

M Mountain State Sierran

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Summer 2018

Eastern Panhandle tackles Mountaineer Gas pipeline

Maggie Londen

The WV Sierra Club Eastern Panhandle group held their third public educational meeting on April 24, at St. John Lutheran Church Activities Annex, Martinsburg. The topic was the TransCanada Mountaineer Pipeline being laid in the Eastern Panhandle of WV. Deidre Lally, the Western Maryland Beyond Coal Organizer for the Sierra Club, and Tracy Cannon and Mary Matlage of the Eastern Panhandle Protectors (EPP) presented attendees with information about how the construction and operation of the pipeline will affect our drinking water, the value of the homes near the pipeline, the purity of the Potomac and the environment at large.

What is the Mountaineer Gas pipeline?

The Mountaineer Pipeline is a 10-inch distribution line proposed to connect to the TransCanada feeder Pipeline in Northern Morgan County and run 56 miles through all three counties in the Eastern Panhandle. The proposed line would run with a depth of 3-4 feet underground, presenting concerns for local farm owners when operating their machinery. The current planned route includes 100 creek and wetland crossings, including Back Creek and Sleepy Creek. It will need 140 parcels of landowners' rights to complete the pipeline.

The first section of the pipeline is already being built in Morgan County and the western part of Berkeley County. The second and third legs of the pipeline, however, through Jefferson County, still need approval from the WV Public Service Commission (PSC). The gas company will be applying for this approval when they submit their newest five-year plan to the PSC in August.

Problems with the pipeline

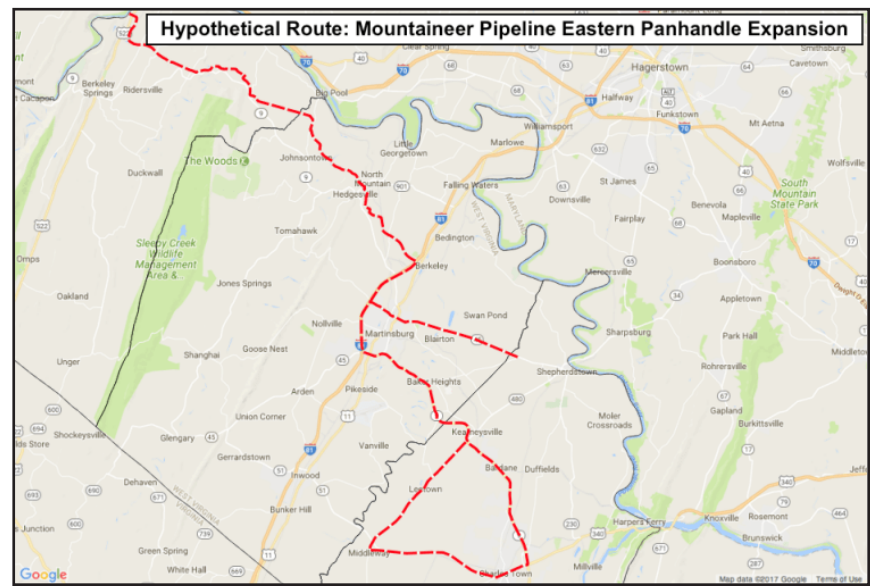
- The construction and the movement of gas through the Mountaineer Pipeline poses threats to the environment and people. Crossing the Potomac, creeks and waterways and wetlands potentially endangers the water delivered to homes and businesses due to contamination by the chemicals used in constructing the pipeline and to leaks of gas.



Slope erosion is a problem at the Kesecker Farm in Morgan County.

- Karst landscapes that underlie some of the proposed path of the Eastern Panhandle pipeline create unique aspects that must be considered in laying the pipeline and in potential effects to the environment. The biggest safety threat associated with ongoing operations of a natural gas transmission pipeline in karst terrain is due to its potential ability to swiftly and widely transport pollutants through karst conduits, thereby potentially affecting a wider array of people and resources. In particular, gases move fast in karst terrain and can pollute wells and other sources of drinking water. Karst terrain is characterized by the presence of sinkholes, caverns and many large springs; karst terrain develops as a result of the presence of soluble bedrock such as limestone, dolomite, marble or gypsum.

- Many jurisdictions — Boonesboro Md., D.C. City Council, D.C. Water and Sewer Authority, Montgomery County Council, Washington County Board of County Commissioners, Prince George's County Council — fear for the safety of their drinking water, yet the permit to proceed with the pipeline was approved. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the Army Corps of Engineers also approved necessary permits, ignoring the overwhelming opposition by citizens.
- TransCanada has a problematic environmental history. As recently as March 2017, a notice of violation and compliance order found the company “did not use properly and well qualified welding procedures” at the ANR Lincoln Storage Field Line in Michigan and did not properly monitor corrosion at pipe supports and at soil-to-air interface locations at the Michigan Bridgman Compressor station. In January 2014, a TransCanada pipeline in Canada about 50 miles north of the North Dakota border ruptured and exploded. The local fire chief, Jeff French, described 20- to 30-foot-high flames that were 10-15 feet wide shooting out of the ground.
- Environmental protections to streams and surfaces are supposed to be followed by the companies laying the pipeline to prevent erosion on slopes. Excessive soil in streams blocks sunlight for plants and reduces the oxygen available for animals. Erosion barriers are supposed to be erected, but when heavy rainfall destroys the soil coverings or creates holes in the barriers, they are often not replaced, and further erosion occurs.



- Mountaineer Gas plans to use horizontal directional drilling (HDD), to place the pipeline under the Potomac, Sleepy Creek and Back Creek. Problems include an inadvertent release of drilling fluids which poses a grave threat to the Potomac, the source of clean drinking water supply for six million people downstream. Another problem is that blow-outs (explosions) have occurred using HDD
- Folks and groups opposing the Mountaineer Pipeline continue to fight its construction in court and through raising public awareness.

What you can do

Local groups continue to oppose the pipeline. It is strongly recommended that people with wells that might be affected by the pipeline get their wells tested before and after construction. Tests should be conducted for possible contaminants, including methane, and are suggested for those who live near areas where HDD will be used. The Berkeley County Health Department Environmental Section conducts water testing (<http://www.bchealthdept.org>, 304-263-513). Testing can be expensive if a comprehensive battery is done, but if one's well becomes contaminated and wasn't pre-tested, the company will not be held responsible.

For more information, contact Deidre Lally, deidre.lally@mdsierra.org, 240-284-9771 (leave texts); or the West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club sierraclub.org/west-virginia.

Individuals are needed to monitor conditions around construction sites. WV Rivers and Trout Unlimited have created a webinar that instructs citizens in what to look for and how to report, <http://wvrivers.org/our-programs/water-monitoring/pipelinevisualassessment>.



Monongahela National Forest Management Plan and Roadless Area Protection, 1985-86

A history of the first major conservation issue of the new WV Chapter of Sierra Club

Mary Wimmer

Imagine you are a biochemist and have just agreed to be Conservation Committee Co-Chair for the newly-formed WV Chapter of Sierra Club. In December 1984, a heavy box of documents arrives from the U.S. Forest Service in Elkins, containing the Draft Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Monongahela National Forest (MNF). Each yellow document is 1-2 inches thick and is in a language new to you. Well, this was me, and one of the most exciting turns in my life was about to take place.

The mailing was the start of the "public comment period" dictated by federal laws guiding National Forest management. These resulted from the 1975 "Monongahela Decision" a federal court ruling against the Forest Service addressing controversial clearcutting on national forests. The Forest Service was required to develop draft management plans for each national forest, evaluate environmental impacts and seek public input in developing a Final Forest Plan.

A team of Sierra Club volunteers (led by Kathy Gregg, Dave Warner, Jim Sconyers and myself) reviewed the Draft Plan/DEIS and prepared comments on behalf of the Chapter. We met in Elkins with Forest Supervisor Ralph Mumme and Forest Planner Gil Churchill who described the process. Kathy already had a positive working relationship with these two, so our approach from the start was one of cooperation, not confrontation, even though we disagreed with the Draft Plan in many ways, especially regarding timbering and road building in roadless areas.

We submitted 82 pages of comments. I wrote a separate document focusing on protection of MNF Roadless Areas. Therein, we proposed that a new prescription for managing these lands be developed, prohibiting timbering, road building and other negative impacts on their natural character, and that the top 12 Roadless Areas, 126,000 acres or 15 percent of the MNF, be assigned this prescription. *This would become one of our major accomplishments, with significant long-term impact.*

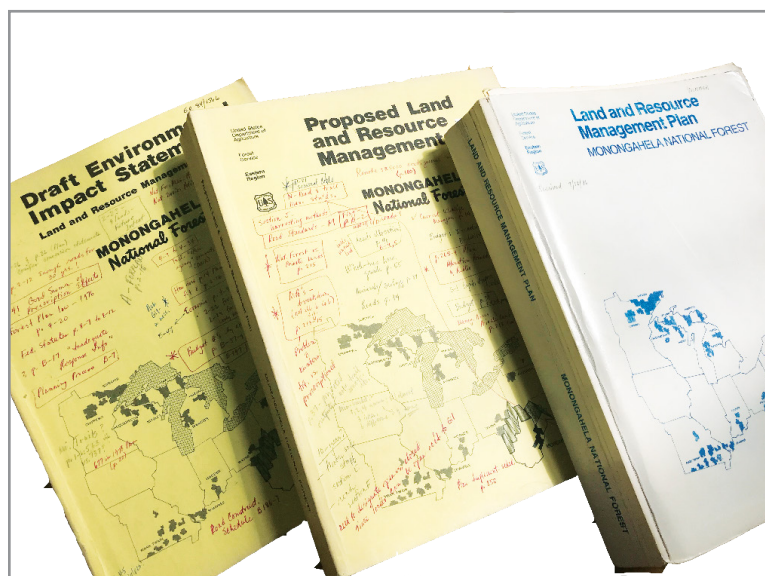
We then set about to inform the public and encourage them to comment. *Keep in mind, NO email, NO social media, just landline phones and snail mail!* Many organizations helped. Press releases and alerts were sent. Our message was positive: "The public now has its opportunity for input into the Forest Plan, and with enough pressure, the Forest Service will have to make significant changes in their Draft."

Our Congressional delegation was fantastic to work with on this issue. We kept in constant touch with Senators Robert Byrd and Jay Rockefeller, and Representatives Nick Rahall, Alan Mollohan, Harley Staggers, Jr., and Bob Wise about the work we were doing. They were copied on every piece of Forest Service correspondence we sent, and Kathy and I made regular D.C. office visits. We got to know key staff members who helped us communicate. (One commented that they had to buy a separate filing cabinet for all the mail I was sending them.) From the Monongahela Decision, they were well aware of how their constituents valued the MNF, and "Congressional" (letters of concern) started appearing on Supervisor Mumme's desk.

By the end of the 60-day public comment period, so much concern was being expressed by the public that the Forest Service extended the public comment period for 30 days, a blessing for us. Nearly 4,000 comment letters were submitted, the highest number at that time of any national forest in the country.

We now had the political capital to make change, and the Forest Service was preparing to do just that. Gil drafted, with my constant input, language for the new management prescription for roadless areas that we had proposed, calling it "M.P. 6.2." These lands would see no timbering or road building or other surface disturbance. Emphasis would be on dispersed (semi-primitive) non-motorized recreation and remote wildlife habitat, with natural forces largely at play. It was the first such prescription of its kind and has been adopted by other national forests to protect roadless areas short of permanent Congressional Wilderness designation.

In a unique move, critical to our ultimate success, Ralph and Gil offered six forest plan re-drafting sessions OPEN to the public, followed by newsletters describing re-draft progress. Sessions were held on Fridays, with two evening updates, and we were there. Dave would take the morning session, and



Successfully Protected Areas

MP 6.2 Areas (acres)

- Canaan Loop (7,800)
- Cheat Mountain (8,000)
- East Fork Greenbrier (10,200)
- Gaudineer (6,700)
- Gauley Mountain East (7,800)
- Gauley Mountain West (6,600)
- Lower Laurel Fork (3,200)
- Middle Mountain (12,200)
- Roaring Plains East (3,000)
- Roaring Plains North (3,100)
- Seneca Creek (13,000)
- Tea Creek Mountain (8,300)
- Turkey Mountain (6,100)

Total Acres 96,000

Designated Wilderness (acres)

- Big Draft Wilderness (5,144)
- Cranberry Wilderness (47,815)
- Dolly Sods Wilderness (17,371)
- Laurel Fork North Wilderness (6,055)
- Laurel Fork South Wilderness (5,874)
- Otter Creek Wilderness (20,698)
- Roaring Plains West Wilderness (6,792)
- Spice Run Wilderness (6,030)

Total Acres 115,779

Kathy and I would meet him to get filled in, then take the afternoon shift. Paul Turner would help with the evening sessions. After M.P. 6.2 was announced, choosing the lands that would be designated was a key session. We worked closely with WV DNR game managers. In the Final MNF Management Plan of 1986, 124,500 acres were placed in the 15 Roadless Areas designated 6.2, representing 15 percent of the MNF. A huge success!

Sierra Magazine published a feature article on our efforts in the Jan/Feb 1987 issue. The *Charleston Gazette* did major pieces. Our protection of these roadless areas in 1986 led to permanent protection of 38,000 of these acres as Wilderness in the 2009 Wild Monongahela Act. These areas keep growing "wilder" over time, with former human impacts disappearing. The MNF Forest Plan was revised in 2011, and 22,000 acres of new 6.2 were added, consistent with the advantages of this limited forest management for dispersed recreation, remote wildlife, water quality, and overall ecosystem integrity.

Update on memorial gifts for Dr. Helen Lang

This information was not available in time to include with Helen's memorial in the last Sierran. For those who knew Helen or wish to make a memorial gift, you may contribute to the Dr. Helen Lang Legacy Endowment at WVU. The Endowment was established to provide assistance to women wishing to pursue a career in

Geology or Geography. Checks payable to the WVU Foundation with 3V1094 in the memo section will be accepted at One Waterfront Place, 7th Floor; P.O. Box 1650; Morgantown, WV 26507. Gifts may also be made online at secure.give.wvu.edu/3V1094



Help your Chapter stay strong for the hard work we do to keep West Virginia wild and wonderful.

sierraclub.org/west-virginia

State Parks spared from logging bill

David Lillard

First, the facts: It began with a statement that the Justice administration was considering logging in West Virginia's state parks to fund upgrades and ended with the Governor signing a bill to allocate a portion of lottery proceeds instead. What happened in between is one for the history books. Few times in the annals of West Virginia have so many groups worked together so nimbly and fiercely, responding to the ever-shifting tactics of the Justice administration with bold ideas, sound science and many voices from every corner of the state.

When the measure, SB270, was announced in January with intent to log six state parks, several West Virginia conservation organizations quickly rallied under the umbrella campaign, Save Our State Parks, or SOS Parks. Because the bill was introduced as a funding measure,

partners compiled research on alternative ways to fund parks. Coordinated by the West Virginians for Public Lands alliance, SOS Parks partners crunched numbers, pored over maps and showed that the bill's promises didn't add up — to raise the funds they were touting over 20 years, nearly every marketable tree would be cut.

Sierra Club members, along with the member organizations statewide, wrote letters to the editor, letters to legislators, made telephone calls and talked to their neighbors. People were immediately energized.

Then the bill's proponents dropped the funding ruse, saying it's not about the money, it's about restoring forest health — about protecting the forest from fires and pests, and making it more hospitable to wildlife. Anyone with an ounce of common sense knows that a mature forest is already a healthy forest — but we had to

prove it. So professional foresters became our messengers. They provided expert analysis, appeared in media and wrote eloquently about the ecology of forests and the shortcomings of the proposal.

When the bill's supporters shifted again, claiming the logging was to enhance the visitor experience, we didn't need science or data. We had something more powerful, a spontaneous outpouring of love for our parks and the old forests there.

The pressure put on by SOS Parks partners was so intense that the bill had yet to make it out of committee. So, the Justice administration submitted a substitute bill to log in one state park alone, Watoga, considered by many to be the crown jewel of the system. They must have thought that by choosing one isolated park in Pocahontas County to "pilot" their logging scheme, the opposition to the bill would wither. They were wrong. It only grew more intense and more enthusiastic.

When Senator Mike Woelfel, the staunchest opponent of the bill, issued a press release saying the bill was dead, there was relief and some disbelief. Was it really over?

For many, it wasn't real until March 22, when Governor Jim Justice signed SB 438 into law. Instead of cutting trees for revenue, SB 438 directs additional funding from the WV State Lottery to support a bond for capital improvements in state parks. This measure was one of the alternative revenue suggestions made by the Save Our State Parks campaign.

Now partners hope to work collaboratively with WVDNR to support the future maintenance and management of our state parks.

For a calendar of events taking place in state parks and public lands, see the WV Environmental Council's website: <https://wvecouncil.org/calendar>.

The Land and Water ... What?

Matt Kearns, West Virginia Rivers Coalition

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is a foundational piece of our public land system. While the acronym is uninspiring and the name somewhat misleading, this critical fund is set to expire September 30.

The LWCF was established by Congress in 1964. Even though it has been with us for more than 50 years, Congress, in 2015, only reauthorized the program for three more years. Conservation, recreation and sporting groups from across the country are calling on Congress for permanent reauthorization of LWCF so we don't run into this problem time and again. A permanent solution for LWCF would help bring about a level of certainty for the agencies that have relied on the funding for long-term planning of public land and park improvements.

What is Land and Water Conservation Fund?

With the post-WWII boom in outdoor recreation, Congress recognized that we needed a mechanism to fund the acquisition and improvement of public lands, so it set up the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The federal government uses LWCF to purchase inholdings within national parks, wildlife refuges and national forests from willing private sellers. States get grants from LWCF to dole out to county or city parks or use on state land for recreation, hunting or fishing projects.

Originally tied to user fees and motorboat fuel tax, the nascent LWCF wasn't generating the kind of revenue that Congress was hoping for. In 1968, LWCF was amended to tap into government revenue from offshore oil and gas leasing in the Gulf of Mexico. Since then, LWCF's authorized share of oil and gas revenue has increased twice and now sits at \$900 million. This sounds like a lot of money, but the federal government receives over \$6 billion annually from Gulf of Mexico oil and gas leases and royalties. The defining principle of LWCF today is that development and industrialization should be used to fund offsetting conservation and public land improvements elsewhere. The fund has never used taxpayer dollars.

However, the money that is authorized for LWCF and the money that is actually appropriated to LWCF are two different things. Authorizing the fund is like opening an account in a bank and setting a maximum balance. But it takes a Congressional appropriation to actually make a deposit in that account. LWCF usually receives only a fraction of its \$900 million authorization; the 2018

appropriation was \$425 million. Since the inception of LWCF, it has been fully appropriated only twice and has therefore missed out on \$20 billion (that's billion, with a "B") in potential appropriations.

Why should we care?

The LWCF has contributed to nearly 500 projects in 54 of our 55 counties at the federal, state and local levels in the past 53 years. These projects have included city pools, public restrooms, neighborhood playgrounds, handicapped access, trails, campgrounds, ball fields, fish hatcheries and improvements to state park lodges. LWCF has supported "Wild and Wonderful" icons of the state, including Seneca Rocks, New River Gorge, Cheat Canyon and Watoga and Blackwater Falls state parks.

All told, West Virginia has received nearly \$240 million dollars from LWCF, including \$2.4 million for hunting, fishing and wildlife projects; \$8 million for WV State Parks and Forests; and over \$30 million for city and county parks. The federal dollars have been used to buy mineral rights under the Cranberry Wilderness, preserve Eastern Panhandle Civil War battlefields, provide boater access to the Gauley River National Recreation Area and secure habitat for the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

The LWCF helps maintain the places and facilities that support our tourism economy and has provided real quality of life benefits for our residents. LWCF is the underpinning of our state's current marketing emphasis that invites visitors to experience the natural beauty of West Virginia. Research shows that every dollar invested in LWCF returns four dollars to the economy.

With the clock running out on such a far reaching and positive federal program, West Virginians for Public Lands (WVPL) partners are turning to our Congressional leadership for their support of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Senators Joe Manchin and Shelley Moore Capito have co-sponsored different bills to permanently reauthorize LWCF. Senate Bill 569, supported by Senator Manchin, would ensure permanent reauthorization and establishes protocols to fully fund LWCF each year. Senate Bill 896, supported by Senator Capito, only permanently reauthorizes the LWCF.

WVPL partners thank each Senator for supporting permanent reauthorization and

gratefully acknowledge that this is the first time Senator Capito has done so. We do like that Senator Manchin's support for LWCF goes beyond reauthorization and appropriates the full allotment of LWCF funds for West Virginia year after year. WVPL wants to see the support to help him get it done.

West Virginians for Public Lands is planning a summer campaign to educate Mountaineers on what LWCF has done for West Virginia and what we could stand to lose if the fund is allowed to expire. Soon we will publish online resources to help you find LWCF project sites in or near your community, along with tools to make your voice heard with our delegation in Washington, D.C. Stay tuned, and follow the campaign on Facebook at WVPublicLands.



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Eastern Panhandle Group

Maggie Louden

The WV Chapter's Eastern Panhandle Group has been making its presence known. So far, we have held three successful program meetings and have several more planned. (See **Upcoming Meetings** to the right.)

At our second public meeting (Feb. 27), Laurie Potteiger, the Information Services Manager of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), presented Appalachian Trail's 14-State Challenge, explaining the ATC's new plan for exploring the beauty and diversity of the Appalachian Trail by visiting iconic locations or day-hiking highlights in each of the 14 states the Trail passes through. Those in attendance were inspired by Laurie's slides and words, and some began making plans to begin the program.

Our third program meeting, on April 24, educated us about the TransCanada Mountaineer Pipeline being laid in the Eastern Panhandle. Deirdre Lally, the Western Maryland Beyond Coal Organizer for the Sierra Club, and Tracy Cannon and Mary Matlage of the Eastern Panhandle Protectors (EPP) provided information about

how the construction and operation of the pipeline will affect our drinking water, the value of the homes near the pipeline, the purity of the Potomac and the environment at large. (Details from this meeting are provided in the article on page 1.)

In addition to meetings, Panhandle Sierrans have enjoyed several winter and spring hikes. Photos from some of them can be found in this issue. On May 20, Chris Craig will lead (or led, depending on when you receive your newsletter) a hike on the Appalachian Trail from Gathland State Park, MD, to Harpers Ferry, WV. The 11-mile hike includes rolling terrain on South Mountain, a dramatic river overlook at Weverton Cliffs, descending switchbacks to the C&O Canal and a walk along the canal to Harpers Ferry.

Watch for future outings on the Events calendar at www.sierraclub.org/west-virginia and on www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Eastern-Panhandle.

We welcome all who live in the Eastern Panhandle to attend our meetings and work with us to make West Virginia an environmental champion.

Upcoming Meetings

Program meetings for Sierra Club – Eastern Panhandle take place at 6:30 pm on the fourth Tuesday of every other month. (There will be no meeting, however, on December 25!) These meetings are in the annex building of St. John's Lutheran Church, 101 Martin Street, Martinsburg, WV. Light refreshments are provided, and parking is readily available in both the lot and on the street. The public is welcome, free of charge. For more information on meetings, contact Regina Hendrix, 304-725-0223, regina.hendrix@comcast.net. (Note that St. John's Lutheran Church is not affiliated with the Sierra Club.)

June 26: David Lillard Special Projects Manager West Virginia Rivers Coalition

WV Rivers is a statewide organization focused on water policy and the headwaters in our public lands. In the Eastern Panhandle, it works with watershed groups, communities and water utilities on drinking water protections and federal policies that impact rivers and streams in the eight counties within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. WV Rivers also works in communities impacted by natural gas development. David Lillard will describe how Sierra Club members can connect with local watershed restoration, policy advocacy and a summer photo documentary project on public lands.

August 28: Dan Conant Founder of Solar Holler, Shepherdstown

Solar Holler is a social enterprise dedicated to bringing solar energy within reach of all West Virginians, including churches and other community organizations. His work has been featured on NPR and in the New York Times. He won the Interfaith Power & Light national role model award. Dan will tell us about innovative ways that individuals and community organizations can finance a solar installation.

October 23: Mary Anne Hitt Beyond Coal Campaign, Sierra Club

Mary Anne directs the Beyond Coal Campaign, recognized as one of the most successful environmental campaigns in history. Beyond Coal works to replace coal with clean energy by mobilizing grassroots activists in local communities. Mary Anne was listed in 2015 as one of the POLITICO

50, POLITICO's list of the top thinkers, doers and visionaries transforming American politics. She has made numerous media appearances on outlets ranging from Good Morning America to NPR's Diane Rehm Show, and was featured in the National Geographic film From the Ashes and their Emmy-winning Years of Living Dangerously series. She is also co-host of the climate storytelling podcast No Place Like Home. With degrees from the University of Montana and University of Tennessee, she was presented the 2008 Notable UT Woman Award. She grew up in the mountains of east Tennessee and now lives with her family in West Virginia.

In non-program months, the Eastern Panhandle group sponsors conservation meetings in members' homes. Also starting at 6:30 pm on the fourth Tuesday of the month, these meetings focus on various topics but also allow for time to socialize and strategize with fellow Sierra Club members. All are welcome to these meetings.

May 22: Conservation Priorities and the Election Outlook

This meeting will be at the home of Regina Hendrix, 65 Bradford Court, Charles Town.

July 24: Recycling in the Panhandle

This meeting will be at the home of Gail and Allyn Kohlhorst, 3153 Engle Molers Road, Harpers Ferry.

September 25: Topic TBA

This meeting will be at the home of Aileen Curfman, 1067 Comstock Dr., Shepherdstown.

November 27: Topic TBA

This meeting will be at the home of Chris Craig and Ed Wheelless, 844 E. Ridge St., Harpers Ferry.

In addition to meetings, an active schedule of outings is held in and around the Eastern Panhandle. Summer outings include hikes on Maryland's Appalachian Trail, in Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and at Sleepy Creek Wildlife Management Area. See the Outings calendar for details and keep up with the schedule at sierraclub.org/west-virginia or at meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Eastern-Panhandle.

Sierra Student Coalition Update

David Buch

On April 24, the Sierra Student Coalition held its final meeting of the school year, concluding my tenure as Vice President. Overall, we have had a remarkably successful and active membership this year. Here are some of our highlights:

Decker's Creek Trail Building

In early fall, our faculty advisor, Jim Kotcon, and several of our members made a strong showing to help construct an extensive network of trails around Decker's Creek in Morgantown. The project has been underway for several years and is moving right along. More information: <https://fallingrungreenspace.wvu.edu>.

Day Trip and Hike to Friendship Hill

Later in the fall, we visited Friendship Hill, former home of Treasury Secretary Albert Gallatin. We enjoyed great weather and a good turnout, and were able to capture some stunning pictures of Monarch Butterfly caterpillars, one of which is on page 9.

Solar Awareness Jam

In the spring, after an extended campaign to encourage WVU to install Solar Panels, we held an awareness event at the Morgantown Brewing Company, featuring local bands and an information table from West Virginia Solar United Neighbors.

WVU Earth Day Celebration

More recently, we held our second annual Earth Day Celebration on the Mountainlair Green. The event featured more than a dozen student organizations hosting a range of sustainability activities, including t-shirt "upcycling" and eco-trivia with wildflower seed packets and reusable water bottles as prizes.

Red Spruce Planting at Canaan Valley

Finally, we returned to Canaan Valley to join the Wetlands Conservancy group there and plant red spruce saplings, a species native to the area whose population has been decimated in recent history. We were joined this year by another WVU Student Organization, the Society of Environmental Professionals. The event was a great success and a lot of fun.

Mon Group Summer Activities Calendar

June 2, Saturday, 10 am 'Float the Fork' — Good Hope to West Milford, boat rentals available

The Mon Group is co-sponsoring this event with Guardians of the West Fork. Meet at the Good Hope access site in Lost Creek. Boat drop off begins at 8:30 a.m. The float begins at 10 a.m. and ends with a community event in West Milford, where you can enjoy food from local vendors and learn about plans for the West Milford Park. Donation: \$20 per person includes shuttles,

commemorative T-shirt and boat insurance. Contact: John Ciesla, 304-627-1019, guardians.westfork@gmail.com.

Sign up at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/float-the-fork-tickets-43939765020>.

June 16, Saturday, 1-4 pm Ice Cream Social: Coopers Rock SF, Shelter 2

Join us for the Mon Group's annual ice cream social at Shelter 2, Cooper's Rock State Forest. We will make ice cream the old-

fashioned way — with ice, salt and a hand-cranked ice-cream maker. Bring a dish to share. Explore the trails. Have a sweet day!

For more information, contact John Bird, johnbird@frontier.com.

August 23, Thursday, 6-8 pm Corn Roast: Krepps Park, Morgantown

Enjoy roasted corn fresh from our members' gardens! Bring a dish to share.

For more information, contact John Bird, johnbird@frontier.com.

SAVE THE DATE

SierraFest 2018
is coming

Oct. 12-14

More details to follow.

Tree Sits: A last resort to stop destruction

April Pierson-Keating

The Mountain Valley Pipeline is one of several large pipeline projects planned for Appalachia. It begins in northern West Virginia. Although FERC approved the pipeline, opposition continues to grow.

Starting April 2, in Virginia, Red and Minor Terry stayed rooted on a platform in a tree on their family farm in the path of the MVP. As of May 4, Federal Judge Elizabeth Dillon ruled that they must come down or each face fines of \$1,000 per diem. For one week in the middle of April, the Roanoke County police denied Red, who is 61 years of age, any food and water. After vocal complaints from family and supporters, including several members of clergy, the police began delivering bologna sandwiches, juice, and water three times daily. Preserve Monroe on Facebook has been covering the MVP fight extensively. By May 5, live streaming revealed that Red had come down from the trees.

In Franklin County, VA, 20 miles or so outside of Roanoke, tree sits began on April 19 on the Reilly family farm, an organic farming cooperative that produces natural, organic foods. On May 4 was the hearing for the tree sits on their farm, sits not populated by the Reillys but

by supporters. The final ruling will come from Judge Dillon on Monday, May 7. Their motto has been, "We Will Win." See the Little Teel Crossing Facebook page for video and coverage of that action.

Despite a ruling by Judge Robert Irons in Monroe County that MVP did not have authority to move tree sitters because MVP did not show convincing evidence that they were within the right of way, later rulings have sided with the company, and the law continues to back this for-profit project.

We applaud the tree sitters' heroic efforts to stop this destructive project, putting their own lives in danger and going without the conveniences of life such as showers, exercise, and even food and water, so that residents of their

state and others could have clean water to drink.

We hope that the history books reflect the truth of this situation: that a for-profit corporation was supported and backed by the State over the rights of citizens, laws protecting clean water were ignored, and a few brave souls sacrificed a portion of their comfortable lives to save their home. We will all benefit from these actions, even if we don't have the ability to take that stand ourselves.



Off-Grid Home for Sale in Preston County

Nestled on 2.4 acres in the hills near Cranesville Swamp preserve, this unique 2BR, 1 bath house is perfect for an environmentally conscious lifestyle. Say goodbye to your electric bill, with power provided by the sun and wind. Enjoy all the modern amenities while leaving a small footprint on the earth. Beautiful views, abundant wildlife and easy access to the best outdoor recreation in Northern WV and Western MD.

For more information, go to www.offgridWV.com or call/text listing agent Amy Snyder at 410-409-6593.



Job Opening with Sierra Club

The Sierra Club is looking for a new Organizing Representative to focus on the goals of the Beyond Coal to Clean Energy and Dirty Fuels Campaigns. In this role, you will build a grassroots network for public support to end mountaintop removal mining and other coal-related pollution, work for an energy and economic transition in West Virginia, and stop interstate gas pipelines from crossing the State. To do so, you'll create a new model of grassroots mobilization by combining traditional organizing with online organizing and leadership development. Desirable qualities include a passion to build volunteer teams and partnerships, rally volunteers and stakeholders around issues that protect our air, land, water and natural places, in an equitable and just way. At least three years of experience in grassroots organizing is preferred. If this sounds exciting, we want to talk to you.

For more details and to apply, please go to: <https://bit.ly/2FEsc4a>

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View from the Chair

— Justin Raines, Chapter Chair

Training to Win

As the world truly springs to life around us here in West Virginia, I'm reminded of what is truly at stake in this state. Vibrant green, brilliant yellow and stunning purple light the eyes as I travel around one of the most beautiful patches of land in North America. The wonders of the natural world aren't something confined to vacations in far-away parks for those of us who live here.

Those wonders are right outside the window. They surround us on our morning commute with tendrils of mist curling from mountains lakes and streams alike. They're there at lunch with the smell of new blooms hanging thick (sometimes too thick) in the air. Those wonders echo outside the window as we fall asleep, in the buzz of insects and the endless song of a dozen types of frog. This is what we fight for. This is why we have to win.

If you're reading this newsletter, though, you already know that. In a state blessed with so much splendor, we are also blessed with so many people who care about it and fight to protect it. No one knows the importance of nature — the basic fight for clean water, clean air and enough space to breathe it in — better than the people of West Virginia. That passion for defending our state is often underappreciated compared to the immense pressure from out-of-state companies who want to plunder West Virginia, but it's a passion that has saved so much of West Virginia down the years and will save more of it in the future.

Passion isn't the only thing we need to win our battles though. We need planning, preparation, a clear idea of what our goals are and the tools to accomplish those goals. With that in mind, this year

we are launching a series of trainings for Sierra Club members, leaders and others interested in conserving and protecting both the wonders of our state and the people who live here.

These trainings will cover a wide variety of topics centered around the basics of community organizing and how to generate real, lasting change in our state. If you are looking for a way to help move the needle but aren't quite sure how to go about it, this program is for you. From the basic one-on-one conversations that are the beating heart of good organizing, community mapping to find allies, and goal setting, to long-term campaign planning, these trainings will cover everything you need to get involved and stay involved effectively.

Training isn't the end of it though. We have several great teams running campaigns in the state already. With work ranging from electing good legislators to promoting clean energy to protecting our communities from the growing threat of the fracked gas industry, there's a place at the table for everyone; and you're invited.

Watch your email inboxes for news about upcoming trainings, events and opportunities from the WV Chapter. Those opportunities will be rolling out regularly throughout the year, and they're here to support you. If you would like to host a training, policy workshop, other event, or just learn more about what WV Sierra is up to, feel free to email me, justinraineswv@gmail.com, for more information.

Thanks for all your support, your hard work and, most of all, thank you for caring.

Drain the Swamp WV asking for 'No Dirty Gas Cash' pledge

Natalie Thiele

The WV Chapter of Sierra Club's Drain the Swamp WV site is hosting a "No Dirty Gas Cash" Pledge for the 2018 election cycle. Candidates for any West Virginia state or local office can sign the pledge to indicate they will refuse to accept campaign donations, gifts and favors from gas executives and the PACs, lawyers and lobbyists who represent their interests.

Drain the Swamp WV urges candidates seeking office in West Virginia to pledge that they will keep their campaigns free of gas company money. West Virginia needs elected officials at every level of government who put the interests of their constituents first and who won't work to impoverish our state to prop up the boom-and-bust gas industry.

We need public servants who will not support measures that exploit ordinary

people, their health, their water, their roads, their livelihoods and their property in favor of unconventional gas profits. We need elected officials who support measures that make the gas industry contribute its fair share to cover the long-term costs of its activities in West Virginia.

The pledge

"I pledge to put the interests of the people of West Virginia and the constituents of my district first, and to be free of the influence of gas industry money. I will refuse contributions in cash or in kind from gas industry executives, their lawyers, lobbyists and PACs."

The pledge, along with a list of candidates who have taken it since its introduction, can be found at www.draintheswampwv.com. If you have questions or would like more information about the "No Dirty Gas Cash" pledge, please email draintheswampwv@gmail.com.

We don't have to choose between schools and gas

Natalie Thiele, Chapter Gas Committee

I want to take a moment to thank and congratulate West Virginia's world-moving force of teachers, school workers, public employees and union members. You pushed our legislators and governor into putting people first and taking steps to rectify their years of deliberately underfunding public employee salaries and health coverage. During your historic strike, you carried the state — our children, public employees who could not strike, the middle class and working poor ... our future — with you. Your leadership lifted us all, and we have seen state after state follow. *West Virginia* has become a rallying cry for tens of thousands of American teachers. Thank you.

The legislature heard the voices of the people and ultimately moved to raise education and state employee salaries. I am so grateful that, because of our teachers, the West Virginia Capitol echoed with the chant "Tax That Gas!" Perhaps that chant originated with teachers from coal country, who see on a daily basis the long-term costs of a predatory extraction industry. As Ken Ward, Jr., points out in his piece, "The Coal Industry Extracted a Steep Price from West Virginia, Now Natural Gas is Leading the State Down the Same Path," West Virginia foolishly rejected the opportunity to tax coal to fund schools and roads for decades.

And it seems clear that not only is our state government reluctant to raise the severance tax on the new boom-and-bust fossil fuel industry — unconventional gas and oil — but it is also still allowing corporations to control the future of our state. Unconventional gas developers obviously don't want West Virginia to raise the severance tax, even to a modest, regionally competitive 7.5 percent. Not only do they have their lobbyists resist new taxes, but they also are reluctant to pay their current fair share in property taxes. Those property taxes fund our schools and other community necessities. Antero Resources Corp. recently sued Doddridge County to take back millions in property tax because they want to be able to deduct more than \$175,000 per well in post-production expenses. This move may cost Doddridge schools \$4.5 million in funds; it could also halt a public water project scheduled to bring public water service to two-thirds of the county.

Our schools and our public water are not revenue streams for unconventional gas corporations. Nor are they emergency profit reserves. Gas developers know their industry is subject to booms and

busts, but they seem to be under the impression that their economic woes should be solved by the government of West Virginia at the expense of the common people.

They would have us believe that we all benefit during a boom — but if they sue the communities in which they operate for their money back the moment they hit a slump, we are the ones paying twice. Once when they invade our communities and endanger property, wealth, health and even life for anyone who isn't in the industry. And then again when they snatch back the money that funds the school or pays to get clean water out to folks with fracking-devastated wells.

And it's not just one corporation scrambling to renege on taxes — after Antero sued Doddridge County (and Tyler, too), eight gas companies in Mingo County lined up to file their own tax disputes: Core Appalachia, EQT Production Co., Coal Mac, Jackson Management Company, Jackson Resource Company, Burchett and Adkins Gas Company, Ethel Gas Company and Kinzer Business Realty and New River Energy Corp. Their tax snatch-back may cut the Mingo Board of Education's budget by \$2 million.

However, gas companies have not and will not limit themselves to suing individual counties to make citizens responsible for post-production expenses. In April, EQT sued DEP Director Austin Caperton over recently passed Senate Bill 360. This bill was passed to address a loophole that allowed gas corporations to aggressively deduct post-production expenses from mineral rights owners' royalty checks. EQT characterizes their issue with the law as being, in part, about exercising their property rights, but when a gas corporation is given free rein to deduct post-production expenses (especially during periods where the price of gas is low), sometimes into the negative, it seems they begin to consider mineral rights owners' money as their "property."

West Virginia does not have to nurse the unconventional gas and oil industry through their slumps and we should not let them dodge their property taxes. We should absolutely demand a higher gas severance tax. Anybody who suggests we must choose between gas and public benefits — such as school funding, state employee salaries or clean water — is mistaken.

If you are interested in joining the WV Chapter Gas Committee, or have suggestion for discussion or future projects, please contact me at natalie.a.a.thiele@gmail.com.

Please contact the Editor for submission guidelines or advertising rates. Contributions to the newsletter may be sent to the Editor at:

celliot2@comcast.net

Deadline is August 4 for submissions to the Fall issue

Opinions expressed in the Mountain State Sierran are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Sierra Club. This newsletter is published bimonthly by the WV Chapter of the Sierra Club and distributed to all paid members.

Saving Memories

Kathy Gregg, Chapter Archivist

The Sierra Club couldn't succeed without its membership and those who serve as leaders. All of us stand on the hard work and successes of those who served before us. It is important to remember and learn from the challenges of the past.

As Chapter Archivist, I have recorded the events that I've attended, but you all are out there every day doing the Chapter's work.

I invite all of you to take pictures of our conservation activities, our outings, our leadership workshops and, of course, our celebratory SierraFest, and send them to

me so that I can keep a pictorial history of the Sierra Club in West Virginia. Be sure to date and identify the event and persons in the photos.

Enjoy the accompanying pictures from SierraFest 2009 and 2014. And be sure to take plenty at SierraFest 2018 and at all activities during the coming months.

Send your best ones to me, at gregg@wwwc.edu. I would also be happy to accept news releases and any other Chapter memorabilia that you can send, either electronically or to 23 Meade Street, Buckhannon, WV 26201.



Still with us in 2014, Jim Sconyers and Helen Lang were two beloved Chapter leaders who will be sorely missed but well remembered for their important work.



Together for the first time in many years at SierraFest 2014, Christine DeChristopher, Kathy Gregg and Mary Wimmer — often referred to as “the three mothers” of the WV Chapter — gather for a group photo.



Paul Wilson, Beth Little, Mary Wimmer and Jim Kotcon were recipients of annual Chapter awards in 2009.

Rare species of the Southern Mon National Forest: A series

Matt Kearns, WV Rivers Coalition & Tom Kloehn, The Wilderness Society

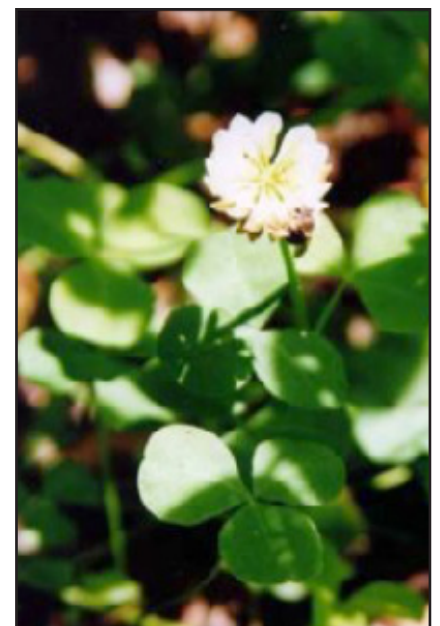
The wild mountains, hollows, rivers, and bogs of the southern Monongahela National Forest hold a rare and valuable treasure: some of the last populations of the Eastern United States' most at-risk species. These small amphibians, mammals, plants, and fish often go unseen, but they are a vital part of the varied ecosystems that would be protected by the proposed Birthplace of Rivers national monument.

The survival and recovery of these species is important for the scientific community, outdoor enthusiasts, and anyone who wants to see these plants and animals continue to be part of the landscape of the Mountain State, as they have since the ecosystem came into being.

This is the second in a series of quick looks at the endangered and threatened species in the southern part of the Mon National Forest and areas downstream. These species are either known or very likely to be found in the region known as the Birthplace of Rivers.

No. 2: Running Buffalo Clover

As its name suggests, this plant is intimately tied to another historic species of the eastern woodlands: the American bison. Running Buffalo Clover (*Trifolium stoloniferum*) originally grew in the fertile patches of soil stirred up by bison, mostly in the spots where forest and prairie met. Although bison can no longer be found in West Virginia, the white flowers of their namesake clover can still be seen on the edges of the forests in the Birthplace of Rivers, especially alongside trails and streams. The clover is listed as an endangered species, however, and continuing habitat loss, combined with competition from invasive species such as Japanese honeysuckle, makes the Running Buffalo Clover's future uncertain.



SUMMER OUTINGS

Highlights of recent outings

For additional details about any outing and to RSVP your intent to participate, please contact the designated leader ahead of time.

Sat, June 2

Educational Day Hike: Old-growth forest, Pierson Hollow and Paterson Trails Carnifex Ferry Battlefield SP

Distance/Difficulty: a two-part hike with a total of about 3 miles. First part, about 1 mile out and back; second part, extra 1.5-2-mile loop. EASY to MODERATE

Duration: Total about 2.5-3 hours. First part, about 1 hour; second part, about 1.5 hour.

Description: The first part, out and back, will be mostly an educational short hike to an old-growth forest where we'll discuss the importance of old growth in the forest ecosystem. A mostly easy hike with a few rocky sections (recommended for those individuals who simply want to learn about nature without having to go on a lengthy hike). For those who want to do a longer hike, the second leg of the hike will follow a section of the Patterson trail loop, stopping at several outstanding overlooks of the Gauley River canyon. The hike will continue in light drizzly precipitation, but steady rain cancels. Please dress for the weather and wear sturdy footwear; bring water and snack.

Meet: Tentative start time, 1:00 pm.

Leader: Laura Miller, aepicysta@gmail.com, 304-776-4677

Nearest Town: Keslers Cross Lanes, WV

Sat, June 9

Day Hike: Locust Spring area George Washington NF (Va.)

Distance/Difficulty: approx. 6 miles, EASY to MODERATE

Duration: 3-4 hours

Description: Topic: Leave No Trace. Leisurely hike to Laurel Fork River. We will be using Buck Run and Locust Spring Run trails. The trails are rated easy to moderate; they use old railroad grades, and there will be several stream crossings. Hikers should be able to hike a moderate trail and to rock hop small streams. We will stop along the Laurel Fork River for lunch/snack/break and enjoy the scenery. Beginners are welcome, please dress for the weather, bring water, snack and wear sturdy footwear.

Meet: 11:00 am. We will meet at the Locust Spring Picnic area on FR 142 off Route 28, between Cherry Grove and Thornwood, WV. Contact the Leader if interested in meeting in Davis for carpooling to the trail head.

Please be advised that Sierra Club assumes no responsibility for shuttle/ carpooling. Carpooling is at the sole risk of the participants.

Leader: Brent Carminati, brentcar1@frontiernet.net, 703-999-8679

Nearest Town: Cherry Grove or Thornwood, WV

Additional Info: There is a vault toilet at the trail head.

Sat, June 9

Day Hike: Bolivar Heights/ Schoolhouse Ridge North Harpers Ferry NHP

Distance/Difficulty: 2.5 miles, EASY/ MODERATE

Duration: about 1.5 hours

Description: For a short hike, this one is rich! There are views of the Blue Ridge and its gap at Harpers Ferry, Civil War fortifications and stories, walks through shaded forest and expansive meadows. The terrain is rolling, and the trail is earthen and irregular. Open to all adults and minors (with parental permission or accompanied by adult) prepared for moderate exertion. Well-behaved dogs on leashes also

welcome. Bring water, sun protection and a snack, if desired. We will carry on in light rain but cancel in case of a downpour.

Meet: 3:00 pm, Bolivar Heights Battlefield, Whitman Ave., Bolivar, WV. Note that parking is limited at the Battlefield. Those able to add a hill to their hike are asked to park at Harpers Ferry Middle School at the base of the hill and walk up

Leader: Chris Craig, 304-433-1260, ccraig@laurellodge.com

Nearest Town: Bolivar, WV

Additional Info: There is no charge for this hike, but NPS admission is required (\$5/person or \$10/car, or Park pass).

Sat, July 14

Day Hike: High Rock-Shockeys Knob Sleepy Creek Wildlife Refuge

Distance/Difficulty: 6.5 miles, MODERATE with 960-foot elevation gain

Duration: about 3.5 hours

Description: This hike will include sections on an old forest-access road and hilly trails, including sections of the Tuscarora Trail to High Rock Overlook. Expect some good views and short but vigorous climbs. Open to all adults and minors (with parental permission or accompanied by adult) prepared for the distance and a moderately strenuous hike. Well behaved dogs on leashes are welcome. Bring water, lunch, a snack if desired, and protection from ticks and other insects. We will carry on in light rain but cancel in case of a downpour. There is no charge for this hike.

Meet: 10:00 am, 706 Historic Packhorse Trail (west of Glengary, WV, just off WV Route 45). GPS Coordinates: 39.399106, -78.1976086. For further parking and meeting information, check the Chapter website Calendar of Events or Meetup.com

Leader: Chris Craig, 304-433-1260, ccraig@laurellodge.com

Nearest Town: Inwood or Gerrardstown, WV

Sat, August 11

Day Hike: Appalachian Trail Washington Monument SP (Md.) to Gathland SP (Md.)

Distance/Difficulty: 9.5 miles, STRENUOUS, over 1,000 feet of elevation gain and some very rocky sections.

Duration: about 6 hours, including shuttle

Description: This hike will take us along the AT atop South Mountain, with chances to experience some great views, Civil War history and Maryland monuments, including Maryland's 1827 Washington Monument. Open to all adults and minors (with parental permission or accompanied by adult) prepared for a long, strenuous hike in August heat. Well-behaved dogs on leashes are welcome. **Bring plenty of water, lunch, a snack and protection from ticks and other insects.** We will carry on in light rain but cancel in a downpour. Since this hike is one-way, **a shuttle will be required at the end of the hike***. There is no charge for this hike.

Meet: 9:00 am, at Gathland State Park, 900 Arnoldstown Road, Jefferson, Md. (1 mile east of MD Route 17). GPS Coordinates: 39.4057661, -77.6485888.

Leader: Chris Craig, 304-433-1260, ccraig@laurellodge.com

Nearest Town: Boonsboro, MD

Additional Info: This is a one-way hike. A shuttle provided by some drivers will be required at the end of the hike. *Contact Leader to RSVP and for shuttle information back to trail head.

Please be advised that Sierra Club assumes no responsibility for shuttle/ carpooling. Carpooling is at the sole risk of the participants.



Six Sierra Club hikers participated in a chilly February hike to Maryland Heights and Civil War fortifications in Harpers Ferry National Historic Park. Still smiling after the snowy descent, five are shown crossing the C&O Canal with the Potomac River in the background.

Photo by Ed Wheelless



Any sign of spring?

Chris Craig

It was supposed to be a hike with signs of early spring. Instead, open winter views and a dusting of snow greeted eight hikers in March, at Cacapon State Park, as they walked the Ziler Loop trail. Nevertheless, everyone enjoyed the friendly group and interesting hike. The lack of leaves provided exceptional views of the nearby valleys, while the group discussed some of the treasures and challenges of the West Virginia State Park and Forest systems.

Photo to left: Chris Craig (left) led a group of eight on an early spring hike at Cacapon State Park. Photos by Ed Wheelless.



Unlike her human companions, Anise the dog wouldn't look at the camera. But she and everyone else was still standing — and smiling — at the end of a vigorous hike.



A group of 22 Sierra Club hikers fittingly celebrated Earth Day weekend and John Muir's birthday with a walk through the big trees at the WV Land Trust's Marie Hall Jones Ancient Forest Preserve, Doddridge County. Photo by Autumn Long

Sierrans celebrate Earth Day with a WV Land Trust hike

Autumn Long

On a sunny Saturday afternoon in April, a group of Sierra Club hikers met to explore a special tract of land in Doddridge County, the Marie Hall Jones Ancient Forest Preserve. This 190-acre property was donated to the West Virginia Land Trust by Allen Jones in 2016, to uphold his mother's wishes that this land be protected from development forever. The property includes a 15-acre stand of old-growth hardwood trees, ranging from 150-300 years in age.

Twenty-two hikers gathered along Nutter Fork Road northwest of West Union to embark on a walk around the preserve. After fording a small creek, the group ascended an old county road at the mouth of the hollow to the ridge line. Spring wildflowers in bloom included spring beauties, toothworts, anemones and trout lilies. Entering the grove of old trees, the hikers admired towering red oaks, magnificent black walnuts and stately tulip

trees. As they approached the head of the hollow, the group descended downhill and followed a beautiful spring-fed stream back to their point of departure.

The seclusion and peace of this property are compromised by adjacent shale-gas activities. Well sites, access roads and pipelines surround the preserve on all sides. The hikers noted noise pollution throughout their visit, and local residents are subjected to light, air and water pollution as well. This tiny slice of old-growth forest stands in stark contrast to the heavy industrial development taking place throughout Doddridge County and north-central West Virginia.

The property deed specifies that the West Virginia Land Trust will keep the Marie Hall Jones Ancient Forest Preserve in its natural condition in perpetuity, while accommodating hiking and nature study. To find out more about the WV Land Trust, go to <http://www.wvlandtrust.org>.

West Virginia Chapter Outings

Updated outings and the Liability Policy are available at: sierraclub.org/west-virginia and also on two Meetup.com groups: "West Virginia Chapter Sierra Club" and "Sierra Club-Eastern Panhandle." Check these sites weekly for newly added outings.



Monarch butterfly caterpillars, on an SSC hike at Friendship Hill, Pa. photo by David Buch

Perspectives on Outings

— Laura Miller, Outings Chair

Embracing a Broader View of Nature

During the past few months, the Outings Program has been building back up again, thanks to our dedicated and enthusiastic Outings Leaders who have put a lot of time and effort into organizing and conducting hikes.

Some of these hikes have included interesting themes to discuss along the trails. For instance, a hike in Doddridge County, led by Autumn Long, took us to an old-growth forest, the Marie Hall Jones Ancient Forest Preserve. Jesse Cecil, operations coordinator for the WV Land Trust, hiked along with the group to provide information about the ancient forest and the Preserve. He explained that the property was acquired by the WV Land Trust to protect it, use it for scientific research and allow for public education. During the hike, we were able to observe and measure the diameter of some very large old trees. Some trees were more than a hundred years old.

On a separate hike, leader Christopher Craig and former National Park Superintendent and master naturalist Clark Dixon spent time during their Cacapon State Park hike discussing some of the challenges that invasive species, logging and poor fire management have brought into our public lands. Throughout the discussion, participants were relieved to learn that the 2018 Senate Bill that would have allowed commercial logging in West

Virginia State Parks was not enacted.

Due in part to the many threats our public lands are facing nowadays, and also with the intent to broaden our perspectives, the Outings Program will be moving toward offering a greater diversity of outings. The objective is to provide outings with more than the sole intent of outdoor adventure and exercise, but to also include nature appreciation, hands-on activities, short and long educational walks, etc. Participants will get a chance to learn more about nature so they can use that knowledge to better enjoy and protect nature.

Recently, the efforts of activists, scientists and citizens who presented educated and scientifically based facts to our legislators defeated the ill-conceived Senate Bill that would have allowed logging in our State Parks, including some of the few remaining old-growth forests in West Virginia. These forests have been protected since the days our State Parks were created. With this in mind, we will also strive to offer outings to more diverse groups of people, not only the physically fit but also anyone who wants to learn and fully embrace nature.

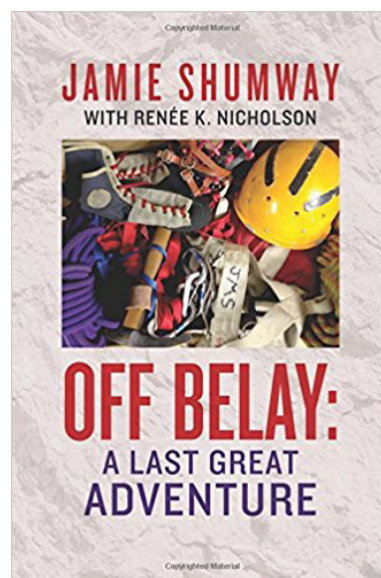
So, stay tuned. Please visit the WV Chapter Sierra Club website Events Calendar often. New outings are posted online throughout the year. Hope to see you soon in the great outdoors.

Book Review

— Review by Sally Wilts

Off Belay: A Last Great Adventure

Jamie Shumway with Renee Nicholson



sessions to interview him and record his answers. A transcription service produced typed pages, but in order to create a book, more editing and narrative improvement was required. Renee Nicholson filled that role and worked with Jamie to create the book.

I dearly wish that I had known this man, as his character shines through in every story. Those who did know him will hear his "voice" again in the stories he shares. Setting goals and then challenging himself to learn the needed skills were central to everything he did. Enjoying people and sharing his love of life, exploring new areas and cultures, having the courage to experience whitewater, rock-climbing and skiing adventures, investing himself to start new environmental organizations in the state, enjoying the challenges of his chosen career and his strong love of family and friends fill the book.

This incredible book required an amazing convergence of many individuals for it to become a reality. Jamie, one of our Chapter's early leaders, was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) in 2008 and gradually lost the use of muscles throughout his body. He set himself the goal of writing some of his life stories, but because he could no longer type, friends, following an outline he had prepared earlier, organized regular

No sense of self-pity is expressed. He seems to have had the strength of character to continue with his life as best he was able, in spite of many unexpected medical crises. One can only imagine the tremendous support he received from family, medical personnel and friends. The book is a tribute to all who loved him as well as to Jamie, who wished to share his life with others.



**SIERRA
CLUB**

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State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

website: www.legis.state.wv.us
has contact information for all state legislators.

Regional Sierra Club Staff

Beyond Coal and Dirty Fuels Campaign
JOB OPENING (see inside for details)



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Preserve the Future

Not everyone can make a large gift to protect the environment during their lifetime, but you can preserve the environment for generations to come by remembering Sierra Club in your will. There are many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter.

For more information and confidential assistance, contact:

Sierra Club
Gift Planning Program
85 Second St, Second Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105
gift.planning@sierraclub.org • (800) 932-4270

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