The 1987 Legislative Session

Chambers Elected Speaker

Robert "Chuck" Chambers (D-Cabell) was elected House Speaker. Chambers has been House Judiciary Committee Chairman since 1985 and is generally acknowledged as Legislature's most effective advocate in conservation issues. He has been a Conservancy member for several years.

What is a National Wildlife Refuge? Why are they important?

National Wildlife Refuges play an important part in the conservation story of the United States. In combination, they make up the national Wildlife Refuge System — a farflung collection of lands and waters selected for their value to America's wildlife populations, particularly migratory birds and rare mammals. Over 400 refuges totaling 34 million acres are now in the System.

These Refuges range in size from just over 200 acres to several million acres and are the primary way our government protects wildlife in America. A federal refuge is a high-quality natural area with unusual and special natural features. Refuges insure the availability of important habitats for wildlife and for research on species whose populations may be little understood or decreasing in number. Through specific management plans, a Refuge's important resources are protected, public awareness of its value to mankind is promoted, and a variety of outdoor recreational activities is provided to the public. Where wildlife populations are especially plentiful, public hunting, fishing and trapping are permitted on a Refuge.

The National Wildlife Refuge System is

A Wildlife Refuge In Canaan Valley

by Linda Elkinton

Canaan Valley is fourteen miles long, four miles wide and 3,200 feet above sea level, the highest valley of its size east of the Mississippi River.

National wildlife refuges are popular as places to find large numbers of many kinds of wildlife. Few other sites afford opportunities to see such great, stirring concentrations of waterfowl and other birds. Refuges not only harbor birds and mammals, but also provide for species of plants, insects, amphibians, and reptiles that each year become more difficult to find in other places. Many refuges have fine scenic and historical values that are preserved, along with the wildlife.

Our national wildlife refuges often are thought of as self-operating wildlife paradies from the time they are established. More often than not, they have been developed from areas misused in the past by drainage, lumbering, burning and overgrazing, and needing restoration to become first-class wildlife habitat. This is accomplished through management techniques that may include regulated livestock grazing to provide habitat for more successful wildlife use, soil conservation practices, or forestry programs.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) of the Department of the Interior administers the System. Some Refuges are managed by States through cooperative agreements with the USFWS. Funds for the purchase and operation of these important areas come from Congressional appropriations, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (primarily collections from the lease of off-shore mineral reserves and fees collected for certain uses of Refuges) and from funds made available by the DOI for use.
Mountaineer View - The Bottle Bill
by John Purbaugh

True, there are some people who won't stop littering if we pass a bottle bill. Once, when showing some visiting families the New River Gorge from the Old Fayette Station Bridge, we saw some 'necks down from Ohio gleefully seeing who could come closest to the rafters with their empty bottles. I spoke harshly before bothering to count them and gotackerED-punched for my trouble. I don't really believe enhanced enforcement of existing litter laws will affect such people. I have a lawyer friend who while working for DNR got so frustrated that he drafted, only partly in jest, a bill which provided for summary execution for stream littering. The only mechanism, short of the firing squad, which has a track record of changing litter behavior is a "beverage container deposit law," or "bottle bill." In the nine states with a bottle bill not only has beverage container litter been dramatically reduced, but the total volume of all other litter and all solid waste has also been reduced as the recycling ethic takes hold.

General information on the bottle bill was presented by Charlie Garlow of the West Virginia Citizens Action Group in the December Voice. To me, the hardest problem to deal with is the remote possibility that a bottle bill would hasten the long existing downward slide of West Virginia's glass and metal manufacturing industry. I am not comfortable with the sight of a newly laid-off factory worker, and my guilt is not soothed by studies which show that his union-scale job will be replaced by several low-wage jobs in the new container-handling source sector.

However, speakers for the container industry, as is typical with such folks, give very little in the way of specific facts on the likely impact on West Virginia industry beyond predicting plant closings. How much has industry employment declined over the past five or ten years without such a bill, and why? What percentage of local plants' container production is distributed in West Virginia? Against such unanswered question and more stands the fact the travel/tourism is reported by the West Virginia Department of Commerce to be the second largest industry in the state. A clean, litter-free landscape is required for any expansion of this trend.

Not only West Virginia's but the national economy as well is undergoing fundamental change. A bottle bill is a vital part of that change, a change that will do much more good than evil.

Positive Dialogue Appreciated

Dear Editor:

I appreciated very much two columns by Messrs. Purbaugh and George which ran in your November issue.

Mr. Purbaugh's remarks on the relationship between an employer and its employees on environmental issues are very thought provoking. I further appreciated his remarks that The Conservancy's objections to several of the policies of our administration are not based on partisan Politics.

I view our differences of opinion on certain matters which have come before my agency as primarily differences of preferred tactics and differences on rather narrow or procedural issues but not as differences in our fundamental commitment to environmental protection.

It could be fairly said that the goal of this administration is to work within existing state laws and technical standards to conduct the implementation of environmental measures by the State of West Virginia in an efficient and cooperative manner as possible. If we do that effectually, we should be able to link jobs to continued advances in environmental quality.

Mr. George's comments concerning Governor Moore's position on the Davis Power Project is insightful. Mr. George is correct in stating that the State of West Virginia as a major energy producer is in a strong position to be on the forefront of the construction of new environmentally sound, state-of-the-art electric generating stations. A positive dialogue along the lines which Mr. George suggests is something that the environmental and industrial communities can engage in which will result in long-term benefits to the State's economic and natural environments.

Sincerely,
Michael A. Fotos, Deputy Director
Department of Natural Resources

Objection To Using BTI In New River Gorge

Dear Editor:

As a resident and possible spray target for BTI, I read your previous issue with great interest and was shaken to find nothing in it mentioning the link between rising blackfly populations and sewage in the New River and similarly affected rivers. The NPS report clearly stated that the sewage levels in these rivers provides the ideal habitat for Blackfly larvae. Clearly this "out break" could be controlled much closer to its source with greater benefit to recreationists and public health with new and improved sewage treatment plants and sewage lines in the rivers adjacent ravines and streams.

The spring and summer months are these areas highest tourist season. Low water flow combined with increased evaporation causes a rise in human waste entering and remaining in the rivers. These wastes will not be eliminated by BTI application; indeed the labeling calls for an increased dosage of BTI when sewage levels are raised. The label on the container of Tektron HP-D, the brand name BTI which would be used under the DNR proposal, cautions against human inhalation or contact with open eyes or wounds: "Environmental Hazards: Do not apply directly to treated, finished drinking water, reservoirs or drinking water receptacles."

Due to BTI's possible health effects, people would be prohibited from using the river on the planned 15 day total in 1987. Residents have no where to go and hide; our property and gardens are prey to aerial drift, our springs and wells to runoff contamination. Pre or post biological research of human side effects has not been done by the DNR or other agency.

I do not care to be a guinea pig for industry when the same amount of money would build proper disposal and treatment of this main culprit.

Carol S. Osgood
Brooks, WV

Guidelines For Articles and Letters To The Editor

The Voice welcomes any well-researched article or editorial on areas of concern, for example, river conservation, public lands issues. I have adjusted the following guidelines been established:

1. Whenever possible, articles should be typed, double spaced on 8 1/2 inch paper, with at least one margin on each side. If the submission is not typed, the author should use lined paper and write legibly on every other line.

2. Each article should be accompanied by the author's name, address, and telephone number. (Address and telephone number will not be printed with the article, but may be used to contact the author for additional information, if necessary.) If the article is more than one page, the author's last name should be placed under the page number on each page.

3. Photographs related to the article are greatly appreciated. Black and white photographs reproduce best, but color photographs will be used. Photographs will be returned if the author requests them.

4. The deadline for each issue of the Voice is the first Friday of each month.

The Voice also welcomes letters to the editor expressing views on any of the topics covered in previous issues or on other environmental concerns. Letters to the editor should follow the guidelines for articles.
Cross-Country Skiing In The Cranberry Backcountry
by Kleta Burnham
Good news for those who love the Cranberry Glades and Backcountry! New XC ski trails in the upper creek valleys, and would help sustain the nets of dinosaurs and offers river running on the Yampa and Green Rivers and hiking in the high-desert country.

The Richwood Ski Club was formed in 1982 in cooperation with the Richwood Chamber of Commerce and the U.S. Forest Service Gauley Ranger District office at Richwood to develop and promote XC ski trails in the Cranberry Backcountry trail system. All the trails were already in existence and will be familiar to those who have already hiked in the Cranberry Backcountry. For beginner skiers, the Cranberry River Road and Glacier Boardwalk is an excellent outing. More experienced skiers would like the Cowpasture Trail around the Cranberry Glades or the Pocohontas Trail around Blue Knob west of the Visitor Center. Close to Richwood, beginners are directed to the Cherry Hills Golf Club 3 miles out of Richwood or to the Forest Service roads at the Summit Lake area 10 miles east of Richwood. More advanced skiers would enjoy the Pocohontas Trail at the gate above Summit Lake out to Hanging Rock to the west or to Miles Knob to the east. The Frosty Gap Trail in the Dogway Road area is also a challenging outing.

The newest development on XC skiing in the Cranberry is the emergence of the Richwood Mt. Visitor Center, offers X-C ski rentals as well as ski lessons and guided tours of the trails in the area. The Cranberry Nordic Center is also planning to groom and set track on Forest Service trails and roads around the Visitor Center.

The Richwood Chamber of Commerce is sponsoring a Richwood Winter Festival. Events begin Friday, February 8th with a parade, bonfire, and hayride. Saturday, February 9th, will feature a chili cook-off indoors and snow fun events outdoors, including snowball throwing, snowman making, 2x2 antique race, sled races, and medley relay ski races. The evening will end with a pig roast and dance. The big event Sunday, February 8, will be a 10X-C ski race. For more information on any of these happenings in Richwood and the Cranberry Backcountry call the Richwood Chamber of Commerce at 846-6790 or the Gauley District Ranger Station at 846-2695. A map of this trail system which includes 75 miles of trails in the Monongahela National Forest from Richwood east to the Cranberry Mt. Visitor Center atop Kempton Mountain is distributed through the Richwood Chamber of Commerce. The trails are posted with standard U.S. Ski Association signs as to trail name and difficulty. Also available is a 24-hour ski condition hotline which is located at the Richwood Chamber of Commerce office, 846-6790.

New River Gorge Gets New Superintendent

Joseph Kennedy, currently the Superintendent of Dinosaur National Monument in Utah, has been appointed as Superintendent of New River Gorge National Park in West Virginia. As Superintendent of Dinosaur since 1979, Kennedy administers a 211,000-acre park that preserves the fossils of dinosaurs and offers river running on the Yampa and Green Rivers and hiking in the high-desert country.

Kennedy joined the National Park Service in 1961 as an administrative officer at Kings Mountain National Military Park in South Carolina. He later served in the same capacity at Fort Pulask National Monument in Georgia and as a management analyst in the office of the Secretary of the Interior from 1965 to 1968.

From 1968 to 1971, he was Assistant Superintendent of Everglades National Park where he helped acquire land and develop Biscayne National Park, a new national park area of 33 keys. In 1971, he became Assistant Superintendent of another new national park area, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area on Lake Powell, a lake formed from the Colorado River. Much of his effort here went into the construction of boat ramps, marina sites, campgrounds, and employee housing to handle an influx of visitors coming to this recreation area.

"Joe Kennedy's experience in managing river rafting and in developing new park areas will serve him well at New River," said James W. Coleman Jr., Regional Director of the Mid-Atlantic Region of the National Park Service.

Ecological Flood Control
by Robert Stough
During the past year since the terrible floods of November 1985 there has been, understandably, much renewed debate upon technological solutions to help prevent future disasters as well as generate revenue for local inhabitants. These have principally concentrated on the construction of massive watershed control projects that would be so designed and built as to eliminate all significant danger to those living along the rivers from 100-year floods and eventually wall themselves with hydropower and recreationally created incomes. Accordingly, these proposals would involve expenditures of hundreds of millions and many forms of construction, and unless we can find more modest configurations and require the draining of thousands of acres along the river edges by both nature and man we would partially achieve the goal of eliminating risk for river dwellers by eliminating the river dwellers themselves.

Those who would be the principal developers and beneficiaries of these projects have made, to put it gently, optimistic appraisals of the economic benefits of construction. We are being told of a new boom for the coal industry, lavish revenues from the sale of hydroelectricity, and an influx of tourists, the like of which we have never seen. Perhaps these claims would all come true. The trouble is, however, that it we go ahead with dam building we must have done the impossible to make the worst of the possible. It will be worse off than before, having degraded our natural heritage once again to serve the ends of a very limited and for the most part short-term, immediate, but not possibly sustainable, economic need. We can do no better.

We have been and doubtless will continue to be strongly persuaded to undertake massive projects that will have most to gain and the least to lose, and they will continue to tell us that if we fail to undertake these projects in the near future we may forever lose the possibility of doing so, to our permanent economic loss. But by far the most valuable commodity of the highlands is the land itself. Revenues connected with tourism and many forms of recreation are growing fast and should continue to grow as long as we maintain the natural integrity of the highlands, and even in times of national economic depression the relative proximity of the highlands to major urban centers would likely provide a continuing source of revenue for local inhabitants, as opposed to the demonstrably wild fluctuations of the energy industry. In order to stay free we must also keep in mind that we must understand that the value of the highlands as a tourist haven depends greatly on the fact that our land is largely untouched. And although untouched does not have to mean undeveloped, but rather environmentally sensitive development according to specific local needs. Yet even if massive dam-building is not economically or ecologically justifiable we must still concern ourselves with the dangers of flooding, and the need for alternative sources of energy that do not result in the pollution of the atmosphere. By carefully considering smaller-scale watershed management programs (including hydro-power developments that would serve local needs without obliterating unique ecological habitats such as Canaan Valley, and both natural and non-structural we should be able to largely eliminate the danger from the 20-year type floods that are likely to occur every ten decades and to come, and also perhaps consider reforestation projects that could greatly decrease the risk of 100-year floods to future generations. The fact that the floods of 1985 and many previous years could have been mitigated by intelligent conservation practices such as Canaan Valley would make it possible for our generation to achieve results that should not be forgotten. Nevertheless we must all keep in mind that full protection for rivers dwellers at an affordable cost, if it is even possible, must depend primarily on personal choices and actions of those who have the determination to achieve local self-sufficiency. If we wish to live in deep, relatively narrow river valleys surrounded by tall, broad mountains it must become a matter of common sense and social responsibility that we locate and construct our houses and businesses to make them less vulnerable to damaging floods. We have no choice. Our political leaders and politicians are recommending, or we can finally come to the realization that the earth we are exploiting, however bountiful it may seem to some, is not an endless treasure that we may plunder at our whim but an interwoven and counter-balanced system that we disrupt at our peril. Our past failure to acknowledge the interdependence of all things has cost us dearly, and a lot more than we thought. But the many hardships that we are now experiencing are the results of that short-sightedness. We have seen again and again that development as any kind of development ultimately becomes development at the cost of our natural heritage, and thus at the cost of our most viable and stable economic base.

There is nothing that we can do for our children that will benefit them more than our wise use and conservation, and with possible, restoration of our natural resources. And to do less than this, when we know all too well the misery it could cause them would be a sad repudiation of those family values we say we hold dear. The path of ecological balance isn't nearly as difficult or uninteresting as some would have us believe. It does not exclude careful, patient development or demand unreasonable sacrifices, it offers the inestimable reward of an economy and communities that are in harmony with the living earth itself and can be sustained and depended upon for generations to come.

Join The WVHC Today
The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is a private, non-profit environmental organization started in 1967. Its objectives are "to promote, encourage, and work for the conservation - including both preservation and wise use - and appreciation of the scenic, historic, open space, wilderness, and outdoor recreation resources and actions of 'The Highlands Region.'"
The tiny frontier community of Draper's Meadow in western Virginia was enjoying a particularly peaceful Sunday afternoon on July 8, 1755. Having been established only a few years prior by the Ingles and Draper families, it was one of the first white settlements west of the Alleghenies. By total surprise the Shawnee raided Draper's Meadow, killing three people and retreating along the New River on horseback with Mary Ingles and her two children as hostages.

For several days the raiding party traveled downriver and eventually overland to a large Shawnee village near the mouth of the Scotto River along the Ohio. There Mary's children were given as booty to Indian families, and shortly after, Mary was moved to a large salt works in what is now Boone County, Kentucky, near Cincinnati. With an escape planned her co-conspirator was a Dutch woman faced wild animals, an early eventual overland to a large Shawnee village on the Ohio.

Despite the proposed location of the trail within the national river boundaries, many private owners would be involved and recreational licenses would have to be secured. As the Chapter began to contact property owners, it became clear that there were two areas of concern about entering such lands with WVSTA. One was a concern over liability, and the other was what effect such licenses might have on future negotiations with the NPS.

To resolve liability concerns with private property holders, WVSTA on behalf of the Ingles Chapter secured a general liability insurance coverage in 1985 and continues to carry it. The other point was addressed in a Memorandum of Understanding between WVSTA and the NPS.

In the same manner as the Appalachian and Allegheny Trails were built, the Mary Ingles Trail is underway. With the groundwork laid, other communities along Mary Ingles' route will see the benefits of trail development and organize to extend it through their areas. In no small vision, it will take years of work to establish the 450 mile trail, but with continued commitments from private citizens, businesses, and governmental agencies, hikers will some day be able to retracethe entire route of Mary Draper Ingles' return from captivity.

Anyone wishing more information may contact: Mary Ingles Chapter of WVSTA, P. O. Box 813, Fayetteville, WV 25840.

Mary's Route Revisited

Retracing the route taken by Mary Ingles in her 1755 journey into the wilderness is not easy even today. The dotted line on the map shows the eastward route, from what is now Big Bone Lick, taken by Mary after she escaped from her captors.

Establishing a trail on the west bank of New River between Cotton Hill and Prince is a long term goal for members of the Mary Ingles Chapter of WVSTA. The Mary Ingles Chapter hopes to see a section of the trail across from Thurmond opened this spring. (Map from the NRGNR)

[Elizabeth Watson is a member of the Mary Ingles Chapter and served as chairperson during its first year. She is also a whitewater raft guide on the New and Gauley Rivers and has worked for the New River Gorge National River.]
The Bluestone Turnpike Trail

by Jim Phillips

One of the most interesting hikes in southern West Virginia is the eight mile trek from Pipestem Resort State Park to Bluestone State Park through the Bluestone Public Hunting and Fishing Area. This trail has been unofficially named the Bluestone Turnpike Trail. It is believed that the original Bluestone Turnpike followed this same route. If you have an interest in geology, history, flora or fauna just enjoy walking through some beautiful country, then this is the walk for you.

The exposed rocks in the canyon consist of red, gray and green shale sandstone. In some places there are small areas of limestone, usually containing marine fossils. The name "Bluestone" may come from a blue-green mineral vein visible in exposed shale. The original Indian name for the stream has been translated as "Big Stone." The source for this name obviously comes from the large boulders found in the river. This whole area along the Bluestone River has been described as a canyon or gorge. The depth of this canyon ranges from 300 to 1200 feet. Midway down the canyon wall, especially in and near Pipestem Resort, is a fairly level bench area made up of sandstone cliffs which contain quartzite pebbles.

Human activities along the river date back to about 1000 B.C. Local historians locate a trail of the Shawnee Indians along the river. Apparently the Indians would travel along the river in their journeys from the Ohio River country to western Virginia. Evidence indicates that Mary Draper Ingles, during her famous encounter with the Shawnee Indians, followed the Little Bluestone and on down the Bluestone River. White men first began to explore the region along the Bluestone in the mid-1700's. Migration to the area was slowed by the Indian wars until late in the 1700's. One of the first settlements in the county was located at the mouth of the Little Bluestone River. Until the late 1930's, a community, complete with post office, store, and a grist mill, was located there. Subsistance farming was the main source of sustenance along the river. Extensive logging was done during the early part of this century. Signs of these early inhabitants can still be seen along the trail in the form of rock piles, fallen-down cabins and road grades.

During the spring, a large assortment of wildflowers can be found along the river. Late April and early May can be like a vision from your imagination with golden ragwort as yellow as gold, blooming under the lavender flowers of redbud, Bluebroid, trilliums and Jack-in-the-Pulpit add to the spring splendor. Various mints, snakeroot in shales and sandstone. Marine fossils. The exposed rocks containing gray and green shales and sandstone.

The Bluestone River Area

The Turnpike Trail is on the west side on the river and connects Bluestone and Pipestem State Parks.

Jim Phillips is the naturalist at Pipestem State Park. He is Field Notes Editor for The Redstart, the journal of the Brooks Bird Club.
with Refuge. Federal law provides that areas where Refuges are located receive special Refuge revenue-sharing funds in lieu of local taxes.

Many refuges contribute substantially to local economies. By law, local governments share in the revenues from grazing, haying, sale of timber, and other economic uses of refuges necessary for the best management of wildlife habitat. Refuges add to the economic base of their communities through local expenditures for food, supplies, and lodging by people visiting the refuges for recreation. Nearly 30 million visits are made to national wildlife refuges annually. Wildlife trails, interpretive centers, and other facilities are provided. National Wildlife refuge resident staffs who typically include a refuge manager, an assistant, maintenance personnel, and/or operation equipment operators, and clerks also contribute to the local economy.

A Refuge in WV Canaan Valley

West Virginia is the only state in the Nation that does not have a federal wildlife refuge within its borders. In the mid-1970s the USFWS, at the request of Senator Byrd, conducted a survey of possible sites for a federal refuge in WV. The survey showed Canaan Valley to be the State's best site for a refuge. Because of a number of imminent threats (including uncontrolled and rapid commercial and resort development and plans for a power dam there) the USFWS moved ahead with the necessary studies to determine the feasibility for establishing a refuge in Canaan Valley.

Many alternatives were explored by interested groups and government agencies in regard to the proposal. The one finally chosen selected for study based on

The Canaan Valley Refuge Management Plan

The proposal identified the following management objectives for the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge:

- Preserve in perpetuity approximately 28,000 acres of boreal habitat, a unique ecosystem, and its wide spectrum of plants and animals.
- Provide a unique educational resource to all ages by assisting with field studies and assisting with field studies and stimulating curiosity of living things by offering a variety of first-hand outdoor experiences.
- Provide for bird watching, photography, nature study, hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-oriented activities.
- Establish a woodcock research and management area. The Valley has the highest density woodcock population in West Virginia and is an important staging area for migratory woodcock.
- Provide and develop habitat for waterfowl consistent with preservation of existing ecosystems.
- Plan for provided hunting for a wide array of game species such as white-tailed deer, wild turkey, pheasants, duck, woodcock and snipe on the Canaan Refuge. Fishing for native trout, trout stocking by the State in the Blackwater River, and for bass found in some of the larger beaver ponds in the Valley would also be a feature of the Refuge.
- Opportunities for hiking, camping, canoeing, wildlife observation, nature photography and other forms of outdoor recreation would be expanded, and boardwalks to view the more inaccessible and sensitive wetland areas constructed. Wildlife studies and biological research would guide wildlife management. Activities such as an interpretive environmental education program for teacher training and school-age children would be available.

The Canaan Valley Refuge would be a focal point for regional environmental education. School districts in Tucker, Grant, Randolph and Pendleton Counties would be within easy driving distance for day trips to the valley. Students and teachers involved in formal environmental awareness programs could use refuge lands and facilities. Use of refuges as outdoor classrooms is nearly always encouraged through refuge sponsored workshops where teachers are familiarized with what the refuge offers.

The Canaan Refuge, it was noted, would also attract visitors from other areas and to a large degree, enhance the excellent outdoor recreational opportunities already available in the Potomac Highlands area of the State. These include those available in the Canaan Valley State Park, Seneca Rock-Spruce Knob National Recreation Area, Blackwater Falls State Park and the Dolly Sods and Otter Creek Wilderness areas. All within thirty miles of Canaan Valley.

The Refuge Plan and Canaan Valley Residents

It is important to note that as proposed the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge would displace no present residences or businesses in the Valley and traditional land uses such as present farming practices are both protected and enhanced by the Refuge plan. These and other traditional uses of Valley lands would be encouraged.

Land use agreements would allocation of the remainder of Valley wetlands or if available they could be purchased at fair market value on a willing-seller willing-buyer basis. The Canaan Valley Refuge will not mean the end of private ownership or development that might be undertaken by private owners in the Valley.

The rights of private landowners would not be affected except in cases where land uses or developments planned by private landowners may adversely affect Refuge lands. In such cases the full array of land use management agreements such as scenic easements, purchase of development rights, life use reservations, would be available to land owners.

The Refuge plan for hunting for a wide array of game species such as white-tailed deer, wild turkey, pheasants, duck, woodcock and snipe on the Canaan Refuge. Fishing for native trout, trout stocking by the State in the Blackwater River, and for bass found in some of the larger beaver ponds in the Valley would also be a feature of the Refuge.

The plan called for the initial establishment of the Canaan through the purchase of Valley lands held by the Allegheny Power System and the Chesapeake System. The estimated cost was $52,000,000 ($79,000). Other lands would be added as they and money became available.

While the Refuge would remove lands from county jurisdiction and tax roles, it would increase local government revenues through Refuge revenue sharing payments estimated in 1979 to be $380,000 annually. This amount was more than 1½ times the total revenues collected in the entire County in 1979 ($268,000) and nearly ten times that collected in the Valley lands at the time. Neither of these has changed a great deal since 1979. These funds would be available for use for schools and roads and other county government operations.

Administrative personnel, equipment, and facilities would be located at a headquarters complex in the valley. Six permanent and three to five temporary staff were projected to be employed by the time the refuge was fully operational. Projected funding for administration, staffing, and operations would involve annual expenditures of some $200,000, half of which, it is estimated, would be added to the local economy in return for goods and services purchased for refuge operations and personnel. Applying a business multiplier of 1.21, this would mean the addition of $212,000 in local expenditures and revenues.

A fishing, a major activity, would remain an important form of recreation. Hunters would continue to come to the area seeking the quality upland big-game hunting experience available in Canaan Valley. Hiking and canoeing and other forms of wildlife-wetlands recreation, such as photography and bird watching, would be encouraged.

The geological and historical background of the area in all boreal settings would also attract draw visitors.

Long-range recreational use of the wildlife refuge was projected to increase, accompanying the growth of tourism in the region. The Canaan Valley State Park and Monongahela National Forest to the south would also attract and accommodate visitors seeking non-wildlife-oriented recreation in the area.

A study based on the 1985 visitation to the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge on the Maryland-Virginia border indicated that visitors to that Refuge spend an average of $33.33 per day on-site for food, beverages, lodging and entertainment. Given an annual visitation of just 100,000 annually to the Canaan Refuge, this could mean as much as $3,330,000 to local merchants and businesses.

Canaan Valley Refuge Plans

A modified refuge plan being advanced by the National Wildlife Federation and a committee of interested organizations, calls for a Canaan Refuge of 18,000 acres. It would be composed of lands presently held by the Allegheny Power System and the same lands for which they have sought a license for the Davis Power Project and adjacent lands for partial mitigation of losses of wildlife and habitat associated with the flooding of some 4,600 acres of the Valley's invaluable wetlands.

The plan calls for an exchange of land between the Department of Interior and APS to provide for the establishment of the Refuge.

The addition of either 28,000 (all the land in Canaan Valley except the State Park), and as originally proposed, or 18,000 acres, as in the modified plan, to the National Wildlife Refuge System would be a monument to the clear thinking of this and future generations. It would protect the Valley's wetlands - the largest of their kind to be found in the eastern United States; insure the Valley's accessibility to all Virginians and contribute greatly to the economic well-being of Tucker County, the surrounding area, and the State of West Virginia.

Wide-spread public support expressed in letters from individuals and organizations will be required for a federal wildlife refuge to be established in Canaan Valley. Ultimately, it is the only viable alternative for protecting the natural and unusual plant and animal life there.

Continued uncontrolled commercial development and land development in general without any kind of overview planning to protect fragile resources and water quality is already impacting the delicately-balanced ecosystem and visual amenities. At present, land ownerships are constantly changing and no assurance exists that the large areas of the Valley will protect the overall integrity of Canaan will remain intact.

Despite continued opposition by local political leaders and development interests to protection of the resources of Canaan Valley, the long-term economic benefits of doing so has never been stronger among both old-time and newer residents of the Valley. Local towns and surrounding communities outside the Valley proper could benefit greatly from a Canaan Refuge. And, its establishment would insure protection of the very resources that attract people to the area in the first place. A Refuge in Canaan and an overall management plan would prevent the destructive effects involved in building, literally, on the very land and resources that need protection to insure sound economic growth and development in the area.

Persons interested in having this modified Refuge plan fully considered and acted upon should write Governor Moore, APS, Donald B. Regan, Governor, and President Regan, and be prepared to write again as more details of this plan become available.
NEWS

Elections Show Environmental Concern

John B. Oakes, former Senior Editor of The New York Times, feels that last November's election results reflect "a back to environmentalism movement" by the country's voters. He bases his statement on conservation victories in key issues in New York and California. In New York, voters approved by 2 to 1 a $1.45 billion bond issue to help clean up toxic waste sites and to acquire lands in the Adirondacks and Catskills to be added to the state park system. In California, voters approved by 2 to 1 a measure restricting industrial and agricultural use of more than 200 toxic chemicals in order to prevent contamination of drinking water.

In addition, Oakes pointed out, "Almost every senatorial candidate supported by the nonpartisan League of Conservation Voters won." Although environmental issues were not the leading concerns in many states, in several races "a candidate's stand on the environment made the difference, especially against opponents whose environmental records were particularly dismal."

In a New York Times/CBS News poll, nearly two-thirds of the respondents agreed that "protecting the environment is so important that requirements and standards cannot be too high, and continuing environmental improvements must be made regardless of cost." Oakes pointed out that the affirmative vote on this question has risen from 45 percent in 1981 to 66 percent in 1986.


Wildlife Funding Victories

Defenders of wildlife claim victories in gaining money from the 96th Congress for environmental programs despite the Gramm-Rudman-Hollings Act and Reagan's proposed cuts in environmental spending.

Congress provided $42 million to buy refuge land, a $2 million increase over last year. Programs to clean up toxic contaminants on National Wildlife Refuges and to investigate nonlethal predator control were also funded. In addition Congress voted $4.3 million for grants to states for cooperative work with the Fish and Wildlife Service on endangered species. A study to determine the possibility of creating another wildlife refuge along the Upper Sacramento River in California to preserve dwindling riparian lands received $150,000.

Activist Network News, December 1986

American Outdoors Commission Wants Scenic Urban Corridors

The President's Commission on the American Outdoors recommended that a network of scenic corridors, "greenways," be established along streams, abandoned rail lines and highways to make outdoor recreation more accessible to urban residents. Since 78% of all Americans now live in cities and towns, and urbanization of the nation will likely increase in the next century, Tennessee Governor Lamar Alexander, chairman of the commission, said the commission considered it vital that more recreational areas be established closer to cities, providing a "close-to-home" alternative for many urban residents who did not have the time or money to travel to distant national or state parks.

The panel's report said private interests and communities must take a bigger role in enhancing outdoor recreation because there is only so much the federal government can or should do. The summary report called for Congress to set up a one billion dollar trust fund to help pay for innovative recreation, wildlife, and conservation efforts.

Some panel members suggested that farmers, particularly those in depressed areas, might gain new income sources by turning over idle farm land for conservation projects.

Charleston Gazette, December 31, 1986

Battling Acid Rain

Scientists at the Sandia National Laboratories in Livermore, California, reported they have developed a process to remove nitrogen oxides from power plant emissions and truck exhaust. Nitrogen oxides account for half of the acid rain in the United States, according to the environmental group Americans Against Acid Rain.

Chief Sandia researcher Robert A. Perry reported that his tests with a small diesel engine proved cyanuric acid, a white granular chemical used to stabilize chlorine in swimming pools, is 99 percent effective in eliminating nitrogen oxides from exhaust. Heat from the exhaust system turns the cyanuric acid into a gas that reacts chemically with nitrogen oxides, breaking them down into harmless components of nitrogen and water.

The chemical reaction also produces a small amount of carbon monoxide, another toxic gas, but Perry said, "It's possible to take care of carbon monoxide with a later step. The major stumbling block in emission control has been nitrogen oxides."

Charleston Gazette, December 18, 1986

BRIEFS

State Buying 41-Acre Lake Near Ripley

The state of West Virginia is purchasing 41-acre Rollins Lake near Ripley for $170,000. Seventy-five percent of the money for this purchase will come from the state's share of federal taxes on the sale of fishing tackle and assorted equipment and the remainder will come from state hunting and fishing license fees. The lake, which already has largemouth bass and bluegill, will be stocked with trout in January and March and with channel catfish later in the year.

Charleston Gazette, January 2, 1987

Out On A Limb: Elderly Help Chestnut Blight Study

Jim Comp, an 86-year-old in a nursing home in Alma, Michigan, and five of his buddies from the home have in the past decade led a corps of volunteer who collected more than 225 million chestnuts. These nuts were used by Michigan officials to raise 100,000 seedlings, many of which were sent back to West Virginia where researchers at WVU have been studying chestnut blight.

Comp remembers playing under chestnuts in Grafton, West Virginia, during the early years of the 20th century. By the time he left Grafton in 1928, all the chestnut trees in the area had fallen prey to the blight, and eventually all the chestnut stands were destroyed.

In spite of the help of Comp and his friends, WVU researcher Bill MacDonald does not foresee the chestnut being returned to its role as a major source of timber and food. MacDonald said, "If ten virulent fungi could be introduced to small forested areas, it might control the blight there. We could produce nuts for people and as food for wildlife and, perhaps, a limited amount of American chestnut lumber."

Pittsburgh Press, December 11, 1986

Too Many Deer?

At a meeting in Nuttall, West Virginia University extension agent Bill Grafton offered tips to Fayette County farmers on how to keep deer away from their crops. Grafton suggested electric fencing and chemical repellants, but he pointed out that the most effective means of control is hunting, particularly if an antlerless season is begun.

He estimates that there are 600,000 to 700,000 deer in the state, and "We need a decrease in the doe population to stabilize the population," he said. Recommendations of 250,000 does would help the growers, but, he said, "There are about 300,000 deer hunters and as a rule they're happy with the success they're having." Another problem is that the Wildlife Division of the DNR needs the dollar support from the sale of licenses, and in order to insure good sales, deer need to be available in good numbers.

Grafton said, "I don't know if anyone in the state of West Virginia knows what to do. It's a monstrous problem. Alfalfa is a thing of the past in many parts of the state. We're still able to grow corn if we can get past the six-leaf stage. I think the problem is still enormous."

Fayette Tribune, December 8, 1986

Wildlife Group Joins Fight Against Forest Plan

The West Virginia Wildlife Federation has joined with seven other organizations to prevent the U.S. Forest Service from increasing its logging and road construction in the George Washington Forest. These organizations have released an analysis which argues that the forest service plan is not responsive to public needs, is based on flawed data and would violate federal law and policy. A representative of the Natural Resources Defense Council indicated that in 1987 the forest service spent $2 million more to administer timber sales and building logging roads than it received in receipts from logging operations. In addition, forest scientists have stated that the plan offers no tangible benefits and would be harmful to the forest environment.

Charleston Gazette, January 2, 1987

Population Crisis

In separate articles (from the Charleston Gazette) Robert Clarke and Werner Fornos, president of The Population Institute, discussed the problems of overpopulation. Clarke feels that the main problem of the next century will be massive population growth. He points out that people are being born today at a rate of 2.5 per second, 9,100 per hour, about 218,190 per day, and 1.5 million each week.

The world's population, now 4.9 billion, will increase to 6 billion by the year 2000 and not stabilize until it reaches 11 billion says Robert McNamara, former president of the World Bank. Certain countries will grow beyond the conditions that are politically and socially acceptable. In Sub-Saharan Africa, for example, the population will grow from 170 million in 1950 to 2 billion by 2100.

Richer countries, Clarke says, cannot allow other nations to deal with the problem alone. A middle ground between China's one-child-per-couple rule and general neglect of the problem by most nation's must be explored to "avert the most serious crisis the world has known."

Fornos expressed concern that environmental groups are ignoring the overpopulation problem, which in many cases is causing the problems the groups are addressing. Fornos said, "I recently learned by an official of a major environmental organization that its surveys show that of a membership of 450,000 only 1,000 listed high population growth rates as a matter of priority concern."

Environmentalists need to rally to the cause of global population stabilization, he feels, with the same fervor they rally to protecting specific environments and preventing industrial pollution.

Charleston Gazette, December 17, 1986
Natural Heritage Program

The West Virginia Chapter of The Nature Conservancy has been working to persuade Governor Moore to submit an Administration bill to dedicate up to $5 million over ten years to the DNR Natural Heritage Program. Under one proposal, such funds would be dedicated from proceeds of the West Virginia Lottery and used as matching grants to acquire natural heritage lands with private and other public funds.

The DNR Natural Heritage Program is funded primarily by private grants from The Nature Conservancy to inventory and protect exceptional wildlife and plant populations. This program includes the acquisition of real property and other management approaches to secure the location of such species.

DNR and the Department of Energy appear supportive, but no commitment has yet been made by the Moore Administration.

Hunting/Fishing License Fees

The DNR Division of Wildlife has proposed fee increases for hunting and fishing licenses to raise an additional $5 million annually. In addition to increased license fees, a $5 conservation stamp would be required on each license.

The new revenue would be used to increase by 25 officers the existing staff of 97 conservation officers in the DNR Division of Law Enforcement. Although their primary duty is enforcing game laws, the DNR conservation officers have the authority to enforce state and federal law enforcement duties in state parks and, under a state-federal agreement, on the Monongahela National Forest.

The proposed bill would acquire state's trout stocking program, provide additional public access to streams and public hunting areas and acquire additional land for wildlife management.

Concentration of a specific tract of land without acquiring any real property interest in the land. Essentially, the development rights are acquired while the original owner retains all other rights.

The purpose is to maintain the status quo for conservation purposes while permitting the owner to continue his present landuse activities. Federal tax credits and contributions of these easements to government or non-profit organizations such as The Nature Conservancy.

Presently, state common law limits such conservation easements to the lifetime of the parties involved, a limit which renders them nearly useless. The Conservancy proposal would amend common property law to authorize a perpetual conservation easement. Such easements are already available in a majority of the states and are often used by the U.S. National Park Service.

Canaan Valley

Delegate Jim Humphreys (D-Kanawha) announced in November that he would sponsor a bill to prohibit landuse activities. Federal tax deductions are available for landowners who sign conservation easements.

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The DNR Division of Wildlife suffered a $500,000 budget reduction in the 1986 Legislative session and further cuts are expected this year due to the state's fiscal crisis. West Virginia license fee revenue has been far below the national average for several years. The increased fees are essential to maintain existing programs in the Divisions of Wildlife and Law Enforcement and would provide for modest capital improvements.

Governor Moore has yet to make a definite commitment to submit legislation for the fee increase. The Conservancy Board of Directors will address the license fee proposal at its January 25th meeting if the Administration submits such legislation.

New State Parks

A bill to upgrade two state Forests to Park status has been introduced in the Senate by Senator Tod Kaufman (D-Kanawha) and Senator Truman Chafin (D-Ming). Kanawha State Forest near Charleston and Panther State Forest in the southern coal fields of McDowell County would be managed exclusively for recreation and preservation if designated as State Parks.

The Legislature banned timbering at the Kanawha Forest in 1978 in recognition of its prominent recreational activities. Only a few miles from Charleston, it has traditionally received heavy use by local residents in the Kanawha Valley. In contrast, the Panther Forest is relatively isolated and has been subject to proposals for timbering, gas drilling, deep mining and haul roads from adjacent mining operation for several years.

In 1983, DNR proposed leasing state-owned coal under Panther for deep mining, but no bids were received. In 1985, the Conservancy filed suit in McDowell County Circuit Court and succeeded in temporarily prohibiting coal haul roads for adjacent mining operations from crossing the Forest. This dispute is now subject of negotiations between the Conservancy and the Department of Energy which originally authorized the haul roads.

In 1985, the Legislature transferred the Division of Forestry and the nine state forests from DNR to the Department of Agriculture. At the same time, the entire state park system was transferred from DNR to the state Department of Commerce. Therefore, the proposed upgrade of the two Forests would apparently require their transfer from Agriculture to Commerce.

The state Agriculture Commissioner, Gus Douglas, is an elected public official independent of the Governor, and his position on any transfer has not been announced. However, during the 1986 Legislative session, Commissioner Douglas requested the Legislature to remove the timbering ban at Kanawha Forest to allow demonstration forestry sites. These sites would be convenient to Charleston and visits by industry and state officials.

The Commissioner and his Forestry Director, Bill Gillespie, have recently distinguished themselves by working hard to expand the state's underdeveloped forest products industry. They both view demonstration sites at Kanawha Forest as a useful element in the Department's contribution to addressing the state's economic problems.

Trail Bill

A trail bill is being put together by a committee which was formed after last November's West Virginia Trails Conference. The proposal calls for the creation of a statewide trails system, an administrative council, and a State trail coordinator. The council would consist of one representative from organized groups interested in creating and maintaining trails for bicycling, hiking, horseback riding, off the road vehicles, cross country skiing, handicapped, and scenic highways. The council would work with the Department of Commerce to create a balanced system of trails for the many types of trail users. The proposal is similar to the 1980 Senate Bill 262. John Giacalone, President of West Virginia Scenic Trails Association, is the committee chair and Jim McNeely (D-Mercer) will sponsor the bill.

Ethics In Government

The final legislative matter is generic and not necessarily related to state forest resource policy. West Virginia is one of only five states without lawful standards of conduct for state appointed and elected officials. The West Virginia Chapter of Common Cause is proposing an ethics an government law to remedy this shortfall.

Conservationists have been affected by the lack of ethical standards for many years. The controversy involving conflicts of interest on the part of state Energy Commissioner Ken Faerber is only the most recent example. The propriety and public confidence of state environmental officials could greatly benefit from a rigorous code of ethics and provisions for independent review of official conduct and sanctions.

In the 1986 session, the Conservancy took an unprecedented action by opposing the confirmation of Energy Commissioner Ken Faerber on ethical grounds. The Conservancy's position contributed to initiating the media and public discussion during the past year concerning the lack of ethical standards in state government. The WVHC Board will also consider a position on the Common Cause bill at its winter meeting.

CORRECTION

The article “Nature Guide to Babcock State Park,” which appeared on page 8 of December Voice, was written by Emily Grafton. Her name was inadvertently omitted.

Emily Grafton is a science teacher in Raleigh County and a member of the Brooks Bird Club. She has done extensive natural history work in the New River Gorge area, participating in the West Virginia Birding Atlas Project and preparing a literature review on the geology, plants, and animals for the National Park Service.

George Appointed To Democratic Post

Conservancy Past President Larry W. George has been appointed to the state Democratic Finance Committee by West Virginia Democratic Chairperson Sally Richardson.

The Finance Committee was established by Richardson last fall to develop and supervise financial support for the West Virginia Democratic Party. George was appointed in November and is the only Committee member who has served multiple terms.

George is a Charleston attorney. He previously served as Majority Counsel of the West Virginia Senate and as a member of the State Water Resources Board. George presently serves on the National Coal Council, a federal advisory committee to the U.S. Secretary of Energy.