

# WOODS & WATERS

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## National forest trail is a gem

**Editor:**

Thank you for Sunday's article by Ben Cramer about the proposed Morrison Run Wilderness Area and Morrison hiking trail in the Allegheny National Forest (ANF). Cramer is correct that Morrison Run is a true gem for backcountry recreation.

The nearly 7,000-acre area is actually one of eight tracts in the ANF — totaling 54,460 acres — outlined for wilderness designation in our Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest.

The proposal has been endorsed by more than 100 business throughout Pennsylvania as good for hunting, fishing, hiking, and tourism. It has also been endorsed by the Moshannon Group of the Sierra Club that Cramer is a member of, and many other conservation organizations whose memberships total over 400,000 Americans.

Wilderness designation requires an act of the U.S. Congress. Centre County residents can help preserve wilderness in perpetuity by writing to the new 5th district Rep. beginning next month, encouraging him to legislatively support the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal. See [www.pawild.org](http://www.pawild.org) for more information.

The ongoing boom in oil drilling in the ANF in response to skyrocketing fuel prices that Cramer references is negatively affecting many wild parts of the forest, making our cause that much more urgent. However, I do commend the U.S. Forest Service for their due diligence and professionalism in trying to manage a situation that is virtually untenable. More than 90 percent of all mineral rights underlying the ANF are privately owned, and owners are permitted by law to access their properties for development.

**Kirk Johnson, Executive Director  
Friends of Allegheny Wilderness  
Warren**

**We've Got Mail**