mining matters, report from the mining committee
by Cindy Rank

The absence of a report from the mining chair in the last issue of the VOICE is somewhat due to a growing inability on my part to capture any meaningful snapshots of the moving targets of our appeals, lawsuits, state program amendment comments, etc., as they are batted about by the inevitable barrage of political waffle.

Unfortunately, my level of fatigue and waning enthusiasm is only exacerbated by the notice of this current self-proclaimed ‘pro-citizen’ Congress that is about to tear apart the very fabric of the laws that protect us and the agencies charged with enforcing those laws. It’s a scenario that causes a friend familiar with the internal workings of the James Watt regime to mutter quietly “WORSE THAN WATT.”

I won’t at lawyer jokes.

I happen to believe that good laws are often all that stand between the preservation of our homes and lives and the destructive tendencies of greed and profiteering. And good lawyers are a must to counter those lawyers who do the bidding of the special interests who stand to profit from stretching the law for their own economic benefit.

To a believer like myself, the main reasons environmental laws like the Clean Water Act (CWA) and the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) haven’t worked is not because of inflated budgets or over-restrictive regulations, but because they haven’t been enforced strongly enough.

Industry is able at nearly every turn to outmaneuver, out influence, out spend and out lawyer citizens in every neighborhood, community, city and town in the good ole U S of A, while their publicity create and promote the make-sake sales pitch and razz-matazz that hypnotize these same citizens as well as local government and regulators into believing they should roll out the welcome mat and cheer while their homes, communities and futures are sold down the highway, exhausted up the smokestack and flushed out the drain.

Congress in its wisdom 20-30 years ago recognized the need for protecting the public trust, the waters, land and lives of coal field communities and created the CWA (and EPA) and SMCRA (and OSM), etc. Congress today has lost sight of those needs and is instead responding to the cries of those who believe their profits are not large enough by slashing away at every aspect of environmental protection and environmental justice.

Those actions are going to have dire consequences in every state across the country. The renovation of the Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act of 1977 (SMCRA) by budget cuts and limiting current enforcement powers of the federal Office of Surface Mining (OSM) will bring these bitter consequences home to West Virginia.

Coal industry profiteers must be laughing on their way to the bank secure in the knowledge that Congress is about to do for them what they have been unable to do for themselves in other forums, lawsuits, challenges and delays of the last two decades.

- It is particularly disheartening to know that official voices of the state of WV are supporting these actions against SMCRA and OSM.

Governor Caperton, past DEP Director Dave Callaghan, and current DEP Director Dr. McCoy and Deputy Director Mark Scott have all supported reduced budget, enforcement and oversight for OSM, WV belongs to the Interstate Mining Compact Commission (IMCC), a lobbying group supported by all of the coal states, and reportedly pays about $10,000 per year in taxpayer funds as membership dues. During the last several years, the positions taken by the IMCC have been almost identical with the coal industry’s lobbyists. Currently, the IMCC is lobbying for cuts in OSM (see page 6)
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---from the heart of the plateau---

by John McFerrin

Thanks

As I write this we are getting ready for the Fall Review, including our annual meeting for 1995. It reminds me that it was at the 1994 annual meeting that I was elected President.

It also reminds me of the old saying: 'I'd rather be lucky than smart.'

The past year has been a good one for the Conservancy. With Richard DiPretoro as our Administrative Assistant and Tom ship renewal notices go ed for. As far as the business of the Conservancy goes we run very on mining issues.

In the past year we have continued our longstanding advocacy on mining issues. Thanks to Cindy Rank and the other members of the Mining Committee, we continue to be the most visible and active conservation groups working on coal mining issues. Thanks in no small part to Hugh Rogers, we were able to file substantial comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for Corridor H.

The endowment fund has become more active. David Elkington has taken it upon himself to do a solicitation in an effort to help that fund grow. The Public Lands Committee is planning some new initiatives. We are beginning a project to recruit new, younger members. Such organizational members as the Downstream Alliance and the Rivers Coalition are doing great things.

From what I hear, Carrol Jett and Frank Young are working very hard planning the Fall Review; from all indications it will be a hum-dinger.

There are probably many more people and activities I have forgotten. Even with just the ones I can remember, we are a pretty active and energetic group.

The politician in me is tempted to say, "See all the good things which happened on my watch. I must be doing a great job." Any politician with such a record could probably get re-elected without having to kiss a single baby or go to a single ramp dinner.

The truth of it is, however, that I am not responsible for any of this stuff. I have had the good fortune to be president during a year when lots of positive things happened to the Conservancy. Through their energies, our members are making these positive things happen for the Conservancy. To them, I say THANK YOU.

For myself, I say 'I'd rather be lucky than smart.' For the past year I have had the good fortune to be president of an organization which is alive and energetic. Even though I didn't have much to do with it, it makes me proud. How much luckier could someone be?
What must we do to restore and maintain ecological integrity of the Central Appalachians? What must we do to implement policies that operate in conjunction with, rather than in opposition to, natural processes? This conference will be an educational event and working meeting for scientists and the concerned public to discuss issues and share knowledge regarding the biodiversity of the Appalachians. The primary goal of the Forum is to start building valid scientific support for citizen actions that will slow and stop the accelerating region wide losses of native biological diversity.

Opportunity

A multitude of assaults are degrading the region’s ecological health. Due to ongoing and past environmental impacts, most of the remaining Central Appalachian natural areas are impoverished, stunted, diminished and fragmented. Even so, an incredible opportunity is present. The remaining forests of the Central and Southern Appalachians offer an incredible opportunity for ecological recovery, an opportunity currently unmatchted in the East, perhaps anywhere in the world. Here lies an opportunity for intact, fully functioning deciduous forests. The wild old-growth forest ecosystems which originally blanketed this region have been extirpated, battered, and dismembered. It’s up to us to re-member these forests before it is too late. These mountains are a world class center of biodiversity, a crown jewel of wild America. They offer an incredible opportunity, but we are blowing it.

Need

To protect and restore the ecological integrity of the Central Appalachians we need to establish a substantial system of buffered and connected ecological reserves. And we must do it now. Some of the data necessary for reserve design is readily available, other data sets are very incomplete. However, we have adequate knowledge to begin the process of reserve design today. It is critical that we provide policy makers with information about such a system. And convince them of its validity, applicability, and necessity. Equally critical is the need to find the public political pressure which will bring the vision to fruition.

Vision

The Central Appalachian Project of Heartwood (a regional coalition of grassroots forest conservation groups) is a citizen initiated campaign to apply the Wildlands Project Land Conservation Strategy to this region. This is a proactive and preventative alternative to the commodity driven system that now dominates the region’s natural areas. The goal of this region’s wilderness reserve system is to protect, preserve, and restore the native biotic communities and all their natural processes in perpetuity.

A key element of this plan will be to shift the management emphasis on the large public land holdings (e.g. national forests). In biogeographic terms, these islands of habitat-defacto wildlife refuges have paradoxically become the "continental" source pools of the region. It is essential that they no longer be treated as mere tree farms, game feedlots, or crossed playgrounds. Instead they must serve as and be managed as the "core reserves" of the protected lands complex. Such core reserves are components of the overall strategy, a regional wilderness recovery network of reserves connected to corridors connected to island refugia connected to buffer zones. The ecological reserve system will be a new form of federal/region-state/local/independent partnership. This proposed is not designed to further erode local control, but to help restore control of the region’s destiny to its citizens and to decentralize responsibility.

Work

There is lots to do. To properly provide for ecological integrity, we must:

- assess the current situation and trends
- identify areas of ecological richness, significance, or rarity
- identify data gaps and priority research
- design a network of reserves that both protects and restores native biological diversity
- integrate the management of public and private lands to minimize conflicts with purposes of the reserves
- talent, educate, and mobilize the public
- overcome political interference and special interest meddling in the process.

Purpose

This regional council is being convened in order to:

1. bring a focus on critical issues regarding native biodiversity here
2. provide information on the pending needs and threats facing our region
3. shape policy for protecting the ecological integrity of the Central Appalachians

Some of the critical issues are the status of knowledge regarding biological diversity, the status of ecological integrity, effects of human activities, research needs, and corroboration of the presumed necessity of a reserve network. The region’s remaining natural areas are coming under increasing threat from within and without. Their context and context are being damaged by development, highways, pulp mills, mines, industrial recreation, acid deposition, and so on. A region wide proactive and special land policy conservation is the only viable strategy that offers a way out of this ubiquitous mess. We have to think BIG and think CONNNECTED.

Action

Attendees should come prepared to discuss the following:

1. How would you assess the current status of the ecological integrity of the Central Appalachian region?
2. What species and ecosystems are threatened or nonexistent?
3. What is the most useful recommendation we could make to enhance ecological integrity?
4. What is the best thing we could do, or fail to do?
5. What short term recommendations would you make?
6. What are the knowledge gaps and research priorities?

For too long agriculture, development, and industry have defiled the debate and set the agenda for our relationship with the Appalachian forests. The time is past due for treating these lands as the place to sample and save our crown jewels that they are. These precious remnants of the original great eastern forest are a sea of human disturbance. And we’re all Noah. Now it is time to start acting like it. The forests, the plants, the animals - we all need your help!

Contact:
Heartwood
360 Water Street
Staunton, VA 24401
1-540-886-1584
email skribbab@interserv.com

Ecosystem Management

(from page 6) Oak, something that is not supposed to happen under Ecosystem Management. Fake Ecosystem Management says that human needs are the context in which management must take place. We need Oak, then come hell or high water, we have Oak.

Ecosystem Management: What It Should Be

R. Edward Grubinette, from the Sierra Institute in Santa Cruz, California, identifies five goals of Ecosystem Management in a March 94 article in Conservation Biology, maintain viable populations of all native species, protect areas that represent native ecosystems in all of their variations, maintain evolutionary and ecological processes, manage in time periods long enough to maintain the evolutionary potential of species and ecosystems, and accommodate human uses and occupancy within these constraints. Grubinette’s goals recognize that if we do not place ourselves within the context of the ecosystem there will be no new or even current ecosystem management. There will always be someone with a hook of a good reason why their own needs should come first over the needs, if not the right, survival of species that just so happens to already be there. Only true Ecosystem Management will keep that selfishness in check.

We are where we are today due to a wealth of natural resources that are now being lost. The time has come for action.

To continue to behave as if the health of our ecosystem is less important than fulfilling our own needs is unhealthy itself. To continue to pretend that we understand what is going on is delusional. To humbly approach true ecosystem management with a sense of place and value will ensure our own survivability. Anything less is just a giant crap shoot. The day our forests can understand and discuss how to implement these principles is the day we can trust them enough to give them back the forests.

Public Lands

(from page 4) abandoned. A more appropriate way would be to look at the forest as the interconnectedness of watersheds.

1.) Monitoring of management activities as well as the plan was not occurring, and should be given a much higher priority.

2.) I really do not know, there is still time to talk.
Conservancy’s Living Forests Project Begins

by Richard d’Iorio

The Conservancy has recently initiated a new project called the Living Forests Project. Modeled on Mountain Stream Monitors’ successful Living Streams Project, the new project is designed to systematically follow developments in the logging industry using publicly available records. We have started this project out of Morgantown and will focus on District One of the Division of Forestry (Brooke, Hancock, Ohio, Marshall, Wetzel, Monongalia, Marion, Harrison, Taylor, Barbour, Preston, Tucker) but we hope to transplant the project statewide after an initial shakedown.

We envision the project to work as follows: We will check logging notifications in the Fairmont Forestry office. The notifications are required to be filed by the logger within three days of starting the operation. We will note the location of each job on a set of top maps we keep for that purpose. We will then locate the job on highway maps and plan a route to get to it using public roads or private land with permission. (On occasion we may fly over the site.) Next, we will find the job on the ground. We may return to the same site after heavy rain. We will take photos and videos. When needed, we will file complaints. We also plan to use our data, photos, complaints, etc., to push for any needed reforms of the law and regulations. We hope by these means to establish a trained group of citizen monitors as logging continues to expand around the state.

To begin this project, I sent a Freedom of Information Act request to the Fairmont office to inspect their files. On August 17, I spent two hours there and I found the District Forester, Lowell McPherson, and learning about the workings of the Logging Sales and Control Act. He was cooperative and gave me some interesting data. Roughly 800 logging notices are filed annually for his 12-county district. In the first 6 months of 1995, 62 complaints were filed. Of those, 53 (85%) were deemed valid. That indicates to me that the program is still maturing. A mature program would have mostly invalid complaints. Nearly half of the complaints (26/52) came from citizens and residents from Forestry and other agencies. Twenty-three complaints involved lack of licensing or notification. Nineteen complaints (of which 16 were valid) involved mud or silt on roads or in water. Twenty-seven compliance orders and 14 suspensions orders were issued. No legal actions were taken.

The heart of state logging oversight (I won’t call it regulation, because the Forest Service has no authority to do so) is a set of suggested Best Management Practices (BMPs). The definition of those BMPs is as follows, “sediment control measures...to reduce soil runoff from logging operations to meet the standards for commercial timber harvesting.” Notice that the law does not require that the supposed Best Management Practices be actually BE the best practice or to prevent soil runoff in excess of pre-logging conditions. The regulations go on to further define BMPs as “the technically feasible and economically reasonable procedures, as currently used in the state’s silvicultural water quality management plans...used to reduce sedimentation of the waters of the state by soil erosion...associated with commercial harvesting of timber.” It is important to note that the BMPs are not mandatory. Only if the “failure to use a particular best management practice is causing or contributing, or has the potential to cause or contribute, to soil erosion or water pollution” may the Forestry Division require corrective actions.

On August 31, Jason Huber and I returned to the Fairmont office with our maps and began the process of recording the locations of active logging operations on our maps. At that time, we found out the District offices supply the main offices in Charleston with computer disks each week with information from the latest logging notifications. We hope to computerize our data and keep it up to date using the electronic data supplied to the state. We will be filing another FOIA for that information soon.

For more information on the Living Forests Project, or to volunteer, contact Richard d’Iorio at Morgantown at 296-4963; email rd@procon.com; or on WNYBP’s Wilds computer bulletin board.

Best Management Practices for Logging Workshops

These workshops are offered by the WV Division of Forestry to educate loggers about the ‘best’ ways to log in order to reduce erosion and soil runoff. If you want to attend the Conservancy’s new Living Forest Project, I recommend attending one to educate yourself before going in the field and checking out logging operations in your area. WV Division of Forestry (558-2788) for the phone number of your district office.

Public Lands from the Public Lands Committee by Queerus Raggez

Maybe you read about it in the last VOICE, but except for 12 or so Conservancy members, you missed it. What was it? A great public lands committee meeting on the upper deck of the Cheat River Inn, overlooking the Shavers Fork.

Well here’s your chance to review the discussion. The following is a summary of all the views aired at the meeting as it comes from my memory only. Cindy took notes, but lost’em available to me yet. If you would like a copy of the minutes let me know, I’ll forward them to you when Cindy gets them to me. I hereby invite you all to inform me via phone, email, or small mail of your ideas and opinions and what you are interested in doing to see them implemented. See Roster of Board on page two for my address/phone.

We had several items on the agenda, but the biggest draw was the formulation of a policy on Timbering in the Monongahela National Forest. The issue has been raised in a couple of letters, and in recent years over the years, but the issues were too complex, and emotions too intense for any resolution. I called the meeting to see whether an afternoon dedicated to the problem would allow us to come to a better understanding.

The group unanimously agreed that commercial timbering in the Monongahela had only a negative effect on the forest, its health, its diversity. We recognized that some members of the group, conservationists, consisted of half National Forest land; and that the county was becoming more dependent on timbering public lands for income (and more dependent on tourism). It has been only in the last decade or so, as the forest recovered from the clearcutting and fires of the early part of the century and as the timber market has shrunk in size, that logging and forest products industries have grown.

I think the problem is how to balance an economically essential) to an end sale to logging on the Monongahela out of concern for folks living in those counties and the effect it would have on their lives. We felt we needed to get a better understanding on just exactly how a timber ban would effect locals.

Cindy Rank raised the concern about loss of jobs to local schools. I reminded her that the so-called ‘Racial Decision’ which removed funds in the state to have equal educational opportunities would force the state to distribute funds to those counties if they received less from the Feds. This would have a small ripple effect across the state to other schools. How great would this be?

Joe Marshall felt that there definitely was a conflict between logging and recreation. According to Joe, who makes his living in the tourism industry on the Board of Directors for the Potomac Highlands Travel Association, recreation concerns were among the most heated in the popular areas of the Mon, and that at times they were way too crowded. Logging precludes the exercise of certain sectors of the recreation and tourism industry. Several folks suggest a development of a strong recreation industry and more efficient use of timber from public lands might be possible, and the hydrology might allow more jobs lost from a Timbering Ban.

Don Gersch pointed out that we felt that the forests belonged to all Americans, now and in the future, and that the logging in Western most times can only be done for the extractive industries. We do allow whalers to continue killing whales just to preserve their jobs. Would the economy be better off if we had much larger tracts of wilderness and old growth?

Continued logging at present rates would also preclude the expansion of Wilderness. There seems to be agreement that the Wilderness Areas were too small, both for the preservation of biodiversity and to offer a true ‘wilderness experience’. We all supported a several fold expansion in the size of wilderness areas. We felt that timbering was to continue to be should be far away from Wilderness, in areas already fragmented, preferably along highways and county roads.

Don Gersch cautioned that a loud and strong voice in support of expanded wilderness would be like having a red flag. He would already hear the cries of certain interests shouting about the Conservancy trying to put up a roadblock. Don felt that making a strong statement against logging on National Forests would not be enough. Someone might even argue that the gains that were made in the formation of the Forest Plan. Several folks suggested a moratorium on logging might be more palatable (while we research the effects of the loss of topsoil, species diversity and restoration methods).

What about the Elk, the Buffalo, the Wolf and Cougars? Someone suggested we should focus on the charismatic creatures, Wolf and Cougar restoration would be another red flag.

But what can we do? Should we alienate our beliefs because certain voices in industry and their puppeteers will always complain at any attempt to preserve more for future generations and for nature? Would our silence be a strategic one, to better further our goals of more preservation?

I reminded folks that public opinion polls have consistently shown that the general public overwhelmingly does not want cutting in National Forests. Do we need to try to get a similar study done in WV and in the effected counties with our maps and began the process of recording the locations of active logging operations on our maps. At that time, we found out the District offices supply the main offices in Charleston with computer disks each week with information from the latest logging notifications. We hope to computerize our data and keep it up to date using the electronic data supplied to the state. We will be filing another FOIA for that information soon.

For more information on the Living Forests Project, or to volunteer, contact Richard d’Iorio at Morgantown at 296-4963; email rd@procon.com; or on WNYBP’s Wilds computer bulletin board.

The group felt that the Forest Service puts timber first, often making decisions about locations of timber cuts and number of board feet years before any other decisions were made. The other ‘multiple users’ were fit in around the timber cut, although once in a while they would limit or at least move the location of the cut.

Other points of consensus (I think)

1.) Clearcutting should be eliminated entirely, except for endangered species restoration.
2.) Below cost timber cuts be eliminated. Costs should include all road building, maintenance, monitoring.
3.) No new roads should be built, many current roads should be abandoned, and the hydrology restored.
4.) Cessation of logging on all areas.
5.) The current Forest Plan’s carve-out the forest into arbitrary Opportunity Areas should be (see page 3)
The Eastern Forest—Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

by Don Gaspar

What is "Old Growth" or "An Ancient Forest"? As we cannot at this moment visit one, it is best understood by contrasting it with the woods you generally see and regard as "natural", and a review of the Four basic successional phases of any regrowing forest.

"Reorganization" is the first stage, occurring immediately after a disturbance in the forest caused historically by fire and wind or today also by man. In the early 1900's West Virginia's virgin forests were logged. In 1908 one tenth of the state was burned. This stage generally lasts less than two decades during which many nutrient cycles and other soil processes interact to stabilize the area at a lower level of productivity because nutrients and soils were lost. Through this period seedlings and saplings strive to become established. While the canopy of the forest may flow may decrease by 1/3 for perhaps five years leaving stream beds wider. The younger trees transport nutrients and soils, of course, but also gravel in sediment waves that erode banks further. Closing for settlement extended this process.

The second stage is called the "aggradation" or polye stage. It may last for a century. Most of West Virginia's forests are approaching 7th Annual National Forest Reform Rally

"The Forest Fest" September 28, 29, 30, and October 1, 1995

Sponsored by the National Forest Reform Network, and hosted by the New York County Environmental Association (NCWA), and the Ozark

Timbering in Natural Forests—Other groups' resolutions

The following resolution unanimously passed the Ohio Chapter Conservation Committee on February 19, 1995, and the Ohio Chapter-Sierra Club Executive Committee on March 26, 1995:

"By all measures the Ohio Chapter of the Sierra Club is committed to ending commercial and/or extractive logging on state lands as rapidly as possible. Accordingly, definitions and intent listed in 11/21/95 Conservation meeting notes below."

A) Definition of "Commercial"—wherever trees are removed from the land upon which they fell;
B) "Salvage": included in above definitions of commercial and/or extractive logging;
C) Recognition that most wildlife habitat improvement projects involving logging, i.e., wildlife opening (or savanna, etc.) creations or maintenance, are undependable practices that fragment forest habitats and canopies, are biased towards general forest species, and may also be commercial or extractive in nature;
E) Recognition that the majority of "commercial" or "re-creation" cuffs are nothing more than euphemistically disguised forms of commercial and/or extractive logging:
F) Sole exception: On an individual basis, the Exxon may choose to not oppose genuine restoration projects that are fully non-commercial and non-extractive in nature, provided that strong scientific evidence exists— independent of the timber industry or industry supporting agencies - that the ecological health of the forest is clearly benefited rather than harmed.

2.) The Ohio Chapter has also had a policy "opposing all commercial logging and all road building on all federal lands in Ohio," (i.e., the Ohio Natural Forest) since July, 1993.

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activities:
- Food will be provided by NCWA as an concession, the menu is vegetarian and primarily organic, and includes vegetarian foods available for extended hours. BRING YOUR OWN TABLE SERVICE! There will be no disposable food or utensils available, please bring your own supplies in the most environmentally sensitive manner possible. NCWA must plan and BUY the food you will eat.
- The menu will include plant meals and beverages provided in the most environmentally sensitive manner possible. NCWA must plan and BUY the food supplies and we need cooperation, please register early. Those who registered will receive an information packet.
- All cabins at Lost Valley Canoe and Lodging are reserved, a few cabins are still available in Fonca from Buffalo Outdoor Center 1-800-222-5514. Cabins sleep 2 to 8 people and range from $80.00 to $150.00 per night. Tent Camping is $5.00 per person per night - indicate which nights Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday. Travel arrangements can be made through: Mike Stut at Sports & Adventure Travels, 1-800-420-2651.
- Registration is $25.00, pack for registration and four nights camping is $70.00. Checks should be sent to: Newton County Wildlife Association Post Office Box 189 Jasper, AR 72641-0189 phone: 501-861-5388 or email: news@arkansas.com

Buffalo National River at Lost Val­ley Canoe and Lodging in Ponca Ar­kansas and providing a remote and scenic setting for a weekend of net­working, training, and plenty of good old Ozark Fun.

Some Items from the Schedule:
Dr. Anne Cochran, Forest Forester at the University of Idaho, discusses true forest health.
Gwen Marshall of Project Biodiversity on Public Forests will report on how public land policy adversely affects private enterprise.
Alison Cochran, counselor and educator, presents "All our Rela­tions: "

Leif and Ciele Myczack of Broadened Horizons Riverkeeper Project report on the ship mill inva­sion of the Ohio.
Tak Knielich, Tom Fulham, and Anne Petersmann of Native For­est Network will report on Interna­tional Corporate Deforestation, the legacy of pulp and paper mills, and an international approach to edu­cation.
Mike Roele will present the Rainforest Action Network's "Cut Waste, Not Trees" campaign.
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Ecosystem Management: A Matter of Trust

from Protect Our Woods

(Author's note: this article is on Indiana's Forests, it could have just as well been written with our West Virginia agencies and the Monongahela Forest Service in mind - bill)

*Protect Our Woods asked a professional biologist to write about ecosystem management. Because of employment concerns, our biologist asked to remain anonymous.*

They say its called Ecosystem Management (EM). Ecosystem management is going to be the forest management tool of the future - and the future is now. The US Forest Service has an EM vision for their holdings, including the Hoosier National Forest. And so does INDR Division of Forestry for their holdings. And so does the American Forest and Paper Association for their, well actually our, holdings, and being a Land Grant College, the Purdue University Department of Forestry and natural Resources has a "big picture" EM vision for every single acre of woods in Indiana. Coincidence or not? You decide.

Up front, Purdue has the most optimistic approach. Ecosystem management involves "sustaining the long-term productivity and health of the total ecosystem and, in doing so, enhance overall biological diversity. Ecosystem management shifts emphasis away from the production of commodities and toward a more integrated system of production. The underlying assumption is that less attention is paid to what is removed from the land and more attention is paid to what is retained on the landscape," (Ext. Pub. FNR 145)

And the US of A Forest Service? "The USFS recognizes that to manage ecosystems to provide for all associated organisms, as opposed to a strategy or plan for managing individual species." USFS Chief Jack Ward Thomas (a real live biologist, no less) has said, "I am saying ... this challenge is the application of ecosystem management principles and forest plan standards and guidelines while achieving our annual timber sale quotas." What? How do you help all of the "associated organisms" while removing enough trees to satisfy the biggest organism (public timber interests and their associated politicians)? And so it goes for others. In its Draft Plan, the INDR Division of Forestry says that forests and wildlife are "not widely understood by the public... In recent decades, Indiana forests have grown older... While this decline in younger age classes of timber benefits wildlife that favor mature forest, it is occurring at the expense of earlier successional species..."

The American Forest and Paper Association's stab at ecosystem management is wrapped up in a document called Sustainable Forestry Principles and Implementation Guidelines. Sustainable forestry practices designed to be more environmentally friendly, that all its memo says is he goes on to say in order to remain a member of AFPA. The principles call for, among others, protecting forests from pests and diseases through the miracles of modern chemistry, rearranging the timber harvest to "minimize the impact of harvesting on visual quality" and reducing the "average" size of clear cuts from 25 acres down to 10 acres except when necessary to..."

Fake Ecosystem Management

The most workable with Ecosystem Management, as defined by the documents available for public review shows that in truth, there is no mention, hint, or implication made at all about the need to preserve any forest land anywhere in an unmanaged state of existence (assuming aside from current vilder than... pulling out with all of the scientists running around Ecosystem Management that someone would remember the value of having a control subject, or a baseline set of data, to help us determine to what degree our different management strategies are removing us from the natural ideal and to what degree, if any, that removal from the ideal is good or bad. This would require that every now and then we leave a forest large enough to take care of itself through its cycles of adversity, fire, disease, pest, drought, old age, etc. At this point in time the little Deadan Wilderness does not fill the bill. We can and should do better. The Hoosier does fit the bill. And as an added bonus nobody is now dependent on it for timber so there would be no hard choice involved in turning it into a ecological study area. Fake Ecosystem Management says that every acre can be harvested as long as it is done with an environmentalNew Ask the Right Questions

Second, our forest managers still do not understand the most simple of principles of biodiversity and the value in preserving it. Despite the fact that the vast majority of Indiana's species that are extirpated or endangered have habitats that are found in large blocks of woodland age with mature characteristics (that is a wide spectrum of different aged trees and age classes that are more indicative of the west. This continues to happen about the incredibly small dip in populations of animals that move through the forest ages and the vegetation. Well of course, the acreage of solid mature trees is reduced, but not so much as a single study under their belts the Forest Service has to start and toil away the long time on the Hoosier. The excuse that it's for the plants that are smothered by undergrowth does not cut it. A forest is a forest. There's supposed to be undergrowth. The best guess is that natural fires occurred only after many decades, if not hundreds of years, of growth and accumulation. The fact that native Americans may have burned the woods more frequently for their own use is totally irrelevant other than to note that the Forest Service isn't copying any past fires regimes or burning the same location every other year or so. All that they are doing is trying to grow shade intolerant or eucalyptus trees. What's wrong with this picture? They don't know? Infrared burning is not the same as burning the same area over and over. Fire scars and glades are still present under natural conditions. But hey, it gives them something to do.

The same arguments hold true for pests and diseases. Unless we are willing to spend the time and money to do a Smallpox Operation Routine on a disease or pest, meaning around the perimeter or eucalyptus areas to avoid damage to the trees (as is often prescribed for Gypsy Moths) just encourages us to go out and plant up with adaptations and mutations to overcome the man-made cure that we just poured millions of dollars to the trees. There are times when the use of a pesticide may be warranted but you decide that the forest industry has done anything to define what those circumstances are. It's the Money Stunt...

The dirty secret is that most of the burning, pesticide use, and eucalyptus is done in a so-called unharmed area to grow in areas where they are not naturally inclined to grow. Why? It's the Money Stunt. Now of course since we need timber, if there are no Oaks (and of course there always is) as long as we don't cut them all down) we'll pay top dollar for the next valuable tree. So the question remains Why? For no good reason other than too many foresters have an unbridled fondness on (see pages 2) for OSM. 

Letters or calls would also be helpful to Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt (18th & C Streets, Washington, D.C. 20240) and Senator Mark Hatfield (202-224-3953; Senator Rockefeller 202-224-6472) and congressional representatives (Congressman women; House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515) to vote against any Interior Appropriations bill that does not include full funding for OSM. Tell them why it is important and why you need a fully funded OSM.

Worse Than Watt

The funding cuts proposed by Congress for OSM (some $23 million from the IMCC) is the money that has been saved is a remnant residue of the various states as supporting and encouraging the enactment and enforcement of a strong but fair federal environmental law and strong oversight authority is an absolute necessity, the protection SMRCA meant to provide. While not always a paragon of virtue on its own, OSM has been and remains an indispensable ally of citizens working to uphold our duties under the law, i.e. holding state and federal government responsible and responsive to the needs of citizens and the environment. Its imperative that we as groups and individuals speak out now in support of SMRCA and a fully funded OSM.

If you live in WV, write a letter to Governor Caperton (Capital Complex, Charleston, WV 25303) expressing disappointment at his relentless and unbridled support for the IDEP Director McCoy (WV DEP 10 Jeff McLain Rd, Nitro WV 25314-2506)

- Especially important, before the final budget actions during September, contact your US Senator, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 - or better yet give them a call - S.abor Byrd (202-224-3953; Senator Rockefeller 202-224-6472) and congressional representatives (Congressman women; House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515) to vote against any Interior Appropriations bill that does not include full funding for OSM.
Corridor H Update
by Helen Ries
from the Mountain State Sierra

One again the WV Department of Highways (DOH) has resorted to whatever tactic is necessary to ensure that Corridor H is built. Apparently, the WVDOH and Michael Baker, an engineering firm, have signed a $5 million dollar contract for the final design on one section of the highway. Baker has actually proceeded with the engineering and design work on an interchange, drainage, bridge, guardrails and roadway clearings.

Federal regulations do not allow a final design until the Environmental Statement from the Endangered Species Coalition.

Officials like an agreement reached with a timber company to preserve habitat for the endangered Virginia northern flying squirrel in the Monongahela National Forest, according to a release from the FWS. Backwith timber Co., of Slaty Fork, WV, will be allowed to build a road through the forest saving them costs in accessing their own land for timber cutting. The savings will be used by the company to protect squirrel habitat.

Environmental Stewardship
by Bob Marshall

What does environmental activism and religion have in common? Apparently plenty, as a very attentive group of fifty-some people discovered on August 1st, at the first ever Appalachian Environmental Stewardship Committee meeting at the Trinity Lutheran Church in Charleston. Centering on the Biblical basis for stewardship of the environment, the evening’s focus was on the Scriptural references and mandates that all faithful people are called to care for the earth and her resources. Following a moving slide presentation accompanied by some inspirational keyboard playing, a panel discussion involving a variety of local people allowed for open dialogue between the participants and the audience. The panel consisted of Rev. David Green from St. Luke’s Episcopal Church; Rev Mark Davis from Van Fossin Will Baptist Church; Allen Johnson of the Green Cross; Pam Nixon, a community activist; Rev. Ray Woodruff; Rev Jeff Allen of the United Methodist Church; and Rev John Whittaker, from Potomacville Ohio. Janet Fost, of the Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition, served as the evenings moderator, doing a great job of keeping everyone on the primary focus of the meeting. Issues discussed ranged from our individual responsibility to preserve God’s creation, to the question of how our religious beliefs conflict with today’s society’s attitude of environmental exploitation in the name of profit.

The evening concluded with the promise of further meetings, to more deeply explore how this group can help the religious community live and model to the world our call of good environmental stewardship. A follow-up meeting will be held Tuesday, September 26th at 7:00 pm at St. Luke’s Episcopal Church here in Charleston. You may call Rev Dave Green at 342-3272, or Rev Jeff Allen at 342-2256 for directions or questions. Everyone is welcome, as this is a very ecumenical group. Much credit for the initial success of this committee goes to the Conservancy members who worked hard behind the scenes, including Mary-Elaine O’Farrell, Robin Godfrey, and Norm Steenstra. Hope to see many more people on September 26th.

Cheat Greed!!!!
by Dave Saville

We in the Morgantown area who have been denied access to Cheat Lake for years need the help of all our friends around the state to fight the greed of a few wealthy, and politically powerful individuals who would like to further deny us our right to recreational access to this resource!!! West Penn Power, owner of the property in question has had a recreational plan approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) as a requirement of their relicensing of the dam for Cheat Lake. This plan includes a 4.5 mile hiking trail to a nature preserve along an old rail corridor. It is in a stunningly beautiful area, without equal on the lake or elsewhere in West Virginia. The plan for a paved hike/bike/rollerblade/disabled accessible trail has already been approved and now these selfish folks in the Greystone development are trying to reverse it. West Penn Power is proposing to replace it with a much shorter trail from the backwaters to the road at the dam. Please help us. Without a strong showing of support they will probably succeed.

Comments should be sent to:
Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
825 N Capitol St. NE
Washington, DC 20426

Letters must have as a heading the word PROTEST in capital letters at the top of the page and the project number 2459-012 Lake Lynn Project. They are due by Sept. 28th, 1995. AND if you believe, they want the original and 7 (seven) copies!

Please cover all or some of the following points in your comments:
1. Make sure to request that FERC not grant West Penn Power’s request to renge on its commitment to establish this trail to the nature preserve.
2. This trail is in the best interest of WV citizens and Morgantown residents.
3. The alternative trail proposed by West Penn Power is NOT an acceptable replacement for the 4.5 mile trail to the nature preserve.
4. Land owners along this trail do not speak for this community.
5. The trail provides the only land access to the nature preserve. Without this access, this preserve will become the private playground of the Greystone property owners.
6. This abandoned R5 grade is owned by the utility and should be managed as a trail for the public.
7. This is a unique resource. No other such opportunity exists elsewhere in northern West Virginia.

Wildlife concerns of these landowners (privacy, vandalism, etc.) can be taken care of with good management and design.

Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide Now Out

Edition 6 of Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide is now available. This edition is bigger and better than ever, with 368 pages, 96 pages of maps, 49 photographs, 177 trails totaling 812 miles, and a new full color cover. West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is the publisher. Author is Allen de Hart and Bruce Sundquist (same edition 5). Allen has hiked all the trails of the Monongahela N.F. over the past few years. Bruce was the editor for the first four editions. The hiking community and the U.S. Forest Service provided trail reports and photographs. Edition 6, like edition 5, also provides information for ski-touring and backpacking.

The growing throngs of visitors and the public at large regard the Monongahela National Forest as a ‘Special Place’. And indeed it is. The hiking, backpacking, and ski-touring opportunities it provides are among the best in the eastern U.S. The more outstanding areas are becoming known far and wide - Outer Creek Wilderness, Dolly Sods Wilderness, Flatrock Plains, Roaring Plains, Blackwater Canyon, Spruce Knob, North Fork Mountain, Shaver’s Mountain, Laurel Fork Wilderness, Cranberry Back County, Cranberry Wilderness, among others.

Profits from the sale of these guides support a wide variety of worthy environmental projects in the west Virginia Highlands Conservancy. To order your copy of Edition 6 of Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide, send $12.85 (this includes $2.90 first class shipping) to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy PO Box 306 Charleston, WV 25321

West Virginia residents must add $0.60 sales tax. (total of $13.45)

I have included a check or money order for the amount of $_________ to WVHC for _______ copies of the Monongahela National Forest Hiking Guide.

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:

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1995 West Virginia Highlands Conservancy - Fall Review

Canaan Valley - September 15, 16, 17, 1995

Schedule of Events

Friday, Sept. 15 - 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm.
Arrival: check-in - hospitality room at White Grass Ski Touring Center
Jackie Hettman will be showing slides of her recent trip to Southern
Italy. If you have good slides you want to show, bring them along.
Contact Jackie 304-345-3718
Jam session - bring musical tools

Saturday, Sept. 16 - 7:00 am to 9:00 am
Meet at White Grass - have breakfast - prepare for outings.
Note: All outings will depart from White Grass at 9:00 am except the
birders. If you are interested in bird watching, bird counting, or bird
banding, please call Mary Ruffnerberger 636-4535. Birders will
rendezvous earlier and probably just meet on site at Dolly Sods
where the activities are going on.
Canoe trip - lower New River Fork - contact Seyne Rodman (only if we get
lots of rain between now and then) 304-328-4093
Seneca Creek Hike/fish - contact Frank Young: 304-372-3933
Spelunking (cave exploration) - contact Judy Fisher 304-258-4974, It
would be a big help to Judy if you call ahead so she will know how
many to plan for and what level of difficulty to attempt.
Road tour of nearby areas affected by the proposed Corridor "H"
construction. Battle sites from the Civil War, residences, etc.
Contact Hugh Rogers 304-636-2662.
Lodgers and Shirkers Expeditions - There are always folks who prefer
to kick back, relax, watch TV, etc. Why not meet at White Grass
and do it together?
6:00 pm - Dinner at Timberline (see map)
7:00 pm - Panel Discussion - pros and cons of Corridor "H"
Panelists: Peter Kostmayer, former Administrator, EPA Region 3
John Doyle, West Virginia House of Delegates
Hugh Rogers, Corridor H Alternatives
Bill Hettman, West Virginians for Corridor H
9:00 pm - 12:00 am-Music by Kate Long, followed by
Square Dance with music by Gerry Milnes & Friends,
calling by Denise Reese.
Get acquainted with Conservancy members and Peter Kostmayer.

Sunday, Sept. 17 - White Grass
8:00 am - breakfast
9:00 am - annual membership meeting and election
9:30 am - board of directors meeting
1:00 pm - lunch and closing

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Join the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

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<th>Category</th>
<th>Individual</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Corporate</th>
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<td>Mountaineer</td>
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Here are the prices and options for lodging for the
Fall Review at Canaan Valley on Sept 15-17 (all on a per
person per night basis, unless noted):
- Mountain Retreat Center at Harman: $7.50
- Laurrelville Cabin: $10
- Condos at Timberline: $20
- Village Inn Motel: $46.87 for two
- Smaller sites: $60.00 for four
- Reservations are pretty well nailed down by September 8.
- If you have access to WNPH's computer bulletin board,
  you can leave a message for Richard difreto. Or you can email him at
  rdpretorio@gsa.gov.

Make Your Reservations For Fall Review, Now!

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast (yogurt, fruit, eggs, bacon):</td>
<td>$4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch (taco and bean soup):</td>
<td>$4</td>
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<td>Prices half off for children.</td>
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Here are the prices for meals at the Fall Review at
Canaan Valley on Sept 15-17 (all at White Grass except
for Saturday night dinner at Timberline):
- SATURDAY
  - Morning snack (coffee, fruit, muffins): $5
  - Lunch (chicken or vegetarian lasagne): $10
  - Dinner (chicken or beef lasagne): $10

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

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Membership Benefits

* 1 year subscription to the Highlands Voice
* Special meetings with workshops and speakers
* Representation through WVHC efforts to monitor legislative and agency activity
  - The WVHC, at age 28, is the oldest environmental group in West
Virginia. The Conservancy has been influential in protecting and
preserving WV's natural heritage. Your support will help WVHC to
continue its efforts.

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