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Toxic Waste Disposal Site Not Good Neighbor for Morgantown/Masontown

John Bird and Carol Nix

Energy Corporation of America (ECA) is proposing a toxic injection well less than 500 feet from Deckers Creek and the rail-trail in Masontown, WV. They plan to transport, store and inject at high pressure large quantities of fracking wastewater from unknown sources.

Fracking creates huge quantities of contaminated brines, some of which are radioactive, and all of which must be disposed of safely. A site adjacent to Deckers Creek is not a reasonable, safe, or civilly responsible disposal site.

It has taken \$10 million and 20 years of action by citizen groups and volunteers, the business community, local, state and federal government to clean up the Deckers Creek watershed. The rail-trail has become an important recreational area for Morgantown and Preston County. A toxic disposal site threatens these accomplishments.

This injection well may require holding ponds, tanks, pits and out-of-state truck traffic crossing the rail-trail. Surface spills can occur during fluid transfers, and tanks have been known to leak. High pressure can compromise well casings, resulting in groundwater contamination.

The long-term safety of injection wells has never been established. *ProPublica*, which describes itself as "an independent, non-profit newsroom that produces investigative journalism in the public interest" and was awarded a Pulitzer Prize in 2010 and 2011, has published the following reports on injection wells and their effects on groundwater:

www.propublica.org/article/epas-abandoned-wyoming-fracking-study-one-retreat-of-many

www.propublica.org/article/injection-wells-the-poison-beneath-us

www.propublica.org/article/natural-gas-drilling-what-we-dont-know-1231

Methane leaks from an injection well can enter abandoned wells, such as the ones that exist in the Masontown area. In one case, the injected material had done everything that scientists usually describe as impossible: It migrated over a large distance, travelled upward through rock, reached the open air and then exploded.

www.propublica.org/article/an-unseen-leak-then-boom

Wastewater disposal wells have been implicated as the cause of earthquakes:

stateimpact.npr.org/oklahoma/2013/09/12/regulator-will-respond-to-risk-of-injection-well-earthquakes-with-suggestions-not-rules-or-laws/

stateimpact.npr.org/texas/tag/earthquake/

Surely ECA can find a more appropriate site for an injection well — a site without steep slopes, removed from residential and recreational areas, without winding mountain roads and nearby waterways. Safety demands

PETITION AGAINST A FRACKING WASTEWATER INJECTION WELL IN DECKERS CREEK WATERSHED

We, the undersigned, respectfully ask the Energy Corporation of America to halt plans for a Class II UIC well in the Deckers Creek watershed in Preston County (Cascade Well 474, API #077-00170). Additionally, we respectfully request that Greer Industries, Inc., the owner of the property, to not allow any such injection well to be built. Finally, we respectfully request that the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection deny any permit for the aforementioned well. Many years and millions of dollars have been invested in improving the water quality of Deckers Creek and creating a thriving natural and recreational area that's an asset to the community. The risk of serious contamination is too great.

a locale where old gas wells have been properly capped, where previous coal mining has not left the groundwater vulnerable to toxic contamination, a site where accidental spills would not result in far-reaching damage to sensitive environments. The proposed Masontown site does not fit any of these criteria. ECA is not acting responsibly, or being sensitive to the local community.

This well offers NO benefits to either Masontown or Morgantown, or to other residents in the watershed. It offers NO significant local employment. It will NOT

bring economic development to the area. ECA reaps all the economic benefit, but Masontown and Morgantown assume all the risks of hosting a toxic site — depressed property values and contaminated environment.

If you care about Deckers Creek, the rail trail and the Mon River, please raise your voice against the installation of this injection well. Let the DEP know that a permit for an injection well should not be granted; a storage site for toxics brought in from unknown areas should not be established within the Morgantown urban axis or within the watershed.

What you can do:

Contact your elected officials and let them know that you expect them to oppose this well.

Inform community groups of which you are a member; talk to your neighbors; sign the petition against the injection well, and ask others to sign it.

Our West Virginia environment has suffered greatly because our people are hostage to the energy industry. We have had to accept the trade-off between a clean environment and pollution that provides us a livelihood. But there is no reason for us to become the receptacle and storage area of toxics, especially when those toxics are stored alongside our water sources and recreational areas.

This is the place where all of us — business interests, environmentalists, and the general community — can come together to draw the line.

Learn more at: NoInjectionWell.org.

Deviance and Denial about Drilling Waste at the DEP

Beth Little

There are two problems with the drill cuttings (solid waste) from Marcellus shale drilling. One is the volume, which the WVDEP is dealing with by arbitrarily issuing new rules that circumvent the law. The other is the probability of radioactivity, which the WVDEP is dealing with by denial.

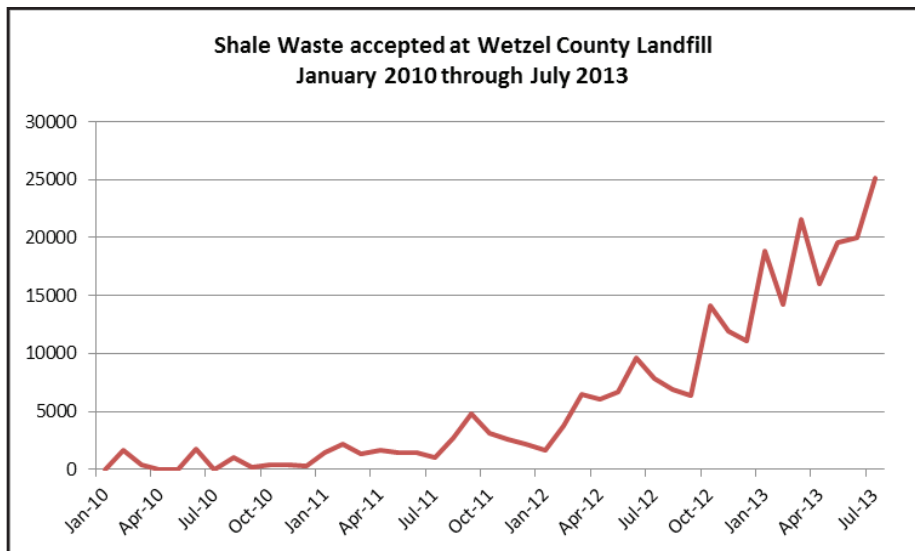
The Wetzel County landfill began receiving drilling waste in 2010. At first it was small amounts (see chart, p. 2), but in 2012 it began increasing rapidly, and by the end of 2012, it went over the legal limit of 9,999 tons for the Class B landfill.

At this point it helps to understand the issue if you know something about the "garbage wars" and our landmark Solid Waste Management Act (SWMA) that was passed as a result. West Virginians were never particularly careful about what to do with their own trash, but when threatened with out-of-state garbage filling up their hollows, they rose up and demanded action from the legislature. Coordination of this monumental legislative action was one of the most successful efforts by the West Virginia Environmental Council, which includes the WV Sierra Club, WV Highlands Conservancy, WV Citizens Action Group, and numerous local groups of impacted citizens. The SWMA created a strict permitting process for landfills, with classification by amount of tonnage — Class A up to 30,000 tons/month and Class B up to 9,999 tons/month. Class A landfills were to be approved by county referendum.

Drilling Waste — p. 2



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



Drilling Waste — from p. 1

Also in WV Code, county or regional solid waste authorities were to come up with a siting plan based on transportation infrastructure, property values, aesthetic and environmental quality, and the public health, welfare and convenience, among other things. The code also states "it is unlawful for any person to establish, construct, install or operate a commercial solid waste facility at a site not authorized by the siting plan," and a Class B solid waste facility "may not increase the aggregate monthly solid waste capacity in excess of ten thousand tons monthly unless such a facility is authorized by the siting plan (§22C-4-24(e))."

So what did the WVDEP do about all the Marcellus drilling waste? In January 2013 the WVDEP sent a memo to landfills under Secretary Randy Huffman's signature stating:

There are two options a land fill can pursue in order to address the tonnage issues created by the new Legislative mandate: (1) a Class B facility can apply to expand to a Class A facility in order to increase its monthly tonnage limit from 9,999 tons to 30,000 tons, or (2) either a Class A or a Class B facility can construct a cell separate from the municipal solid waste ("MSW") cells to be dedicated solely to the disposal of drilling waste;

disposal of drilling waste into this separate cell will not count toward a facility's monthly tonnage limits.

In the meantime:

Those facilities that ... apply for approval to construct a special waste cell will be eligible to exceed their monthly tonnage limits by twenty percent (20%) until January 31, 2014.

There follows a list of requirements, including:

3. By November 30, 2013, the permittee must have completed construction of the special waste cell

From the chart, you see that Wetzel County's landfill was already way over the 20 percent above their tonnage limit, and they are not close to completing a special waste cell.

Not to worry. The WVDEP will fix it. In February, they sent another memo amending the bold-faced language above from the January memo as follows:

Those facilities that ... apply for approval to construct a special waste cell will be eligible to exceed their monthly tonnage limits until June 1, 2014.

3. By June 1, 2014, the permittee must have completed construction of the special waste cell

Note that the 20-percent language has disappeared, making the excess tonnage unlimited, and the date is extended for completing the special cell. Then the WVDEP sent a third memo in July 2013 amending the deadline for completing the special waste cell to September 30, 2014.

From this we conclude that the WVDEP will continue to alter regulations to meet the needs of industry in disposing of drilling waste. Secretary Huffman's explanation is that they are trying to avoid having the waste buried onsite. — This is still legal, by the way, if the landowner consents, despite years of vigorous efforts to abolish the practice, which has resulted in tens of thousands of pits containing toxic material buried all over West Virginia. Until a couple of years ago, they weren't even required to have liners. However, the volume of the waste and the possibility of radioactivity from Marcellus drilling make it a new ball game.

Note, also, that these DEP memos went to the landfills, not the solid waste authorities. The Wetzel County solid waste authority is concerned that a special waste cell with no limit will take up space and limit the life of the landfill. They also note that they were excluded from the process that they have legal authority to oversee through the siting plan. The Wetzel County Class B landfill is already exceeding the tonnage limit for a Class A landfill, though there has been no new siting plan and no county referendum.

For justification, WVDEP refers to the Natural Gas Horizontal Well Control Act, passed in December 2011, which says drilling waste was to be disposed of "in an approved solid waste facility." In other words, it's the legislature's fault for passing conflicting legislation.

Radioactivity issues

Now we come to the conceivably more critical problem with Marcellus drilling waste: Radioactivity.

Geologists have known for 50 years that the Marcellus is radioactive. Drillers know from their gamma log, or gamma radiation detector, when they have reached the Marcellus. That's when they know to turn the borehole from vertical to horizontal and

drill through the Marcellus where the gas is. An industry shale-gas study, "Fractured Shale Gas Potential in New York," by David G. Hill, Tracy E. Lombardi and John P. Martin, states, "The Marcellus formation is highly radioactive..." (p. 8). Radioactivity monitors are required at all landfills in Pennsylvania. Periodically, their alarms go off when they detect a higher than desirable level of radioactivity.

"DEP spokesman John Poister confirmed the drill cutting materials from Rice Energy's Thunder II pad in Greene County (Pa.) had a radiation level of 96 microrem. The landfill must reject any waste with a radiation level that reaches 10 microrem or higher." — *Pennsylvania Tribune Review*, April 23, 2013.

The level of radioactivity may be low. We are all exposed to low levels when we get X-rays at the dentist, but the dental assistant leaves the room because it is cumulative. What about the landfill workers and the truckers who are exposed to this stuff for hours every day? To what level are they being exposed? We don't know, because radioactivity is not required to be monitored at WV landfills.

When questioned about this, the WVDEP responded that results from a study done by the Water Research Institute (WRI) "clearly indicate that no human health hazard is posed by the low level radiation by the naturally occurring radiation." However, further investigation revealed that the samples tested by WRI were from vertical bores. It seems that at no time did the researchers have access to drill cuttings from a horizontal bore where the radioactivity would likely be found.

And here's the crux of the matter for the WVDEP: WV Code says, "The disposal of radioactive waste material in a solid waste facility or in a commercial solid waste facility, as defined in section two, article fifteen, chapter twenty-two of this code, is prohibited (§16-27-2(b))."

If they find out that Marcellus drilling waste is radioactive, where would they put it?

There is talk of a legislative fix, but this writer is doubtful that it will do more than adjust the law to suit the gas industry.

Book Review

Refuge: An Unnatural History of Family and Place by Terry Tempest Williams

Richard Mier, Martinsburg, WV

Refuge is part of the canon of modern environmental literature. Its author, Terry Tempest Williams, is often grouped with the greats, writers like Wallace Stegner, Aldo Leopold, Edward Abbey, John McPhee, and Annie Dillard, among others. Terry Tempest Williams herself is a phenomenon. A well-published writer and committed environmental activist, she has received many awards for her work, been arrested for her principles, been a guest at the White House, been featured by Ken Burns and received at least seven honorary degrees.

In *Refuge*, she takes us down two parallel paths. In one, she describes the death of her mother from cancer and how she and her family cope with and adapt to this loss. Her family is of a proud, Mormon lineage and have been in Utah since arriving with Brigham Young many generations ago. She focuses on the connectedness among the wonderful women of this Mormon family, including her mother and grandmother, whose dying is also described. *Refuge* is at its best when describing with poignancy these slow and painful leavings.

She reports, simultaneously, an environmental tragedy that involved the Great Salt Lake in the mid-1980s. Flooding that occurred during this period threatened Salt Lake City, highways, homes and the airport. The rising water also destroyed the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge, to which Williams was committed professionally, as a trained naturalist, and personally. She clearly loves this corner of her world and its inhabitants. Each chapter, named for a different bird species found in the Refuge, begins with a notation of the water level in the Great Salt Lake. Both paths contain writing of beauty and sadness. As her mother dies and the lake rises, her world collapses.



With your help we can clean up our water

Sierra Club Water Sentinels are the first line of defense of America's waters. We live on the water planet. However, water is a finite resource with only about 1% of the world's water actually being available for human consumption. Water pollution & over-use are threatening both the quality & quantity of our water resources at an alarming rate.

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Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Officer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 15	N/A
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Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Student	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35
Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.



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Enclose a check and mail to:
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Photo Essay — Marcellus Gas Well Outing



The West Virginia Chapter conducted a tour for 25 participants of the intense Marcellus gas development in the Mobley area of Wetzel County. Marcellus activist Bill Hughes guided us and added explanations and interpretations of what we were seeing. We met at the Barr home. The well pad there is virtually in their yard, with drilling 24/7.

Drill rig on multi-well pad. Later, we went to a pad with 12 active wells on a single pad site.



Fracking at a pad about 500 yards from the Barr home. The machinery will be moved to the pad in his yard soon to frack the latest well there.

*Photo Essay by
Jim Sconyers*

*Chapter Outing to See Shale Gas
Drilling Up Close and Personal
November 17, 2013
near Mobley, in Wetzel County*



Tanker truck of hydrochloric acid to be used in the frack fluid.



Trucks are filled with frack sand then upended to dump them. The dust is quite hazardous.



A dehydrator facility. The scale of capital investment is huge.

MONONGAHELA GROUP

January 11 and 12 Injection Well Canvassing in Masontown and Morgantown

A local group, noinjectionwell.org, will be canvassing door-to-door in Masontown and Morgantown to raise awareness of the dangers of a proposed injection well to be used for drilling waste near Deckers Creek and the rail-trail near Masontown.

We need as many volunteers as possible, and this is an excellent way for concerned individuals to help protect our environment.

Info: www.noinjectionwell.org; Hannah Spencer, hspencer22@gmail.com; or FODC office, 304-292-3970.

Tues, Feb 4, 7 p.m. Blackwater room, Mountainlair, WVU New Vision Renewable Energy Solar Light Fundraising Campaign Presentation

The Mon Group and WVU Sierra Student Coalition will sponsor a fundraising campaign to provide solar powered lighting to a community that lacks electricity in the developing world. Almost 1.3 billion people are still affected by energy poverty and live without this basic necessity. Chris Haddox, a WVU professor well known for his work in sustainable, energy-efficient building design, will be our speaker. He has sponsored two projects already with this nonprofit organization, which is based in Philippi, WV (www.nvre.org).

Using solar energy for nighttime lighting of homes that lack electricity eliminates the pollution and health effects associated with using fossil fuels for lighting. This is a vital improvement to the lives of those receiving the lights.

A fundraising website will be set up. Come join us for this inspiring presentation.

Info: Sally Wilts, 304-379-7567, sallywilts@yahoo.com.



Spring Course at Shepherd University to Teach Tree Basics

Can understanding trees better help us in our care of and interaction with them? Why do we identify trees?

To answer these questions, among others, the Shepherd University Lifelong Learning Program is offering a course this spring called **Trees: 101**.

This course is an introduction to trees, with its primary focus on anatomy, functions and identification of trees within the context of managed landscapes. The course will culminate with a tree walk through nearby Morgan's Grove Park in Shepherdstown.

Taught by Shawn Walker, the course will be from 10–11:30 a.m. on three consecutive Mondays, April 28, May 5 and May 12, 2014, in the Erma Ora Byrd Nursing Building, Room 112.

The cost is \$49. For further information, or to register, contact Karen Rice at 304-876-5135, krice@shepherd.edu.

Facebook Page Up for WV Wilderness 50th

My name is Delia (pronounced DELL-ia, or just Del, for short) Delgado. I am an Appalachian Forest Heritage Area AmeriCorps member working with the Forest Service this year, based in Marlinton. My major responsibility is to help celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act (September 3, 2014) on the Monongahela.

I recently launched the WV Wilderness 50th Facebook page and invite you to check it out, answer the survey question, and consider submitting wilderness area photos for the photo showcase.

Here is the link:
www.facebook.com/wvwilderness50th

Island Hopping in Channel Islands National Park 3-Day, 3-Island Cruises April 12-14, May 4-6, June 8-10 July 22-24, Aug. 24-26, Sept. 14-16

Hike wild, windswept trails bordered with blazing wildflowers. Kayak rugged coastlines. Marvel at pristine waters teeming with frolicking seals and sea lions. Train your binoculars on unusual sea and land birds. Watch for the highly endangered island fox. Look for reminders of the Chumash people who lived on these islands for thousands of years. Or just relax at sea.

All cruises depart from Santa Barbara, Calif. The cost, \$590, includes an assigned bunk, all meals, snacks and beverages, plus the services of a ranger/naturalist.

To reserve space, send a \$100 check, written to **Sierra Club**, to leader Joan Jones Holtz, 11826 The Wye St., El Monte, CA 91732.

For more information, contact leader, 626-443-0706, jholtzln@aol.com.

Perspectives on Outings

— Russ Flowers, Outings Chair

Looking Back & Looking Ahead

Looking back, it is hard to believe that it has been a year since I became the chapter's outings chair. Last year when I heard that the position was open, I knew it would be an opportunity to serve the Club. It was a perfect fit; I love the outdoors, meeting people, and my beautiful home state of West Virginia. After participating in outings and later becoming an outings leader, the chair was a logical progression.

I am so grateful to have had an opportunity to meet many of the Club's members and outings leaders. We are fortunate that our Club has such a wonderful membership. It is the dedication of such leadership that makes this job easy and enjoyable.

In 2013, our outings leaders lead more than 50 outings. The diverse outings opportunities have ranged from hikes in the Cranberry Wilderness; cross-country skiing in Canaan Valley; bird watching along the Ohio River; trail improvement service projects at Coopers Rock; kayak float-paddling down the Cheat River; blueberry picking at Dolly Sods; and a train ride on the Cass scenic railroad. There truly has been something for everyone and offerings at various skill levels. Because they are always open to members and non-members, these outings have been a great way to meet up with old friends, meet new ones and to fellowship with like-minded people, all the while soaking in the natural beauty of our incredible state.

In an attempt to continually improve and meet your needs, as we move forward into this next year, I am asking for your constructive feedback and suggestions to make our outings program even better. Are there other types of outings you would like to see offered? Perhaps you would like to see more outings in certain locations of the state. Are we doing a good job getting outings information to you through the newsletter and website?

The outings aspect of our Club is meant to get us outdoors so we can appreciate the wonder of nature. Thus, it is important to me that we provide the types of opportunities that would most motivate us to do so. If

you have an outings wish, odds are that there are others who will enjoy such an opportunity as well.

So far, I have received some great feedback. For example, one suggestion has been to have outings focused around the newly proposed Birth Place of the Rivers National Monument. Another has been to have more float-paddle options. Both ideas are excellent and I look forward to incorporating them into our 2014 plans.

Furthermore, to improve the outings program, a retreat for all outings leaders is in the works so we can all meet and get to know one another better. It is my hope that this will give us a great opportunity to collectively come up with some ideas and strategies to keep moving us forward. It is also my hope to provide more opportunities for training members to become outings leaders by offering OL101 & OL102 courses.

In 2013, six members took OL 101 training, and I really wish to increase this number in 2014. Just remember, the only prerequisites for outings leadership training is a love of being in the outdoors and sharing it with others. That probably sounds like you, right?

In closing, I personally wish to thank our outing leaders who led outings and those who participated. They are the ones who make this program a success and bring a personal level to the Club. I offer each and every one of you a standing ovation.

If you have any comments, questions, concerns, or suggestions, feel free to contact me, so we can make the outings program better fit the needs of all of our members.

As always, thanks for your support of the WV Sierra Club Outings Program as we look ahead to the New Year.

Take to the Outdoors!

Maryland Chapter Outings

Our neighboring chapter to the east has an active outings program, with many trips coming into West Virginia or western Maryland. These outings, by highly experienced leaders, range from easy to strenuous, and are open to everyone. Join an outing by checking out their calendar at

maryland.sierraclub.org

Allegheny Group Outings

Sierra Club members in the Pittsburgh area belong to the Allegheny Group. They have a moderately active outings program as well as links to other local outdoor activities. Visit their website for an outings calendar and more details at

alleghenysc.org

Potomac Region Outings (PRO)

This is an activity section of the Sierra Club Virginia Chapter, with an extensive outings program run by leaders who live in and around the Washington, D.C., area. A calendar of activities, information and updates can be found on their website at

www.sierrapotomac.org

West Virginia Chapter Outings

For updated listings of outings sponsored by the West Virginia Chapter, check our Chapter website at

westvirginia.sierraclub.org

Outings — Winter and Beyond



2014 marks the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Watch for outings marked Wild 50, celebrating the pristine wildlands in

West Virginia that are protected as Wilderness for posterity.

Sat, Jan 4

Hike: Black Rock/Annapolis Rocks

rated easy to moderate — We will meet at the AT trailhead parking area on Rt. 40 just east of Greenbrier SP. We will then take one or two vehicles to the Thurston Briggs trailhead on White Oak Dr. in Smithsburg. We will hike up the mountain to the AT, head south to Black Rock and Annapolis Rocks which afford great views of the valley below, returning to the vehicles parked on Rt. 40. The hike is 6 miles. Other than an initial very steep climb on the Thurston Briggs trail, the AT portion is fairly easy. Please pre-register with trip leader.

Leader: Pam Peitz, 240-818-6554, pspeitz@hotmail.com

Nearest town: Hagerstown, MD

Web info: hikingupward.com, search Black Rock, Annapolis Rock

Sat, Jan 4

Winter Lecture Series: Birding “Big Year” by Mike Williams

not rated — Join us for our Winter Lecture Series at the Vienna Public Library, presented by the WV Master Naturalists. Mike Williams, retired Ohio DNR geologist and photographer and expert birder, will chronicle his “Big Year” of birding in 2013. Mike will share his photos, stories and experiences in this fun interactive presentation. The lecture is free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader, seating is limited. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Vienna, WV

Web info: vienna.park.lib.wv.us

Sat, Jan 11

Hike: Coopers Rock

rated moderate to strenuous — Join us for our Third Annual Coopers Rock Winter Hike. This is a moderate to strenuous (depending on the weather/conditions of the trails) hike of about 7 miles. We will start the hike at the Day-Use Lot, hike the Scott Run Trail, and then continue on the Roadside Trail to the overlook. Plan is to eat lunch at the overlook, and then hike back to the cars. Bring snack/lunch and water, trekking poles can be helpful, as sections of Scott Run trail are fairly steep in places. Be sure to dress for the weather. Contact leader for directions, rendezvous location, and start time.

Leader: Aaron Vedock, 540-805-0019, amvedock@hotmail.com

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: coopersrockstateforest.com

Sat, Jan 25

Winter Lecture Series: Edible and Medicinal Plants

not rated — Join us for our Winter Lecture Series at the Vienna Public Library, presented by the WV Master Naturalists. Master naturalist Emily Grafton will lead an interruptive lecture on edible and medicinal plants in our area. Learn the plants that the Native Americans and early pioneers used before there were super markets and drug stores. The lecture is free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader, seating is limited. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Vienna, WV

Web info: vienna.park.lib.wv.us

Tues, Jan 28

Workshop & Lecture: Owls of the Ohio Valley

not rated — Join the Friends of the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge for this fun, interactive, hands-on workshop on Owls of the Ohio Valley. Learn about the various owls in the area and get a hands-on study of owl pellets. The program is held at Ohio River

Islands National Wildlife Refuge headquarters in Williamstown, WV. The workshop is free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader, seating is limited. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands

Sat, Feb 1

Winter Lecture Series: Hiking, Backpacking & Camping Skills

not rated — Join us for our Winter Lecture Series at the Vienna Public Library presented by the WV Master Naturalists. Learn skills and equipment required for hiking, backpacking, and camping from local experts. They will cover the skills from the basics to more advance. The lecture is free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader, seating is limited. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Vienna, WV

Web info: vienna.park.lib.wv.us

Sat, Feb 22

Winter Lecture Series: Family Birding Day

not rated — Join us for our Winter Lecture Series at the Vienna Public Library presented by the WV Master Naturalists. This fun interactive workshop is for all ages. Learn how to identify birds and attract birds; plus many hands on activities such as making bird nests. Please pre-register with the leader, seating is limited. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Vienna, WV

Web info: vienna.park.lib.wv.us

Tue, Feb 25

Workshop & Lecture: Pollinators

not rated — Join the Friends of the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge for this fun, interactive, hands-on workshop on pollinators. Learn about the various types of pollinators and how important they are to our ecosystem. Learn how to attract pollinators to your yard and how to make nesting boxes. The program is held at Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge headquarters in Williamstown, WV. The workshop is free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader, seating is limited. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

Leader: Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, russwvu@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands



Sat, Apr 26

Hike: Pocahontas Trail and Falls of Hills Creek

rated easy to moderate

— The West Virginia Sierra Club and our allies in the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition are advocating for an area centered around the Cranberry Wilderness to become a new national monument. Join us for outings that give a taste of why this area is so special. We will meet at the Cranberry Visitor Center, where we explore the informative exhibits. We then hike the Pocahontas Trail to an outstanding showing of spring wildflowers. From there we move to the stunning three-step Falls of Hills Creek. Hiking the trail/boardwalk takes us to the spectacular falls and many photo ops. Beth Little will be our guide. Please pre-register with leader.

Leader: Jim Sconyers, 304-698-9628, jimscon@gmail.com

Nearest towns: Hillsboro, WV

Web info: birthplaceofrivers.org/pocahontascountywv.com/cranberry_glades_nature_center.aspx

Sat, Jun 7

Leisure Float/Paddle: Cheat River

rated easy — We put in at Holly Meadow in Tucker County, for a leisurely float-and-paddle down the Cheat River to St. George. Enjoy the riverine scenery of forest, farm fields, summer wildflowers, possibly wildlife (bald eagle last year), and more, with the mountains as a backdrop. The trip is generally flat water, with a few riffles providing brief excitement here and there. Expect to spend about 4 hours on the river. It is suitable for beginners. Boat rentals are available. Kayaks and sit-on-tops are recommended for their shallow draft. The outing depends on warm weather and adequate water level. Personal Floatation devices (lifejackets) are required on Sierra Club watercraft outings. Optional late lunch/snack at local Parsons bistro afterwards. Please pre-register with leader.

Leader: Jim Sconyers, 304-698-9628, jimscon@gmail.com

Nearest towns: St. George & Parsons, WV



Sun, Aug 10

Hike: Cranberry Glades and Beartown

rated easy to moderate

— The West Virginia Sierra Club and our allies in the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition are advocating for an area centered around the Cranberry Wilderness to become a new national monument. Join us for outings that give a taste of why this area is so special. We will meet at the Cranberry Visitor Center, where we explore the informative exhibits. Then we walk the boardwalk at the fascinating and unique Cranberry Glades, with commentary on the flora and fauna by our guide Beth Little. From there we move to bizarre, mysterious, and funny Beartown, with its convoluted and unique rock formations. Please pre-register with leader.

Leader: Jim Sconyers, 304-698-9628, jimscon@gmail.com

Nearest town: Hillsboro, WV

Web info: birthplaceofrivers.org/beartownstatepark.com/pocahontascountywv.com/cranberry_glades_nature_center.aspx



Sat, Sep 6

Hike: Dolly Sods North

rated moderate — Dolly Sods

North was added to the Dolly Sods Wilderness in 2009. Come and see why! We'll explore the forest, savanna, streams, and the natural and human history. Dolly Sods North is a high alpine landscape with spectacular scenery, encompassing the headwaters of Red Creek. Our trail distance is approximately 6 miles. Grades are generally moderate, and this hike rates as leisure for difficulty and moderate for length. We will keep a leisure pace with numerous stops to “smell the roses.” Our route focuses on the more northerly trails in the upper parts of the headlands. Day hiking gear is needed, along with plenty of water, sunscreen, and weather protection. Please pre-register with leader.

Leader: Jim Sconyers, 304-698-9628, jimscon@gmail.com

Nearest town: Harman, WV

Web info: midatlantichikes.com/id188.html

Sierra Club Liability Policies For Chapter Outings

Sierra Club outings are open to everyone, members and non-members alike. Each outing is intended to be a wholesome, safe, and enjoyable experience in the outdoors. Participants must have suitable clothing, gear, and stamina, and are encouraged to select activities that match their individual abilities for outdoor adventures.

The Club offers a variety of outings from “easy” to “moderate” to “strenuous” that suit all activity levels. The difficulty of each outing is clearly designated in the announcement. Reservations are generally not required unless noted, but the outing leader may be contacted in advance for questions about the terrain, the difficulty and recommended gear.

Activities are normally held “rain or shine,” but may be postponed at the leader’s discretion for safety reasons in the event of inclement weather. Participants are reminded that all outdoor activities carry a degree of risk, and some take place in locations where professional emergency medical aid may be two or more hours away. People with health concerns should consult a physician to determine the advisability of participating in these or similar activities. The leader is responsible for the safety of all participants, and has the final authority to decide whether or not an individual may participate on a specific outing. Sierra Club safety policy requires that helmets be worn on bicycling outings, and a personal flotation device (PFD) be worn when using personal watercraft such as kayaks or canoes.

Unless noted in the announcement, Club outings are intended for adults. Children and

dogs are not normally permitted, unless an outing is so designated. Minors (under 18 years of age) must be accompanied by a parent or a legal guardian, or they must have both 1) a signed permission slip, and 2) the leader’s prior consent to participate in the Club outing. Sierra Club outings officially begin and end at the trailhead.

Travel to the official starting point and back, even from an advertised meeting place, is the sole responsibility of each participant. While the Club encourages car-pooling, such arrangements are strictly between the riders and the drivers, and are not a part of the outing. Participants assume full responsibility and liability for all risks associated with such travel.

All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver, which can be viewed on the web at www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms or by calling 415-977-5630.

The Sierra Club does not charge for chapter outings, although payment of park entrance fees, a share of campsite rental costs, permit fees, equipment rental charges, etc. may be required from the participants. The Sierra Club practices “leave-no-trace” trail techniques, including hiking and camping on durable surfaces, minimizing campfire impacts, packing out all trash, respecting wildlife, being considerate of other visitors, and leaving the environment as it was found.

The Sierra Club’s California Seller of Travel identification number is CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.



**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

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West Virginia Chapter
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cglagola@mail.wvnet.edu
(Put name of recipient under subject)

Messages for legislators can be left at:
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Mail address:

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Charleston, WV 25305

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

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

A Will is a Way

Make a commitment to the next generation by remembering
Sierra Club in your will. Your support will help
others preserve the intricate balance of nature

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(800) 932-4270 • gift.planning@sierraclub.org

For planned giving in West Virginia, contact Paul Wilson at 304-725-4360

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