BLACKWATER CANYON
THREATENED AGAIN!

Blackwater Canyon © Kent Mason
BLACKWATER CANYON THREATENED AGAIN! – WHAT YOU CAN DO

For more than fifteen years, the core mission of Friends of Blackwater has been to protect the 10,000 acre Blackwater Canyon, West Virginia’s scenic “Crown Jewel” -- and to move the approximately 2,500 acres of land in the Canyon remaining in private hands into public ownership.

In advancing this core mission, we have had many successes, including protecting scenic Lindy Point and adding hundreds of acres to Blackwater Falls State Park. But there is much more to do. And as I write this letter, the Blackwater Canyon faces grave threats.

Allegheny Wood Products (“AWP”) is moving ahead with plans for logging and development on their private land in the Canyon, along the Blackwater River. Bulldozers and chainsaws could be in the Canyon this fall, doing serious harm to endangered bats, to “Ginny” the West Virginia Flying Squirrel, to the Cheat mountain salamander, and to the Blackwater River.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service must review AWP’s plans before the company could get a permit to injure endangered species in the Canyon. As part of the application process, there is a federal comment period, which provides a major opportunity to mobilize scientific, public, and policy opinion and pressure. FOB will let you know immediately when any comment period begins, so you can make your voice heard!

AWP’s owner has said he is willing to sell this property, but negotiations have stalled and need to be restarted. We are asking West Virginia Governor Earl Ray Tomblin to help restart negotiations. And, to get additional funds for this purchase, we need to engage the West Virginia delegation to Congress. Please, let your views be heard – they make a difference! Call or write the Governor and the WV delegation and ask that all of the Blackwater Canyon be put in public ownership. We have to keep the pressure on!

There is a second threat to the Canyon that you need to know about. The U.S. Forest Service has failed to maintain the beautiful hiking trails in the Blackwater Canyon -- including the Blackwater Canyon Rail Trail, Canyon Rim Trail, and Limerock Trail. We recognize that huge budget cuts have created big problems for the Forest Service, but at some places on these trails toppled trees block pathways, along with stinging nettles and overgrown rhododendron, make hiking and biking impossible. Additionally, the camping area at the head of Big Run and the picnic area around Olson Fire Tower have been sorely neglected. You can visit www.saveblackwater.org to send a comment to the Forest Service today. Feel like an adventure? Call our office in Davis at (304) 259-5600, and volunteer for a work crew to clear brush!

Our focus on the Blackwater Canyon is unrelenting, and it is our supporters who make that focus possible. Thanks!

You can also send a letter to Governor Tomblin by visiting our website at www.saveblackwater.org

GOVERNOR AND CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin
State Capitol
1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East
Charleston, West Virginia 25305
Phone: (304) 558-2000 or 1-888-438-2731
http://www.governor.wv.gov/Pages/contact.aspx

U.S Senator John D. Rockefeller IV
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510
Phone: (202) 224-6472
http://www.rockefeller.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/email-jay

U.S. Senator Joe Manchin
306 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC, 20510
Phone: 202-224-3954
http://www.manchin.senate.gov/public/index.cfm/contact-form

U. S. Congressman David McKinley
412 Cannon HOB
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Phone: (202) 225-4172
http://mckinley.house.gov/contact-me
Two years ago Friends of Blackwater asked a wide range of citizen groups concerned about public lands to come together to research and publish an online “Citizens’s Guide to Fracking Problems on Our Eastern National Forests.”

Now the new website is completed, and it can be seen at saveblackwater.org/gasdrilling/index.html. The site shows how the Buckeye Forest Council stopped fracking in the Wayne National Forest in Ohio; and how, in Alabama’s Talladega National Forest, dangerous drilling was put on hold by challenges from the Southern Environmental Law Center, Natural Resources Defense Council, and Wild South.

A recent article in Blue Ridge Outdoors says "new forms of drilling have now put the oil and gas resources beneath the Eastern public lands within reach. Much of the region’s drinking water comes from sources with headwaters in protected national forestlands. Will your drinking water soon be laced with fracking chemicals? Will your favorite forest campground or trail soon become a wasteland of wells, towers, and toxic ponds?"

According to the article, in Virginia’s George Washington National Forest (which is like a sister to West Virginia’s "Mon Forest"), the Forest Service is revising its management plan. Fracking opponents pushed for a prohibition on horizontal drilling; this was included in a draft of the plan before political and industry pressure forced to it be dropped. A decision on the GW fracking plan will be announced in October. Go to www.blueridgeoutdoors.com for the rest of the article by Jeremiah Knupp.

FOB’s new website, “A Citizens’s Guide to Fracking Problems on Our Eastern National Forests,” comes at an critically important time. Groups from Mississippi to Michigan, and from Maryland to Arkansas, need to understand the problems created by proposals for fracking on our public lands, and they need the tools to challenge damaging projects.

No fracking has been proposed on West Virginia’s Monongahela National Forest since 2010, when Friends of Blackwater raised objections; but we are remaining vigilant. And we are glad that so many allies and friends have joined in this collective effort to protect our public lands. Thanks to our FOB supporters who make this work possible.

ROYALTY AMONG US

One of our wonderful volunteers is royalty! Miss Kelcie Mullins has been appointed to be a princess at the 77th Mountain State Forest Festival by Senator Brooks McCabe of Kanawha County. Kelcie has volunteered many hours for Friends of Blackwater doing everything from monitoring water to assisting with productions of the J.R. Clifford Project.

Kelcie is also the daughter of FOB staffer Brandae Mullins. Kelcie is currently a Sophomore at Davis and Elkins College, where she is majoring in History and Biology with a minor in Education. She is a member of the National Society for Leadership and Success as well as being the President of D&E’s chapter of Alpha Phi Omega, as service fraternity.

Besides her area ties through FOB, Kelcie also has family ties. Her family includes the Moyers of Durbin, WV.

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 19, 2013 - "A New Home for Liberty" Randolph County Courthouse, Elkins, WV

September 27-29, 2013 - Leaf Peepers Festival, Davis, WV

September 28, 2013 - Tour of Davis/Run For It, Davis, WV

September 28 - October 6, 2013 - Mountain State Forest Festival, Elkins, WV

October 22, 2013 - "A New Home for Liberty", Independence Hall, Wheeling, WV

Visit www.jrclifford.org for times
West Virginia Bats are "Getting Hammered."

In a recent conversation with Craig Stihler of the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources, Stihler reported on the spring 2013 survey of bats in Hellhole Cave, in Pendleton County -- which holds more bats than any other cave in the State. What happens in Hellhole reflects what is happening to bats across West Virginia.

Mr. Stihler said that little brown bat populations are down 97% -- from 87,000 in 2010 to less than 2,500; and that Indiana bats are down approximately 86%, from the 2010 number of 18,000 to a 2013 number of 2,500!! See our website, www.saveblackwater.org, for the complete DNR report, with photos. We all are indebted to the intrepid biologists and spelunkers who collected the data for this important study.

What We Can Do

Solutions require all possible action to preserve these bat species, and nurse them back to health. Bats are pervasive, all-important creatures, whose prodigious appetite for insects is vital to our agriculture, forestry, and public health. Here's some of what Friends of Blackwater is doing to respond to this crisis, and what you can help to succeed.

Beginning two years ago, Friends of Blackwater formed a coalition of scientists and advocates that has formally asked the Fish and Wildlife Service to review the status of the little brown bat and to list the species as endangered. We expect a decision by the end of the year, and this decision will be an important step as we go forward to meet this crisis.

Additionally, on February 28, 2013 Friends of Blackwater's lawyers filed an eighty-six page objection to the grossly overbroad U.S. Forest Service Upper Greenbrier North timbering proposal. The timbering proposal, as currently outlined, will destroy critical habitat for endangered bats that live between Gaudineer Knob and Blister Swamp -- in the headwaters of the Greenbrier River, and next to the headwaters of the Potomac.

We will keep you updated on this breaking crisis. Thanks to all who support FOB's work to protect the landscapes, communities, and creatures of the West Virginia Highlands.

You can read the Hellhole Survey Report by visiting www.saveblackwater.org.

Sad to say, in their DC-bureaucrat driven rush to "get out the cut," Forest Service officials are ignoring the huge downward spiral of endangered bat colonies. Friends of Blackwater and the Center for Biological Diversity have sent two supplementary letters to the Forest Service, identifying bats on the proposal area, and pointing to new research on bat mortality. But so far, the Forest Service has not modified their ill-advised plans, and are continuing with "business as usual" -- while entire species are disappearing!
NORTH FORK WATERSHED PROJECT WATER QUALITY MONITORS FIND POLLUTION VIOLATIONS ON BEAVER CREEK; ENFORCEMENT FOLLOWS.

Local water quality monitors are a key part of protecting the health of West Virginians and enforcing our laws against pollution. Here’s an example of why, from our own North Fork Watershed Project in Tucker County -- at the head of the Blackwater Canyon.

In August 2013, after we heard from local residents about massive sediment pollution in Beaver Creek that was reaching the Blackwater River at Davis, we dispatched volunteer water quality monitors, Lon Marshall and Bij Sarlati. Initial tests showed turbidity -- from massive slugs of raw dirt and mud runoff -- to be way above allowable limits near the mouth of Beaver Creek. FOB’s volunteers followed the pollution upstream, and found it was coming from a road construction site operated by the J.F. Allen Company. At the construction site, legally required silt fences were down and not working, and ditches made to catch polluted water were flowing directly into Beaver Creek.

FOB immediately reported the problem to West Virginia’s Division of Environmental Protection – providing the agency with photos and pollution measurements that proved the case. An inspector came out the next day, pointed out basic problems, and asked the company to follow the requirements of their construction permit. But when inspectors returned a week later, they found the company still out of compliance, and wrote a Notice of Violation. Cited as unsatisfactory were: maintenance, diversions, unprotected downslope areas, and areas left unstable for more than 14 days. Cited as marginal were silt fences, seeding, mulching, ditches, berms and pipe slope drains.

We hope that the J.F. Allen Company will have fixed the problem. Pollution can be avoided, but it takes effort – and, unfortunately, sometimes it takes law enforcement to be sure that effort is made.

A Lot is At Stake

Friends of Blackwater is very concerned about this kind of pollution, because siltation from Beaver Creek kills fish right downstream in the Blackwater River, degrading the Blackwater as it flows through Davis and Blackwater Falls State Park. Already, from our Davis office overlooking the Blackwater, fishermen are not lining the riverbank as usual. A lot is at stake here. Millions of dollars and decades of work by public and private organizations and individuals, to restore the Blackwater River into one of the State’s top trout fisheries, will be undermined -- if this kind of pollution continues.

When citizens see violations of the law, and law enforcement follows up properly, we can protect the natural world and the creatures that live here. That's good business for everyone. FOB is proud of our monitors, and of all of their fellow public servants who enforce our pollution laws. And we thank our supporters who make this work possible. (We always need donations to help pay for testing equipment and laboratory fees). Please visit www.saveblackwater.org to read our report.
THE J.R. CLIFFORD PROJECT

HISTORIC MARKERS DEDICATED IN TUCKER COUNTY

Two new historic markers were dedicated in Tucker County on June 24, 2013 – and both feature Blackwater heroes. Blackwater Hero number one is Carrie Williams, an African American schoolteacher who went to court to get equal school terms for the children of "colored" workers in the Coketon coke ovens, in the 1890s. Blackwater Hero number two is J.R. Clifford, West Virginia’s first African American attorney, who persuaded a Tucker County jury and the West Virginia Supreme Court that Carrie Williams and her pupils were right! One of the historic markers celebrating these heroes and Tucker County’s legacy of diversity is in front of the Tucker County Courthouse. The other is in Coketon, at the head of the Blackwater Canyon, near the Coketon Colored School site and in front of the Buxton Landstreet Company Store Building. Brochures on these markers can be picked up at our Davis Office or the local Visitors Center.

CLIFFORD AND WILLIAMS VISIT TUCKER COUNTY

We celebrated these markers and West Virginia’s 150th Birthday at the Tucker County High School on Monday, June 24, at the Tucker County High School, co-sponsored by the Tucker County Historical Society and New Historic Thomas. Senior Supreme Court Justice Larry Starcher portrayed Circuit Judge Joseph Hoke, who presided at the Carrie Williams trial. Pam and Art Dodds played Governor and Mrs. Pierpont with Jackie Dooley playing Carrie Williams and Professor Atiba Ellis as J.R. Clifford. Music was provided by Carrie and Michael Kline and Mont Miller, Esq.’s Church Quartet.
The J.R. Clifford Project has just completed a new classroom/tourism map and poster, titled "A New Home for Liberty." The poster celebrates people of all colors – like J.R. Clifford and the abolitionist West Virginia statemakers Gordon Battelle and Granville Hall -- who fought 150 years ago to put a new, free star in "Old Glory. The poster tells the little-known story of how West Virginia’s statemakers grappled with the issue of slavery, as the Civil War raged around them. You can see the new poster online at [www.jrclifford.org](http://www.jrclifford.org).

Ten thousand posters are printed and ready for distribution, and West Virginia teachers are anxious to receive and use them. We are working to get them distributed to schools, libraries, museums, visitor centers and parks. Order one today for $3.00, and $1.00 for each additional map. Help us show our children and West Virginia visitors images like the medals that the new State of West Virginia awarded to African American soldiers in 1865. Send a donation to the J.R. Clifford Project at Friends of Blackwater, 501 Elizabeth St. Charleston, WV 25311. Or order one online from [www.jrclifford.org](http://www.jrclifford.org).
Dear Senator Rockefeller:

The reason for this letter is that I think it is time that the Allegheny Mountains got the recognition as a natural wonder that they deserve and get a National Park. The Blue Ridge chain has two national parks, and even the Cuyahoga Valley has one. It is true that the Alleghenies/Cumberlands are not the highest mountains in the U.S., but in terms of rugged terrain, combined with variety of vegetation; they are certainly in the competition for being among the most scenic. It is true that the New River area has a sort of protected status, which it deserves. But the New River area, for all its scenic greatness, does not quite epitomize the intrusion of northern topographic, vegetative and climatic patterns into a relatively southern area that the higher areas of the Alleghenies do.

A basic question this poses is what areas should be included, and whether or not they must all be contiguous. The core area I see for inclusion is the present-day Blackwater Falls State Park and some areas adjacent to it. In my view, this is the most spectacular scenic place in West Virginia, though Grandview in Raleigh County is a good #2 on this list. I remember once that I got a letter from my mother saying that Blackwater was the “St. Moritz of West Virginia” – at that time, I had seen St. Moritz, but no Blackwater. I think that claiming that the Blackwater Falls area matches the absolutely world-class scenery of the Upper Engadine Valley of Switzerland is a bit of a stretch: the same comment would go for the Tetons, Yosemite, Yellowstone, etc. in the American West as compared Blackwater. But Blackwater has some things that most places don’t, and that is variety of trees and shrubs, of both Canadian and more temperate natural origins. It’s the sense of height – at least by eastern U.S. standards – combined with the sense of being on climatic, topographic and vegetative boundaries that makes that area so important. Being close to large population centers is also a bonus.

In addition to the Blackwater area, certain nearby areas should be considered. Dolly Sods and some of the Canaan Valley area are examples, as is possibly Spruce Knob as well as some of the Keyser’s Ridge area in Garrett County, Maryland and lapping over just into Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Farther south, some of the Cranberry Back Country is also a possibility.

No I realize that there are a lot of practical questions connected with the above. The most obvious is that it would cost a lot of money, at a time when the existing national parks are hard-pressed for cash for maintenance and the overarching problems of the federal deficit create grave concerns. But this country has always been concerned about maintaining its spectacular natural heritage. Think how much was done during the Depression to develop national and state parks and other recreational facilities. There has always been some way to deal with issues of this sort even through the hardest of economic times. It may take some creative thinking to maneuver with current economic realities to pursue a project like this today, as for example with emphasis on private-public cooperation.

Why write to you in particular? Several reasons – first of all, you have quite a bit of seniority in the U.S. Senate, and you are retiring after next year. Second of all, you are a link between rural West Virginia and the metropolitan east coast U.S., which would supply most of the visitors for such a park. Third, the Rockefeller family has a long history of involvement in preservation activities, of which Colonial Williamsburg is an example. For these reasons, I hope that this project interests you, and that you can get something done about it.

Yours very truly, Thorn C. Roberts
NORTH FORK WATERSHED UPDATES

EXPERTS ATTEND THOMAS MEETING ON NORTH FORK OF BLACKWATER

On July 11, 2013, Friends of Blackwater hosted a meeting of agency folks working to improve the North Fork of the Blackwater River. Representatives from the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), West Virginia University’s Water Research Institute, the Mayor of Thomas, local watershed groups, Green Rivers Corporation, and FOB volunteers and staff attended. The Abandoned Mine Land Section of the DEP filled us in on current and future projects planned to reduce acid mine drainage pollution from the old mine works that honeycomb the hills around the Town of Thomas. Water running through these abandoned tunnels becomes toxic and seeps out of hillsides and old mine portals.

Right now the DEP is completing a large project on Long and Tub Runs on the North side of Blackwater Canyon, that will seal up mine portals and stop rain and small streams from entering underground mine works and adding to the polluted water beneath the surface. Additional projects will be done on the Albert Highwall above Douglas, Pendleton Creek, Roger Camp Hill Refuse, Chaffey Run Strip, Davis Coal and Coke near the Francis Grade and on Snyder Run. Following the meeting we toured the Tub Run and Long Run Reclamation sites. Thanks to Jim Baczuk for the great tour! These projects clean up dangerous and polluting sites and create jobs! And thanks to FOB supporters who make this all possible.

THREE RIVER QUEST VOLUNTEERS

In July we also held a training for recruit new water monitors under the Three River Quest Program at WVU, which is expanding our knowledge of water quality across the state. Join us for trainings this fall and we will supply you with equipment to do monitoring in a stream near you. Results go to WVU for their database to help us improve the state’s waterways. Super Volunteer Lon Marshall, who did great work on Beaver Creek, was recruited through this program. Thanks also to Paul Baker of Save the Tygart who was our trainer!! For more information please call 304-259-5600.

BUXTON-LANDSTREET – THE COMPANY STORE & NEW ART GALLERY

The Buxton & Landstreet Company opened in 1889 to do general merchandising in Davis Coal and Coke Co. mining towns and provided for the needs of the miners and their families. The store in Coketon was considered the finest building in the county, with its white tile bricks, ornamental ceilings, graceful columns and electric lights. Much of the original beauty and fixtures can still be seen today in the newly refurbished Buxton and Landstreet Gallery.

The Company Store closed with the downturn in mining during the 1950’s. Various businesses used the building in following years including a bottling company during the 1970’s. Today the Buxton and Landstreet Building is owned by Vandalia, Inc., a non-profit focused on historical preservation and community development. Currently there are various organizations such as Trout Unlimited, using the upper floor office space. The front of the building with its gardens and front room includes Gallery space for regional artists and artisans which works well with the beauty of the building. There are studios in the back rooms for use by artisans, including occasional classes.

When you are in the area, stop into the Buxton-Landstreet building and check out the beauty of the building and the beautiful work in the Gallery. Some of the artists exhibiting are Ron Hinkle, Brian Van Nostrand, Seth Pitt, Kimberly Trathen of Back Stitched, quilter Margaret Babb and potters Lori Haldeman and Ben Nelson of Thomas Clay Works and many more. We are on Facebook at the Buxton and Landstreet Gallery where you can see pictures of the artwork in the Gallery space. The gallery also hosts special occasions and events such as the upcoming fundraiser for the Tucker County Animal Shelter. Stop by and visit – Friday’s through Monday’s every week.
IN MEMORY AND HONOR

ELIZABETH FOSTER SCHOYER  1919-2013

Elizabeth Foster Schoyer, a longtime supporter of Friends of Blackwater and the mother of FOB Director Judy Schoyer Rodd, was born in 1919 on her grandfather’s farm in the Squirrel Hill section of Pittsburgh, and died on June 10, 2013, on that same property at the age of 94. Mrs. Schoyer’s grandmother used to ride on horseback from Pittsburgh to the family farm near Paw Paw, W.Va; and Mrs. Schoyer spent many summer days and holidays gathering her family around her at that farm, where they learned the wildflowers and creatures, the rhythms and the mysteries, of the countryside.

In 1943, Mrs. Schoyer married Judy Rodd’s father, the late Edward Holyoke Schoyer, a lawyer and great conservationist, and they had three children. Mrs. Schoyer worked as the librarian at St. Edmund’s Academy from 1957 to 1972. She was a docent at the Carnegie Museum for 33 years and a member of the Museum Women’s Committee for 54 years. She loved taking groups of school children around the Museum. Reading and gardening were also favorite pastimes; she started a book club that lasted 50 years, and was a member of the Hillcrest Garden Club. To help promote racial equality and understanding, in 1967 Mrs. Schoyer helped found the Freedom House Ambulance Service, an ambulance service for underserved African American communities. Mrs. Schoyer will be deeply missed by all who knew her and her many great achievements and good works will live on.

JIM WELCH  1955-2013

Jim Welch loved his son, James, his wife, Kristie, his dogs, Darla and Punkin’ and the forest in West Virginia in that order. He always felt more at home in the woods than anywhere else. Jim backpacked with his friends and family in the Cranberry Wilderness almost 100 times in the last 38 years and supported the wild places in West Virginia throughout his lifetime. Taken from us too soon at only 57 years young by pneumonia on July 6, Jim named the Friends of Blackwater for his memorial donations. In the 1970s, Jim was a supporter of the West Virginia Highlands Conservancy and active in the Cranberry Backcountry study area project helping the Cranberry earn its national wilderness designation in 1983. A writer of children’s poetry, pen and ink artist, gardener and gourmet cook, Jim earned his living working with residents of Montgomery County, Maryland solving their recycling problems. He thought that his most lasting contribution to his beloved Cranberry was inviting friends along on trips and providing them with the equipment needed to enjoy the wilderness thereby supporting the growth of new lovers of the forest. Although he lived in Maryland, his heart was never very far from that next backpacking trip to West Virginia. Good Journey, Jim. Written by Kristie Welch.

HUGH YOUNG 1930-2013

Excerpts from Obit Hugh Young By Paula Reed Ward / Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

As a physics professor at Carnegie Mellon University, Hugh David Young was known for writing one of the most widely used introductory textbooks in his field -- and for hosting Thanksgiving dinner.

Every year, he and his wife, Alice Carroll, invited students from the department to their Squirrel Hill home for holiday dinner, where they would dress up, mingle with the family and often play Monopoly.

"I knew I was coming to the home of the premier physics educators in the world," said Steve Garoff, the incoming head of the physics department, who joined the faculty in 1988. "If there was one teacher you learned from, it was Hugh. "What I didn't know -- from afar -- was his impact on students outside his classroom. I would do anything to know the secret of being that tough and that loved," Mr. Garoff said. Mr. Young's exams were difficult, he continued, but because of the clarity he offered in his lectures, the students didn't know it. "He was so brilliant. His mind was so boggling; there was so much in it," Ms. Carroll said.

Mr. Young retired from CMU in 2004 -- after spending more than 50 years at the university. Even after that, though, Mr. Young maintained an office and continued to revise his books, including University Physics, which is in its 13th edition and still one of the most widely used introductory textbooks in the field.

Hugh was a long time donor to Friends of Blackwater.

"Start out the way you would have them grow. Jim Welch (34) and his son (20 months) hiking the Middle Fork Trail in the Cranberry Wilderness in 1989."
“Ginny,” the West Virginia flying squirrel, is a furry, big-eyed, nocturnal and truffle-eating resident of the boreal forests of the High Alleghenies – including the Blackwater Canyon. Although there are less than one thousand of Ginny's species in the entire world, their legal protection under the Endangered Species Act was stripped away by the Bush Administration. Since then, Friends of Blackwater has been fighting to get Ginny back on the Endangered Species list, where she and her babies will be protected.

Today, “Ginny” has a new champion on her scientific team in the person of Dr. Liz Flaherty, Assistant Professor of Forestry and Natural Resources at Purdue University. She will partner with Dr. Winston Smith and her students to collect and analyze the hair and fecal pellets to find out what Ginny is eating throughout the year, and where that food is found. This field work has never been done before, and could yield important results for preserving Ginny's species, which is already stressed by climate change. Importantly, Friends of Blackwater needs to raise $6,500 for lab supplies and isotope analysis of samples for Dr. Flaherty's work. Please help!

Dr. Flaherty received a bachelor’s degree in wildlife and fisheries biology and management, and a doctoral degree in zoology and physiology from the University of Wyoming, and a master’s of natural science in biology from Southeast Missouri State University. For the past ten years Dr. Flaherty has been conducting research in the Tongass National Forest of Southeast Alaska, investigating the responses of northern flying squirrels, other species of small mammals, and mesocarnivores to various timber harvest and management treatments. We are honored to have Dr. Liz Flaherty’s expertise brought to bear on protecting Ginny – our "poster child" for the Blackwater Canyon and the High Alleghenies.
NEW DISCOVERIES ON GINNY’S GENES!!

Recent research on flying squirrel genetics shows that Ginny and her species have the most genetic diversity of any northern flying squirrels on the North American continent -- and that they are therefore likely the original population from which all others evolved. Their genetic diversity means that they can more easily adapt and survive climate change, when other northern flying squirrel populations may not. This discovery makes Ginny and her species even more important to conserve!

Photo by Alex Badyaev at tenbestphotos.com