Dear FOB Supporter,

Our first snow fell last week! -- following a beautiful autumn, with spectacular fall foliage. We are thankful for this, and for the inspiring young people working on our many projects.

Now, at the end of our 21st year, we need to ensure that permanent protection of the entire Blackwater Canyon is the most important conservation project in West Virginia. Whether as a National Historic Park or National Recreation Area, the Canyon must be moved into public ownership as soon as possible.

New threats have us very concerned for the ecological integrity of the Blackwater River and Canyon, including damage to scenic views from Blackwater Falls State Park. Your support is crucial to help push back against these misguided plans.

On a positive note: a crew of seven young people from the National Civilian Community Corps just spent a week with us, clearing autumn olive and multiflora rose from the historic rail trail leading to the Canyon. They attacked the weeds and bushes undermining the foundation of the old train repair shop. Our new greenhouse will hold young plants until warm weather. Meanwhile, expert planning for the Blackwater Loop Trail is moving forward, and the first set of historic signage for downtown Davis has been completed -- due to your generous donations. You can view the signs on our website under “Heritage.”

And exciting new plans for the North Fork of the Blackwater River show a compact system that will receive polluted water from Mine Portal 29, Burns Blowout, and Long Run. Tank clarifiers will remove iron and other particles, and clean water will be returned to the North Fork. When completed, trout will return to this famous waterway!

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We are hard at work responding to the Monongahela National Forest's increased old-growth logging program. Their flawed "Upper Elk" proposal would log in the Roadless Area on Gauley Mountain. Please sign our petition to stop this illegal action and protect the MON's precious Roadless Areas. https://saveblackwater.org/take-action/

We are excited that we will be doing new community projects and publications about Blackwater heroes Carrie Williams and J.R. Clifford, and the fabulous timber and coal boom era in Thomas and Davis. Our children's art contest features "Wildlife in Winter." Get your kids and grandkids to send in their art; details at https://saveblackwater.org/winter-wildlife-art-contest/.

We need to raise funds now to keep our projects going, and especially to get a positive outcome for West Virginia's scenic "Crown Jewel", the Blackwater Canyon.

Help protect the Canyon from roadbuilding and logging. Help educate the public about the unique ecology of the Canyon, and its amazing and diverse history. We need your support so we can continue to build a circle of love and protection around this unique area. Every dollar counts. Remember to shop in our online store, where you can also purchase a gift membership for a friend, books or stuffed animals for kids.

Thanks for your help from all of us at Friends of Blackwater:
Judy, Frank, Samantha, Alicia and Sarah