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Birthplace of Rivers National Monument

Why the southern Monongahela National Forest deserves permanent protection

Mike Costello, Executive Director
WV Wilderness Coalition

The southern Monongahela National Forest, in particular the area in and around the Cranberry Wilderness, is undeniably special. This unique area contains features such as Cranberry Glades, Falls of Hills Creek, Honeycomb Rocks, the former Mill Point Federal Prison, not to mention opportunities for extensive backcountry recreational experiences. These natural and historic treasures, along with the headwaters or tributaries of the Cranberry, Cherry, Gauley, Williams, Elk and Greenbrier Rivers, is what makes this land a strong candidate to become West Virginia's only national monument. Throw in strong support from area business owners, religious groups, sportsmen, mountain bikers, various local leaders and several prominent conservation groups, and the initiative to protect one of the Mountain State's most iconic landscapes is poised for success.

What is a National Monument?

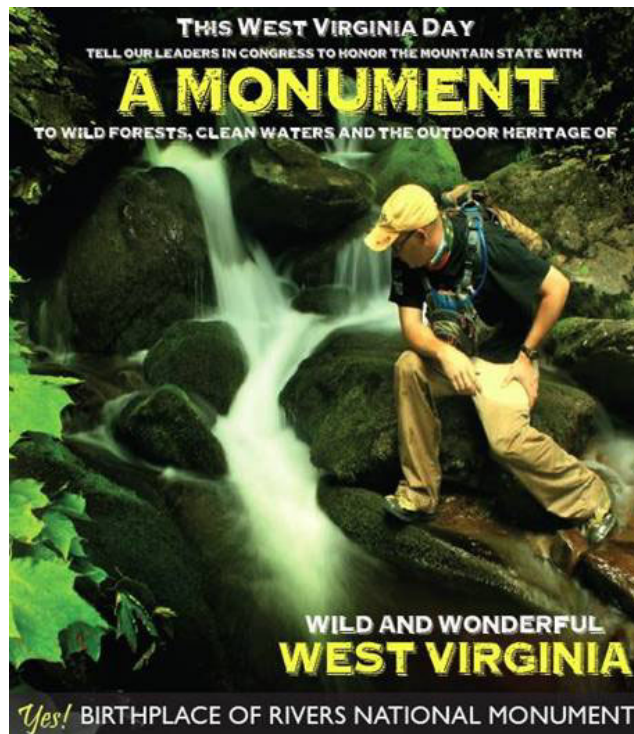
National monuments are special designations which aim to preserve federal public lands that possess special features of historic, ecological, geologic or cultural significance. Monuments are managed by the Forest Service, Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management. There are currently more than 100 national monuments, ranging from small historic sites to multi-million acre tracts of wild lands in the West.

National Monuments may be established either by an act of Congress or by presidential proclamation. Most importantly, national monument designation is statutory, meaning the landscape is permanently safeguarded against future administrative actions, which could open these special resources up to industrial development or other activities and could compromise the way they are enjoyed in the future.

The Threats

Like all National Forests, the Monongahela — or the "Mon," as many of us know it — is managed to emphasize multiple uses. Some of these uses include backcountry recreation and restoration of resources, such as the historic red spruce ecosystem, uses currently emphasized on nearly all lands considered for monument designation. Other uses, however, include commercial logging and mineral development, such as gas drilling of federally owned minerals.

Perhaps the greatest threats to public lands, however, are those we cannot predict: decisions made by future administrations. Since 2010, certain members of Congress



have launched an attack on America's treasured public lands through repeated attempts to strip protections for roadless areas, such as Tea Creek or Turkey Mountain. Currently pending bills would eliminate environmental review for development projects on public lands, and at least one recent presidential candidate pledged to double gas drilling on public lands, if he had been elected. For better or worse, each change in federal administration means a shift in priorities for managing federal public lands. Put simply, the futures of the Mon's special wild places are far from certain without a statutory designation such as national monument in place. A national monument would identify resources for permanent protection, such as the backcountry trails, high-elevation spruce forests and extensive native brook trout streams the area contains, keeping those features intact for the enjoyment of future generations.

National monument designation would withdraw federally owned minerals from exploration and development, and could prioritize the acquisition of private minerals from willing sellers within the monument. Commercial logging

would be prohibited in Wilderness and special backcountry areas, just as it is today. Areas managed to promote restoration of the red spruce ecosystem would continue to emphasize this important management objective, enhancing the viability and overall resilience of the landscape and its special resources.

The Opportunity

West Virginians from all backgrounds have come together to define a vision for the Birthplace of Rivers National Monument. Establishment of the monument would keep the area under the management of the Forest Service and would result in few, if any, changes to the landscape itself. Birthplace of Rivers would be the first USFS-managed monument in the East and would place an emphasis on protecting the natural and cultural resources that have made our connection to this land as strong as it is today. At a time when our public lands are under attack, the Mountain State's leaders in Washington have an incredible opportunity to honor West Virginia's scenic beauty and outdoor heritage by supporting protections for the Mon under national monument designation.

Take Action!

Congressional leaders in the Mountain State need to hear from West Virginians who want to ensure protection of the Birthplace of Rivers for future generations! Take a quick moment to call our U.S. Senators, tell them why the southern Mon is important to you and ask them to support the Birthplace of Rivers National Monument.

Senator Jay Rockefeller

(304) 347-5372

Senator Joe Manchin

(304) 342-5855

For an excellent editorial in support of national monument status for the "Birthplace of Rivers" see the **August 7, 2013**, issue of the *Clarksburg Exponent-Telegram*

www.exponent-telegram.com/opinion/editorials/



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

MARCELLUS CAMPAIGN NEEDS VOLUNTEERS TO HELP GATHER DATA

Our new **3-Ring Binder** project is off the ground, but there is still work to do.

People removed from the fracking phenomenon have no idea of the range of problems that come with it — inadequate setbacks from residential property, excessive spills, unethical actions from landmen pressuring owners to sign drilling leases, unresponsiveness or misbehavior of inspectors, threats and intimidation by drillers, lack of sediment/erosion control, poor waste management, open pits/ponds, unidentified hazardous waste, problems with underground injection control (UIC), noise, fumes, contaminated wells, trucks, accidents, explosions ... and the list goes on.

To gather the necessary documentation illustrating these problems, we must do some research. Many people have suffered serious impacts, but their stories are frequently written off as emotional exaggerations. So we need to get the facts — dates and times, documents from the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), pictures, media coverage, whatever it takes.

The finished product will serve to illuminate and broadcast the many personal hardships that West Virginians have had to deal with since the advent of industrial-scale gas drilling in the state.

If you have been adversely affected by Marcellus drilling and would consider being part of this project, please request our Gas Drilling Incident Survey Form so you can detail the problems you've experienced.

Additionally, we are asking for volunteers to work on reviewing these survey submissions and verifying reports. Ideally, these volunteers would have some experience with desktop publishing, video shooting and editing, or webpage design, but there will be ample opportunities for anyone willing to work on documentation and verification.

Some of the work can be done at home on a computer or by phone; some of it may involve a site visit, landowner interview, or trip to the DEP in Charleston.

The eventual result will be the **3-Ring Binder**, an eye-opening collection of thoroughly documented examples of how and why our current laws and regulations are not protecting us — not our land, our air, our water, or our health. It will be a tool we can take to our representatives, the media, or our doubting neighbors to make our case.

Here is your chance to make a difference. Even if you can only check out one part of one story, it will be a valid (and valuable) contribution.

If you are interested in helping, please provide your name, address, email, and phone number(s) to our outreach coordinator, at outreach@marcellus-wv.com or 1-877-252-0257. We will get back to you to find out what types of things you are interested in and able to do. Together we can make a difference.

HELP WANTED

Nominations for Executive Committee (ExCom)

Both the Chapter and the Monongahela Group are looking for a few good folks to be leaders and decision-makers for their respective groups. The Chapter needs four candidates on the ballot to fill two expiring terms; the Mon Group needs five candidates for three expiring terms. Ballots must be mailed in December, so **nominations are needed by Nov 1**.

Chapter ExCom members must keep abreast of various conservation issues, attend four meetings around the state each year, and participate in occasional conference calls and email threads to make decisions for the Chapter.

To nominate yourself, someone else, or to get more details about what the position entails, please contact Nominating Committee Chair, Sally Wilts: sallywilts@yahoo.com.

Membership Chair

This position has been vacant for several months. Someone with an outgoing personality, internet access, a smidgeon of tech savvy, and an extra 4-8 hours per month would be ideal. We need a membership chair who can ensure that new members are properly welcomed and informed of activities and events in their areas, and who can work with the national member database (training provided). An ambitious chair could even recruit a committee and develop innovative membership recruitment strategies.

If interested, please contact Jim Sconyers at jimscon@gmail.com.

Toxics Headed to Masontown?

Carol Nix

What happens when toxic frack fluid is injected deep underground? Well, the real answer is that nobody knows. As fracking operations proliferate and turn bucolic West Virginia hamlets into industrial zones, the problem of what to do with the toxic brew that is "produced" grows more urgent. One company is proposing to use an old gas well in the middle of little Masontown, WV, as an injection site. West Virginia Sierra Club and Friends of Deckers Creek are opposing this operation.

Fracking creates tremendous waste, and politicians seldom talk about this — it's all about the "prosperity" and "jobs." Ohio has seen a huge increase in the number of injection wells, but public outrage there has led the industry to put places like tiny Masontown in its crosshairs.

According to an article in *Scientific American*, June 21, 2012, "Leaking injection wells may pose a risk — and the science has not kept pace with the growing glut of wastewater. Once waste is underground, there are few ways to track how far it goes, how quickly or where it winds up. There is plenty of theory, but little data to prove the system works." The article continues, "Until recently, scientists and

environmental officials have assumed that deep layers of rock beneath the earth would safely entomb the waste for millennia ... there are growing signs they were mistaken."

Scientific American quoted Mario Salazar, an engineer with 25 years experience in the EPA's underground injection program in Washington: "In 10 to 100 years we are going to find out that most of our groundwater is polluted, a lot of people are going to get sick, and a lot of people may die." Stefan Finsterle, a hydrogeologist at Lawrence Berkeley National Lab who specializes in understanding rock layers and modeling how fluid flows through them said, "There is no certainty at all in any of this, and whoever tells you the opposite is not telling you the truth — you have changed the system with pressure and temperature and fracturing, so you don't know how it will behave."

There are hundreds of documented cases of wastewater migration in the U.S. and Canada; will we let Masontown be the next statistic? Masontown is underlain with a honeycomb of old coal mines and riddled with gaswells, the locations of which may or may not be recorded. Fluid migration through abandoned gas wells and failed casings has resulted in contaminated aquifers, as any quick

internet search will reveal. Of course, they'll say it can't happen here.

"Over the past 20 years the City of Morgantown, Monongalia and Preston Counties, the State of West Virginia, the Federal government and numerous other funding groups have invested over 8 million dollars in the restoration of the Deckers Creek watershed, with the majority of those funds coming from taxpayers. The subject Class II injection well will jeopardize the intent of this investment," says Liz Wiles, executive director, Friends of Deckers Creek. The proposed well is adjacent to Deckers Creek, and trucks hauling frackwater will have to cross a well-used rail-trail to access the site.

The West Virginia Sierra Club supports the efforts of the Friends of Deckers Creek to inform the public and rally opposition to the proposed well.

To stay abreast of planned events on this issue or to offer your help in the fight, contact the Friends of Deckers Creek:

Office: 304-292-3970
Email: liz@deckerscreek.org
Website: www.deckerscreek.org
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-of-Deckers-Creek/155850824453758>

Chapter Website moves to New Platform, Gets New Look

Paul Wilson

Sometime last year, national Sierra Club decided to move its web content to the open-source web software, Drupal. The Club has since moved its Activist Network webpages, as well as other content, over to Drupal.

The West Virginia website began construction in late 2003 using the content management software, Atomz Publish. The Club subscribed to this software and provided it to a number of chapters without their own websites or which were running into financial problems with their current web platforms. The web staff set up the templates and the Chapters provided content.

This has worked well for us for the past 10 years, even though we did have to put up with some quirks in the Publish software, such as a less than adequate homepage layout. And Publish was sold or bought out, first by Omniture, then most recently by Adobe Digital, which affected subscription costs and availability. So the Club decided to move to an open-source software that is more flexible to the end-users and has a relatively painless learning curve. That software is Drupal.

Since your webmaster is a Drupal idiot, and my time was fairly limited this year, our Computer Committee Chair Jonathan Rosenbaum recruited Mark Branciaroli to help us, as Mark is experienced with Drupal and builds websites for a living.

Mark migrated over the content from the old Publish website with the aid of the Club's web staff Jason Berry. The web address remains the same, but the

old version of the site is invisible to the user. We still have content to load, updates to make, and some administrative tasks and responsibilities to identify and assign. Please be patient during this updating process.

One of the best benefits of Drupal is that we can assign access to add or change content for specific webpages by assigning passwords and content rights to other Chapter leaders and activists. For example, Outings Leaders will be able to add their own outings and the Chapter Outings Chair can approve the outing via his editorial rights, which will post the new outing to the Chapter website. And updates, or cancellations, of outings can be done by the Outing Leaders. In this case, the benefit of Drupal would be the immediate access to outing listings to update the content without having to wait for the Chapter webmaster to do it.

So, do check out the new website, westvirginia.sierraclub.org, and bookmark it in your web browser.

If you wish to have access or provide content, please contact Paul or Mark. In the meantime, if you know as little about Drupal as I do, check out various books on the subject at your local bookstore or online. My personal favorite is ***Drupal for Dummies (2nd edition)***. Its a brave new world out there!

Paul Wilson, pjgrunt@gmail.com
Mark Branciaroli, mark@markandbonnie.com

Marcellus Academy Photo Essay



Left: Gene Smith addresses dozens of attendees.

Below: John Detwiler & Gloria Forouzan of Marcellus Protest in Pittsburgh speak on creating a communication network between community action groups via social media.

Right: Ben Stout, professor of biology at Wheeling Jesuit University, speaks on the proposed Wheeling wastewater facility.



Left: Gene Smith, DEP Assistant Chief of Permitting



Above: Pam Dodds, a registered professional geologist with a PhD in Marine Geology and specializing in hydrogeology, speaks on planning for watershed protection.

Photo Essay by Chuck Wyrastok Marcellus Academy 2013 July 13-14 at WV Wesleyan College in Buckhannon, WV



Above left: Former state senator Charlotte Pritt and Delegate Mike Manypenny talk about the WV Legislature.

Above right: Mike McCawley, School of Public Health at WVU, in charge of measuring air pollution effects from Marcellus for a DEP study due in July, Chair & Associate Research Professor, Department of Occupational & Environmental Health Sciences.



Above: A rapt audience listens attentively.

Left: Alan Collins, Professor and Assistant Director for the Division of Resource Management at WVU, speaks on Split Estates and Surface Owner Perceptions of Shale Gas Drilling.



Letter to a Young “Cole” Miner

I've been thinking about the changes happening in the West Virginia coalfields. I worry about young miners who may be feeling uneasy about their and their families' futures. And I'm reminded of my days as a classroom teacher in West Virginia. These thoughts prompted me to imagine a letter to a young West Virginia coal miner — I'll call him Cole.

Dear Cole,

When I was a high school teacher in West Virginia in the 1980s, I often faded into the background during morning homeroom, nothing happening as we marked time for a few minutes. The students would chat as if I weren't there.

One subject I heard was boys' futures. A common theme went something like this: “I'm not worried. I'm just putting in time here. I have to go to school, but I'm basically blowing it off. You know why? Because when I get out of here I can go into the mines. My daddy, and his daddy, were coal miners, and I'll be one too. I'll sit in the back of the classroom and ignore the teachers. I won't make trouble as long as I'm left alone.”

These fellows had it all figured out. School was an unavoidable waste of time. They would leave school one day and go right into the coal mines. They were basically untouched by the school experience.

Were you one of these guys, Cole?

The problem is, things change. The assumption that anybody could walk out of high school and into a coal mining job became unfounded quite a while ago.

Coal production in West Virginia is declining. That's happening for many reasons. But it is declining, and all the experts tell us that is going to continue.

What's a coal miner to do? After all, you have a family, and bills to pay. Seems like there are several possibilities. A lot of folks bury their heads in the sand. Pretend that it's not happening. Ignore it and it'll go away. Problem is, it doesn't go away; and when the

pink slip comes, they're totally unprepared. Others rant and rave, trying to find someone or something to pin the blame on, someone who caused this to happen. “If it just weren't for Mr. X or the Z Corporation this wouldn't be happening.” But the handwriting is on the wall, and it isn't going to change because of a lot of outraged screaming and shouting.

Where does that leave you? You might be one of the lucky ones. After all, coal mining is declining, but it will continue, just on a reduced scale. But a good many miners are going to be let go. So what's a guy to do?

You know, I'm sure, that there will be other jobs. It won't do any good to dig in your heels and refuse to face the changes happening. Yes, you thought coal mining jobs were forever, but for many folks it just isn't working out that way.

I know advice isn't always welcome, but if I were giving it, here's what I might say. Prepare. Study the facts about jobs for the future. Take advantage of opportunities to train in a new field, one with a bright economic future. Don't wait for the axe to fall. Maybe you'll resent the necessity of doing that, because you've been perfectly happy as a miner, and you assumed that would be for always. But it isn't for always for a good many coal miners.

Many political “leaders” and coal company bosses want folks like you to stay angry and afraid. It serves their interests. We see the results: These “leaders” have neglected their responsibility to the people. They should be taking action to assess the changes that are in the wind. To help miners prepare for the real future. And to bring economic diversity to the coalfields. They have refused to do this. That's why you yourself have to be proactive. Do what you can to create your own future — and it can be a good one.

Good luck to you.

In Suspect Terrain

by John McPhee

Richard Mier, Martinsburg

The words are new and unless you are a geologist, you'll need your personal handheld device, maybe even a dictionary. Included are wonderful words like kettle moraine, till, monticle, erratic, drumlin, and kame. John McPhee puts them together well in this classic geological travelogue along I-80, from the Delaware Water Gap, over these old Appalachian Mountains, and on to the Indiana Dunes. It is mostly in the form of a long and interesting conversation, between McPhee and Anita Harris, a lively and well-recognized geologist. And it's all about our very own spot on this Earth, the eastern mountains.

McPhee, even 30 years ago when the book was first written, had a reputation as one of our best nonfiction writers. This book was one of five he wrote about the geology of North America along the 40th parallel, eventually revised and assembled as *Annals of the Former World*, for which he won the Pulitzer Prize for nonfiction in 1999. He continues to write regularly for the *New Yorker*, as well as to teach writing at Princeton.

It's a classic book about the natural world: conversational and hard to put down. There are short but interesting excursions into the history of petroleum in Pennsylvania, the formation of coal, the use of asphalt in ancient times, and the process of how crazy theories become scientific dogma. There are no chapter headings. It is the geology “un-textbook.”

Anita Harris, who plays Sherlock Holmes to McPhee's Dr. Watson, is entertaining and quotable: “In glacial country, all you have to do is look for cemeteries if you want to find the moraine.” At the time, 1983, she thought plate tectonics a bit of an “oversimplification.” The orogeny—how mountains form—of the Appalachians, now described in terms of colliding land masses, was less clear then. Also, though the history is presented of how important glaciers were in sculpting our environment, there is, of course, nothing about global warming and the loss of ice caps.

There is, however, wonderful writing: “Rivers come and go. They are younger by far than the rock on which they run. They wander all over their valleys and sometimes jump out. They reverse themselves and occasionally disappear—their behavior differentiated by textures in the solid earth below.”

Letter to the Editor

Pear Energy sells electricity produced from the wind and sun

I paid my electric bill last month and actually felt good about it— how weird is that? I paid 2 cents more per kWh but my electrons came from wind and sun, right through my ordinary service wires. My new provider, Pear Energy, allows customers to purchase clean energy using “renewable energy certificates,” regardless of whether the local utility offers a renewables option or not (mine doesn't). Sort of crowd-sourcing wind and sun, and it's amazing how comforting it feels to be part of that.

Their website, www.pear-energy.com, displays the logos of the Better Business Bureau, Green Business Bureau, and Green Building Council, so I'm assuming it's legit (anyone who knows differently please let me know). I made one phone call (877-969-7327), no one came to my house, and I got a bill about a month later that was easy to understand but a little higher than usual. I'll have to think up some way to conserve a little extra to make up for that 2-cents/kWh. MonPower still maintains my lines and reads the meter, as always.

I thought Sierra Club members might want to know that they have this option right here in West Virginia, and it's easy and stress-free. But it's the feeling of actually contributing to a cleaner future that's worth every extra cent.

Check it out!

Carol Nix

Ed.'s Note: There are a number of other companies who sell renewable energy certificates (RECs). A list of some of them may be found on the U.S. Department of Energy's website: apps3.eere.energy.gov/greenpower/markets/certificates.shtml?page=1

Beech Ridge Wind May Install “Energy Storage Device”

Frank Young

Beech Ridge Energy, a division of Chicago-based Invenery Corporation, operates a 67-turbine wind energy generation facility (aka “wind farm”) in Greenbrier and Nicholas counties in southeastern West Virginia.

This facility has been controversial since its inception in 2005 and is currently operating under restricted daily and seasonal schedules, pending development of an acceptable Habitat Conservation Plan and the issuance of an Incidental Take Permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Recently Beech Ridge gave notice to the WV Public Service Commission (PSC) of its intent to file “an Application for a Waiver of Requirement of Modification or Amendment of its Siting Certificate, or in the Alternative, Petition for a Modification of a Siting

Certificate” granted by the Commission in August 2006.

The modification would be the construction of an “energy storage device,” according to Beech Ridge's pre-filing notice to the WV PSC. The notice says, “**The purpose of the Application will be to seek waiver of approval of a modification of Beech Ridge Energy LLC's existing siting certificate in order to construct an energy storage device (the “ESD”) within the footprint of said certificate, or to request an amendment or modification of the same.**”

Laurel Mountain Wind operates a lithium ion battery array at its wind generation facility near Elkins. When the battery array was installed at Laurel Mountain, some of us presumed that it would be used to store wind power generated on the site in order to “even

out” the wind facility's output over the course of windy days vis-à-vis not so windy days. But there are reports that it is being used instead to buy and store power from the multi-state PJM power grid at “off peak” hours, when rates are comparatively low, and then to sell it back onto the grid at “peak” demand hours, when the price is high, and/or during periods of low wind turbine output.

We will be asking whether Beech Ridge intends to operate in a similar manner. A formal filing will be made “no less than 30 days from [August 2, 2013],” according to the pre-filing notice. Stay tuned for more updates as this process unfolds.

Chapter Leaders Retreat to Camp Horseshoe to Get Reinvigorated



Bill Csutoros blends in nicely with his surroundings at Camp Horseshoe in Tucker County. He spent an early-August weekend finding out more about what makes the WV Chapter tick.

photo and profile by Candice Elliott

MEMBER PROFILE: Bill Csutoros

Intrigued by Jim Sconyers' email invitation to the August Leadership Retreat at Camp Horseshoe, Bill Csutoros RSVP'd that he would like to attend. He thought it would be a good opportunity to become more informed about what the local Sierra Club did and how its leadership operated.

A McDowell County native, Bill worked as an underground coalminer for much of his career and later traveled the region on construction jobs. As an outdoor enthusiast and nature lover, he joined the Sierra Club in the early 1980s, largely due to the disastrous environmental policies touted by then Secretary of the Interior, James Watt. Bill was a member in the early days and remembers when the West Virginia Group of the Potomac Chapter was first organizing to form our own state Chapter.

Now retired and living in Lost Creek, WV, Bill loves to go dancing and helps out with his local Literacy Volunteers. Though he would like to be more involved with the Chapter's activities, his distance from the Chapter's main social centers as well as various time conflicts make him reluctant to take on any major Club leadership roles at this time. Nevertheless, he says he learned a lot at the Retreat and would not be averse to helping out with some of our efforts when he can.

It was a pleasure to meet and get to know Bill better at the Leadership Retreat. It's nice for some of us "long-timers" to see new faces once in awhile. It would be great if more of our members followed Bill's example and came out to see what we are all about.

Memes, ELGs, SSMs — two dozen participants learned about these terms and more at the Chapter's Leadership Retreat at Camp Horseshoe in Tucker County over the Aug 2-4 weekend. Many long-time members recalled staying at primitive cabins three years ago for chapter Gala events, but we were treated to modern accommodations with all the conveniences of home, including wireless internet.

The composition of the group varied over the course of the weekend, but everyone contributed ideas and stories as we attended workshops, watched environmental films, socialized, and applauded five of our volunteers who were honored with Outstanding Service Awards.

Award Recipients

Our chapter is among a handful that do not have paid staff, yet we won three national awards last year and Chapter Chair **Jim Sconyers** will be honored this September in San Francisco with a Special Service Award for his strong and consistent commitment to conservation and the Club over an extended period of time.

The Chapter Awards committee felt Jim also deserved a more local show of appreciation and presented him with one of the engraved ceramic plates we have commissioned for our Chapter awards over the last few years.

Jonathan Rosenbaum was honored for his service to the Executive Committee and his work on both our chapter website and the Marcellus-WV website that he maintains for us. He continues to serve as Transportation Chair.

Chuck Wyrostok is an independent contractor who has served as our outreach coordinator for the Marcellus Campaign for the past three years. He was honored for the excellent work that he has done and his continued commitment to our goals.

Frank Young has been an environmental activist for three decades and was honored for his work with the WV Environmental Council as well as with our ExCom.

George Monk and his wife **Molly** were honored for their extensive research and teaching about inspection and regulation of natural gas wells. Our Chapter Chair developed an online course to

teach volunteers to monitor the safety and environmental impact of these wells with George's input and supervision.

Workshops

Our workshops included Outings Leader Training, Introduction to our new Chapter Website, Updates on our Conservation Issues, Learning to Engage Our Members Effectively, and Strategic Social Media. All were excellent and provided stimulating ideas and food for thought.

Outing

We finished the weekend by touring the natural stream restoration project that was completed on Horseshoe Run about five years ago. This stream, a tributary of the Cheat River, runs through Camp Horseshoe. Jennifer Newland, Director of Canaan Valley Institute, was kind enough to lead us on a tour of the areas of the stream that were re-engineered with large rocks and tree stumps to direct the current to the center of the stream and stop the erosion that had been eating away at the banks and endangering residents' homes and property.

FYI: a MEME is a visual graphic designed to attract attention on social media and spread a message or idea rapidly by word of Mouth, E-Mail, blogs, Etc. ... ELGs are Effluent Limitation Guidelines, proposed federal standards for limits on pollution that can be discharged from coal plants. ... SSM is an acronym for Startups, Shutdowns, and Malfunctions; the emissions from which would count toward total limits for coal plants.



Shirley Rosenbaum

Right: Megan Kelly and Joe Solomon of GreenMemes.org instruct the group on strategic uses of different social media to advance our environmental messages.

Below: Jennifer Newland (2nd from left), Director of Canaan Valley Institute, leads a tour of measures used to prevent stream bank erosion on Horseshoe Run. Frank Young, David Sturm, and Carol Nix listen attentively.

photos by Jim Sconyers



Above: Awards Committee members Sally Wilts (left) and Candice Elliott present Jonathan Rosenbaum with one of the Outstanding Service Awards presented at the Retreat.

Right: Most sessions were held outside on the comfortable, sheltered porch.





MONONGAHELA GROUP

Tues, Sept 10, 8:15–10pm
Movie: Triple Divide
 Mon Art Center (MAC)
 107 High St, Morgantown

A movie that attempts to answer the question, "How are state regulators and industry handling impacts from fracking?" Actor Mark Ruffalo co-narrates this 18-month cradle-to-grave investigation by Public Herald that discovered contamination hidden away in America's most valuable watersheds. It's a clarion call that everything, and everyone, is downstream from shale gas extraction.

Shown in conjunction with the Monongalia Arts Center "Art21" series, which will screen the film *Balance* at 7pm.

Tues, Oct 8, 8:15–10pm
Movie: Bidder 70
 Mon Art Center (MAC)
 107 High St, Morgantown

"At this point of unimaginable threats on the horizon, this is what hope looks like. In these times of a morally bankrupt government that has sold out its principles, this is what patriotism looks like. With countless lives on the line, this is what love looks like, and it will only grow..." Tim DeChristopher, subject of this documentary and the son of the WV Chapter's first Chapter Chair.

Shown after the Monongalia Arts Center "Art21" series, which will screen the film *Loss and Desire* at 7pm.

Fri, Nov 1, 8:30–11pm
 (Rain date: Nov 2)
Saw-whet owl banding with Joey Herron
 Valley Falls Superintendent's Office (top of hill)

Discussion at 8:30pm followed by (hopefully) netting and banding these interesting creatures as they migrate. Bring folding chairs (you will be outside), WARM clothing, a flashlight, your camera, and maybe a hot drink for a night you won't forget. We should finish by 11pm. Contact David Sturm with questions: 304-363-7160, davidsturm@ymail.com

Tues, Nov 12, 8:15–10pm
Movie: The Last Mountain
 Mon Art Center (MAC)
 107 High St, Morgantown

Shown after the Monongahela Arts Center "ART21" series, which will screen the film *Boundaries* at 7pm.

All events at the MAC are free and open to the public. Donations will be appreciated.



Perspectives on Outings — Russ Flowers, Outings Chair

Take to the Water!

Though hiking is one of my favorite outdoor activities, water has become my new outdoor love.

My wife, Sue, and I were recently camping in Canaan Valley and were invited to go kayaking with some of our friends. When they told me that it would be on the Blackwater River, my first reaction was to say, "Thanks, but no thanks." I saw visions of white water and the dangers associated with it: flipping upside down, crashing into a rock, and so on. My friend explained it would be a flat paddle outing and we would be on still water, not whitewater. I was so relieved, and I became excited to try a new activity.

As a bonus to kayaking up the Blackwater River, we would be stopping to picnic and monitor vernal pools in a remote section of the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge (CVNWR). Our friends said there are no trails to the pools, so traveling by river was the only way to access them. It sounded like a great new adventure, so Sue and I were in. After borrowing two kayaks, we were on our way. We put the kayaks in near Davis and paddled upriver towards the CVNWR.

Not being an experienced kayaker, I was a bit nervous. Our friends helped us feel better when they told us how relatively simple it is to learn and that kayaks are very stable; they do not flip as easily as canoes. Within minutes of being in the water, we got the hang of it and were paddling up the Blackwater River. At ease in the water, I was able to relax and take note of the beauty around us and the peace and serenity of the "calm" section of the Blackwater River. As we paddled further up the river, we felt as if we were miles away from civilization. This was the instant that I became a fan of

kayaking.

I am not sure how many miles we paddled before we arrived at our first destination. We pulled our kayaks onto the bank of the river, ate our picnic lunch, and found the vernal pools. We used dip nets to assist our friends with the wood frog and salamander counts. In addition, we collected water-quality data and pool measurements. It was such a treat to be part of this! After monitoring the vernal pools, we paddled downstream to return to our vehicles. The water was so calm that it was hard to tell whether we were even paddling with the current.

Sue was as enthralled as I. As soon as we were in the truck, we both turned to each other and said, "We need to get kayaks!" We have caught the kayaking fever and found a new way to enjoy the great outdoors.

As with hiking trails, WV offers a multitude of paddling adventures. Some great spots are the Blackwater, Cheat and Greenbrier Rivers. If you are a beginner, you can always go with a group. Throughout the year the WV Chapter offers flat paddle outings, which will be listed in the *Mountain State Sierran* and on our website. Also, there are numerous outfitters throughout the state that offer guided and self-guided tours. Don't worry if you do not own a kayak. You can always rent one from an outfitter, or perhaps a friend or neighbor might let you borrow one.

If you are interested in having more flat paddle outings, or want to lead one, I encourage you to contact me.

Take to the Outdoors!



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Please contact the Editor for submission guidelines or advertising rates.

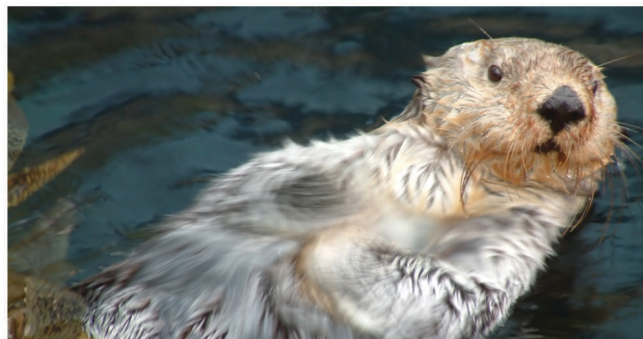
Contributions to the newsletter may be sent to the Editor at

celliot2@comcast.net
 414 Tyrone Avery Rd
 Morgantown, WV 26508

**Deadline for
 November/December issue
 October 10**

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.

Make a gesture that lasts a lifetime.



A Sierra Club Life Membership is a gesture on behalf of all life - from our oceans to our forests, and from the tiniest insect to the largest sequoia. As a Sierra Club Life Member, you'll be helping to support programs and campaigns that protect endangered species and preserve threatened wilderness areas (and all the life that they support) - not only for today, but for decades to come.

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 \$350 first annual installment is enclosed.

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 Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX

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Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not 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 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club,
 P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041
 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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Upcoming Outings — Autumn

Sat, Aug 31

Deadline to sign up for Cass Train Ride

(see outing description for Sat, Oct 19)

Sun, Sep 8

Day 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 8 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. Dayhiking 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

Sat, Sep 14

Workshop: Flora & Fauna Nature Identification & Wetland Habitat

not rated — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on two part workshop on Flora & Fauna Nature Identification & Wetland Habitat Workshop at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshop is free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader, seating is limited. Bring bag lunch (fridge & microwave available). Workshop is from 8:30AM to 4:30PM. Meet at Refuge Headquarters in Williamstown at 8:30AM. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

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

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: www.fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands

Sun, Sep 15

Kayford Mountain MTR Site

not rated — We will visit Kayford Mountain, site of Larry Gibson's mountaintop compound, surrounded by a mountaintop removal (MTR) operation. Kayford Mountain is one of the few MTR operations that are not concealed from public view. See for yourself what MTR looks like up close — the moonscape created and left behind.

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

Nearest town: Cabin Creek, WV

Web info: www.mountainkeeper.org/kayford-mountain/

Sat, Sep 21

Day Hike: Coopers Rock SF

rated strenuous — Join us for 13 miles of strenuous hiking at Coopers Rock State Forest. We will hike a large loop through the forest starting at the Overlook Area, heading down to Cheat Lake and then back up, looping out to the front gate and then back to the Overlook Area. This hike is very steep in places; rocky, uneven trails will be plentiful. This hike is for EXPERIENCED hikers only. Not recommended for Beginners. Be sure to bring along plenty of water and snacks. Proper footwear is required; trekking poles are highly recommended. Expect to be hiking for 5-6 hours. Contact leader for information on parking and start time.

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

Nearest Town: Morgantown, WV

Web info: www.coopersrockstateforest.com/

Sat, Oct 12

Workshop: Nature Photography & Geology

not rated — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop on Nature Photography and Geology at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshops are free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader as seating is limited. Bring bag lunch (fridge & micro-

wave available). Workshop is from 8:30AM to 4:30PM. Meet at Refuge Headquarters in Williamstown at 8:30AM. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

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

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: www.fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands

Sat, Oct 19

Cass Scenic Train Ride

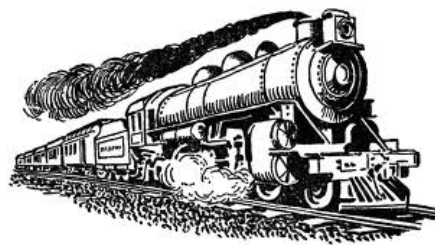
not rated — Join us as we take a scenic train ride to the third highest peak in Wild and Wonderful West Virginia. We will depart from the train station in Cass, WV, and make our way up to the top of Bald Knob. Mid-October should provide for Fantastic Fall Foliage (fingers crossed). The Bald Knob area has a climate similar to that of Canada; therefore, attendees should dress for the weather, as the temperature at the top of Bald Knob is considerably cooler than that of our starting point at the station in Cass. The view is spectacular, and from the overlook, we will be able to view two states. Attendees won't want to forget their binoculars and cameras for this outing! The train ride will last about 4.5 hours.

Attendees MUST register for this outing by Aug 31. Fees associated with this outing are: Adults, \$32; Children, \$24. Registrants must pre-pay for this outing by sending a check to Aaron M. Vedock by 8/31/13. Contact Aaron to register and get his mailing address. Contact leader for information on parking & start time.

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

Nearest Town: Cass, WV

Web info: <http://www.cassrailroad.com/>



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

Sat, Nov 9

Workshop: Ferns & Nature Prints

not rated — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop on Ferns and Nature Prints at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshops are free of charge and open to members & nonmembers. Please pre-register with the leader as seating is limited. Bring bag lunch (fridge & microwave available). Workshop is from 8:30AM to 4:30PM. Meet at Refuge Headquarters in Williamstown at 8:30AM. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

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

Nearest town: Williamstown, WV

Web info: www.fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands

You Flip the Switch, the Light Turns On ... Now for the Rest of the Story

Have you seen mountaintop removal (MTR) mining for yourself? On Sept 15, you'll have a chance to do just that. Most MTR sites are impossible for the average citizen to see. They're in remote, inaccessible locations, or they're heavily guarded, or they lie behind a "beauty strip" and you don't even know they're there. Kayford Mountain gives us the rare opportunity to see mountaintop removal "up close and personal."

Kayford Mountain is the home place of the late Larry Gibson, icon and inspiration of the movement to end MTR. Even while surrounded by MTR activity, Larry held on to his own piece of the mountain.

On this outing, we will drive to Kayford Mountain, meet folks from the Keeper of the Mountain Foundation, then walk a short way to a place that overlooks the devastation caused by ongoing MTR activity. Bring a camera; you'll want to take plenty of pictures.

We can pick up folks in Morgantown, along I-79, and in Charleston. It will be a full but memorable day. You'll never turn on a light again without at least a subliminal thought of mountaintop removal in southern West Virginia. Everyone should see it at least once!

Sign up by contacting Jim at jimscon@gmail.com or 304-698-9628.

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

West Virginia Chapter
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Morgantown, WV 26504
www.westvirginia.sierraclub.org

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Capitol Switchboard (202) 224-3121

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Washington, DC 20515

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(202) 225-9061 (NR)

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Governor Earl Ray Tomblin
State Capitol
Charleston, WV 25305

Dial-the-Governor:
1-888-438-2731
email: governor@wv.gov

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
has contact information for all state
legislators



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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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