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A watershed’s new beginning: Restoration and hope for the South Fork Cherry River

By Andrew Young, Staff Attorney for the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance

At long last, the coal trucks have fallen silent on Sugartree Bench Mountain at the headwaters of the South Fork Cherry River. South Fork Coal Company – the rogue operator that used an illegal haul road through the Monongahela National Forest – is shut down for good. In August, the company’s parent firm announced it would liquidate rather than continue mining after failing to find a buyer. And on Sept. 16, 2025 the United States Forest Service terminated the road use permit for South Fork Coal Company’s use of forest roads for coal hauling. This decision caps a major legal and regulatory victory: the illegal haul road



Big Run Trail heading toward Fork Mountain Trail, Monongahela National Forest—just over the ridge west of the Rocky Run mine and South Fork Cherry River valley. *Photo by Linsey Young.*

slicing through public forest has been shut down by enforcement authorities, and with South Fork Coal in bankruptcy, the immediate threat

of ongoing coal mining in the South Fork Cherry River watershed has finally been stopped, for now. For the first time in years, this wounded

corner of the highlands can begin to heal without the rumble of coal trucks or the fear of new strip mining and blasting looming overhead.

This victory did not come easily or quickly. It was earned through the tireless efforts of a broad coalition of people who refused to give up on these mountains. Local residents, conservation groups, and concerned citizens sounded the alarm and kept up the pressure. West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, Appalachian Voices, Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance, and others exposed South Fork Coal’s abuses and then fought them in court and through regulatory channels. Attorneys from Appalachian Mountain Advocates

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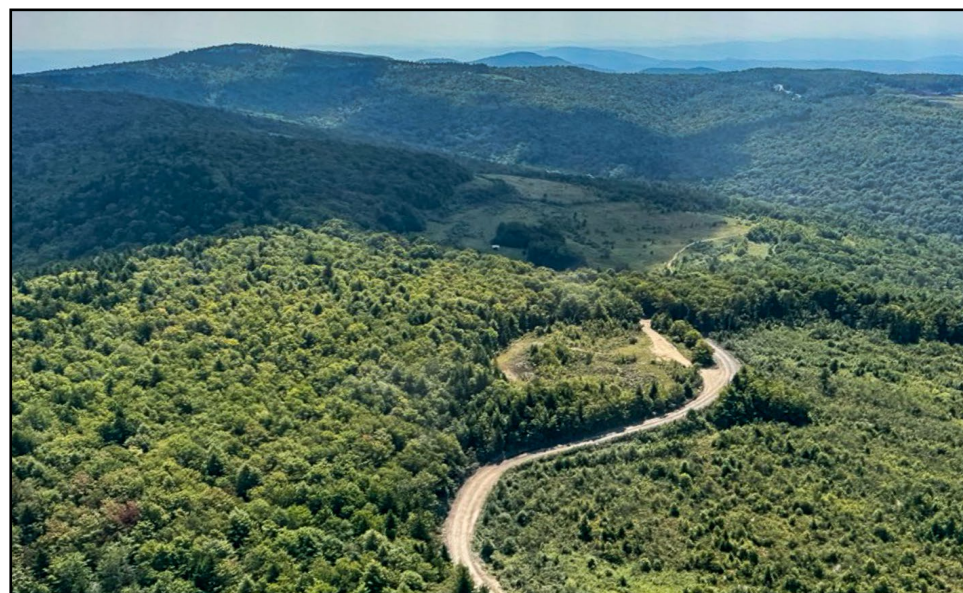
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and allies like the Center for Biological Diversity took on the legal battles. Outdoors enthusiasts, from trout fishermen to hikers to hunters, lent their voices, submitting thousands of public comments against allowing coal hauling in the national forest. Even some regulators eventually answered the call: the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection finally stepped in to issue violation notices and cessation orders when the evidence of lawlessness became impossible to ignore. It took a village – a determined, passionate village – to stand up to this outlaw operation. I am grateful beyond words for each person who has so far played a part. But as satisfying as it is to celebrate this hard-won victory, I want to spend most of this space looking forward. Because now comes the real work: ensuring this place recovers and is never threatened again.

Reclaiming what should have been

One fact gives this moment a profound sense of justice: the mines and haul roads we have fought over lie entirely within the original proclamation boundary of the Monongahela National Forest. Over a century ago, when Monongahela National



Haul Road #2 in the Monongahela National Forest. *Photo by Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance.*

Forest was established in 1920, these lands were envisioned as part of the public estate. They're high in the headwaters of the Gauley River and Greenbrier River systems, rich with red spruce forests and streams. Generations ago, the Cherry River Boom and Lumber Co. (a timber company, now Weyerhaeuser) acquired this tract before the Forest Service could.

With the coal company gone, those scarred mountains and valleys should be brought into the fold of the Monongahela National Forest or otherwise permanently protected and restored to native habitat. I firmly believe that adding this acreage to the national forest is the best outcome. If these ridges and hollows become public land, never again can anyone scheme to carve up the mountains for short-term profit. Mining and other destructive uses would be effectively off-limits – protected by the same laws that have safeguarded Dolly Sods, Seneca Creek, and other treasured parts of our eastern national forests for decades. But more importantly, it would provide public

access, recreation opportunities, and good jobs.

Transferring the land to public ownership won't happen overnight, but we should start laying the groundwork now. Weyerhaeuser and public officials need to come to the table and talk about a deal to transfer or sell this land for conservation instead of letting the zombie mines rot in perpetuity and continue to decimate the watershed with toxic mine drainage, and standing as a huge flood and erosion risk. Fortunately, we have precedent on our side: at the Mower Tract, West Virginia has seen large tracts of former mine land restored in the Monongahela in recent decades, securing funding, getting the cleanup and restoration done, and developing the land for public access and recreation opportunities. We also just saw the huge success in the 2025 acquisition of the Blackwater Canyon land into the Monongahela National Forest from Allegheny Wood Products after years of efforts by advocates. Why not here? This place has always belonged among

the protected wild lands of the Mon. Let's make it happen.

Healing the land

Protecting the South Fork Cherry River watershed on paper is only one piece of the future we must build. The other piece is healing the physical landscape after years of devastation. I've flown over and walked the edges of the South Fork Coal strip mine moonscape, and each time felt my heart sink at the sight of once-green mountainsides denuded and gouged open. Over 3,600 acres of mines and infrastructure now sit idle here, still dumping sediment and acidic runoff into streams whenever it rains. Toxic, orange-stained water permanently discharges from a failed wet seal on the abandoned South Fork Deep Mine No. 2, and from the Lost Flats complex refuse storage site, a stark contrast to the clear, cold streams this area is otherwise known for. The damage is real, but it should not be forever. The Allegheny Highlands are tremendously resilient. With care and commitment, nature can and will rebound – and we can lend a helping hand in that recovery while creating jobs and restoring our connection to the land.

Picture this: a decade or two from now, the currently bare mine sites are blanketed with young red spruce and native hardwood saplings, planted by crews of local restoration workers. Red spruce is a keystone of these high elevations, and bringing it back will revive not just the forest canopy but whole ecosystems of birds and mammals that rely on spruce. In the creeks below, erosion has been curbed; volunteers and experts have stabilized slopes and restored streambanks. As vegetation returns, the South Fork Cher-

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Update on Fundamental Data and the Ridgeline Project

By Luanne McGovern, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

Despite the outpouring of public concern and protest against issuing an air permit to the Ridgeline power plant project, the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection issued a construction permit to Fundamental Data on Aug. 16. As noted in the September edition of *The Highlands Voice*, there were a few minor changes incorporated based on the over 1,600 citizen comments. But the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is still opposed to this project being built in Tucker County.

In partnership with Appalachian Mountain Advocates, Tucker United and the Sierra Club, an appeal was filed with the West Virginia Air Quality Board requesting that the permit be reconsidered.

Our appeal challenges the company's claims that this plant qualifies as a "synthetic minor source" of pollution. We believe it must be treated as a "major source facility," which would require continuous emissions monitoring and stricter regulatory controls. The permit is problematic in several other ways:

- It allows critical information to be kept secret from the public.
- It fails to require emissions and pollution monitoring.



In June, over 400 people gathered at Canaan Valley Resort State Park for an in-person meeting with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection regarding Fundamental Data's application for an air quality permit.

- And overall, the permit does not meet the standards set by West Virginia's Air Pollution Control Act.

The Air Quality Board has scheduled an evidentiary hearing on the appeal for Wednesday, Nov. 5, at 8:30 a.m. at the Department of Environmental Protection offices in Charleston. We urge all members and interested parties to attend, either in person or via Zoom, to hear directly about this problematic permit. More information and the details of our appeal can be found at the end of the article.

This fight for the Highlands is likely to be long, and costly. Please consider contributing to our data center opposition fundraiser to help

defray the costs for legal assistance and advocacy work. As stated so eloquently by our Program Director, Olivia Miller and our President, Marilyn Shoenfeld in the most recent edition of the Tucker County Observer:

"We call on citizens and those who love Tucker County to stay engaged. The remarkable grassroots uprising seen these past months must not fade. The fight is difficult, but it's far from over, and public engagement is the key to success. Keep speaking out through every channel available. This is a fight for the life of our home as we know it. That's not hyperbole. But it's a fight we can win by drawing on our unity, our history, and our mountain spirit."

Tucker County stands at a crossroads not unlike ones we've faced before. One path, greased by outside interests, leads to an industrialized highland with short-term gains for a few and long-term costs for the many. The other path is one of local empowerment, prudent planning, and preservation of the precious assets that make this place home."

Tucker United invites all community members to stay engaged and take part in these important conversations about Tucker County's future. The Community Potluck & Roundtable Discussion will be held from **noon to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 12**, at the Thomas Community Center, followed by the Community Informational Session & Conversation from **5:30 to 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 23**, at the Tucker County Courthouse in Parsons. Both events are free and open to everyone interested in learning more about the Ridgeline Project, House Bill 2014, and other issues shaping the county's direction. For more information or updates, visit Tucker United's Facebook page or contact organizers directly.

Help protect
our community,
land, and future
— donate to our
Data Center
fund.



THE WAY THE VOICE WORKS

The Highlands Voice is the official publication of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy. While it is the official publication, every story in it does not represent an official position of the Conservancy. While all of our members share the general goal "to promote, encourage, and work for the conservation—including both preservation and wise use—and appreciation of the natural resources of West Virginia and the nation," our members often have differing views upon the best way to do that.

As a result, stories in *The Voice* often reflect different points of view. The Conservancy itself, however, only speaks through its Board. The only stories that reflect the official policies of the Conservancy are those reporting Board actions, including litigation positions we have taken, comments on proposed regulations, etc.

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
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- Fighting to Protect the Highlands: \$15.95 + \$5.38 shipping
- The Nature and Scenery of the West Virginia Highlands, 2nd Edition: \$29.95 + \$5.38 shipping

To order by mail make checks payable to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and send to P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321. Please indicate the item and relevant color and size if applicable. To view and purchase store items online, visit wvhighlands.org

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ry River runs clear and cold again, providing a healthier home for native brook trout and rare species like the candy darter and hellbender that cling to survival in these waters. A flood-resilient river valley begins to reform as the replanted forests soak up heavy rains. (Richwood knows all too well the importance of this – healthy forests upstream are a bulwark against the kind of catastrophic flooding that has ravaged the town in the past.) Instead of denuded moonscapes visible from the Cranberry Wilderness and Highland Scenic Highway, future hikers on the Fork Mountain Trail will look out on green ridgelines and young forests reclaiming their rightful place. The land will start to resemble its old self, full of life.

Just as exciting, this restoration can create stable, skilled jobs for local people. Reclaiming a large mine complex to native habitat is not weekend volunteer work. It is a multi-year endeavor requiring heavy equipment operators, tree planters, hydrologists, wildlife biologists, and more. I would love to see some of the very miners who lost their jobs with South Fork Coal hired on to help reclaim these mines and restore the streams. In a not immediately apparent way, it makes perfect sense, because who knows



An aerial view of the Rocky Run Surface Mine. (Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance)

the land better than those who worked it? With training and support, former coal workers could find dignified, meaningful work turning a former mine site into a thriving native forest. This kind of restoration economy could sustain families here for years, and the pride that comes from healing your own home ground is immeasurable. We owe it to these workers and their families to create that opportunity – to show that environmental restoration isn't a pipe dream and could be a real, near-term economic pillar for coal impacted communities across Appalachia.

A new hope

For the towns near the South Fork Cherry River – places like Richwood, Nettie, and Fenwick – this moment represents a chance to break the cycles of boom and bust that have defined and held captive the local economy for generations. Richwood was built on extraction; a century ago it was a booming timber

town that famously billed itself the “Lumber Capital of West Virginia.” When the big timber was gone, the town struggled, and more recently it pinned hopes on coal and other industries that never truly panned out. With South Fork Coal's liquidation, coal has once again left everybody downstream holding the bag with tens of millions of dollars in reclamation work undone and workers left without employment, while shareholders in New York and Virginia and Toronto lined their pockets. It is a story played on repeat for the last century here. The wounds from those busts are tangible, and playing out once again: lost jobs, population decline, and a tax base that can't support public needs. Even worse, the practices of timber and coal extraction have left the area more vulnerable to forces of nature – for example, the loss of forest cover upstream was one factor that exacerbated flooding when record rains came. Richwood was devastated by floods in 2016, a disaster that underscored how urgently we need to restore and protect our watersheds.

Now, with the South Fork Coal mine halted, Richwood has an opportunity to pivot toward a different kind of future. The ingredients for success are all here. This region's natural beauty – the same impressive rivers and mountains that were seen as impediments to development – can be the foundation of a sustainable outdoor recreation based economy. In fact, Richwood has already begun embracing this identity as a “Gateway to the Monongahela National Forest.” If we secure permanent protection and robust restoration for the South Fork Cherry River area, we could eventually see new trailheads just outside Rich-

wood, anglers traveling from afar to fish its reborn trout streams, hunters and hikers exploring its ridges in the fall, and paddlers running the Cherry downstream. Those visitors will need places to eat, sleep, and get gear; local entrepreneurs can rise to meet that demand, creating new businesses and jobs. And it's not only about tourism: the quality of life improvements that come with a healthy environment – cleaner water, safer communities, pride in one's surroundings – make it easier for local people to stay and raise families here. In short, investing in restoration is investing in the long-term vitality of Richwood and all the communities of the Cherry River valley. It's a path out of the extractive death spiral, toward something more lasting and enriching.

All hands on deck

None of these visions will become reality by default. We have a window of opportunity right now, and it's going to take all hands on deck to seize it. That means everyone has a role to play. First and foremost, Weyerhaeuser, the private timber company (and largest landowner in the USA besides the federal government) that owns the surface and mineral estates, must be part of the solution – whether through a land sale, a land swap, or an agreement to collaborate on restoration and conservation. I know that might sound optimistic, but I believe even big corporations can do the right thing, particularly when they have no other choice, and they should be given the chance to help us get it done.

The remaining minable coal in the watershed relies upon use of national forest road(s) and will never

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be mined without overwhelming resistance from the public and drawn out legal and regulatory battles. Instead of getting shortchanged on their royalties when their mineral leasee (South Fork Coal this time) goes bankrupt, Weyerhaeuser has a chance to make the right decision here and either sell (at least the mineral lease) to a conservation entity and eventually deed to the national forest, or at a minimum, commit to prohibiting future mining and place the area into some form of conservation easement. The U.S. Forest Service also needs to step up. They should be our allies in adding this watershed into national forest ownership, as well as seeking federal funding for land acquisition and the mine restoration projects. The West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection has a legal and moral duty here as well. WVDEP should aggressively use the tools at its disposal – revoking South Fork's permits, seizing the full reclamation bonds, and getting reclamation moving now, whatever it takes. No more foot-dragging for another decade; every month of delay means more pollution in the Cherry River and more risk of unreclaimed highwalls collapsing or mudslides occurring. We can and will keep the pressure on WVDEP to make sure



A native brook trout caught in the Gauley River headwaters. *Photo by Micah Bates.*

they enforce the law and prioritize this cleanup.

Federal, state, and local leaders and officials in Nicholas and Greenbrier counties have a stake too. They can advocate for state and federal assistance, help coordinate retraining programs for displaced miners into restoration work, and ensure that any planning integrates this new vision for the area. Labor unions and workforce development groups can help organize the labor needed – whether it's the United Mine Workers or construction unions – to guarantee that restoration jobs are good jobs with fair wages and benefits. Our academic and scientific partners can contribute expertise: ecologists and hydrologists to design restoration plans, foresters to guide replanting of red spruce and hardwoods, and fishery biologists to monitor stream recovery. Environmental and sportsmen NGOs are already mobilizing and will remain crucial. Groups like the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance, Appalachian Voices, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, WV Native Fish Coalition, WV Backcountry Hunters and An-

glers, West Virginia Rivers Coalition, Sierra Club, and many others have passionate members who can volunteer on-the-ground or lobby for funding and policy support to get this done. In short, this is a team effort on the grandest scale – the kind of effort that can actually succeed when we all pull in the same direction. The good news is, after watching so many different groups and people come together to stop the mining, I have more faith than ever that we can keep working together to restore the land and protect it forever.

An invitation to shape the future

Writing this, I feel a profound mix of gratitude, responsibility, and hope. Gratitude for the unlikely alliance of people who delivered us to this point. Responsibility, because declaring victory is just the beginning of another chapter – one where we must be as dogged and passionate about restoration as we have been about resistance. And hope, because I've seen the power of community and I've seen how resilient nature can be when given a chance. As I

imagine the South Fork Cherry River watershed twenty or thirty years from now, I can envision hearing the wind in stands of young spruce and the rush of clean water over rocks. I can see families catching glimpses of brook trout darting in clear pools. I picture former miners pointing out areas of red spruce they replanted with their grandchildren, with pride in their voices. I see Richwood hosting the annual Cherry River Festival not to lament what has been lost, but to celebrate a living, thriving watershed that sustains the town in new ways.

That vision won't materialize on its own. It's up to us to make it real and make it ours. So I'm writing today not only to share a story, but to extend an invitation. Whether you're a lifelong Highlands Conservancy member or someone new to this issue, your ideas and energy are needed now. In the coming months, there will be ways to get involved – I invite you to join in. Help us demand that these lands be placed into public hands. Come out and plant a tree or help build a trail when the time comes. If you have expertise, lend it; if you have influence, use it. And if you simply love these mountains, raise your voice for them. The South Fork Cherry River is writing a new chapter, moving from exploitation toward renewal and hope. Let's all be authors of that chapter. Together, we can ensure that this special place – now scarred by greed – becomes a national example of restoration, resilience, and community-powered change. ABRA, the Highlands Conservancy, and our numerous partners will be there every step of the way. I'll be there. I hope you will be too. Let's go build the future this watershed deserves.

Metallurgical coal: a critical mineral?

By John McFerrin, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

Metallurgical coal is having a moment right now. After years of being just the less common type of coal, it is being elevated to “critical mineral” and “critical material” with all the rights and benefits accruing thereto. Since 46% of the metallurgical coal in the United States is in West Virginia, West Virginia is having a moment as well. The largest consumer of metallurgical coal is China; the largest consumer of metallurgical coal from the United States is India.

There are, in general, two types of coal. One is called “thermal” or “steam” coal. Although it is sometimes used to heat buildings directly, its most common use is to make electricity.

The other type of coal is “metallurgical” or “met” coal. Although it is occasionally used to make electricity, by far its most common use is to make steel. It has properties that make it good for making coke which is used to make steel.

The first part of met coal’s moment came in the Big Beautiful Bill. Although the most visible parts of that bill were the cuts to food stamps and Medicaid and the tax cuts, there were less discussed provisions. As the late, great John Wayne used to say (in more colorful language), it’s the ones you do not see that get you.

The Big Beautiful Bill designates metallurgical coal as a “critical mineral.” The United States Department of Energy had previously added metallurgical coal to its Critical Materials List. This entitles those who mine metallurgical coal to a tax credit of 2.5% of the cost of mining.



This credit applies whether the coal is used domestically or exported.

The nominal policy behind the Critical Materials list is that there are some materials which are critical to our national defense. It is important that the United States have a domestic supply so that, in times of emergency, we do not run out. Steel is important to national defense, metallurgical coal is important to make steel, so it follows, as the night the day, that metallurgical coal must be important to our national defense.

The second part of metallurgical coal’s big moment comes in a proposal to have it added to a more general list of critical minerals. The proposal, which is not yet final, would add metallurgical coal to a list that already contains such minerals as samarium, rhodium, lutetium, terbium, dysprosium, gallium, germanium, gadolinium, tungsten and niobium (54 minerals in all).

Being on the Critical Minerals list is the golden ticket of American public policy. Anything on the list is eligible for some kinds of funding and tax credits as well as a streamlined permitting process.

While metallurgical coal is already in the Big Beautiful Bill, its inclusion on the more general Critical Minerals list is pending. The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy has joined with several other groups in opposing the addition of metallurgical coal to the Critical Minerals list.

WVHC opposed the addition of metallurgical coal to the list because there is nothing about it that justifies that status.

We do not need metallurgical coal to make steel. To the extent that we need metallurgical coal, we are producing much more than we need for domestic steelmaking.

The steel made in the United

States is made in one of two ways: (1) making new steel by processing iron with the addition of carbon; (2) taking previously used steel, melting it down, and making it into new steel. In the United States, 70% of our steel comes from previously used steel. According to the Steel Manufacturers Association, that will increase to 90% by 2040.

Melting down scrap steel and making new steel does not require metallurgical coal. It is done by an entirely different process.

At present, metallurgical coal is used to make most of the steel that is made by processing coal, etc. It does not, however, have to be like that. There is currently available technology that can make steel from iron ore using methane or even hydrogen as a fuel.

Even if metallurgical coal were necessary to make steel, there still is no reason to justify hoarding our supply for national security reasons. We have way more than we need or use. According to the United States Energy Information Administration, the United States exports 76% of the metallurgical coal that it produces. It is not necessary for the United States to give tax breaks, special financing, streamlined permitting, etc. to keep us from running out. If our national security ever requires that we have more metallurgical coal, we can stop exporting some of it.

The tax credit in the Big Beautiful Bill for metallurgical coal expires in 2029. It is about time for whatever lobbyist was responsible for having the credit included in the bill to start working on an extension.

New initiative launched to save five miles along the Gauley River

By Faye Wooden, Arc of Appalachia

An organization that is relatively new to West Virginia is working to buy and preserve a 1,336-acre forest tract that will potentially protect 5 miles of shoreline on the Gauley River. For the last 30 years, the non-profit land trust, the Arc of Appalachia, has been preserving forested wildlands in Appalachian Ohio, with a secondary focus on wetlands and native eastern prairie remnants. To date, they have purchased 189 properties and over 14,000 acres of natural areas. The Arc has a special focus on helping people and nature come in closer connection. To further this purpose, the Arc maintains 90 miles of hiking trails in Ohio, and hosts a large variety of outdoor literacy workshops and courses that attract registrants from across the nation.

You may be wondering, why is a group from Ohio expanding into West Virginia? Simply put, nature knows no borders. With nearly 80% forest cover, it is the third most forested state in the nation, and real estate parcels are considerably larger, and the price/acre considerably more affordable than rural Ohio. As environmental and developmental pressures continue to escalate across the Eastern third of the continent, the need to protect our last remaining wildlands and rivers intensifies. The Arc of Appalachia likes to think of the Ohio River as not a boundary, but a stepping stone that can potentially unite land forms that share nearly identical geology and physiography.

Late last summer, the Arc of Appalachia became smitten with a



Photo of the Gauley River property and its 1,136 acres of forest lands. *Photo by Arc of Appalachia.*

beautiful, roadless 1200-acre forested tract in Greenbrier County near Lewisburg, West Virginia. The property took in nearly 2 miles of Renick Creek, and most of its watershed, which belongs to the larger Greenbrier River Watershed. Biological inventories recorded the presence of the small-footed bat, thirteen species of salamanders (including the cave salamander), and the rare Tree Lungwort Lichen. The nonprofit succeeded in raising money from private donors for the property. Today, the Arc is delighted to be the proud owner of its first nature preserve in West Virginia, and have been drawn deeper into the Appalachian heartland.

Just as the 2024 calendar year was drawing to a close, the Arc received a 110-acre donation of land in the Carter County, eastern Kentucky, a property known as Chegeree Cliffs. This beautiful karst landscape became the Arc's first preserve in Kentucky. And so it was that in just three months, the Arc transitioned from working in one state to three!

Earlier this year, the Arc became aware of the 1336-acre real estate on the Gauley River listing

through a private offering. The tract included not only five miles on the Gauley River shoreline, but also one mile on both sides of Big Beaver Creek, a tributary of the Gauley that showcases the property's most remote and beautiful forests.

The entire property is teeming with wildlife, including black bear, bobcat, coyote, wild turkey, mink, beaver, white-tailed deer, and a high diversity of salamanders, including the charismatic green salamander. Notable bird species that are common in these woodlands include the Swainson's warbler and the hooded warbler. The call of one or both species resound from every glen and cove in the springtime. This section of the Gauley River is also a refuge for the eastern hellbender and the federally endangered candy darter.

The forests of Five Miles on the Gauley are dominated by oaks, several species of magnolias, and eastern hemlocks, boasting a thick understory of great Rhododendron. The tract also protects a rare habitat along the frequently-flooded cobble zone of the Gauley known as River-scour, a plant community native to the Eastern third of our nation that

is in serious decline. This rare ecosystem shelters a large number of unique, imperiled species that are adapted to the alternating extremes of being exposed to the hot, drying sun and submerged under rushing floodwaters.

The Arc of Appalachia humbly recognizes that it is a new face in the West Virginia conservation community, and it arrives to West Virginia with a great deal of humility. The Arc's goal is to add to the efforts of land trusts that have been working in the state for decades, hopefully succeeding in attracting conservation dollars from other states that, without their efforts, would never have wound their way to West Virginia.

The Arc has initiated a campaign to raise \$3.6 million necessary for the property's acquisition, as well as for the development of a parking lot, which will enable special events to be hosted on the site. As of this writing, the campaign is 44% complete.

To help accomplish this goal, the Arc has created a website at arc-of-appalachia.org for the campaign that is linked to its home page, and can also be accessed through savethegauley.org. Dedicated volunteers have created a campaign film and wrote and produced the *The Gauley River Song* to help reach wide audiences. Both are linked to the webpage. Arc staff members welcome communication of all kinds, and they can be reached at info@arc-of-appalachia.org.

Now is the time to dream big and begin to bring the treasures of the Eastern Forest into our nation's consciousness as landscapes exceedingly worthy to protect.

Tourism to Southern WV’s three national park sites contributes 108.4 million to local economy – new report shows a 12% increase over 2023

New River Gorge National Park and Preserve News Release

A new National Park Service report shows that 2,080,330 visitors to the three national park sites —New River Gorge National Park and Preserve, Bluestone National Scenic River, and Gauley River National Recreation Area —spent \$108,387,000 in counties surrounding the parks in 2024. This reflects an almost 12% increase in spending over 2023.

“Our visitation has increased steadily since redesignation,” said Acting Superintendent Eric LaPrice. “Alongside the rise in visitation, we’ve witnessed a parallel surge in spending across gateway communi-



ties surrounding all three national park sites.”

The National Park Service report, 2024 National Park Visitor Spending Effects, finds that visitors spent \$29 billion in communities

near national parks. This spending provided \$18.8 billion in labor income and \$56.3 in economic output to the U.S. economy. The lodging sector had the highest direct contributions with \$11.1 billion in eco-

nomic output. Restaurants received the next greatest direct contributions with \$5.7 billion in economic output.

An interactive tool is available to explore visitor spending, labor income, and total economic contribution by sector for national, state and local economies. Users can also view year-by-year trend data. The interactive tool and report are available on the NPS website.

To learn more about national parks in West Virginia and how the National Park Service works with West Virginia communities to help preserve local history, conserve the environment, and provide outdoor recreation, go to www.nps.gov/westvirginia.

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	Individual	Family	Org.
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Other	\$15		
Regular	\$25	\$35	\$50
Associate	\$50	\$75	\$100
Sustaining	\$100	\$150	\$200
Patron	\$250	\$500	\$500
Mountaineer	\$500	\$750	\$1000

Mail to West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321

West Virginia Highlands Conservancy
Working to Keep West Virginia Wild and Wonderful
You may also join online at www.wvhighlands.org

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy's 2025 Fall Review: "Environmentalism in a Changing World"

As Appalachia faces escalating environmental threats—from policy rollbacks and extreme weather to industrial development and habitat loss—this fall, conservationists, advocates, and concerned citizens will gather in the heart of Tucker County for a critical weekend of reflection, strategy and action.

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy's annual Fall Review returns to Blackwater Falls State Park the weekend of Oct. 31–Nov. 2, convening some of the region's most trusted voices to examine how we can defend Appalachia's lands, waters, and communities in the face of profound change.

With political landscapes shifting and climate impacts intensifying, the Fall Review will explore how we respond—through policy, advocacy, and grassroots action—to ensure a just and resilient future for the Mountain State and beyond.

We'll be announcing a very special keynote speaker soon, but in the meantime, panel sessions will feature environmental leaders, at-



A scenic view of the Blackwater Canyon from Canyon Rim Rd. in the Monongahela National Forest. (Olivia Miller)

torneys, scientists, and advocates, including:

Federal Policy and Appalachia – a look at national policies shaping the region's future—from climate legislation to conservation funding with experts from local, regional and national environmental organizations.

West Virginia's Legislative Landscape – an insider's view of the most pressing state-level policy battles, featuring voices from the WV Rivers Coalition, the West Virginia Environmental Council, and other key advocates.

Citizen Advocacy 101 – a hands-on session to empower at-

tendees to speak up and organize effectively in their communities.

Looking Back, Moving Forward – a tribute and knowledge-sharing panel with veteran environmental champions, offering lessons from past struggles and hopes for the future.

Outdoor Adventures and Connection – it wouldn't be a WVHC event without going outside. Attendees can look forward to:

- A guided hike on Saturday
- A nighttime nature walk and sound-listening session
- A peaceful Sunday birding excursion

General admission is free, and registration is now open. Don't miss this opportunity to be part of shaping the future of conservation in West Virginia.

Why It Matters – from defending public lands to confronting polluting development and climate-driven disasters, Appalachia needs engaged citizens now more than ever.

Continued on page 15

Leave a legacy of hope for the future

Remember the Highlands Conservancy in your will. Plan now to provide a wild and wonderful future for your children and future generations. Bequests keep our organization strong and will allow your voice to continue to be heard for years to come.

Your thoughtful planning now will allow us to continue our work to protect wilderness, wildlife, clean air and water and our way of life in the mountains. Contact crys.bauer@wvhighlands.org

Are you on our email list?

Signing up to receive emails from the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is your gateway to staying actively engaged in conservation efforts and volunteer opportunities in West Virginia.



Staying informed with our action alerts will empower you to advocate for environmental policies that matter the most. **Sign up today at bit.ly/WVHCemailsSignup**

Despite public pushback, West Virginia approves air quality permits for data center energy campus in Mingo County

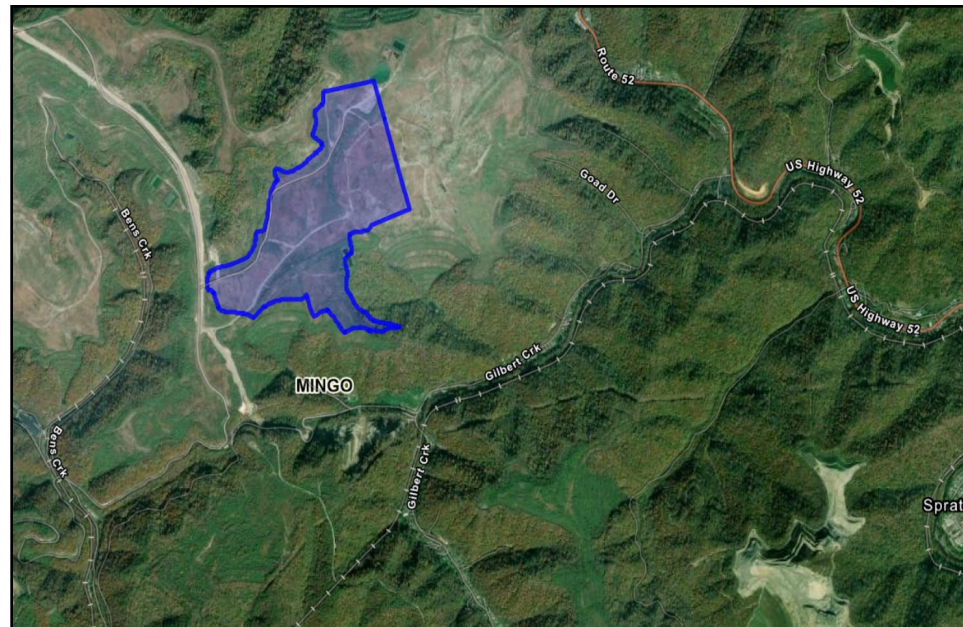
By Jordan Howes, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy

Despite public outcry, state issues air quality permits for two off-grid power plants tied to world's largest ammonia project

A proposal to build a sprawling energy and data hub in southern West Virginia is stirring deep concerns among residents, who say they've been left in the dark about the project's health, environmental, and economic impacts.

In April, TransGas Development Systems, a New York-based company, filed applications with the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to construct two off-grid natural gas-fired power plants and associated data centers — one on the former Twisted Gun Golf Course in Wharncliffe, the other at the Harless Industrial Park near the Mingo-Logan county line. Together, the facilities would be tied to the company's larger Adams Fork Energy project, an ammonia production plant that, if built, would become the largest of its kind in the world.

At full capacity, the power plants would each operate 117 gas engines and could generate more than 2,400 megawatts of power — making them the third- and fourth-largest energy facilities in the state, behind only the John Amos and Harrison power stations. Each would also have the capacity to emit hun-



The Adams Fork Energy project is located along Ben's Creek near Gilbert in Mingo County, WV. (West Virginia Property Viewer)

dreds of tons of air pollutants annually, including nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide, and fine particulate matter.

Concerns over secrecy and health impacts

Dozens of residents from Mingo and Logan counties gathered last month in Wharncliffe Park for an informal meeting led by organizers from the West Virginia Citizen Action Group (WV CAG). Participants voiced frustration over what they see as a deliberate lack of transparency. Critical details in the DEP's air quality permits have been redacted, with officials citing "proprietary information."

That uncertainty has fueled

alarm in a region already struggling with high rates of black lung, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease, and other respiratory illnesses. Nearly every person in attendance said they knew someone with black lung disease.

Water usage is another flashpoint. According to project documents, TransGas intends to draw unlimited amounts of water from underground mine pools beneath the golf course to cool equipment and run operations. Residents, many of whom have endured years of unreliable water service and contamination, worry that corporate access to underground water resources will further disadvantage their communities.

Beyond the environmental questions, locals are skeptical about the promised economic benefits. While TransGas has touted 5,000 temporary construction jobs and 300 permanent roles, critics note that the company has announced major projects in Mingo County three times over the last 17 years — without completing any of them.

State issues permits despite public opposition

After weeks of public outcry and two hearings in August and September, the DEP's Division of Air Quality (DAQ) has moved forward with the project. On October 2, 2025, the DAQ officially issued air permits R13-3714 and R13-3715, authorizing TransGas to construct and operate the two proposed off-grid natural gas power plants in Mingo County.

According to the agency, both facilities "will meet all applicable state and federal air quality rules and regulations" as outlined in the approved permit applications. The decision followed a 30-day public comment period, during which dozens of residents and environmental advocates voiced concerns about air pollution, transparency, and the project's cumulative impacts on nearby communities.

The final permitting documents will soon be available on the DEP website, and printed copies can be

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Climate change and our environment: a story

By Go North Alliance

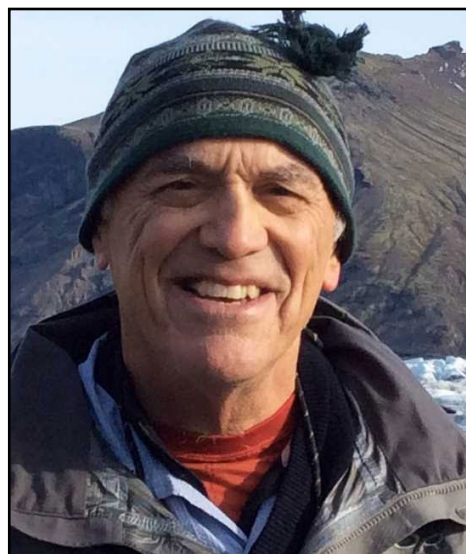
There are two large-scale projects hanging over our heads right now here on our mountaintop in Tucker County — projects that will have enormous impacts on our environment, quality of life and economy.

One, the 10-mile stretch of Corridor H between Parsons and Davis, has been delayed for reasons unknown to us. But we have received word that the issue date for the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement is now set for August 2026.

Secondly, in April, we were stunned to read in the Parsons Advocate about an air quality permit submitted by an unfamiliar, elusive entity called Fundamental Data for a natural gas-fired power plant to be located between Thomas and Davis. A heavily redacted draft permit caused immediate alarm and a strong public reaction. Groups formed, research began, public meetings were held, comment letters were written, and yard signs were planted. Now, we wait for the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection's decision on this permit. The DEP announced a 30-day extension due to the large number— 1,600— of public comments submitted.

It cannot be ignored that both of these proposed projects— a four-lane highway possibly cutting through our towns and a gas-fired powered plant within minutes of our homes and school—will take a toll on our lives: our environment, the air we breathe and our health.

So, as we play the waiting game, we at Go North decided to



Rafe Pomerance, a longtime climate advocate whose early warnings in the 1970s helped bring global warming to the attention of Congress and the White House.

focus this month's newsletter on a subject that is not very popular with either our own governor here in West Virginia, nor our president in Washington, D.C.: climate change and the environment. We begin at the beginning, featuring an interview with Go North Alliance member Rafe Pomerance, an internationally-known environmentalist and Pendleton County resident.

Almost 50 years ago, while doing research, Rafe stumbled across a statement that stunned him and set him on a path to bring the issue of climate change to the attention of Congress, the President of the United States, and the media.

Here is Rafe's story of how it all began:

It was 1977, and Rafe had been working on issues involving the Clean Air Act for the past four years. Finishing up the amendments to the act, he turned his attention to acid rain. While researching, he ran

across a few paragraphs in an EPA environmental report that blew his mind:

"... carbon dioxide emissions from coal use and other fossil fuels or carbon based fuels, oil and gas, would warm up the earth. And that the concentration of carbon dioxide would continue to increase and the earth would get hotter."

"I was so shocked by this. I had never heard of this," Rafe said. "I had been working on the Clean Air Act since 1973 and this was 1977. The issue had never come up in Congress that the climate would warm up from the emissions of greenhouse gases, and it was really a shock. I decided to work on the problem at that point."

A few days later, through what he calls synchronicity, Rafe stumbled across an article by Gordon MacDonald, a renowned geophysicist then working in Washington as a senior research analyst. Rafe contacted him immediately and arranged a meeting.

Mr. McDonald gave Rafe a long briefing on the science of it all, and Rafe describes what happened next. "I said to Gordon MacDonald, if I set up the briefings on this, will you do them? I was a lobbyist and I knew how to do that. And he said sure, he was eager to do that. So I said I would start setting up meetings with people inside the administration, on Capitol Hill, members of Congress and the media."

What astonished Rafe most was how little awareness there was.

"Nobody knew anything about climate change at that point. I mean there were some pockets of the sci-

entific community that were working on it and occasionally as it turns out reports would come out of the executive branch. But they didn't go anywhere. Nobody followed up. There was no organizational effort. So that was sort of the ingredient that I provided, along with my colleagues, to take the science, the substance of it, and take it to policy makers to make it an issue. So that was the first phase and that started in 1979 ... that's how long ago it was ...almost 50 years ago."

The full story of this 10-year period in history, featuring Rafe Pomerance, appeared in the New York Times Magazine on August 1, 2018: *Losing Earth: The Decade We Almost Stopped Climate Change*, written by Nathaniel Rich with support from the Pulitzer Center. It's a must read.

Taken from the Prologue of that article are these words:

That we came so close, as a civilization, to breaking our suicide pact with fossil fuels can be credited to the efforts of a handful of people, among them a hyperkinetic lobbyist and a guileless atmospheric physicist who, at great personal cost, tried to warn humanity of what was coming. They risked their careers in a painful, escalating campaign to solve the problem, first in scientific reports, later through conventional avenues of political persuasion and finally with a strategy of public shaming. Their efforts were shrewd, passionate, robust. And they failed. What follows is their story, and ours.

We continue our story of climate change based on our interview

Continued on page 13

Despite public pushback, West Virginia approves air quality permits for data center energy campus in Mingo County

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requested by contacting Stephanie Mink at the DEP's Charleston office.

Residents who participated in the comment process — or anyone whose interests may be affected — still have the option to appeal the permits to the West Virginia Air Quality Board under state law).

Calls for transparency grow across the state

The tension in Mingo County mirrors growing unease in other parts of West Virginia where large-scale industrial and data center projects have been announced with limited public input. In Mason County, residents recently gathered at the Point Pleasant River Museum seeking information about a separate proposal from Fidelis New Energy that would include a hydrogen plant, carbon storage site, and data center complex. Like the Mingo County project, residents there said they left the meeting with more questions than answers.

As readers of The Highlands

Voice know, similar concerns have surfaced in Tucker County, where an off-grid power plant and data center complex proposed between Davis and Thomas caught the public off guard after redacted permit filings appeared in the local paper. The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and local community groups have also called for greater transparency and local control.

Adding to residents' frustrations, a recently enacted state law HB 2014 — supported by the governor — restricts local governments from regulating the noise, lighting, or land-use impacts of such facilities, effectively reducing communities' ability to protect their quality of life.

The bigger picture

The Adams Fork project represents more than just a local development dispute. Across Appalachia, communities are grappling with new natural gas-based industrial projects promoted as economic lifelines, despite evidence of uncertain markets and serious environmental risks.

As state regulators clear the way for TransGas to proceed, residents say they will continue to demand transparency, independent oversight, and honest answers about how the project will affect their water, air, and daily lives.

Opponents argue that southern West Virginia deserves investment in industries that don't require residents to sacrifice their health or environment for short-term economic promises.

Climate change and our environment: a story

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with Rafe Pomerance.

It was almost 50 years ago, when Rafe Pomerance, sometimes called "the original climate change warrior," stumbled across an EPA environmental report stating that carbon dioxide emissions from coal use and other fossil fuels would warm up the earth, and the earth would continue to grow hotter.

"I was shocked. I said to myself, 'This can't happen! This can't be true.'" That bit of knowledge was the catalyst for Rafe's life's work fighting tirelessly to make others aware of the damaging effects of climate change. The science was known, but he was stunned to find out that there was no awareness in the political circles of Washington DC where he had been working.

By the late 70s, when Rafe and Gordon MacDonald began their "carbon dioxide roadshow," there was really nobody out there who was connecting the science of climate change to policy. Gordon was a scientist, but he understood the bridge between science and policy. Together, they made headway into the corridors of the Capitol, and worked to put climate change on the agenda.

The two men had basically

reached the top of the federal hierarchy with their briefings when they found themselves on the grounds of the White House, in the old Executive Office Building. This briefing was with President Carter's top science advisor at that time, Frank Press. Things were about to change.

As Rafe put it, "Frank Press trotted out his entire senior staff for Gordon's briefing because Gordon MacDonald was a very famous geophysicist!" This time Rafe let Gordon do all the talking. He watched as the president's advisers asked questions. When it was over, Rafe was left wondering if they really got it.

They did... the big report of 1979 was the Charney Report, considered a milestone in the history of understanding climate change.

As Rafe describes it, Frank Press took up the issue. "He calls Jule Charney, a famous climatologist and says, 'I want an assessment of the climate change issue.' Press asked Charney to convene a National Academy panel, which he did, gathering scientists to decide whether the White House should take Gordon's predictions of climate change seriously. Their conclusion would be delivered to the president." Rafe felt "If Charney's group confirmed that the world was careening toward an existential crisis, the president would be forced to act."

Rafe continues: "The remarkable thing about the Charney Report is that the fundamentals have not changed much: that increasing

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Climate change and our environment: a story

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concentrations in greenhouse gases would warm the atmosphere and result in all kinds of consequences. And one famous line in the Charney Report was that the doubling of carbon dioxide would result in a global average increase of three degrees centigrade plus or minus a degree and a half.” Rafe added, “I remember this stuff very well because it was such a big deal!”

Of equal importance was a meeting that MacDonald and Rafe had with Gus Speth, then chairman of the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Speth asked for a report on the climate change problem which MacDonald and three of his colleagues, scientists George Woodwell, David Keeling and Roger Revelle, delivered in short order. The report had a huge effect on Speth: “Its contents were alarming,” Mr. Speth wrote in his 2004 book, *Red Sky at Morning*. “The report predicted ‘a warming that will probably be conspicuous within the next 20 years,’ and it called for early action.” Speth became a major climate advocate throughout many decades.

One of Rafe’s greatest assets during this time was his ability to organize and set up witnesses for breakthrough hearings on climate change. He went to New York City to meet with Jim Hansen, who may be the most famous climate scientist there is.

Said Rafe of Hansen, “I had



Landscape shot of the George Washington National Forest. (Olivia Miller)

never met him. He was the head of the Goddard Institute for Space Studies at that time. Lovely man, very generous with his time. He walked me through the whole thing. And I asked him, ‘Are you willing to be a congressional witness?’ And he sort of nodded, and said yes. For the next several years we tried to use opportunities available to bring Hanson forward as a witness. And I was involved. He became a famous congressional witness.”

One of those hearings was on June 10 and 11, 1986 on the subject of Ozone Depletion, the Greenhouse Effect, and Climate Change. Rafe offered “I could tell you all kinds of stories about how we put this hearing together, but that’s another lengthy conversation. But we got the hearing. Hansen, at the opening panel of the hearing, was amazing. He was a star witness. That panel really blew things up. It got front page coverage in *The New York Times*

and *The Washington Post*. I consider that the breakthrough moment. And on my bookshelf here, I have the whole transcript of the hearing report. I’ll keep it ...”

Another important hearing was in 1988. As Rafe describes, “It was a very hot summer. We had gotten Tim Worth involved in the issue, and he walks out of this briefing on the climate change issue by the Stockholm Environmental Institute and declares that he’s going to do a hearing. So I suggested to David Harwood, key staff person, ‘Why don’t you call Jim Hansen?’ So Harwood calls up Hansen and he calls me back and says, ‘You know what Hansen is going to say... he’s going to say that the temperature record of the earth now exceeds natural variability and it’s a clear climate change signal.’ That hearing made huge headlines around the world.”

We hate to stop here, but it’s impossible to cover the full history

of climate change and Rafe’s ongoing contributions in our brief monthly newsletter. So we encourage you to keep reading, because it’s an important story. Below are some great sources for diving deeper into this important topic and Rafe’s involvement through the years.

Rafe hasn’t slowed down. As he describes, “I have a project. I’m working with colleagues to introduce a concept to the global process to establish an upper limit to sea level rise. Now one of the impacts of climate change, through the melting of glaciers and the heating of the ocean, is to raise sea level and that’s happening, and it’s accelerating, and it’s predicted to accelerate even more. And so our project calls for the establishment of an upper limit which we define as the lowest possible rate of sea level rise. It’s not possible to stop sea level rise because of past warming, but it is possible to slow it significantly.”

In another interview, Rafe was asked if he had hope for the future. He answered: “What gives me hope? The emergence of young people, if they get organized, is really, really, really important. They have a legitimate stake in this, more so than baby boomers like me. And the progress we’re making on some technologies gives me hope. Also hopeful is the number of people involved in the issue. When I started, nobody had heard of the problem. Nobody was active. When I went around with Gordon MacDonald briefing people at high levels in the Carter administration, they had never heard of climate change. We started at zero. Well, look at us now. Everybody in the world knows about climate change. So is that progress? Let’s hope.”

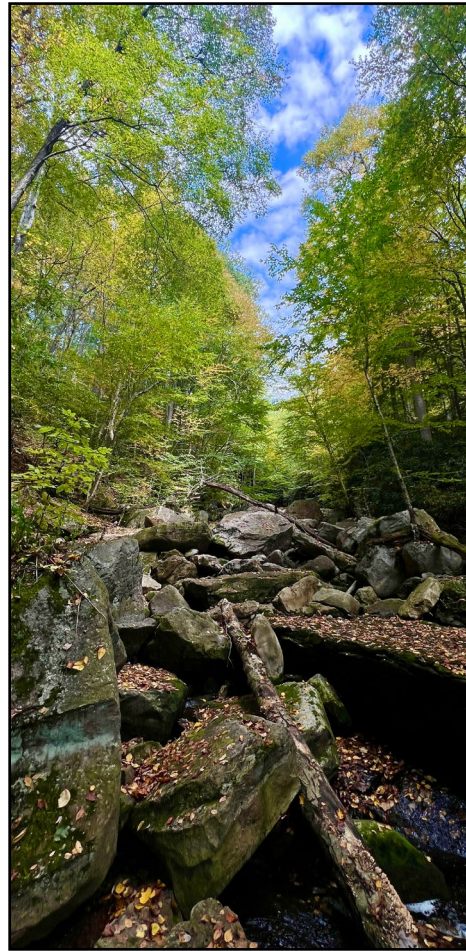
Thoughts from our President

I normally start my president's letter with a report on the weather in the Highlands — leaves changing, snow predictions, hiking conditions, and other mundane issues. But tonight, I'm writing with a heavier heart. We are in crisis mode, and the need to preserve and protect the environment has never been greater.

At the time of this writing, the federal government is shut down. Major reduction in force actions are underway within the Department of Agriculture (including the U.S. Forest Service) and the Department of the Interior (which oversees the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park Service). This is not a normal situation where one would expect a bipartisan solution. It's part of a broader effort to dismantle the very infrastructure that safeguards our national parks, forests, wilderness areas, and wildlife refuges.

Even more alarming, long-standing protections for our public lands are under renewed attack — from attempts to rescind the Roadless Rule, which protects millions of acres of pristine forest, to proposals that would open fragile ecosystems to roadbuilding, drilling, and industrial development. These rollbacks threaten the wild character of the West Virginia Highlands and the integrity of places that define who we are.

The shutdown chaos adds to the uncertainty. Rules are inconsistent and unclear, leaving employees, volunteers, and AmeriCorps



Scenic views from Big Run in the Monongahela National Forest. (Olivia Miller)

members in limbo. Meanwhile, the national press has largely turned its attention elsewhere. That means it's up to us—the members, volunteers and supporters of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy need to push this into the mainstream and local press. Talk to your friends and neighbors. Write letters to local papers. Share what's happening on social media. The more people understand what's at stake, the harder it becomes for these decisions to be

made quietly.

This moment calls for action and solidarity. If you're already a member, thank you — your support is what keeps us in the fight. If you're not a member, I invite you to join today. Your membership directly supports the advocacy, education, and on-the-ground work that keeps West Virginia wild and wonderful for generations to come.

And on a bright note—our Annual Fall Review at Blackwater Falls State Park (October 31-November 2) promises a weekend of learning, laughter, and connection. We'll kick things off with snacks, a cash bar, costumes, and live music on Friday night (I'll be a monarch butterfly—come say hello!). Saturday brings engaging panels on “Environmentalism in a Changing World,” followed by dinner and discussion. It's an inspiring weekend that reminds us why we do this work. All are welcome! A full schedule of events is posted on our website.

Our challenges are serious, but our community is strong. Together, we can ensure that the Highlands, and the values they represent, endure.

For our Highlands,

Marilyn Shoenfeld
President
West Virginia Highlands
Conservancy

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy's 2025 Fall Review: “Environmentalism in a Changing World”

Continued from page 10

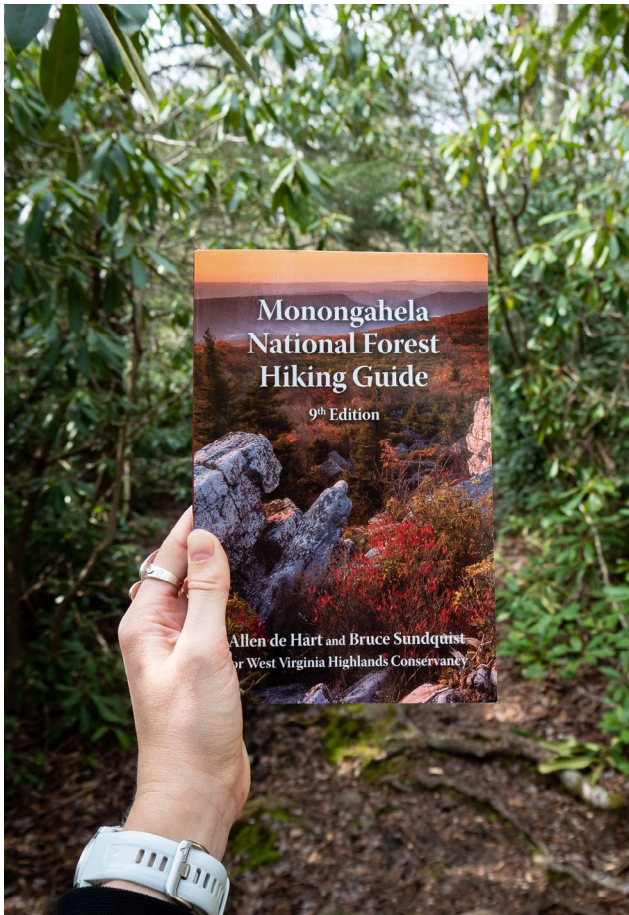
And because community and celebration are part of conservation, the weekend will also feature some fun: on Friday night, Oct. 31, enjoy a live performance by Morgantown favorite **The Helicopter Collective** and join us for our costume party—so come dressed to impress!

The Conservancy is also proud to announce this year's student scholarship recipients: **Hannah Blakely** (West Virginia University), **Aleta Rader** (Glenville State University), **Spencer Nolan** (Glenville State University), and **Jackson Licklider** (West Virginia University). These emerging environmental leaders will attend the Fall Review free of charge, thanks to their dedication and pursuit of protecting our environment.

This event was made possible with the generous support of the American Water Charitable Foundation.

The West Virginia Highlands Conservancy is a non-profit corporation which has been recognized as a tax exempt organization by the Internal Revenue Service. Its bylaws describe its purpose: The purposes of the Conservancy shall be to promote, encourage, and work for the conservation—including both preservation and wise use—and appreciation of the natural resources of West Virginia and the nation, and especially of the Highlands Region of West Virginia, for the cultural, social, educational, physical, health, spiritual, and economic benefit of present and future generations of West Virginians and Americans.

Hit the trails with our Mon National Forest Hiking Guide



Celebrating the 50th anniversary of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, the new edition of the treasured guide to every trail in the Monongahela National Forest features brand-new topographic maps and Kent Mason’s gorgeous photos, all in color.

The Guide has been updated with the cooperation of National Forest District Rangers and Recreation Specialists to reflect changes in the past ten years:

- newly designated wilderness areas
- new trails near campgrounds and sites of special significance
- a new complex of interconnected trails on Cheat Mountain
- rerouted and discontinued trails
- ratings for difficulty, scenery, access to water, and much else

The definitive guide to the Mon adds a wealth of information about history, wildlife, and botany; safety, preparation, and weather; horseback and mountain bike riding and cross-country skiing; as well as sources of further information on the Forest and its environs.

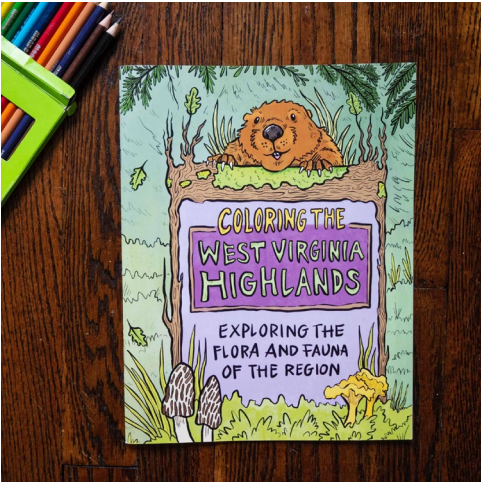
The Monongahela National Forest has long been known as a ‘Special Place.’ The hiking, backpacking, and cross-country skiing opportunities it provides are among the best in the eastern U.S. New wilderness and backcountry trails have been added to the outstanding areas we have appreciated for decades – Otter Creek Wilderness, Dolly Sods Wilderness, Flatrock Plains, Roaring Plains, Blackwater Canyon, Spruce Knob, North Fork Mountain, Shaver’s Mountain, Laurel Fork Wilderness, Cranberry Wilderness -- and there are lesser-known gems to be found in between.

Profits from the sale of these guides support a wide variety of worthy environmental projects for the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy.

Send \$21.95 plus \$5.38 shipping to: West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, P.O. Box 306, Charleston, WV 25321 OR order from our website at www.wvhighlands.org

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Show your love for the mountains with our range of bumper stickers, cotton tees, hats, onesies, toddler tees and Hydro Flasks. Shop now at wvhighlands.org



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info@wvhighlands.org