

Friends of Blackwater



Photo Credit - Doug Sherman, The Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, www.wildflower.org

Working to protect West Virginia's High Alleghenies, Blackwater River & Blackwater Canyon.

501 Elizabeth Street - Charleston, WV 25311 - phone: 304-345-7663 - fax: 304-345-3240 - www.saveblackwater.org - info@saveblackwater.org

IS "GINNY" REALLY PROTECTED BY THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE? EXPERTS REQUEST MORE, BETTER RESEARCH.

The Monongahela National Forest is proposing two major timber projects – one, Big Mountain, in the headwaters of the Potomac River at the southern end of the Spruce Knob Recreation Area; and one, Upper Greenbrier North, in the Greenbrier River watershed just west of Big Mountain. The proposed projects are outlined on the map below.

Purple circles indicate where "Ginny," the West Virginia northern flying squirrel, has been found over the past 30 years. The Forest Service has committed to protecting "Ginny" as an endangered species on their land under an MOU with the Fish and Wildlife Service. This agreement was part of the rationale for removing normal federal protections.

The Big Mountain proposal site includes spraying 1,205 acres with herbicides, burning 3,321 acres, building 25 miles of new logging roads, and timbering 1,174

acres. "Ginny" does not respond well to herbicides, smoke from fires, or tree cutting. In addition, logging could disturb the truffles under the forest floor that make up a large part of Ginny's diet -- truffles that take 30 years to reach maturity!

The Upper Greenbrier North proposal has more flying squirrel capture sites than Big Mountain. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which specializes in flying squirrel protection, made an official objection to parts of the Upper Greenbrier proposal, saying that it did not assure that viable breeding squirrel populations would be preserved and more research was needed.

One criticism of the Upper Greenbrier North proposal came from world-renowned flying squirrel expert and FOB consultant, Dr. Winston Smith. Smith pointed out that a Forest Service plan to "tape-record" squirrel sounds as part of assessing logging impacts can't distinguish males from females. If

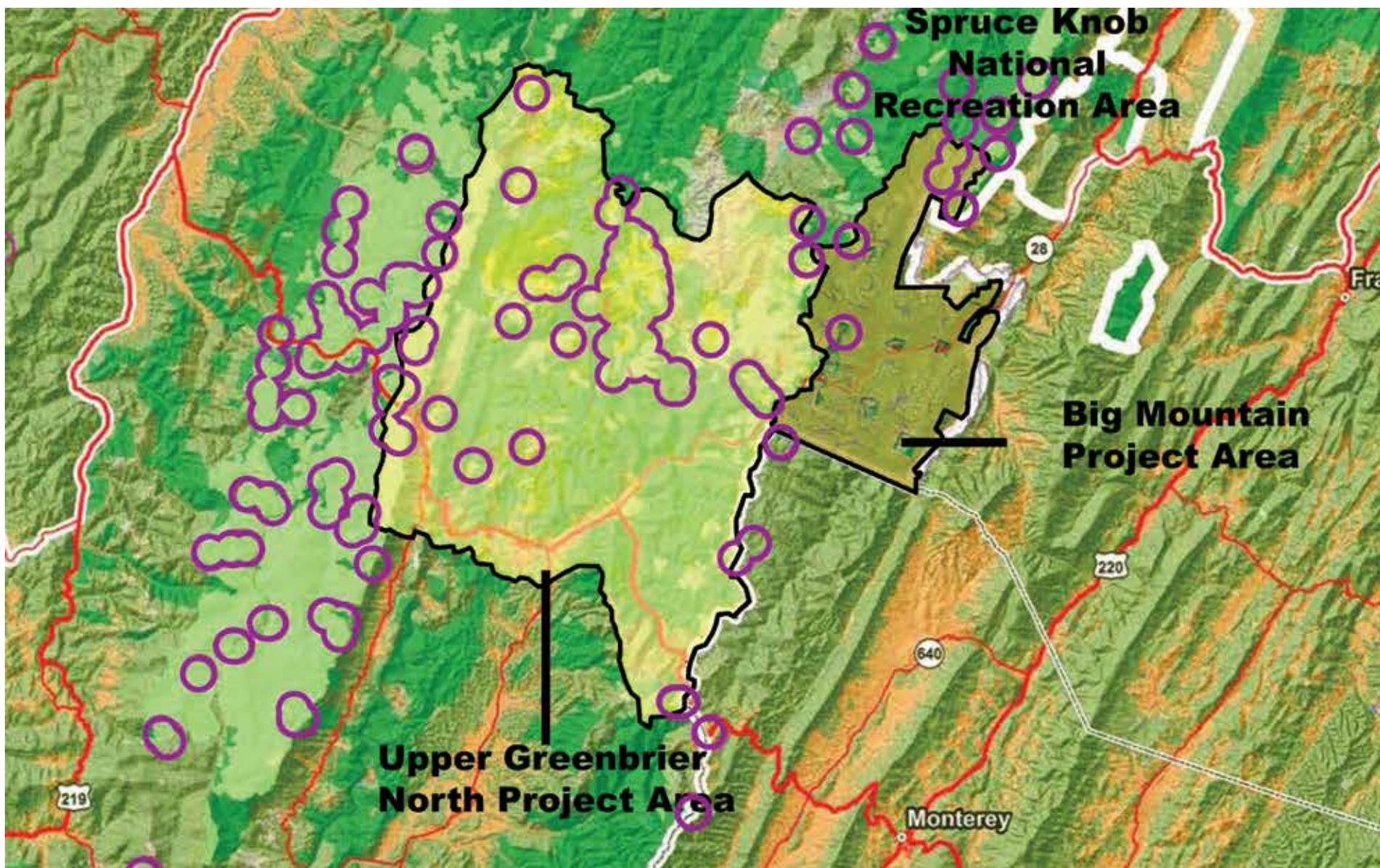
females move away or are killed -- no more squirrel babies, no matter if calls from males are still heard!

At this writing, it appears that the Forest Service is taking the criticisms of the Upper Greenbrier North proposal seriously. Dr. Smith's proposal to add DNA analysis of the squirrels on the Upper Greenbrier Project was met with strong interest.

With your support, FOB and our experts are advocating hard for "Ginny" in the Forest Service permitting process. We are hopeful that the Forest Service will move forward with more in-depth monitoring of the short-term effects of their forest management practices on these rare mammals.

And meanwhile, your donations to Friends of Blackwater support our ongoing cutting-edge research on "Ginny" in the Blackwater Canyon region.

Thanks – and stay tuned!



CLIMATE CHANGE & THE ALLEGHENY HIGHLANDS UPDATE

By Brian Bellew

Hello, readers of the Friends of Blackwater newsletter! I'm Brian Bellew from Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. I'm a senior at WVU majoring in geology. I am working part-time doing outreach programs for FOB's Allegheny Highlands Climate Change Impacts Initiative.

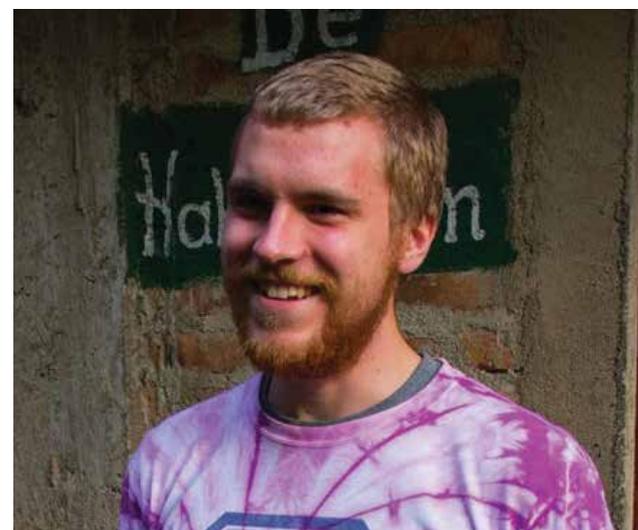
Our Initiative has just issued a new Report, titled "On the Chopping Block." The Report addresses the impacts of rising carbon emissions and global temperatures on the high-mountain ecology and economy of the Allegheny Highlands.

Please go online at www.alleghenyclimate.org, where you can read and download a copy of the Report. If you love West Virginia's Highlands, you will find it compelling. And I would be happy to discuss doing a free presentation on this Report to any groups who are interested. Contact me at brian@alleghenyhighlands.org.

We are excited to see how many people are deeply concerned about the impacts of climate change – in the Highlands and elsewhere. People want to know "what's at stake and what's at risk" – and what we can do to save "Ginny" the West Virginia flying squirrel, and "Brookie" the Eastern brook trout, and our spruce-hardwood forests, and our winter sports industry, and more from runaway climate change.

On February 12 we had a great program on global climate issues in Morgantown, featuring Sarah Forbes, Senior Associate and Energy and China Specialist with the World Resources Institute; and Jerry Fletcher, West Virginia University Professor of Resource Economics and Director of WVU's US-China Energy Center. Nearly 100 people braved a chilly night to hear these great speakers.

Ben Gilmer, Project Manager at



Brian Bellew

Downstream Strategies, moderated the program, and Sam Petsonk, Charleston attorney and former energy policy staffer for the late Senator Robert C. Byrd, was a commenter. There was good audience discussion. Thanks to all of the presenters and everyone who came! You can find a link to a very high-quality video of the event, and see more pictures, at www.alleghenyclimate.org.

We believe that there is a growing audience in West Virginia for reliable, science-driven information about global warming and climate change, impacts on the Highlands, and what we can do.

Thanks to Jamie Van Nostrand and to the WVU Law School and staff for partnering with us and hosting this program. And thanks to the Appalachian Stewardship Foundation, the New York Community Trust, and the supporters of Friends of Blackwater who are making these programs possible!



From left to right: Ben Gilmer, Sarah Forbes, Jerry Fletcher and Sam Petsonk



From left to right: Pat McGinley, Sam Petsonk, Ben Gilmer, Jim Kotcon, Tom Rodd, Bill Price and Paolo Farah



Sarah Forbes of The World Resources Institute

March 2015

DOMINION RESPONDS TO PUBLIC COMMENTS; SURVEYS NEW PIPELINE ROUTE

SUMMARY of FOB Letter to Mon National Forest on the Proposed Dominion Pipeline Surveys sent on February 13, 2015

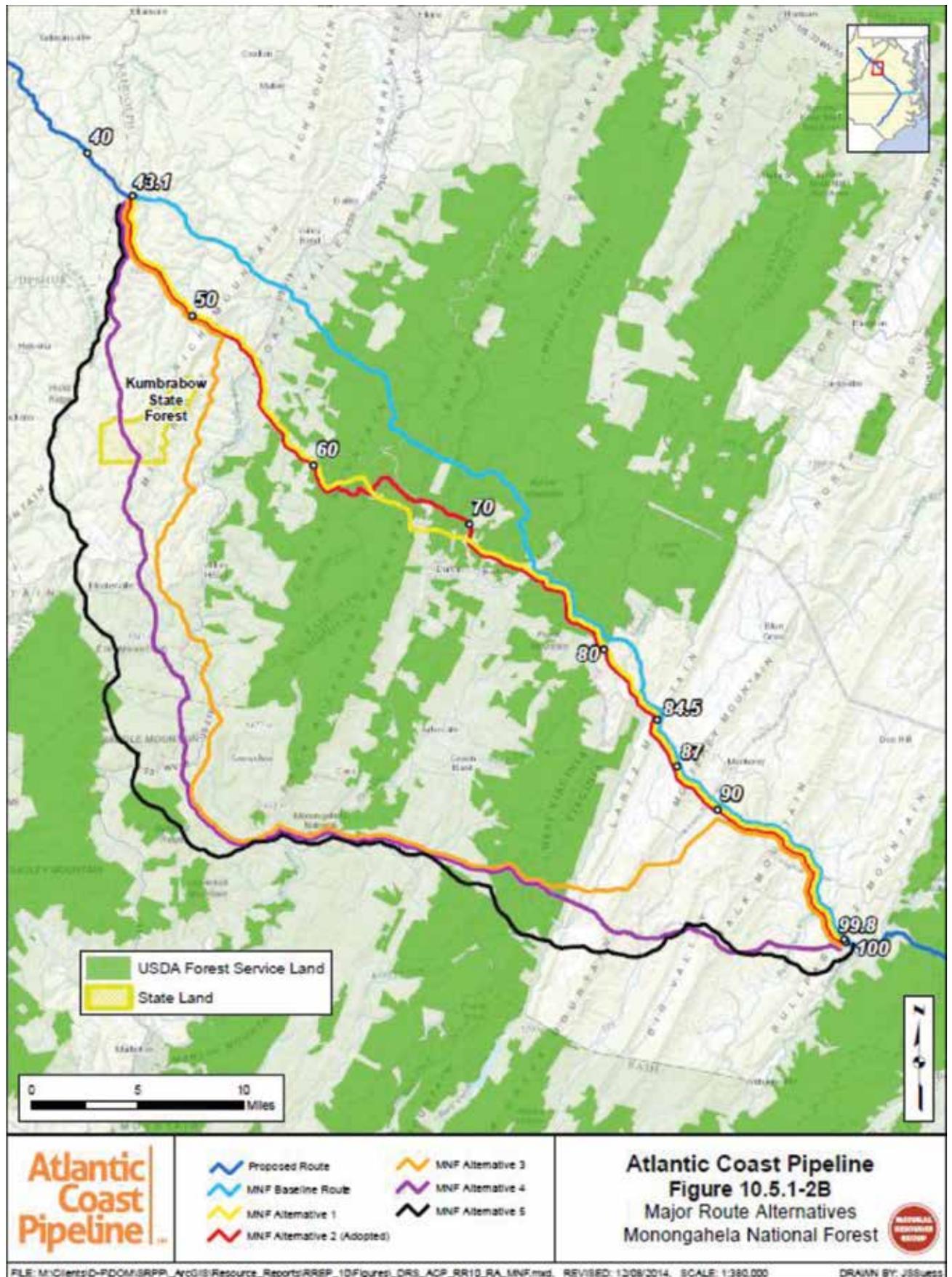
Dear Forest Supervisor,

We are writing to comment on the proposal to issue a special use permit to Dominion Resources for surveys for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline Project (ACP). We are concerned that surveys for this project will not be sufficient to document and protect the resources of the Monongahela National Forest which are owned and valued by the citizens of the United States.

We are concerned about surveys for the West Virginia northern flying squirrel, the Cheat Mt. salamander, the Indiana, Virginia big-eared, and northern long-eared bats, rare mussels, aquatic species, migratory birds and eagles, rare plants, cultural resources, water resources, soils, and caves. We believe that Dominion's current route through the Monongahela and George Washington National Forest is ill-advised and recommend that an alternative route be explored.

New Route to be Considered ...Your Comments Made this Possible!!

Thanks so much to all of you who supported these comments and sent in your own!! Because of your input Dominion is looking at a new route through the high mountains of West Virginia and Virginia which impact less public lands and sensitive areas. See map below for this alternative route #5. According to Dominion Route 5 reduces the number of miles through the Mon National Forest by 2/3rds for a total of 5 miles, it goes through only one tenth of a mile of state land, avoids red spruce/northern hardwood habitat, habitat for northern long eared bats, Cheat Mountain salamander and habitat for "Ginny" the WV northern flying squirrel. Civil war battlefield are also avoided on the new route. Indiana bat habitat is impacted but the size of the disturbance is reduced from 2.4 miles to .9miles. Surveys by Dominion will reveal in more detail Alternative Route 5's impacts.



Black Line is New Route Being Surveyed: Alternative Route 5, Red Line is Original Route



**Heartwood is celebrating its 25 th Annual Forest Council
at Lazy Black Bear, Hoosier National Forest, Indiana
on May 22-25, 2015 (Memorial Day weekend)
For more information visit www.heartwood.org**

TRAIN DERAILMENT MAY AFFECT ENDANGERED MUSSELS

On February 16, 2015 a train with over 100 tankers carrying Bakken crude oil derailed at Armstrong Creek near the Kanawha River. Thanks to the protections of the Endangered Species Act, both the EPA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are actively working to protect endangered freshwater mussels from the spill.

An NBC story reported that "One long-term concern is the potential impact of the spill on endangered freshwater mussels that live in sections of the Kanawha, said Mollie Matteson, a senior scientist with the Center for Biological Diversity in Richland, Vermont. 'They are very dependent on clean water, and so this impact combined with other insults to the river that have happened over the years is very concerning,' she said."

The NBC story continued, "Mussel beds are not located in the immediate vicinity of the oil train derailment, according to John Schmidt, a biologist at the West Virginia Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. But there are mussels downriver and 'the staff biologists working here are concerned that oil may adversely affect the mussels and we are monitoring the situation.'"



Cleaning up the oil spill on the Kanawha River



Spectaclecase



Pink Muck



Fanshell



Sheepnose

SAVE THE MONARCH!

North American monarch butterflies are in trouble. Threats, including loss of milkweed habitat needed to lay their eggs and for their caterpillars to eat, are having a devastating impact on their populations and the migration phenomenon. Unless we act now to help the Monarch, this amazing animal could disappear in our lifetime. Milkweed is disappearing due to herbicide spraying along roadsides and for agriculture.

The monarch butterfly is one of the most recognizable species of wildlife in all of America. They undertake one of the world's most remarkable and fascinating migrations, traveling thousands of miles over many generations from Mexico, across the United States, to Canada.

You can make a difference in bringing back the Monarch. We are working with the West Virginia Field Office of the US Fish and Wildlife Service who have started a service-wide monarch butterfly conservation initiative. Fish and Wildlife will work with private landowners to develop and enhance pollinator habitat on their lands. These projects may range from simple milkweed plantings to school yard habitat development. Contact us to learn more, to get a seed packet for planting milkweed on your land or help school children create a milkweed garden next to their school. Donations are welcome. Go to <http://www.fws.gov/savethemonarch/> for photos and educational materials. For more information please contact Monica at 304-345-7663 x5 or via email at monica@saveblackwater.org.



March 2015

STAND UP FOR THE NORTHERN LONG EARED BAT - AGAIN!!

AS WHITE-NOSE SYNDROME WIPES OUT BATS

In the fall of 2013 Fish and Wildlife recognized the dramatic and rapid decline of northern long-eared bats (NLEB) due to the spread of the deadly white nose syndrome fungus. Forest clearing and mortality at wind turbines are other threats. The US Fish and Wildlife Service originally recommended that these bats be protected as endangered in 2013. But heavy opposition from industry has delayed protection.

We are in the third comment period for the proposal to get federal protection for this tiny bat plunging toward extinction. It ends on March 17th. The Fish and Wildlife has NOW suggested that the bat be listed in the less protective "threatened" category under the Endangered Species Act with exemptions for any timber management activities under section 4(d) of the ESA.

With preliminary results from West Virginia's bat cave surveys indicating that only 50% of last year's populations remain (last year populations of northern long eared bats were down 90%) we believe that the only scientifically justified listing for the NLE bat is as endangered. These bats have been killed by West Virginia industrial wind turbines. We support full federal protection for the northern long-eared bat for these reasons and because bats are an important part of our West Virginia and eastern forest ecosystem.

Northern long-eared bats can't wait any longer for the powerful protection of the Endangered Species Act. Please ask the Fish and Wildlife Service to act quickly to put this tiny mammal under full federal protection to stop its plunge toward extinction. You can make comments here at our website: www.saveblackwater.org



Northern Long Eared Bat

Northern Long-Eared Bat -

- Proposed for Endangered Species Act Listing
- Extremely long, narrow ears extend 4mm past nose when pushed forward
- Narrow, sparsely furred muzzle
- Horizontally striated tail membrane is diagnostic
- Forearm 32-39 mm
- 7-9 g; 9 inch wingspan
- Very similar in appearance to Little Brown Bats
- May roost with other myotis species or in small colonies of conspecifics
- Killed at West Virginia wind turbines
- Found in tree hollows, loose siding
- Hibernating cave bat.



Ed Slone 2012

Little Brown Bat

- Long, narrow ears
- Sharp, furred/whiskered muzzle
- Forearm 34-41mm
- 7-9 g; 9 inch wingspan
- Highly variable in color and body size
- Often uses buildings or barns in the summer
- Migrates to caves in winter – may move 200+ miles to reach appropriate hibernacula
- Forms large colonies
- May roost with other myotis species
- One pup per year
- Lifespan 30+ years
- Hibernating cave bat.



PA Fisher/Commissioner



SAVE LUCY THE BAT

The Save Lucy Campaign was created to raise awareness of white-nose syndrome and its devastating impact on North American bats by:

- 1) Engaging young people to take action on behalf of vanishing bats;
- 2) Empowering young people by providing tools and information with which to effect change and action;
- 3) Providing accurate and timely information to concerned citizens, especially those who normally have no voice in wildlife management decisions;
- 4) Providing conservation education to persons of all ages and abilities;
- 5) Supporting research and other projects that protect bat populations threatened by white nose syndrome through public awareness, funding, and captive bat management.

Thanks so much to Save Lucy the bat for sharing photos and information on these threatened small mammals. Please visit www.savelucythebat.org and support this important project for kids.

Lucy the Little Brown Bat





MEET OUR OTHER BATS IMPACTED BY WHITE NOSE SYNDROME & INDUSTRIAL WIND TURBINES

Eastern Small-Footed Bat

- Distinctive black mask
- Smallest bat in the region
- 3-5g; wingspan 8.5-9 inches
- Foot is only 8mm; keeled calcar
- Associated with scree and talus slopes
- Mountainous areas
- Rare across range
- Dependent on puddles and road ruts for drinking water
- Hibernates in caves or scree



Indiana Bat

- Endangered
- Uses building roosts, but also associated with old trees with sloughing bark
- Is known to roost with Little Brown
- Same size and very similar appearance to Little Brown Bat
- Nose is slightly shorter; face has pinkish cast; keeled calcar; sparse, short toe hairs; small foot
- Migrates to caves for winter; recovered over 200 miles from banding sites.
- Hibernating cave bat.



Courtesy: John Chenger, Bat Conservation & Management, Inc.



Courtesy: NY DEC



Courtesy: John Chenger, Bat Conservation & Management, Inc.

Hoary Bat

- Very distinctive; buffy, gray and rust fur; black points; short rounded ears with black rims
- Forearm 46-58mm; 16 in wingspan
- Largest North American Bat; 20-38grams
- Migratory; may move from Canada to Mexico; overwinters in mid-Atlantic;
- Tree bat; does not use buildings
- Highly impacted by wind turbines
- Winter migration south; No hibernation



TriColored Bat

- Formerly Eastern pipistrelle
- Very small bat with reddish brown fur and red forearms
- 6-8g; up to 9 in wingspan
- Forearm 31-35mm
- Long, pointed ears
- Banded fur; dark, light, dark
- Forms small maternity colonies in tree hollows and sometimes under decks and open barn lofts
- Has twins; pups are under 1g at birth
- Often killed at wind turbine sites
- Migrates to caves for the winter hibernation



Silver Hair Bats

- Very distinctive; black or deep chocolate brown fur with silver tipping on dorsal fur. Face, ear, and facial fur are uniformly dark.
- Medium sized; 8-12g
- Forearm 37-44mm; wingspan 11 in
- Not usually associated with buildings but have been recovered from open sheds and garages during winter
- May enter caves on occasion
- Form small maternity colonies in tree hollows in northeast or in higher elevations in Mid-Atlantic
- found dead at wind turbines
- Winter migration south; No hibernation



Eastern Red Bat

- Buffy, sandy or red with short, rounded ears
- Medium sized bat; 9-15g
- Forearm 35-45mm; 12 in wingspan
- Males are smaller and more brightly colored
- Tree bat; does not use buildings
- Solitary; raises young in tree foliage
- Mates on the wing
- Often hit by cars
- Prone to window strikes
- Blue Jays prey on mothers with young
- wind turbine victims
- Winter migration south; No hibernation



FARM TO SCHOOL PROJECT HELPS TUCKER COUNTY TEEN PAY FOR "NECESSITIES" from WV Dept of Agriculture, Market Bulletin

It's a phrase all too common to parents of today's teens:

"I NEED a new cell phone. I know the one I want is one of the most expensive phone on the market, but..."

When Trenton Helmick posed the question to his father, dad had the perfect answer ready to go.

"Sure," he said. "You can get a new phone as soon as you have the money to pay for it."

Rather than pout, Trenton – a ninth-grader this year at Tucker County High School – planted. He planted squash, he planted zucchini. He planted kohlrabi, Brussel sprouts and beans. He planted ten, 300-foot rows of sweet corn and he planted green peppers.

Throughout the summer he had produce for the local grocery store and the senior center. When school started this fall, he was ready to move into that market as well.

"We went to the senior center and they loved the peppers. They wanted more," said Helmick. "We took them to Shop 'n Save and they said the same thing." He supplied peppers and lettuce at two local restaurants as well.

When school started, he had a bumper crop of green peppers. The cafeteria turned them into stuffed peppers on more than one occasion. Trenton's peppers have been on the school salad bar every day so far this year. The school's cafeteria director – who might only see a food service truck around once a week – now has another option for fresh produce.

"They [the peppers] turned out really

well," said Helmick. Now, "when she needs something, she asks for it, and if we have it, we hook her up. In fact, she just asked for more peppers today."

One of Helmick's keys to success is diversity.

"People like the random stuff," he said. "We have lots of good ideas about what to grow next year. Peppers and beans are the most popular, but we put out a lot of stuff to see what would sell best."

Diversity in markets, as well as products, is also important.

He grew sweet corn that he sold to Tucker County High School, Tucker Valley Elementary and Davis Thomas Elementary. He also sold about five bushels of peppers out of the 50 he grew to Garrett Growers CSA [Community Supported Agriculture – a type of marketing model in which consumers generally pay a set fee for periodic deliveries of fresh produce]. Plus the sales he continues to make with local retailers.

During the interview for this story, a school employee walked in and handed him an envelope with money from one of the local restaurants he supplied. Helmick's best customer is the school system, though. He sold 90 percent of his peppers and half of his beans to the school system.

"I love to provide fresh stuff for the school system to have, and they really do appreciate it a lot," he said.

This is actually Helmick's second year participating in Farm To School. The small plot he began with has become a bigger one. His business has become more sophisticated



Trenton Helmick with some of his peppers as a result.

"The first year, we had few things and made some pretty good money. We were really unorganized," said Helmick. "This year we went big and started a computerized invoice system. It's been really helpful because we know how much people owe us."

The software – called "Invoiceable" – is free, and Helmick says he can access his business records online from any computer, which means his dad can also check the records as he helps with the business.

Helmick says that the work has been a great educational experience. He's looking at applying his knowledge to college or culinary training.

JOIN ALLEGHENY TRAIL SPRING WORK DAYS UPPER BLACKWATER CANYON

"2015 Spring the Road" will take place Friday May 15th through May 17th with a base camp at a cabin in Blackwater Falls State Park. Bring outside sleeping gear (sleeping pad, sleeping bag etc.). Grub – bring your own, or eat someone else's. Blackwater Falls SP has a restaurant with a nice breakfast/dinner buffet.

The target segment will be from the intersection of US 219 and FS Road 18 at MP 84.00, blazing and brushing south on FS 18 to where the ALT intersects and runs with Canyon Rim Trail near Olson Tower. The two+ miles of ALT/Canyon Rim Trail is in rough shape needing major brushing, clearing and blazing. Work along the road to Douglas on FS 18 also needs cleaned up and blazed for the entire nine miles. May spend time on the Heart of the Highlands connector trail and River Road Trail leading into the Blackwater Falls State Park at Davis bridge. Suggested items to bring – loppers, pocket or hand saw and normal day trek gear and personal equipment. Anyone with a vehicle may be asked to shuttle. Blazing paint and brushes will be supplied. Direct questions or a yes of attendance to greg@stratuswave.net 724-428-4456. (Allegheny Trail north section coordinator)

7th Annual CANAAN MTB FESTIVAL 2015
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THURSDAY JUNE 18 RIDE AT FIVE & PARTY AT HELLBENDER BURRITOS
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SATURDAY JUNE 20 GROUP RIDES, LOCAL TRAILS BENEFIT PARTY & RAFFLE
SUNDAY JUNE 21 TRAIL WORK & BIKE HASH

FOR MORE INFO: WWW.CANAANMTBFESTIVAL.BLOGSPOT.COM
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DUANE NICHOLS – A PROUD WEST VIRGINIA CONSERVATIONIST

Duane Nichols is a 1959 graduate of West Virginia University, and was recently inducted into its Academy of Chemical Engineers. Born and raised in Tyler County, West Virginia, Duane graduated with honors in 1959 from WVU, followed by graduate work at the University of Delaware. At Delaware State University he served as the first Head of the Department of Physics and Director of the Nuclear Radiation Laboratory.

In 1968, he moved to WVU and served as coordinator of the National Science Foundation program on "The Siting of Coal Conversion Complexes in Appalachia;" followed by work at the Research Triangle Institute, Durham, NC; and at CONSOL's Research & Development division.

Duane's retirement in 2000, and his involvement with the group "CLEAR" (Cheat Lake Environment & Recreation Association) have allowed him to work on many important environmental issues facing northern West Virginia. They include:

Protecting the Cheat Canyon: CLEAR, Friends of Blackwater, and the West Virginia Chapter of the Sierra Club filed a successful lawsuit against Allegheny Wood Products to protect endangered species in the Canyon, and later helped negotiate its public acquisition. Duane led settlement talks and helped to make sure the public would be able

to access this unique natural treasure.

Longview Power Plant: Duane testified at public hearings before the WV Public Service Commission, the Air Quality Board and the Environmental Quality Board on the impacts of the Longview power plant, including: the smokestack, cooling towers, view shed, noise, truck traffic, and water use.

Monongahela River: Duane served as co-chairman of the Upper Monongahela Watershed Compact. He participated with watershed and conservation groups concerned with the increasing Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) levels in the Mon River and feeder streams.

Dunkard Creek: Duane presented a paper at the 7th National Water Monitoring Conference in which he described the death of an estimated 42,000 fish, 15,000 mussels, 6,000 salamanders and other species due to the invasion of golden algae which bloomed over the entire 42 mile length of Dunkard Creek.

Fracking: Duane edits the internet blog www.FrackCheckWV.net. This site advocates that if the geologic shales are to be drilled & fracked in WV, there should be adequate limitations and regulations to protect surface land owners, the public infra-structure (roads, schools, private homes, etc.), as well as the physical environment.



Duane Nichols

Congratulation to Duane Nichols for his important contributions to protecting West Virginia's outdoor heritage!



Our new AmeriCorps VISTA, Monica Zabroski. If you would like to say hello to Monica or discuss volunteer opportunities with her, you can contact her by calling 304-345-7663 x 5 or via email at monica@saveblackwater.org. You can also stop in at the Davis office and just chat!

SAY HELLO TO MONICA - OUR NEW VISTA

By Monica Zabroski

Hey everyone, my name is Monica and I am so happy to say that I was given the opportunity to serve your community. Environmental stewardship alongside economic growth has been a passion of mine for some time and now I can pay it forward in West Virginia. I graduated from The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey, a college nestled inside the New Jersey Pinelands, last May with a Bachelors of Science in Environmental Science. While I was in school I became involved in many communities based activities such as local clean-ups with the Sierra Club, planting rain gardens with the Littoral Society, and educating the public on how important it is to protect our community and environment. After classes and work I would spend my time enjoying a nice hike or bike ride while throwing in some yoga stretches. These hobbies have led to other hobbies such as nature walks and outdoor concerts. In the future I would love to attend graduate school and then pursue a career involved with groundwater remediation. With all that aside, I am so excited to be lending a helping hand and learning from the culture of the community.

March 2015

FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER ON THE ROAD

A TASTE OF TUCKER GALA

Tasty treats and craft beers, from Stumptown Ale, Mountain State Brewing and the Blackwater Brewing Company, added to the gaiety at the Cultural Center in Charleston on February 12, helping to make the Taste of Tucker Gala a perfect event. FOB Director Judy Rodd, Outreach Coordinator Brandae Mullins and Super Volunteer Sandy Fisher were on hand to network and talk about all the good things happening in Tucker County.



Ned Savage, Davis resident and AmeriCorps VISTA with the Mountain Music Trail, and Sandy Fisher, FOB Super Volunteer had a great chat.



Eric Thompson of WVOnTheGo.com was FOB's tablemate at A Taste of Tucker Gala. Eric is working on 'Free Accessible Adventure Guide' that promotes



Attendees at A Taste of Tucker Gala. Judy Rodd is in pink.

FILM FESTIVAL SUCCESS!

Blizzard conditions didn't stop the deep-powder fun at FOB's Winter Wildlands Alliance Backcountry Film Festival and Dinner in Thomas!

Special thanks to Salud, Tip Top Cafe, Sirianni's, Whitegrass, Potomac Highlands Market, Mountain State Brewing Company, the Golden Anchor, La Fontaine Bakery and the Skiing Chef Johnny Garder. Thanks to ArtSpring for a fabulous artwork display, and thanks to the Vandalia Heritage Foundation for the use of the Peacock Building and to Timberline for their support!



Fabulous art work from ArtSpring was on display as part of the celebration.



Fifty brave souls took on the weather and made it out to the Film Festival.

FRIENDS OF BLACKWATER AT THE CAPITOL



Jeff Allen poses with a copy of "On the Chopping Block", our recently released report on climate change in the Allegheny Highlands

Despite inclement weather that dropped several inches of snow on the capitol city, FOB was part of a strong presence at E-day. Sponsored by the West Virginia E-Council, E-day provides an opportunity to network with legislators and other groups about the issues. We were able to share our work with representatives from OhVEC, Aurora Lights, the E-Council, the WV Council of Churches and many other activist organizations. At noon we were treated to a rousing speech by Bill Price, where he called on citizens and activists alike to remind the legislature of their duties to protect the lands, resources and citizenry of WV.

FOB was proud to share news for our work on Climate Change, "Ginny" the WV Northern Flying Squirrel, water protections and much more with those who were present.



History Day at the Legislature, sponsored by the WV Division of Culture and History was great fun. Frontier forts, revolutionary war sites and Old Hemlock the home of famous West Virginia writer George Bird Evans were represented. FOB's display feature our JR Clifford Project, Our New Home for Liberty living history program and our Celebration of the tiny town of Limerock in Blackwater Canyon. Roy Teter drove all the way from Elkins with his three dimensional diorama of Limerock along the railroad with the river below and a still extant cemetery on the hill above. We got to network with the West Virginia Humanities Council which has supported many of our projects and the state historians who help document the Blackwater Canyon's unique cultural resources.



Friends of Blackwater Booh at Hisory Day

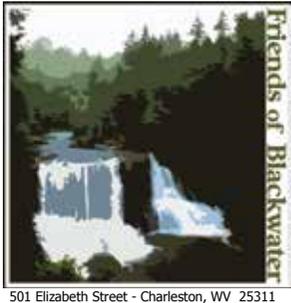


Old Hemlock Foundation



Roy Teter explains his 3-D map of Lime Rock

March 2015



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HISTORIC HIGHLANDS HOME – "OLD HEMLOCK" IN PRESTON COUNTY IS ADDED TO NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

Old Hemlock, the Preston County home of the late authors George Bird Evans and Kay Evans, has been added to the National Register of Historic Places. The Evanses were outdoors lovers, conservationists, authors, artists, philanthropists, preservationists, and dog breeders.

The Evanses moved to a 1782 log cabin near Bruceton Mills in Preston County in 1939. They called the property "Old Hemlock" after the virgin hemlock trees on the land. Originally from Uniontown, Pa., George Evans was an illustrator for Cosmopolitan magazine. He also collaborated on mystery novels with his wife Kay and wrote about the outdoors, including hunting grouse and woodcock.

Steve Smith, publications director of Village Press Inc., said "George made his thousands of followers learn about and come to love Old Hemlock; it became their vicarious getaway place, just as it was for George and Kay in reality." Eliza Newland, a WVU Public History master's graduate who worked with the Old Hemlock Foundation last year, organized and wrote the National Register application.

Famed West Virginia birder LeJay Graffious is one of the directors of the Old Hemlock Foundation and is the property administrator and caretaker. The Foundation was set up to take care of the property, give out scholarships and fund conservation projects. LeJay said that when Evans bought the property the timber had already been sold. He went to the timber man and bought back the trees to save them. That made him a conservationist Now his house and land are conserved for posterity.

Thanks to the State Journal for this informati on.

