness.

It is the intention of the Wilderness Act of 1964 to designate wilderness areas and not to allow wilderness areas to be designed as a wilderness of land type. The areas in Idaho and Montana showed in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, about six percent of the forest lands were not in wilderness. Access to the forest lands with timber productivity potential, timber management practices could possibly improve the area for both timber and wildlife. But the attendant facilities, roads, machinery and vehicles are simply not compatible with the basic concept of wilderness. The area shown in the middle of the Cranberry, the choice for managed forests, traveling about and participating in a variety of activities. Contrary to another myth, lengthiness of time at the Cranberry is not always well represented. Older citizens do visit wilderness; studies have shown that visits are generally short and many are not determined.

The same study mentioned above showed that in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, only 11 percent of the visitors stayed for more than one night. This compares to 20 percent aged 16-25, 25 percent aged 26-35, 35 percent aged 36-50 and 35 percent over 50.

It has been shown that physical ability has no relation to whether people visit the wilderness. Lack of interest is of more importance than lack of ability as a barrier to participation.

Some people have asserted that wilderness is not a resource anything else. The Wilderness Act of 1964 offers a different definition of wilderness. It says that wilderness is the natural condition of the land, lacking human influence to the extent that the natural condition is preserved. However, with timbers and campers on the land, wilderness will only partially be restored. What is left of the wilderness will be subject to the same pressures as are encountered in the national forest system. The term back country is a handy way the Forest Service refers to the combination of management practices it uses in the study area. There are no Congressional dictations regarding what may or may not be done in an area administered as a back country.

Wouldn’t the Cranberry be considered a national forest, whether the Cranberry?
Hard V. Soft Release Is Critical Issue For Cranberry Wilderness

By C. Stark Biddle

Hard Release vs. Soft Release? No, it's not a new way to throw a curve ball, it's the single most important national issue affecting passage of the West Virginia Cranberry Bill. To put it simply, when National Forest lands are "released" they are made available for non-wilderness designation and for development. The Cranberry Bill currently contains so-called "soft" release language, but the "hard" language might have been attached and there is still a real threat that those who oppose further wilderness will succeed in writing in some version of the hard language. What is the difference, and why should supporters of the Cranberry bill care?

First, the similarities. Both versions apply to non-wilderness areas within a state - that is lands not designated as wilderness, plus areas specified for further planning. Both versions release these lands to uses other than wilderness and to development which in many cases means that the areas would lose the characteristics which make them eligible for future wilderness classification. But there is one major difference: the "soft" language releases National Forest land for just the present forest planning cycle - that is until 1992-94. At that time, these lands could again become eligible for wilderness. "Hard" language permanently excludes a state's National Forest lands from wilderness consideration.

The "soft" language is basically consistent with established forest management law and practice which recognizes that wilderness is one of a variety of legitimate uses, and establishes a planning process to periodically evaluate alternative uses. By removing wilderness as one option under multiple use management, and further, making it impossible to study an area for possible wilderness designation, the "hard" language would tie the hands of professional forest managers and exclude from the wilderness system areas and ecosystems not yet discovered.

In sum, the "hard" language makes a decision regarding wilderness classification for all time, while the "soft" language allows the planning process under the National Forest Management Act to proceed in due course.

The issue has national significance because NO bill has ever passed with the hard language, and if a bill did pass with the hard language, it would create a national precedent which would affect all other states with pending wilderness bills. It is for this reason that the Board of Directors of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy unanimously passed a resolution endorsing soft release language.

It is hoped the issue will be resolved, or lie dormant. The "soft" language already represents a substantial compromise and has been used in several wilderness bills which have already been enacted, so there is a precedent for soft release. However, the matter is controversial and emotional, and there are those - like Congressman Don Young from Alaska - who have threatened to block passage of any wilderness bill with "soft" language. The anti-wilderness faction has an insidious advantage - they can argue that the people of West Virginia shouldn't care about hard release, since they will get the wilderness they want. Why worry about other states? The National Forests belong to all of us, regardless of our home state, and we all have a stake in their careful management. So when you sit down and let your Senators know where you stand, tell them you're a hardliner on SOFT release!
The Cranberry Wilderness Study Area boasts majestic old growth spruce and northern hardwood forests that rival those described by early botanists and explorers to our state. Tragically reduced from its early botanists and explorers to our state. Tragically reduced from its spruce and northern hardwood forests the areas in the study area at these high elevations reveals a carpeted forest floor cushioned by various mosses, liverworts, ground-pines, clubmosses, ferns, and thick layers of hemlock, pine and spruce needles which cover virtually everything beneath the evergreen canopy. An occasional painted trillium, Canada Mayflower, or wood sorrel may have found enough light to grow, disrupting the continuous green and brown background so characteristic in the shade of this forest. The red berries of winterberry, lowbush cranberry, and huckleberry add color and serve as food for small animals of this biome.

Scenic trails descend from Black Mountain through open areas filled with jutting rocks exposed in the 1937 Black Mountain Fire. Mountain ash, aspen, fire-cherry, stunted spruce, high bush cranberry, blueberry, hawthorn, and rhododendron have established themselves in the soil from the weathered rocks. Trails, through thick growths of Rhododendron maximum that seems to continue for miles, are marked by the antler-like appearance of the reindeer lichen. As suddenly as it began, the rhododendron ends, opening up into the drastically different vegetation of the mixed northern hardwood forest and its diverse ground cover. A narrow belt of various species of birch, maple, and beech comprise this area. Black cherry, yellow birch, sugar maple, eastern hemlock, and beech undergo a gradual transition at lower elevations to yellow poplar, various oaks and maples, basswood, black locust, the magnolias, white ash, hickories and elm. The Forest Service estimate about 4,000 acres of old growth northern hardwoods and spruce are scattered throughout the proposed wilderness area.

Beneath the towering hardwoods in the spring, a wide array of wildflowers may be found. As many as five species of trillium cover areas as far as the eye can see. Acres of spring beaches with their tiny white and pink blossoms interspersed with the beautiful yellow flowers and mottled leaves of the yellow fawn lilies, present a show in the spring. A panorama which is a spring tonic to the observer. Probably the most widely known and earliest sought plants which appear at winter's end is the wild leek, Allium tricoccum, known locally as the "ramp." The lacy stalk of the dead top is used to locate the ramp even before the lily-like green leaves appear above ground. Eating this strong smelling wild onion imparts a foul odor to the breath that lasts for days, even after using the most potent of mouth washes.

A trip through the book "Spring Wild Flowers by Dr. Earl L. Core," shows a myriad of plant life rivaled by few areas of our state. The avid "naturalist" often finds treasures such as the pink lady's slipper, white Clintonia, showy orchis, purple fringed orchis, and long-lobed orchis at various times of the year.

The wilderness character of the area and its rich diversity of trees, plants, and shrubs attract 50-80,000 visitors each year and has been studied by such renowned naturalists as Earl L. Core, Roy B. Clarkson, Maurice Brooks, P.D. Strausbaugh, and H.C. Darlington.
Promises, Promises

Conservationists weary of promises of 'at wildlife refuge sometime.'

Mrs. Elkinston is the assistant regional representative for the mid-Atlantic region of the National Audubon Society, and has been active in the movement to save the Canaan Valley for well over a decade.

By LINDA COOPER ELKINGTON

We’ve made a concerted effort in the last few months to make our Congressional delegation more fully aware of what is at stake with the delay in action (by default or otherwise) on the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The position paper reprinted below characterizes the seriousness of the out-of-control development situation there at present. If the valley were added to the National Wildlife Refuge System as proposed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1979, the Valley's unusual plant and animal life would be protected and the unwise developments and other abusive activities that are now compromising its natural character would be prevented.

The count down goes something like this:

Senator Byrd has left us out in the cold. His support for "a" refuge "some time" is about as helpful as another cloud on a rainy day. And

his refusal to even sit down and talk with state conservation leaders about that might be done comes as a real slap in the face. Our efforts to meet with him extend back to the first of the year; and the joint letter, also reprinted below, with his swing response really make one wonder anew about his concern for the interests of his West Virginia constituents.

On May 14, Senator Randolph met with a small delegation (representatives from WVHS, WV Wildlife Federation, League of Women Voters of WV and the National Audubon Society) to discuss our concerns. The tele-a-tel was a bit terser as one however. The Senator, exhausted form the previous all-night Senate session on the budget, said he would find out what happened to the final report on the $400,000 Department of Energy study on alternatives to the Canaan power dam, that he must claim some responsibility for in the first place. Randolph also dispatched an aide to meet with us in short order so he could be made more fully aware of our concerns regarding uncontrolled development in the Valley, but he then chided us with the fact that he had "many more important things." Suffice it to say, we are still waiting to hear from either the Senator or his aide, but we've always known him to be a man of his word.

Allegheny Power System's proposed Canaan power dam was argued in the District Court of Appeals (the court on step below the U.S. Supreme Court) on June 18th. This makes unnecessary a proposed appeal by conservationists of the District Court decision, which was in favor of APS.

In the June 18 proceedings, the three-judge panel raised so many questions about the validity of issues decided by the lower district court, that the APS attorney was unable to argue his case as he had planned.

The conservation and state attorneys in the case argued that the case raised significant implications for a nationwide wetlands protection. Moreover, the attorneys argued that Congress never intended for the (FERC) to have exclusive review authority in every single area - a body contested content.

When the D.C. court will issue its decision on the case is not known, but the next step in the legal process will be the filing of another round of legal documents. Attorneys involved say a decision could come as early as this fall or as late as two years hence.

The deep hold this administration has placed on new land acquisition and the deep, deep hold the Department of the Interior (DOI) has put on the Canaan Refuge (again, see DOI's position, compliments of Senator Byrd) is the last thing we need with Canaan now having truly been "discovered." With all the worst, that work court now slowly but surely on the way Canaan needs protection now more than ever.

It is interesting that the red herring of last year, the "we must wait until the DOE study is completed," has now been replaced with a new one, "we must wait until the legal suits are settled" (which incidentally, as Congressman Benedict more accurately notes could well be many moons from now). No doubt the phrase has gotten its ghost authors off the hook with the constituents, who are unaware that Congressional action on the Refuge, would, in itself, put an end to both of lawsuits and any lingering questions about the Canaan power dam. It would say, once and for all, that the highest and best use of the Valley is with its protection, and that would end the matter for the power company.

Make Arrangements Now for the Fall Review

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W. Va. HIGHLANDS CONSERVANCY'S FALL REVIEW

A FAMILY EVENT

REGISTER NOW FOR CHILD CARE

Maximum fee $1.00/hr, but dependent upon final arrangements and number of children.

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If plans change and cancellation is necessary, I'll let you know immediately.

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Attach separate explanation if necessary.

Name.
Address
Phone

The Highlands Voice

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Make Arrangements Now for the Fall Review

CANAAN

Promises, Promises

Conservationists weary of promises of ‘at wildlife refuge sometime.’

February 17, 1982

Ms. Linda Cooper Elkinston Assistant Regional Representative National Audubon Society Rt. 5, Box 228-A Morgantown, West Virginia 26505

Dear Ms. Elkinston:

Thank you for your follow-up letter to my meeting with you and other West Virginians concerned with the Davis Power Project. I, too, feel the meeting was very beneficial.

As I mentioned during our meeting, I intend to keep an open mind regarding the various options for the Canaan Valley. Litigation continues to block progress on the power project. Correspondingly, the Department of Interior will not make any decision on the refuge proposal until the litigation is settled.

The Department of Interior has expressed this view to me and, more recently, to Mr. Don Hollen, President of Monongahela Power Company. The W. Va. Attorney General, Mr. Chauncey Brownlack has made no push to get the "404" case reviewed, and the eventual review may proceed all the way to the Supreme Court.

I am always happy to work with you to resolve this issue. Your continued comments and help will be invaluable to this effort.

Kind regards.

Cleve Benedict Member of Congress

CKB-dr
WASHINGTON

New Definitions

Proposed changes in the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Rehabilitation (OSM) regulations would make it nearly impossible for a citizens group to demonstrate that an area is suitable for mining. The new proposals would allow rejection of "trivial" petitions, requiring a petitioner to have property interests that would be adversely affected by mining. The revisions would affect 20 percent (375,000 acres) of the national forest land in West Virginia, according to Robert Lever of the States News Service.

In addition, some publicly owned parks and historic lands, where mining currently is prohibited, would be possible if development along with as much as 1 million acres in other Appalachian areas.

The Interior report said that the majority of the proposals would have a significant impact on the environment. "It concludes," said Dean, "that the potential for environmental damage is massive" because several of the proposed revisions could cause potentially significant impacts on water quality and other natural resources.

"It reinforces what has been our concern all along: that the Interior is making sweeping changes that in effect gut the federal strip mining act," said Dean.

Until the passage of the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act of 1977, spoil disposal practices of coal operators caused serious erosion, water pollution and destruction of vegetation, the Interior Department stated in a notice published in the Federal Register.

Regan administration officials contend, however, that the rules based on that law are too rigid and discourage mining.

The principal revision would eliminate a design standards concept of reclamation of mining waste. Coal operators would be allowed greater discretion in designing fills, as long as they accomplish the same environmental goals, said Francis Kelly, spokesperson for the Interior Department's Office of Surface Mining.

Yet one of the proposals is to add the term "irreparably" to the current rules defining an area as fragile if it would be damaged by surface mining.

The study also concluded:

+ Mining companies would be required to return land to make it fit for use, but not necessarily its original use. Thus a company could mine on a forest area, then make the land suitable for food crops or grazing, eventually. There were no demand for housing.

+ More than 20,000 privately owned sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places would no longer be protected from mining. The report estimated that several hundred, possibly several thousand, would be likely to be mined, unless local authorities intervened.

+ Wildlife, especially migratory birds, could be affected by the proposed elimination of the requirement that power lines at mines sit be designed to prevent the electrocution of birds that use them as perches. This could cause increased death of large birds such as eagles, hawks and falcons, the report said.

+ Relaxation of requirements for ground water monitoring could result in increased water pollution and acid mine wastes, with possible affects on public water supplies. "This implication would be particularly significant because it would probably have local, but long lasting effects on wildlife, particularly for vegetation and on public water supplies," the report said.

THE MONONGAHELA

Pied Piper

(Continued from page 1)

Tolin asserted, however, that "we are not addressing the cumulative impacts as set out by the National Environmental Policy Act; somewhere down the road we're going to say, 'How in the world did we ever get into this situation?'—if we had done good, long range planning whether we bought the surface, the mineral rights would have been purchased by the U.S. too.

"What I want to know is when will Cabot's story end?" said Tom Rodd, a resident, who said, "This looks like a valuable resource, now we have to do an EIS!"

The only respondents to the 60 letters sent out by the Forest Service concerning Cabot's drilling were the State Soil Conservation Board and the Sierra Club, both of which shared Tolin's concerns about the pipelines that will be used to remove the gas.

Churchill's notation that response was minimal, was countered by Tolin's assertion that the "forests are the best managed piece of property in the state—the people trust us to look after their interests, and that's why the response was so low.

One suggestion from the inter-disciplinary team came from landscape architect Sara Ungrodi, who said a check list for kinds of things that should be done for winter closure on these sites should be drawn up by the Forest Service. This list would ensure that sedimentation ponds would be pumped clean before winter sets in, and regularly pumped during the winter to prevent overflow.

Forest officials said that they expected a final approval of Cabot's operating plans by the middle of August. Cabot officials said they hoped to begin drilling by mid-September. Drilling operations are expected to continue late into the fall, and resume in the spring.

Resident Rodd, who said, "A second spill occurred when the wall of a pond collapsed following moderate rains, allowing thousands of gallons of silty, polluted gunk to flow into another tributary.

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR), whose Technical Resource Advisory Group will be meeting on August 11 at 10 a.m. in Charleston to consider the recurring problem of disposal of wastes from oil and gas pits, had water quality inspectors gather samples and take photographs to be used as evidence of violations of state regulations issued by DNR.

These inspections were called in after downstream residents noticed the discoloration of the stream said Rodd, a resident of Sandy Creek for the past five years, who says plans by Sandy Creek residents include a possible law suit against the offending drillers.

In addition to calling the DNR for action, Sandy Creek residents contacted Mountain Creek Stream Monitors (MSM) in January 1982 for assistance in establishing baseline stream quality data for future water quality monitoring. MSM will also present a workshop to local Girl Scouts, whose theme this year is "Clean Water."

Rodd says a deeper harm than the "devil-may-care?" attitude of the gas and oil extraction industry is "it kills the spirit to see huge trucks rumbling up the road, not knowing what sort of garbage will be flooding down through your front yard the next day," said Rodd, who explained that some of the area's farmers have been stewards of their land for over a hundred years.

"We see this water quality monitoring as more numbers and samples—it's an activity that can serve as a focus for community action and consciousness," said Rodd. The DNR group meeting, which will be in the Division of Water Resources conference room at 1301 Greenbrier Street in Charleston, welcomes the input of citizens. More information can be obtained by contacting Bill Brammon, Division of Water Resources, 1-348-5902.

Tell 'em Bard Sent Ya'! 

THANKS TO GULF OIL

For Honoring

RICK WEBB

West Virginia's Outstanding Conservationist

Bard Montgomery has started a campaign to praise Gulf Oil Company for its conservation award to Rick Webb, in the face of mounting opposition to Gulf from the state coal industry newsletter "Coal Bell.

Montgomery, chairman of the Highland Conservancy's Shavers Fork sub-committee, wants conservationists to shed their industry appearance as "nattering nagas." The industry team came from landowners, and in many cases the coal or mineral rights were retained by the owner or a third party, whose rights to those minerals cannot be abridged by the forest service (see front page story on Coal Oil).

The DNR must accept public comment on their EIS, which was published in two parts for 60 days from publication in the Federal Register. The first part of the EIS, which dealt with valid existing rights was published June 18, for 60 days. The deadline for comments is 4:30 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time, August 25, 1982. Comments may be mailed to:

Administrative Record (EIS-1 Supp.)
Office of Service Mining
Room 5315-L
1901 Constitution Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20425

Another Montgomery tactic calls for conservationists to let their Gulf dealer know their feelings by giving them "thank you cards" (see illustration above). The cards are available by writing Bard Montgomery, 512 Kanawha Blvd. W., Charleston, WV 25302. A donation of ten cents per card is requested, but not required, for reprinting. Montgomery asks that well-wishers please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope.