

# M Mountain State Sierran

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## Pipeline Alternatives

*Beth Little*

The best alternative would be “no build” for all the natural gas pipeline projects proposed to go through West Virginia. The gas transmission industry has several reasons why this should not be considered – some admitted and at least one inferred, but they are all bad reasons.

First reason (repeated often) is that there is all this gas being produced in the Marcellus shale, and we have to get it to... North Carolina, New England, wherever there are people who need it. The problem with this reason is that there is no need for more gas transmission in the US. There are already numerous pipelines to just about everywhere, and some of them are not being fully used; some are being converted to two-way.

The inferred reason for more transmission lines (denied by the industry, though indications keep popping up) is that they want to export the gas to where they can get several times the price it is going for here in the US. The current price of natural gas in the US is below the cost of production. Of course, exporting natural gas would undermine the claims that it is providing energy independence and advancing national security.

Another reason (also repeated often) is that the demand for electricity is growing, but the reality is that electricity usage has been virtually flat for the last ten years. Another version of the ‘demand is growing’ reason (repeated ad nauseam) is that we have to keep the lights on. Not only has electricity usage been flat, but according to the Union of Concerned Scientists we also have the technology now to save 25% of our consumption with energy efficiency, and within 10 to 12 years, solar is going to be as cheap as coal.

The massive resistance and negative publicity for switching to renewables comes from the fossil fuel industry. The problem is that no one owns the fuel for solar or wind power, so no one can get rich just by owning the sunshine or the wind. Renewable companies can, and are, making money building renewable energy projects, but the fuel is free. Fossil fuel corporations have billions of dollars in assets (coal and gas reserves) on their balance sheets, and they make lots of money by supplying those assets to power plants. They make so much money that they can afford to flood the media with misinformation, hire lobbyists to work full time on legislation that inhibits green energy and promotes fossil fuels, and co-opt politicians with campaign contributions. The ones they can't co-opt they trash with attack ads.

So instead of punching a new right-of-way through people's private property, communities and public lands with a massive gas pipeline, the “no build” alternative is the legitimate choice. And it won't contribute to climate change.



Military veterans pose for a photo after a Sierra Club Military Outdoors hike in Bureau of Land Management's Grand Gulch Primitive Area, Cedar Mesa, Utah, in October 2014.

Photo by  
Erin Shae Johns

## Sierra Club's Military Outdoors Program: Calling All Veterans!

*By Paul Wilson*

If you have been a Sierra Club member during the past 3 to 4 years, perhaps you noticed an occasional article in our *Sierra* magazine highlighting climbing and wilderness outings the club was doing with our newest and youngest generation of military veterans, articles like “A Missing Peace” in the 2011 July-August issue.

Actually, our Military Outings started more than 5 years ago with the Military Family Outdoor Initiative, which partnered with groups like Outward Bound, Operation Purple and Armed Services YMCA. Back then, we ran outings under contract with some groups and partnered our local Sierra Club Outings leaders with other groups to get the children of deployed military personnel into outdoor activities. Now we have a Military Outdoors program within our Sierra Club Outings department.

While some — perhaps many — may question what the heck Sierra Club is doing with the military, the actual military history of the club is quite long, stretching back to 1918 when the *Sierra Bulletin* listed the names of all active members who served in the military during World War I.

Most notably for most Sierrans, was the World War II service of our first executive director, David Brower, who served in Italy with the famed 10th Mountain Division. Just before Christmas, National Public Radio eulogized former Sierra Club board member Martin Litton, a World War II

glider pilot who, as a fervent conservationist, kept dams out of the Grand Canyon, a ski resort out of the Sierra Mineral King Valley, and pushed for a Redwood National Park.

More recently, the Military Outdoors program has sponsored backpack outings, mountain climbs, desert treks and the Veteran Film School in 2013 and 2014. The national outings schedule for the Military Outdoors program is still in development, but we do know that we want to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the World War II deployment of the 10th Mountain Division.

One of the 10th Mountain Division's training sites was our own Seneca Rocks. We want to do an anniversary climb of Seneca Rocks to celebrate this famous U.S. Army unit's World War II service. So if you are a climber and want to participate in this event, please contact me.

If you are not a climber, we are also going to organize Service Outings for our veterans, so they have the opportunities to give back to their local communities through such activities as trail maintenance, tree plantings, stream monitoring and other outdoor activities. If you would like to participate or organize one of our Sierra Serves outings, please contact me:

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# Meet your new Energy Efficiency Campaign Team

## Amanda Gardner, EECT Chair, says Farewell

The West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club's Energy Efficiency Campaign Team (EECT) had an exciting and productive year. We have developed into a cohesive body of volunteers since the creation of our campaign team in 2013 and have been active on both the statewide and local levels.

Statewide, we held training sessions for volunteers in Burnsville, Morgantown, Shepherdstown and Clarksburg. Many of us participated in PSC hearings in 2014 as well as in the EPA Clean Power Plan hearings last summer. In September, we started an energy efficiency petition targeted at Gov. Tomblin, collected more than 600 signatures and delivered it in person to the Governor's office on Dec. 16, 2014. We held a slogan contest for our campaign and look forward to revealing it on bumper stickers early in 2015.

On the local level, the EECT promoted Solar Holler projects and free energy audits for public buildings by the WV DEP's E3 Program. Members also worked with city and county governments to expand energy savings, and held "how-to" workshops to teach local residents how to cut energy costs.

With a new year upon us, the EECT chose a new leadership structure. Jim Kotcon is still the Energy Committee Chair, but leadership responsibilities will be divided among six active members.

As for me, I am migrating to Maine in February for an Americorps VISTA job working with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy to support community and economic development through ecotourism. I am very grateful for the opportunity to have served as Chair for 2014 and I look forward to following, and continuing my support of, the campaign after my departure. I have found so much inspiration through this campaign and this organization and have been blessed

to collaborate with the wonderful and dedicated people behind it all. I would like to thank all of you who have been involved with our success in 2014! We look forward to our progress in 2015! GO TEAM!

## Introducing the new EECT leadership

### Team Leader: Laura Yokochi

Hello fellow Chapter members and environmental advocates! My name is Laura Yokochi and I am honored to be the new Energy Efficiency Campaign Team Leader. As a Sierra Club member for quite a few years, I enjoyed reading the national magazine and Chapter newsletter, but when Danny Chiotos asked me to be a part of his "Linked In" network toward the end of 2013, my passive participation gradually came to an end. (Who can say no to Danny?) My active role began with a presentation to the Harrison County Commission in March 2014, then follow-up newsletter articles in April. Now, as Team Leader, I will keep the group organized by facilitating regular conference calls and helping to plan seasonal training sessions. I look forward to working with the many dedicated volunteers on our team to promote the sustainable use of energy resources.

### Local Governments Leader: Graham Smith-White

Hello All, I am Graham Smith-White and I am taking on the role of Local Government Leader for 2015. I have been involved with the Energy Efficiency Campaign for the past year with a focus on local efficiency efforts and taking actions that create direct, tangible efficiency gains.

To this end, I chair the Energy Work Group for Sustainable Shepherdstown and carry the torch of the Berkeley County Green Team. My interest in efficiency stems from efforts to solar-power my professional music practice, [solarpoweredmusic.com](http://solarpoweredmusic.com),

and make it as sustainable as possible. I also work with West Virginia-based national solar company Geostellar, designing and coordinating installations across the country.

My goals for 2015 as Local Government Leader are to cultivate cross-county partnerships among local teams, continue to grow the network of support that has developed around our efforts and work to incorporate renewable resources into the conversation around efficiency.

I look forward to strengthening the voice of West Virginians advocating for energy efficiency by working with folks to share knowledge and experience across efforts.

### Media Leader: McKenzie Allen

My name is McKenzie Allen and I am a current student at Shepherd University studying Environmental Sustainability. I am the incoming Media Leader for the WV Chapter's Energy Efficiency Campaign. A strong presence of energy efficiency in the media is critical, and you, as Sierra Club members, can help with this campaign by writing to the opinion pages of your local papers and addressing the need for efficiency programs in our state.

### Energy Saving Workshops Leader: John Bird

I am the workshop leader for the SC Energy Efficiency Campaign Team. I have prepared a talk on using low-cost, easily available materials to weatherize a home and will provide hands-on demonstrations in which the attendees try caulking, placing foam behind electrical box covers and putting plastic over a window. Free handouts such as a caulk gun, caulk, CFLs, foam gaskets and a booklet on weatherization will be available.

I also will have a talk on climate change prepared by the end of February and will make myself available to present it. I have degrees in physics and electrical engineering and taught at Baltimore Community College for 30 years.

### Policy Leader: Travis Boothe

My name is Travis Boothe and I am the West Virginia Energy Efficiency Team's Policy Leader. I became involved with the campaign as a way to help promote the state's development in a way that will allow it to grow and thrive in the 21st century. Throughout the course of this year, I hope to see the development of additional programs aimed toward helping low-income families improve their efficient use of energy and to achieve the overall growth and organization of the campaign itself.

### Outreach Leader: Kari Yokochi

Hello fellow West Virginia Sierra Club members. I am Kari Yokochi, and I started learning about the Energy Efficiency Campaign exactly one year ago through a Winter Organizing Workshop in Morgantown. Since then, I have become an active team member and leader in Harrison County.

I started realizing how important it is to protect our sacred environment in my early college years; although, it was not until last year that I gave much thought to energy efficiency on its own. Through this campaign, I've learned that while it is easy to be anti-coal and anti-fracking, it is best to have a positive response — pro-EE!

Energy efficiency is something no one should be against, something where everyone wins, and something that is always positive.

This year, I am taking on a new challenge for the campaign. As Outreach Leader, I hope to reach new faces and connect with new organizations to broaden our efforts, as well as to solidify our existing partners. Together I hope we can make a difference with energy efficiency throughout the state.

To get involved with the Energy Efficiency Campaign, contact WV Energy Efficiency Organizer Danny Chiotos, 304-535-8150, [daniel.chiotos@gmail.com](mailto:daniel.chiotos@gmail.com).



Library Director Gretchen Fry gives a "thumbs up" for work at the Bolivar-Harpers Ferry Public Library supported by Solar Holler. This innovative and community-financed project installed 12 solar panels on the library as part of a long-term engagement to reduce the library's energy bills through increased efficiency and solar power.

Photo by Danny Chiotos

## Chapter and Group ExCom Election Results

*Sally Wilts*

The election committee appreciates the work done by Candice Elliott for many years to create ballots for the ExCom elections and arrange for their printing and mailing. The ballots are designed to be folded and returned with membership information intact so we can verify that the ballots are legal. Several people removed all identifying information from their ballots, so they could not be included in the count.

Thank you to everyone who voted. We mailed ballots to 1,833 households for the Chapter ExCom and 172 were returned,

for a 9.4-percent return rate. Gary Nelson, Jody Mohr and Liz Wiles were the top vote-getters in this contest.

Members who are also in the Monongahela Group were able to vote in both the Chapter and Group elections. We sent out 447 ballots to Mon group households and 44 were returned, for a 9.8-percent return rate. Liz Wiles and Amanda Stoner were elected.

Our organization depends on volunteers to keep it working effectively, and we thank all these individuals for their willingness to put their passions to work for West Virginia's people and its environment.

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Make a quick and easy donation from the Chapter's home page: [westvirginia.sierraclub.org](http://westvirginia.sierraclub.org)



## Introducing your new Chapter Chair, Liz Wiles

Hello! I'm Liz Wiles, your new Chapter Chair. After two years on the Executive Committee and one year as the chapter representative to national Sierra Club, I am honored and excited to take on this new position to support all our efforts to protect West Virginia's water, air, wild lands and communities.

You may be asking yourself, who is this Liz? Well, let me tell you. I am 44-years-old. I grew up a Hussey (my maiden name) in Fairmont, where my mom worked in banking and real estate and my dad taught English at Fairmont State. I earned my degree in biology at Fairmont State, when it was still just a college. Because of my desire to be a marine biologist, I headed to Florida State University in Tallahassee for three years of graduate school in ecology and evolutionary biology. I was sad to leave home, but it's hard to study marine biology in a land-locked state.

During my time in Tallahassee, I had the opportunity to teach hands-on environmental education to middle school students at the university's marine lab on the Gulf Coast. While I enjoyed my graduate



Liz rubs shoulders with Executive Director Michael Brune, Sierra Club "royalty" (note the crown), in San Francisco at the National SC Awards Ceremony, Nov 21, 2014.

work, it was nothing compared to the thrill I got seeing kids' eyes light up when they discovered all the cool things oysters do to help other marine life or watched the cooperative interaction among the animals and plants that inhabit sea grass beds.

I realized that's what I want to do — instill an understanding, appreciation and awe, in children and adults alike, of the interconnectedness of all life,

including humans. At the same time I found my "calling," a good friend was preparing to move to Seattle for her own graduate work. I decided to move with her because I knew the Northwest was, in 1995, more environmentally conscious and might provide more opportunities in environmental education. Plus, of course, it had great music and coffee.

I lived in Seattle for 16 years, the bulk of which I worked at the Pacific Science Center teaching hands-on, informal science and doing science demonstrations where I got to "play" with liquid nitrogen, "throw" fire and blow up hydrogen balloons. I also supervised for four years one of PSC's education outreach programs that traveled around Washington State with portable science shows, hands-on exhibits and a portable planetarium.

It is also in Seattle where I became civically active in many progressive issues, but especially in protecting and conserving our environment. For seven years, I served on the board of a local nonprofit called Shoreline Solar Project that promoted the practical application of renewable energy

and environmentally responsible living. At the same time, I became more aware of mountaintop removal coal mining back here in West Virginia. Believing that people throughout the U.S. should know the destructive practices used to generate much of the country's energy, I made presentations on MTR and encouraged Northwest citizens to support Appalachian coalfield communities in their struggle for a better way of life.

During my early years in Seattle, I was reunited with my college boyfriend Jeff, and we married in 1998. We always knew we'd move back to West Virginia because our families are here, and we loved the state's natural beauty, its winding country roads and friendly people — and you can't find pepperoni rolls in Seattle. We found a house six miles outside of Morgantown and arrived back in October 2011. I cried when I saw the sign, "Welcome to West Virginia — Wild & Wonderful" because I knew I was home.

Moving back, my goal was to find work directly involved in environmental protection, and within a few months of my return, I was hired as the executive director for Friends of Deckers Creek in Morgantown. In my two years as ED, I gained a wealth of knowledge about watersheds, environmental legacy costs of coal mining and the new threat to West Virginia's environment and communities — fracking. A major accomplishment during my tenure

was working with the FODC board, other local organizations and a large group of concerned citizens to stop a fracking wastewater underground injection well from being built less than 500 feet from Deckers Creek, in one of the most pristine areas of the watershed.

I also learned about the many organizations and thousands of state residents who are committed to protecting and fighting for WV's most important natural resources — clean water, clean air, pristine wilderness, exceptional biodiversity and its people. I enjoyed my work at FODC but got involved with the WV Sierra Club because I wanted to be a part of the larger, statewide environmental movement.

In June 2014, I had the incredible opportunity to return to my "calling" as the PR & Operations Manager at a brand new, outdoor education school in Morgantown, The Mountain Stewardship and Outdoor Leadership (SOL) School, a program of WV nonprofit Aurora Lights. Through teaching the students about their connections to their communities and the greater circle of life, we are nurturing the next generation of environmental stewards. And maybe even the next leaders of the WV Sierra Club.

I look forward to working with all members of our chapter as we continue to fight to ensure West Virginia will always be "Almost Heaven."

### Book Review

## Don't Even Think About It: Why Our Brains are Wired to Ignore Climate Change by George Marshall

Review by Richard Mier, Martinsburg

Finding enemies in the battle over climate change is altogether too easy and that's true for both sides. Easy, but ultimately useless and probably worse, as George Marshall argues in *Don't Even Think About It—Why Our Brains Are Wired to Ignore Climate Change*. Describing a conversation with psychotherapist Renee Lertzman, he writes, "... we are all irrational, unconscious, confused human beings and we are all struggling to make sense of this issue. This is why she finds the cognitive explanations for our avoidance of climate change to be 'incredibly limited.' They put the blame on the 'ignorant, self-centered, shortsighted people, in contrast to the enlightened and evolved.'... Hatred, she says, is always a clue that something else is going on."

Well then, what else is going on? Marshall goes after this question in short, well-written and engaging chapters, an extended journey into among other realms, evolutionary psychology. Our brains are uniquely unsuited to deal with climate change he writes: we respond to proximity and immediacy. Climate change is "abstract, distant, invisible and disputed" according to Nobel Prize winner Daniel Kahneman. Climate change as a threat lacks salience.

Further, our brains have evolved two distinct ways of looking at and processing information, one analytical (mostly involving the cortex) and the other driven by emotion (centered mostly in the amygdala). The analytical side speaks to rational argument and Marshall is pretty sure, from a career as a climate change communicator, that rational argument or science or data cannot be relied on to both convince people and spur them to action. Without denigrating

our rational side, he believes that engagement at a more emotional level is critical. Critical, but dicey, loaded as we are with personal and cultural biases most of which escape conscious recognition.

He wishes that the Green Team might take a lesson from the God Squad and argues that sacred values are not just about religion. He wonders why climate change activists have not been able to co-opt the qualities of successful religions, including "narrative, image and enactment" and use them to good end. As part of impressively detailed field work, including a stint as a guest speaker at a convention of Texas Tea Part climate deniers, Marshall describes a conversation with evangelical pastor and climate change believer Joel Hunter of Northland Church in Longwood, Florida, who describes three key concepts: shared belief; a specific moment of commitment; and personal contact. By incorporating these into climate change activism, Marshall believes that a greater level of conviction will result.

He writes that there is a problem with the way the climate change narrative has developed. Attitudes regarding climate change fit into "a larger matrix of values, politics and lifestyle" which has led to "enemy narratives"—a "we versus they" way of looking at things. By defining climate change as an environmental problem we restrict and circumscribe it, making it easier to discount. "DROP THE ECO-STUFF" he pleads. Instead, he feels that "we need to find narratives based on cooperation, mutual interest and our common humanity."

Full of interesting, thoughtful and occasionally puckish writing, with one particularly funny quote from George Carlin, this book is a good way to get your head around your head, and how it's thinking about climate change.

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## Birthplace of Rivers National Monument: Looking back at 2014, on to 2015

Mike Costello, WV Wilderness Coalition

*Editor's Note:* The West Virginia Sierra Club is a founding member of the West Virginia Wilderness Coalition.

Over the past year, West Virginians got a first-hand glimpse of what can go wrong when water sources are left unprotected. If a silver lining emerged from Freedom Industries spill near Charleston, it was an increased awareness of the vulnerability of streams we depend on for drinking water. This led to inspiring citizen action and tangible change at the state legislature, as well as the launch of new initiatives to highlight the importance of water quality to all West Virginians. Similarly, throughout the year, we saw the aftermath of the water crisis translate into an outpouring of support for stronger protection of headwaters beginning in the Monongahela National Forest.

The Birthplace of Rivers National Monument initiative — a campaign to permanently protect a special landscape on the Monongahela where six rivers begin — garnered significant momentum in 2014, due in no small part to the infamous water crisis. While the immediate effects of the chemical spill were limited to nine counties served by West Virginia American Water's Elk River intake, the lasting impact was felt throughout the state, and the incident taught all of us some valuable lessons about the source of our cherished waters. Community leaders, business owners, sportsmen, and West Virginians of many other backgrounds rallied behind monument designation as a proactive way to protect headwaters of statewide importance before threats arise.

The Birthplace of Rivers area, especially the waterways that begin there, means so much to all West Virginians. The Cranberry and Williams Rivers are where so many of us grew up fishing. The Cherry and Greenbrier Rivers provide drinking water for communities such as Richwood and Lewisburg. The Gauley provides world-class whitewater rafting; and 140 miles upstream from the site of the chemical spill, the Elk River begins as a clean, pure trickle, quickly becoming a trout-rich mountain stream.

Federal public lands are increasingly threatened, and without a doubt, Congress will pass a multitude of measures in 2015 to expedite industrial development in National Forests, stifle public input in management decisions and roll back environmental protections intended to protect water quality. The streams in the Birthplace of Rivers area deserve the protection a national monument can provide, and West Virginia deserves the honor of being recognized as a headwaters state, a place where our citizens value pristine headwaters and strive to set them aside for future generations.

It wasn't long after the chemical spill that it became clear how an unfortunate disaster in the Kanawha Valley highlighted all water quality efforts, including the Birthplace



Williams River Valley

of Rivers campaign. In an April editorial, *The Charleston Gazette* said:

*"The ugly 2014 Elk River Crisis that tainted the drinking water of 300,000 West Virginians in nine counties spurred headlines around the world — and spotlighted the need to protect the purity of Mountain State streams."*

*Current efforts to create a Birthplace of Rivers National Monument in the state's highlands might underscore the value of clean tributaries, as well as enhance West Virginia's status as a mountain recreation refuge."*

Outside perception that water throughout West Virginia was bad made businesses and tourism officials concerned about the future of an outdoor recreation industry in a place called "Wild and Wonderful." Nearly 200 businesses have signed on to support monument designation as a way to protect and promote outdoor recreation opportunities. A national monument is a strong signal of quality, and as the only state in the East with the distinction of having a wildlands national monument, West Virginia would certainly set itself apart as a quality outdoor destination. There's more than just perception at stake, however. Business owners know that without stronger protection, the Birthplace of Rivers area — already an important economic driver — may not always be such a sustainable asset for the local and statewide recreation-based economy.

In a joint op-ed, the owners of Fayetteville's Water Stone Outdoors, Kenny Parker, Maura Kistler and Gene

Kistler, told readers what a national monument means to businesses throughout West Virginia:

*"Preserving a special area of the Monongahela National Forest as the Birthplace of Rivers National Monument would be a major step toward ensuring a strong recreation economy, providing clean drinking water, and restoring our image. The Birthplace of Rivers National Monument would send a message that West Virginia still has some of the best water in the nation, and our mountain streams deserve to be recognized on a national scale."*

*As was the case with outside perception after the chemical spill, what happens in one part of the state impacts everyone. Special wild places contribute to the quality of life for all of us, and the positive impacts of a Birthplace of Rivers National Monument would reach far beyond local communities, benefiting all of us in West Virginia."*

In many ways, the Birthplace of Rivers initiative brought out the best of West Virginia's collaborative spirit in 2014, even among groups that often find themselves on opposing sides of land use debates. It was an encouraging reminder that public lands truly are America's common ground, and that water is a unifying factor that brings West Virginians together.

As the campaign moves forward, recent activity in other states should be encouraging to West Virginians. The Forest Service stepped up its involvement in creating national monuments in 2014, working towards similar designations that protect vast landscapes while ensuring access for all current recreational uses, and providing a stronger guarantee that stakeholders, local communities and the general public will always get to have a say in future management of the area. California's San Gabriel Mountains National Monument was established as part of the Angeles National Forest last fall, and two additional USFS monuments — Colorado's Browns Canyon and California's Berryessa/Snow Mountains — seem to be primed for designation by early spring.

What's in store for 2015? From bad bills in Congress to construction of gas pipelines, we're sure to see threats to the Monongahela increase. But we'll also see West Virginians continue their push to protect our headwaters, grow our tourism economy and honor our rich outdoor heritage. Behind a strong grassroots effort, support for the Birthplace of Rivers National Monument initiative will continue to grow, and as additional monuments are created across the country, we'll make sure our nation's leaders are paying close attention to this historic opportunity for the Mountain State.

We hope you'll get involved! Visit [birthplaceofrivers.org](http://birthplaceofrivers.org) to add your voice of support!

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

**[celliot2@comcast.net](mailto:celliot2@comcast.net)**

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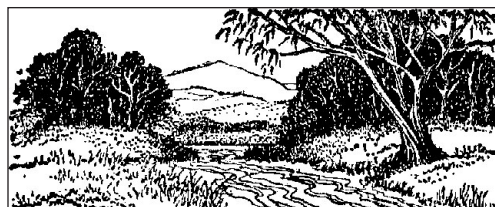
**April 10**

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## Monongahela Master Naturalist classes to begin March 19

Ever wonder why certain trees grow where they do? Wish you knew one wildflower from another? Have you asked someone about that insect in your garden? If you love the outdoors and would like to know more, Master Naturalist training is for you. The Monongahela Chapter of the WV Master Naturalist program will begin classes on March 19, in Room 218 Percival Hall on the Evansdale campus of West Virginia University.

To be a Master Naturalist, the student must complete 64 hours of class work (may be taken in multiple years) and 30 hours of volunteer service. The classes consist of 48 hours of core subjects such as ecology, mammals, wetlands, trees, vines and shrubs, and others. Another

16 hours of elective subjects may include fields such as geology, soils, mushrooms and other nature-related topics.

Approximately 2/3 of the course work will be indoors and the remainder will be outdoors. Field trips will explore the West Virginia Botanic Garden, Cranesville Swamp, the Reedsville rail-trail and other places in north central WV. Classes will be held Thursday nights, 6-9 p.m., with some Saturday and Sunday field trips. Cost for the course is \$60. The Master Naturalist program is administered by the WV Division of Natural Resources.

For information, contact Ellen Hrabovsky, 304-282-5913 or [Ellen1121@comcast.net](mailto:Ellen1121@comcast.net).



Perspectives on Outings

— Russ Flowers, Outings Chair

## The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and its impact on West Virginia

In a previous article, I reflected on SierraFest 2014 and our chapter's strong roots and humble beginnings. Our chapter's story originated with fascinating people whose contributions laid the historical groundwork in the preservation of all the beauty and splendor that we get to enjoy when we explore West Virginia's great outdoors.

To further expand on this reflection, I started thinking of others who did so much for our state. Time and time again, the CCC kept coming to mind. As I hiked and explored the numerous state parks in West Virginia, evidence of their impact is everywhere. So I started researching the CCC and its influence on West Virginia and the country.

The CCC, or Civilian Conservation Corps, was a federal program born out of the Great Depression. President Roosevelt started the CCC in 1933 to help alleviate the staggering unemployment gripping the nation. The CCC worked on conservation projects such as road building, erosion control and developing parks throughout the country. More than 3 million men served in the CCC and were stationed in about 1,600 camps throughout the United States.

While researching the CCC in West Virginia, I found a website for the WV CCC Museum. There were lots of interesting and amazing facts. More than 55,000 men worked in 67 camps throughout the state.

Among their many accomplishments: They developed more than 30 state and national parks; built hundreds of bridges; planted millions of trees; and built thousands of cabins, picnic shelters, lodges, lakes, ponds and swimming pools. In addition, they fought more than 10,000 forest fires.

All of this was accomplished from 1933 to 1942. What an amazing feat. And remember, this was more than 75 years ago. The CCC didn't have the benefit of all the high-tech and heavy equipment that we are accustomed to seeing on construction sites today.

The amazing thing is that most of the structures are still standing and in use today. So when you visit one of our many state parks, keep an eye open. You may be crossing a bridge, having a picnic in a shelter or staying in a cabin that the CCC built. This is a testament to the CCC's hard work and commitment to our state and country.

To pay tribute to this organization, consider visiting the WV CCC Museum. It is located in the old Quiet Dell Schoolhouse in Harrison County (off Interstate I-79, exit 115). I know it will be on my list of places to visit.

As always, feel free to contact me if you are interested in our outings program or are interested in becoming an outings leader.

Take to the Outdoors!

## 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](http://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.

### Sat, Mar 14 Workshops: Wildlife Habitat Improvement & Reptiles/Amphibians

*not rated* — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop on wildlife habitat improvement & reptiles/amphibians at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshops are free of charge and open to members and non-members. Please pre-register with the leader; seating is limited. Bring a bag lunch (fridge and microwave available). Workshop is 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Meet at refuge headquarters in Williamstown at 8:30 a.m. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

**Leader:** Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, [russwvu@gmail.com](mailto:russwvu@gmail.com)

**Nearest town:** Williamstown, WV

**Web info:** [fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands](http://fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands)

### Sat, Apr 11 Workshops: Trees/Shrubs & Stream Monitoring

*not rated* — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop on Trees/Shrubs & Stream Monitoring at the Roane/Jackson Technical School. The workshops are free of charge and open to members and non-members. Please pre-register with the leader; seating is limited. Bring a bag lunch. Workshop is 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Meet at Roane/Jackson Technical School at 8:30 a.m. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

**Leader:** Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, [russwvu@gmail.com](mailto:russwvu@gmail.com)

**Nearest town:** Leroy, WV

**Web info:** [roane-jacksontechnicalcenter.com](http://roane-jacksontechnicalcenter.com)

### Sat, Apr 25 Arbor Day Hike: Birthplace of Rivers (BPOR)

*rated easy* — Join us for a leisurely day hike in the area of the proposed Birthplace of Rivers National Monument. We will meet at the Cranberry Visitors Center at 9:45 a.m. and will hike for 3-4 hours. During the hike, we will celebrate the blossoming of trees and wildflowers in the region. Bring snacks/lunch, water, proper hiking shoes/boots and binoculars. Please pre-register with the leader; outing is limited to 10.

**Leader:** Jane Birdsong, 304-636-8195, [janebirdsong67@gmail.com](mailto:janebirdsong67@gmail.com)

**Nearest town:** Hillsboro, WV

**Web info:** [birthplaceofrivers.org/pocahontascountywv.com/cranberry\\_glades\\_nature\\_center.aspx](http://birthplaceofrivers.org/pocahontascountywv.com/cranberry_glades_nature_center.aspx)

### Sat, May 9 Workshops: Wildflowers/Weeds & Geology

*not rated* — Join WV Master Naturalists for this fun, interactive, hands-on, two-part workshop and fieldtrip on Wildflowers/Weeds & Geology at the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge. The workshops are free of charge and open to members and non-members. Please pre-register with the leader; seating is limited. Bring a bag lunch (fridge and microwave available). Workshop is 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Meet at refuge headquarters in Williamstown at 8:30 a.m. Contact the Outing Leader for further directions and questions.

**Leader:** Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, [russwvu@gmail.com](mailto:russwvu@gmail.com)

**Nearest town:** Williamstown, WV

**Web info:** [fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands](http://fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands)

### Sat, Jun 13 Workshops: Birds & Soils

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

**Leader:** Russ Flowers, 304-482-7919, [russwvu@gmail.com](mailto:russwvu@gmail.com)

**Nearest town:** Williamstown, WV

**Web info:** [fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands](http://fws.gov/northeast/ohioriverislands)

### 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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://westvirginia.sierraclub.org)

## Abbreviations Used

<b>AMC</b>	Appalachian Mountain Club
<b>AT</b>	Appalachian Trail
<b>GWNF</b>	George Washington National Forest
<b>JNF</b>	Jefferson National Forest
<b>MG</b>	Monongahela Group
<b>MNF</b>	Monongahela National Forest
<b>NPS</b>	National Park Service
<b>NRA</b>	National Recreation Area
<b>NWR</b>	National Wildlife Refuge
<b>PFD</b>	Personal Flotation Device (lifejacket)
<b>SF</b>	State Forest
<b>SP</b>	State Park
<b>SNP</b>	Shenandoah National Park

## Optimism is a political act!

*Carol Nix has collected some fun facts to feed your optimism in 2015.*

New York banned fracking. Gov. Mario Cuomo deferred to Dr. Howard Zucker, New York's Commissioner of the Department of Health, who said "Governor, you asked me for my opinion and said, 'let the science decide.' Would I live in a community with high-volume hydraulic fracking, based on facts I have now? After looking at a plethora of reports, my answer is, no. Until the public-health red flags are answered by valid evidence, I cannot support high-volume hydraulic fracking in the great state of New York." Gov. Cuomo's courage in valuing the judgment of scientists should enliven efforts to ban fracking in our state and other states in the months and years to come.



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### To Contact STATE LEGISLATORS

email to WV Legislature:  
[cglagola@mail.wvnet.edu](mailto: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.

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

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