

Mountain State Sierran

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July/August 2012

WV Chapter Wins Sierra Club's 2012 Communication Award

The West Virginia Chapter has been selected to receive the Sierra Club's **2012 Communication Award**. This award honors the best use of communications (either print or electronic) by a Sierra Club group, chapter or other entity to further the Club's mission.

The Chapter's 2011 Marcellus Gas Campaign inspired this honor. The overall campaign, orchestrated by several dedicated volunteers and staff and partially funded by members' generous donations, comprised an integrated set of media materials, ranging from bumper stickers and buttons to brochures, websites, and radio and Internet spot ads, that educated and informed a wide audience about the dangers of shale gas drilling.

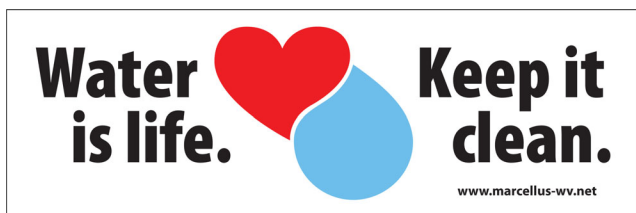
A chapter representative will attend the annual Sierra Club Board meeting in August, where the Communication Award will be presented.

The awards committee was impressed by the following nomination submission:

After two years of an alarming gas rush swiftly beginning to engulf West Virginia, and the Chapter's concerns growing, in 2011 we launched a comprehensive, cohesive, and organized Marcellus gas campaign.

The Logo

One of the first components of the campaign was selection of a logo. We conducted a design contest and chose the image below.



These six simple words summed up the crux of the Chapter's issues and concerns. What's more, the message is one no reasonable person could argue with.

This graphic became a unifying icon throughout our campaign.

- We used it on bumper stickers, of which a couple thousand were distributed.
- We used it on buttons, which became the badge of

honor for our citizen lobbyists who were in the state legislature nearly every day of both the regular 2011 session and the special session in which a Marcellus regulation bill was finally passed.

- And it was used as the "hook" on print materials and websites. A slip of paper with the logo prominently placed was handed to delegates and senators as they entered their chambers for a critical vote.

The Brochure

Our primary public information piece was a full-color, 3-fold brochure. The brochure is informative and also activist. It gives basic information, directs readers to sources, and calls them to action. Printing costs were shared with allies. The brochure is in its second printing of 10,000 copies. Citizens all over the state use it.

For copies of the brochure to distribute, you may contact: outreach@marcellus-wv.com.

The Website

We developed an outstanding Marcellus website, marcellus-wv.com, separate from our general chapter site. It is filled with basic information as well as issues, news, and much more.

Radio and Internet Ads

As the Marcellus gas rush swept over West Virginia, we became concerned by the heavy advertising campaigns being mounted by industry. Misleading or downright untrue, the ads were disturbingly effective with the general public.

Although the Chapter knew all too well that we "greens" could never match industry's deep pockets, we decided to commit to a media ad campaign of our own.

Chapter Marcellus campaign leaders developed parameters and concepts for both radio and Internet ads. Once our plans were set, we hired a media consultant to finalize and place the ads.

The ads are available at keepwvbeautiful.com, a website created for this ad campaign. Compliance rules mandate that we needed this extra step from a listener's or viewer's first click to their arrival at a call to action.

Log in to play the ads. They are entertaining, as well as hard-hitting.



*July 28 Rally at the U.S. Capitol
Get on the bus!*

Join us in D.C. to stop the frack attack!

From California to New York, from North Dakota to Texas, people from across the country are converging on the U.S. Capitol to tell Congress, the President and the world to end the rush to drill and STOP THE FRACK ATTACK!

JOIN US — a nationwide coalition of citizens, communities and organizations declaring the time is NOW to use our collective power to end oil and gas drilling that harms public health, water and air quality, and the climate.

Rally Details

The rally begins at 2 PM at the Capitol, with inspiration, information, and invigoration. At 3:30 PM, we march to the American Natural Gas Association headquarters. The march ends in time to reboard buses around 5:30–6 PM and head for home.

More information about the rally is at:
stopthefrackattack.org

Bus Details

The WV Chapter will be sending two buses to this huge rally. Both leave and return the same day, July 28. The buses are open to everyone, so join us for a rollicking good time and — get on the bus!

From Morgantown

Board the bus at 9 AM at the Wal-Mart parking lot at Exit 1 on Interstate 68. Short stop at Keyzers Ridge. Return after the rally and march, short stop (probably) at Hagerstown, back to Morgantown around 11 PM. Tickets are \$20 roundtrip.

Questions? Contact Jim Sconyers at:
jimscon@gmail.com or 304-698-9628

From Lewisburg & Beckley

Board the bus at 7 AM in Beckley, 8 AM in Lewisburg. Return after the rally and march; back around midnight. Tickets are \$25 roundtrip.

Questions? Contact Beth Little at:
blittle@citynet.net or 304-653-4277

Bus tickets may be purchased online at:
<http://store.wvsierraclub.org>



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Week in Washington Brings Power to DC!!

Bill Price

Regional Sierra Club Staff, Beyond Coal Campaign

You often hear the phrase “walking the halls of power” when you’re in Washington DC trying to educate Congress and the Administration on health and other impacts of Mountain Top Removal mining. But from June 3 through June 5, residents from Appalachia and across the country traveled to DC to show the politicians where real power comes from.

Over 150 people (including several Sierra Club members) gathered for the 7th annual *Week in Washington*, sponsored by the member groups of the Alliance for Appalachia. The week started with a day of training on Sunday that would prepare the attendees for the upcoming days. Over 120 visits were made to the offices of Members of Congress calling on them to co-sponsor the Clean Water Protection Act and to stop attacking the Environmental Protection Agency when they are doing the job they are supposed to do — protect the health of people!!

There were also meetings with the Environmental Protection Agency, the Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement and the National Park Service. These meetings were productive and the message was loud and clear. The people of Appalachia support the actions taken to keep the mining industry from destroying our health, land, homes and lives. We want an end to Mountain Top Removal and a transition to an economy that will lead to true prosperity and not the destruction of our water. The staff of those agencies heard from residents of Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia, along with people from all over that people’s health is in jeopardy and they must continue to work for, and do more, to end Mountain Top Removal mining.

In addition to the *Week in Washington* event, there was a day of action on Wednesday, June 6. It started with delegations from the four states representing Appalachia walking to the Rayburn House office building, where they paid a personal visit to their Members of Congress. Congressmen Rahall (WV), Rogers (KY), Duncan (TN) and Griffith (VA) were somewhat surprised by the visits and even more surprised when the delegations decided not to leave when invited to do so. Twenty-two people made a personal decision to risk arrest by staying in the offices. Ultimately, the Capital Police did arrest those brave people who wanted only to be heard by their “Representatives.” They have now all been released and are on their way back to their homes to continue their fight.

At the same time those visits were being made, a rally was held at the Lower Senate Park where supporters celebrated the week. At that rally, people heard updates from the Rayburn building, while listening to good Appalachian music and continuing the ritual begun by women in Appalachia on Memorial Day at the WV State Capital in Charleston. Six more people (including yours truly) shaved their heads to bring attention to the ongoing crisis brought about by Mountain Top Removal. Paula Swearingen, who was one of the women who shaved her head in Charleston, said it best “my hair will grow back, the mountains won’t. I’m doing this for my kids! I’d cut off my foot if I had to for them.”

The week was a powerful experience. Instead of “walking the halls of power,” those in DC who want to allow the destruction of homes in Appalachia got a taste of what true power looks like. And this is just another step. More will come until the madness of Mountain Top Removal ends.

MONONGAHELA GROUP

Thur, Aug 23 – 6:30 pm to dark
Annual Corn Roast and Potluck

Krepps Park Shelter, Morgantown WV

Come welcome back the students and get energized for a new year of activism. Enjoy good company along with fresh roasted corn on the cob. Bring food to share. Plates/utensils will be provided.

SIERRAFEST 2012

Sept 29-30 – Canaan Valley State Park

SAVE THE DATES! More details in next Sierran.

Link Exists Between EPA’s Greenhouse Gas Rules and Public Health

Jim Kotcon

On May 12, US-EPA released proposed new rules to limit emissions of greenhouse gases from new power plants to 1000 pounds per MWh. The net effect of these rules would be to prevent construction of new coal-fired electric generating plants unless they install carbon capture equipment. Modern natural gas plants would already meet this standard, so the rule primarily targets coal-fired plants.

We all know that limits on greenhouse gases are needed to reduce global warming, but how does this relate to human health?

First, rising temperatures lead to more prolonged heat waves, which have already been linked to increased deaths among vulnerable populations. These include children, the elderly, and those with heart or respiratory problems.

Second, rising temperatures lead to increased ozone air pollution (smog). According to the Union of Concerned Scientists, this

is expected to induce 2.8 million additional respiratory illnesses in the US within the next ten years. Related health costs would exceed \$5 billion annually by 2020.

Most importantly, implementation of these standards would indirectly reduce the health impacts of coal-fired power plants. With fewer plants being built, there will be lower emissions of fine particulates, less mercury, and reductions in a wide variety of other hazardous air pollutants.

So, while carbon dioxide at these levels is not directly toxic to humans, the direct and indirect human health benefits are actually very significant.

Of course there are many other environmental benefits from reducing emissions of greenhouse gases. Changing climates would lead to species extinctions, an impact that would be irreversible. There is also a possibility of abrupt climate changes, which, if triggered, could lead to changes so rapid that humans would have very little time to adapt.

According to the National Research Council, these could include severe droughts in important agricultural and forestry areas, rapid sea level rise from disintegration of the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets, and dramatic increases in size and severity of forest fires.

Unlike most air pollutants, greenhouse gases stay in the atmosphere for long periods of time, ranging from decades to millennia, depending on the greenhouse gas. And decisions made about construction of power plants today will “lock in” emissions for many decades, as most power plants continue to operate for 50 years or more.

Since fossil-fuel power plants represent the largest single category of greenhouse gas sources, accounting for 40 percent of the US total, these new standards are an important step to slow or reverse the effects of climate change. Future generations will breathe easier!

What You Can Do

Send comments to the EPA Docket Center, U.S. EPA, Mail Code 2822T, 1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20460, Attn: Docket ID No. EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0660.

Or comment on-line at: www.regulations.gov/#!submitComment:D=EPA-HQ-OAR-2011-0660-0001

Comments from West Virginians are important. Because of our state’s dependence on fossil fuels, many political leaders oppose these new rules. While they give lip service to the need for “Clean Coal” technologies, they refuse to support the rules that would allow utilities to actually install this equipment. Your comments will help EPA respond to these political attacks by illustrating support here in West Virginia.

Please send your comments as soon as possible. Even if late, they can still be considered.



It’s time for America to get smart about energy and be less dependent on dwindling oil reserves. We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power. Let your voice be heard.

Add your voice to protect the planet.
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Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

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Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041

or visit our website www.sierraclub.org F94Q W 5700

Book Review

Frank E. Grant

Global Warming and Political Intimidation by Raymond Bradley
Amherst & Boston: U. Massachusetts Press, 2011.

This concise book, written for the non-scientist, takes the reader through Bradley's unpleasant journey defending research on global warming to a skeptical — and basically uninformed — congressional committee. It clearly explains the science behind global warming as well as the importance of the august International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and its relationship to the Kyoto Protocol. Throughout is a warning of how dirty politics, led by money, can subvert science.

Bradley, a respected geosciences professor and climate research director, explains why using the term "climate change," a natural long-term process, is benign when compared to the alarm wrought by the abrupt "global warming" earth has experienced since the Industrial Revolution.

In about 360 pages, Bradley has written an essential guide to the issues and problems faced due to global warming in the United States and the world, issues that already have affected every person on earth.

The book ends on a note of mild optimism, mostly through mitigation efforts being made by some European Union countries. A question for those who read this book will be whether the mitigations will be enough to keep the earth from becoming an inhospitable place for a burgeoning human population.

This book is not directly a call to arms; however, any reader interested in the now unstoppable effects of global warming may be inspired to take some action beyond merely reading about it.

View from the Chair — Jim Sconyers

"Future of the Coalfields: It's Not What It Used to Be"

I suppose everyone has heard, *ad nauseam*, about the phony "war on coal." This is the feverish public relations campaign by Big Coal flailing about to distract citizens and coal miners from some harsh realities.

Coal is on a steady decline. The share of coal-fired power in national electric generation has shrunk to barely 30 percent. The cheap, easy-to-mine coal in central Appalachia is nearly played out. Mechanization of coal mining keeps the number of miners low. Natural gas production has skyrocketed. New power plants use gas, and some old plants are converting to gas.

These are market and geological forces. But, of course, coal industry groups and their handmaidens among our decision makers do not want us to frankly and honestly come to grips with the coming — actually ongoing — demise of the coal industry. They thrash about, viciously blaming President Obama and/or the US-EPA. As long as they can keep us distracted with their "war on coal" rhetoric, they can use fear to maintain the status quo — until the last mine shuts down

and workers are left holding the bag. This is their war — the war on coal miner families and their future.

What would be the responsible avenue? How should government act in the face of this decline? What are policy objectives at the state and federal level that would look toward a worthy future in southern West Virginia's coalfields?

Ignoring the change that all parties know is impending does no good for the miners and their families, who today depend on coal for their economic security. But the future is heading right at them. Trying to get miners to believe that all would be just fine if it weren't for the so-called war on coal is dishonest and unforgivable. It uses them as pawns for Big Coal.

The proper policy response is obvious — yet rejected by our governor and our Congressional delegation. Planning and investing for diverse future economic and occupational opportunities in the coalfields can and must be done — now. Waiting until the last dragline shuts down and the last paycheck is cashed is unconscionable.

Largest timber job of modern era at Coopers Rock planned for largest roadless area in state's most popular State Forest

WV DOF "Jumps Shark" at Coopers Rock

Adam Polinski, Coopers Rock Foundation

"Jumping the Shark" is a phrase originally used to describe "the moment in the evolution of a television show when it begins a decline in quality that is beyond recovery" (Wikipedia). Beyond the framework of television, the phrase indicates the point in the evolution of something when it moves so far beyond its original qualities that it is "beyond relevance or recovery." It seems that the WV Division of Forestry has done just that with its planning processes at Coopers Rock State Forest.

On January 19, 2006, the DOF issued its 10-year Resource Management Plan for Coopers Rock State Forest. There were plenty of issues with that plan. Some considered it biased toward some of the things listed in State Code with regard to how WV State Forests are to be managed, at the expense of other things listed in State Code. Regardless, at least there was a plan that went through the process of public comment, a public hearing, a Response to Comments, etc.

That plan was to have guided silvicultural activities within the section of Coopers Rock the DOF has jurisdiction over — the side south of I-68, plus just a few smaller sections north of there. The current timbering of 177 acres, between McCollum Campground and Raven Rock fits into that plan. So did the increase in size of two Wildlife Openings done in 2008, which amounted to a few dozen acres of timbering.

Also in that plan was a project that was to occur in a "No Man's Land" between Rt 73 and I-68, and between the truck brake check station and the overpass to Pisgah. The Plan says "... this area is well located to demonstrate forestry practices to the public. A parking area and interpretive signs could be placed to allow self guided tours with easy access from the interstate highway." Such a project in this site would have displaced absolutely no recreational activities, nor anything of historical or ecological importance. There are 47 acres, more or less, of state-owned land in that "No Man's Land," which is indeed well-situated for a demonstration forestry project.

But, apparently through their own loophole in their *Guidelines for Managing WV's Nine State Forests* that reads

"Amendments deemed necessary to meet the mission and goals of the State Forest Management Plan may be recommended by the Director of the Division of Forestry anytime during the 10-year interim subject to consultation from the advisory committee," the agency decided to make a few changes. And now a newly proposed project has virtually no resemblance whatsoever to the project described in the 10-year Management Plan. Further, it is hard to believe any advisory committee was ever consulted on this — we await proof.

On May 19, 2012, the DOF issued a new project plan and conducted a public tour about it. They (A) moved the project onto the south side of Coopers Rock, into the northeast section of the Scott Run watershed, the largest remaining roadless area within Coopers Rock State Forest (excluding the road network involved in the current timbering near McCollum Campground and Raven Rock). They (B) also increased it in size from 47 acres to 375 acres — **8 times the size of the original project!** They (C) also jettisoned the idea of demonstration forestry, a concept completely absent from the Objectives section of their new proposal.

Why did they move it? Ostensibly, it was because of a potential land swap involving those 47 acres and two inholdings in the northeast section of Coopers Rock within the University Forest Section totaling 111.38 acres and 43 acres, respectively. But this land swap is hardly imminent. The last time any meetings were held on the proposed swap were in Summer 2011. Nor has the state even surveyed their land in the "No Man's Land" anytime in recent history, a normal step when a land transaction is imminent. Because a land swap just might possibly happen one day, the DOF moved their project.

A land swap is conceivably a credible reason, but explains nothing about either converting it into the largest timber project for Coopers Rock of the modern era, **8 times the size of the project for which it is a substitute**, and twice the size of the current project (itself the biggest timbering project at Coopers Rock in a few decades), or jettisoning the demonstration forestry component of it, which actually defined

the original project.

What good is a 10-year Management Plan — *the closest thing the DOF has to a contract with the landowner* — when they don't even follow their own Plan? Why did we, the landowners of this public land, even bother to be involved with it back in 2005/6 if it means so little? This is the latest in a string of questionable management decisions that raise red flags about the credibility of the DOF's entire planning process. With this gigantic departure from their own Plan, the DOF has indeed "jumped the shark" at Coopers Rock.

Oh yeah, you might want to know something about the substance of this new proposal. It's the latest chapter in the Juggernaut of the DOF and the DNR Wildlife Resources Section hungrily desiring more and more Early Successional Forest — forest aged between 5 and 20 years old. It's the latest chapter in their desire to eradicate scores and scores of red maple so that more oaks can grow larger and produce more acorns.

It's all being done without objectively determined Riparian Buffer Zones, with no admittance that this specific project might be the first of many in this roadless area of Coopers Rock, and with the establishment of a new parking area off the beaten path. Said parking area looks like a perfect location for another Cheat Lake Backwaters lawless partying scene that we happily said goodbye to with the advent of Cheat Lake Park & Trail.

The juggernaut is chugging forward toward their happy day when 20 percent of the south side of Coopers Rock is composed of forest 5-20 years old (grouse like it), with a large network of gated service roads accessing the majority of the forest.

The fundamental underlying problem? The DOF categorizes 70 percent of the south side of Coopers Rock as "working, or commercial forest," with only 30 percent off-limits for silvicultural practices.

The solution? That proportion needs to be reversed.

The Fifty States

— Dan Soeder *Outings Chair*

Some folks have made it their life's mission to visit every state in the U.S. Often, they have specific goals, like to go stand on the highest or lowest point, cross each state in its widest or narrowest dimension, or perform some other task.

I knew a couple of guys in Ohio a few years ago who were determined to play a round of golf in every state. They dragged their clubs along and played the links, even finding a golf course that straddled the border between North and South Dakota, allowing them to play in two states at one stop. They recorded their adventures with web cams, and by the time they finished, they had a fair sized fan club cheering them on.

I never set out to visit all fifty states, but when I started collecting the state quarters a dozen years ago, I noticed how many states I had already visited over the course of my travels. I had done a swath through the middle of the country when I was in college and traveling out west for the summer. Work trips took me to Texas, Alabama, Colorado and several other states. I had stopped off in Hawaii for a day on a trip to Japan in the 1980s for a scientific conference. When I lived in Nevada, I got to most of the western states because I was out there. I decided to start planning my travels to get to them all. The only self-imposed rule was that I actually had to have placed my feet on the ground — flying over or driving through without stopping didn't count.

I plotted long detours in the Pacific Northwest to get into Idaho and Montana. I strategically drove around New England, entering state after state, and checking them off in my atlas, nearly missing making a stop in Rhode Island because it is so small. I stopped to get gas in Warwick, even though I could have easily made it to Massachusetts on what I had left.

I came back to West Virginia from Minnesota one summer via North Dakota, a

detour of hundreds of miles that accomplished nothing beyond a ten-minute stop in a rest area near Fargo, and another check mark in the atlas. North Dakota was number 49. The only one left is Alaska, and I'm going there this summer.

Anybody who does outdoor activities has thought about Alaska. It is the ultimate hiking, kayaking, mountaineering and backpacking destination. The place is so big, so wild, and so sparsely populated that it is the closest thing we have in the United States to pristine wilderness. My late brother went up there four times — by road, a four thousand-mile drive one way from his home in Cleveland.

I am meeting my daughter in Alaska, and I'm letting her plan all of our activities (this trip was her idea). I am sure we will be spending a lot of time outdoors. My middle child, Elizabeth, is the only one of my three children who seriously inherited my outdoors

genes. She loves to travel, and she is an accomplished hiker. Beth does massage therapy at upscale spas in resort areas, and currently lives on the island of Maui, in Hawaii. She moved there recently from Honolulu after spending several years at a resort spa in the U.S. Virgin Islands.

I do enjoy visiting this kid. When I saw her in Hawaii a few years ago, we went over to the Big Island for a few days and tramped around on the lava flows. Most of my time as a geologist is spent looking at 400 million year old rocks like Marcellus Shale, so getting up close with ropy, glassy, fresh lava flows was an amazing experience.

In Alaska, Beth and I plan to visit Denali and drive up to Fairbanks, where there are some hot springs she wants to check out. I'll let you know how visiting Number 50 went in the next edition of the newsletter.

See you outside!

OUTINGS LISTINGS

Sat, Jun 30

Evening Bike Ride, Morgantown WV

rated moderate — Join us for a bike ride along the Morgantown Waterfront. Length of bike ride will depend on the desires of the group, but expect a ride of about 10-15 miles. Bring along some water, don't forget your helmet, and make sure your tires are properly inflated. Meet at 6 PM at Ruby McQuain Park.

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

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Sat, Jul 7

Adopt-A-Trail Service at Coopers Rock

not rated — This will be the summer trail clean-up on our "adopted" Intermediate Cross Country Ski Trail at Cooper's Rock State Forest. Volunteers seeking community service are encouraged to participate. Much of the work will be cutting back vegetation, cleaning out and restoring drainage ditches/culverts and general trail clearing. The work is meant to be rewarding and at a pace to enjoy each other's company however, some moderate intensity work will be necessary, using shovels, rakes, pruners, and moving reasonably sized rocks. Volunteers should wear sturdy boots, and carry work gloves, water, snacks. Contact leader for more details.

Leader: Ann Devine-King, 304-594-2636, atdking@gmail.com

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: [www.coopersrockstateforest.com; http://coopersrock.org](http://www.coopersrockstateforest.com;http://coopersrock.org)

Sun, Jul 8

Great Allegheny Passage, MD/PA

rated moderate to strenuous — Bicycle this delightful and challenging rail-trail up the high Allegheny Front from Frostburg, MD to Meyersdale, PA and returning downhill for a round trip of about 30 miles. The packed-gravel trail is built along an old railroad grade, complete with spectacular views, viaducts and tunnels, including a cool 3300-foot under Big Savage Mountain. Mountain bike tires are helpful but not needed. Sierra Club requires that helmets be worn on all bicycle outings. Meet in Frostburg at noon in the trail parking area on New Hope Road. Heavy or steady rain cancels. Contact leader for details and directions.

Leader: Dan Soeder, 304-568-2164, Dan.Soeder@sierraclub.org

Nearest town: Frostburg, MD

Web info: www.atatrail.org/index.cfm

Sat, Jul 14

Coopers Rock Hike

rated easy to moderate — We'll do an out-and-back hike of about 6 miles along the "Goodspeed Highway Trail", on the Chestnut Ridge Park side of the forest. Contact leader for information on parking. Meet at 9:00 AM.

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

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: [www.coopersrockstateforest.com; http://coopersrock.org/](http://www.coopersrockstateforest.com;http://coopersrock.org/)

Sun, Jul 15

Service / Trail Work at Valley Falls SP

not rated — Volunteers seeking community service are encouraged to participate. Much of the work will be clearing fallen tree limbs and adding blazes to existing trails. This park has some of the most beautiful and worst-marked trails in the state. The superintendent has all the supplies needed to blaze trails, but has not had the staff time available to get it done. This is a place where a day or two of effort by Sierra Club members can make a huge, positive difference to a cash-strapped state agency by improving the safety of trails for all hikers. Volunteers should wear sturdy boots, and carry work gloves, water, snacks. Adults and adolescents are invited and those under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or a legal guardian. Volunteers will be required to sign a standard Sierra Club Liability Waiver and a DNR Volunteer Work Program Agreement. Please pre-register with the leader.

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

Co-Leader: Dan Soeder, 304-568-2164, Dan.Soeder@sierraclub.org

Nearest town: Fairmont, WV

Web info: www.valleyfallsstatepark.com

Sun, Jul 22

Spruce Knob/Seneca Creek Backcountry

rated moderate — Escape the summer heat with a scenic 9 mile loop hike atop the tallest mountain in West Virginia. The hike will start at the Seneca Creek Trailhead, walk up the road to the Lumberjack Trail near the crest of Spruce Knob, follow the Lumberjack to the Huckleberry Trail, and loop down to the Seneca Creek Trail and return. Lumberjack and Seneca Creek trails are fairly level and easy trails; the Huckleberry section has a moderately steep downhill grade with rocky areas. Hike is okay for beginners. Rain gear, lunch

and water, and sturdy footwear are necessary. Camping is available nearby at Spruce Knob Lake. Step off at 10 AM. Please pre-register with the leader.

Leader: Dan Soeder, 304-568-2164, Dan.Soeder@sierraclub.org

Nearest town: Whitmer, WV

Web info: Search Google for Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks to get Forest Service websites.

Sat, Jul 28

Service / Trail Work at Valley Falls SP

not rated — See July 15 write-up for details. Please pre-register with the leader.

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

Co-Leader: Dan Soeder, 304-568-2164, Dan.Soeder@sierraclub.org

Nearest town: Fairmont, WV

Web info: www.valleyfallsstatepark.com

Sat, Jul 28

Washington Monument State Park, MD

rated moderate — Hike from the Appalachian Trail parking lot on route 40 along the AT up to the monument at Washington Monument State Park. This is a 6 mile hike out and back with just one short, steep section. This is a good summer hike because the trail is well shaded. There is a great view at the monument and the wild raspberries may be ripe as an added bonus. Meet at 9:30 AM; pre-register with leader.

Leader: Pam Peitz, 240-818-6554, pampeitz@comcast.net

Nearest town: Boonsboro, MD

Web info: www.dnr.state.md.us/publiclands/western/washington.asp

Sat, Aug 4

Blueberry Hike in Dolly Sods Wilderness

rated easy — Family and pet friendly activity. This will be a 4-mile hike in Dolly Sods at a very leisurely pace to allow for wild blueberry and huckleberry picking. The meeting place will be just off Freeland Rd. in Canaan Valley and we will caravan up to the parking area nearest the wilderness area. The hike begins at the trailhead in the Canaan Institute at 9 AM. There is no shade in Dolly Sods or protection from rain, so be prepared for both. Bring sun protection, water, rain gear, snacks and a container for your berries. Group size is limited - please pre-register with the leader.

Leader: Dan Soeder, 304-568-2164, Dan.Soeder@sierraclub.org

Nearest town: Davis, WV

Web info: www.patc.us/hiking/destinations/dolysods.html

Sat, Aug 11

Coopers Rock Hike

rated moderate — Join us for an out-and-back hike along the "Raven Rock Trail" at Coopers Rock. This is a short hike of about 3.5 miles with some moderately steep sections. Beautiful view of the Cheat River Canyon will await us at the end of the Raven Rock Trail. Bring your camera, as there are some great photographic opportunities. Contact leader for information on parking. Meet at 9:00 AM.

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

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: [www.coopersrockstateforest.com; http://coopersrock.org](http://www.coopersrockstateforest.com;http://coopersrock.org)

Sat, Aug 18

Kumbrabow State Forest Day Hike

(with optional overnight)

rated moderate — West Virginia's highest state forest is memorable for rustic log cabins built by the CCC and Mill Creek with its native brook trout, waterfalls, and swimming holes. Saturday's moderate intensity hike will link Kumbrabow trails and fire trails for a distance of 6-8 miles. Crossing Mill Creek will require water shoes. Recent logging may be evident. Rustic camp sites along Mill Creek are available for those who want to stay over Friday or Saturday nights. There are opportunities

Please contact the Editor for submission guidelines or advertising rates.

Contributions to the newsletter may be sent to the Editor at

celliot2@comcast.net

414 Tyrone Avery Rd.

Morgantown, WV 26508

**Deadline for
Sept/Oct issue
August 9**

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.

More Outings — Summer / Autumn

for fly fishing, swimming and relaxing. Contact leader for details and meeting place.

Leader: Ann Devine-King, 304-594-2636, atdk@gmail.com

Nearest town: Huttonsville, WV (Kumbrabow is 24 miles south of Elkins)

Web info: www.kumbrabow.com; www.wvparks.com/kumbrabow; 304-335-2219

Sun, Aug 19

Allegheny Highlands Trail

rated moderate — Join us for a bike ride on the Allegheny Highlands Trail through Parsons and onward toward Elkins for a circuit of about 20 miles. This rail-trail is paved through town with stretches of well-packed dirt beyond. Mountain bike tires are helpful but not required. Meet at the Hendricks, WV parking area at noon — show and go. Contact leader for directions or questions. Bring water and snack. Potential to refill water jugs at natural spring outside of Parsons. Sierra Club requires that helmets be worn on all bicycle outings. Heavy or steady rain cancels.

Leader: Dan Soeder, 304-568-2164, Dan.Soeder@sierraclub.org

Nearest town: Parsons, WV

Web info: www.highlandstrail.org/trailmap.html

Sun, Sep 2

Endless Wall Trail, New River Gorge

rated easy to moderate — Family and pet friendly activity. Hike along the edge of West Virginia's most spectacular canyon. Meet at the National Park Service Canyon Rim visitor center on Route 19 near Fayetteville, on the north end of the famous bridge pictured on the back of the WV state quarter. Children must be accompanied by a responsible adult. Pets must be well-behaved and on a leash (children must also be well behaved, but a leash is optional). Step off at noon for a 3.5 mile circuit hike. Heavy or steady rain cancels. Please pre-register with the leader.

Leader: Dan Soeder, 304-568-2164, Dan.Soeder@sierraclub.org

Nearest town: Fayetteville, WV

Web info: www.midatlantichikes.com/id191.html

Sat, Sep 8

Dolly Sods North Day Hike

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 8 miles over moderate grades at a leisurely pace. There will be 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. Contact leader to pre-register; size of hiking parties entering wilderness areas are limited.

Leader: Jim Sconyers, 304-698-9628, jim_scon@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Harman, WV

Web info: www.patc.us/hiking/destinations/dolysods.html

Sat, Sep 15

Coopers Rock Circuit Hike

rated strenuous — This challenging hike will loop through about 13 miles of forest. Starting at the Overlook Area, we'll hike down to Cheat Lake, and then back up by looping out to the front gate, and returning to the Overlook Area. The trail is very steep in places, rocky and uneven. This hike is for EXPERIENCED hikers only, will take 5-6 hours to complete, and is not recommended for beginners. Participants should carry plenty of water and snacks, wear proper footwear, and trekking poles are highly recommended. Contact leader for information on parking. Meet at 9:00 AM.

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

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: www.coopersrockstateforest.com/http://coopersrock.org

Sat-Sun, Sep 29-30

Sierra Fest at Canaan Valley Park

not rated — Join us for the annual Sierra Club West Virginia Chapter gathering at Sierra Fest.

This year, it will be held in the Allegheny Mountains at Canaan Valley. Some outdoor-related activities will be part of Sierra Fest, including a Sierra Club Outings Leader 101 training class to fulfill partial requirements to become a Sierra Club outings leader. Outings suggested or being planned for this event include the 7-8 mile hike from Blackwater Falls to Canaan Valley, which is reportedly easy and takes 3-4 hours, and other trails around Canaan, Blackwater and Dolly Sods for hiking and bike riding. Save the date, and stay tuned for more details.

Leaders: Dan Soeder, 304-568-2164,

Dan.Soeder@sierraclub.org;

Aaron Vedock, 540-805-0019,

amvedock@hotmail.com;

Brent Carminati, 304-567-2865,

brentcar1@frontiernet.net;

Gwen Jones, gwenjones23@yahoo.com

Nearest town: Davis, WV

Web info: <http://canaanresort.com>

Sun, Oct 7

Snake Hill Wildlife Management Area

rated moderate — Acquired in 1996 by the State of WV, the SNWMA is across the Cheat River Gorge from Coopers Rock State Forest. This 6-8 mile loop trail hike with moderate elevation changes will connect with several scenic views including Table Rock and Cheat View and also several lesser known views along Snake Hill's canyon rim. We'll be following established and semi-established trails, some gas well roads and some "paths" that will lead us across streams, along rock outcroppings and through hardwood forests. Overall, this is a moderately challenging, exploratory hike with rewarding, little known views of the Cheat River Gorge. Please pre-register with the leader.

Leader: Ann Devine-King, 304-594-2636



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

atdking@gmail.com

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: www.coopersrockstateforest.com; www.coopersrock.org

Sat, Oct 13

Mon River Rail-Trail Bike Ride

rated moderate — Join us for a relatively level, scenic bike ride along the Morgantown Waterfront. Most of the trail is paved; unpaved portions are fine, packed gravel suitable for street tires. Length of bike ride will depend on the desires of the group, but expect a ride of about 15-20 miles. Sierra Club requires that helmets be worn on all bicycle outings. Bring along some water, and make sure your tires are properly inflated. Show and go - meet at 10 AM at Ruby-McQuain Park in Morgantown. Contact the leader for questions or directions.

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

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: www.montrails.org

Sat, Nov 3

Adopt-a-Trail Service at Coopers Rock

not rated — The WV Sierra Club will be leading trail maintenance on Coopers Rock Intermediate Cross Country Ski Trail. Rated easy hiking and easy to moderate work intensity, the fall clean-up emphasizes clearing the fallen leaves, drainage restoration and trail clearing. Trail length is .6 miles and total hiking length is a 1.25 mile loop. Volunteers should wear sturdy boots, and carry work gloves, water, snacks. Adults and adolescents are invited to help and those under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or a legal guardian. Volunteers will be required to sign a standard Sierra Club Liability Waiver and a DNR Volunteer Work Program Agreement. Please pre-register with the leader.

Leader: Ann Devine-King, 304-594-2636, atdking@gmail.com

Nearest town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: www.coopersrockstateforest.com; www.coopersrock.org

Sat Nov 10

Valley Falls State Park Day Hike

rated moderate — Join us for a moderate hike at Valley Falls State Park. We will do an out-and-back hike on the Rhododendron Trail to see the "Hidden" waterfall at the end of the trail. This is a short hike of about 4 miles, with some steep sections. Bring your camera, as there are some great photographic opportunities. Sturdy foot-wear, water and snacks are necessary; trekking poles can be helpful. Show and go: meet at 9AM at the main parking lot, near the water falls. Contact the leader for directions or questions.

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

Nearest town: Fairmont, WV

Web info: www.valleyfallsstatepark.com

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

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1-888-438-2731
email: governor@wvgov.org

To Contact STATE LEGISLATORS

email to WV Legislature:
cglagola@mail.wvnet.edu
(Put name of recipient under subject)

Messages for legislators can be left at:
1-877-565-3447 or 304-347-4836

Mail address:
Member, WV Senate or
House of Delegates
Bldg 1
State Capitol Complex
Charleston, WV 25305

[website: www.legis.state.wv.us](http://www.legis.state.wv.us)
has contact information for all state
legislators



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

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

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