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SBU speaker to talk wilderness issues

ST. BONAVENTURE — Kirk Johnson, president of the Friends of the Allegheny Wilderness, will visit St. Bonaventure University on Oct. 30 to discuss the Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest, the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act and the 30th anniversary of the Pennsylvania Wilderness Act.

The program will begin at 4 p.m. in the Beltz Gallery of the Regina A. Quick Center for the Arts. It is free and open to the public.

The Friends of the Allegheny Wilderness is a nonprofit organization based in Warren, Pa., that works to protect the wilderness in the Allegheny National Forest.

The talk augments the Quick Center's main exhibition, "On Nature's Terms: Paintings by Thomas Paquette Commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act." The exhibition runs through Nov. 22.

Mr. Johnson earned a bachelor's degree from Albion College in 1992, and a Master of Environmental Studies degree from The Evergreen State College in 1999. He founded the nonprofit organization Friends of Allegheny Wilderness in Warren in 2001 and serves as executive director. He also serves on the Programs Committee for the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance.

Fifty years have passed since the Wilderness Act of 1964 was signed into law, protecting the wildest remaining lands in the United States. This exhibition celebrates the places preserved by that law — places that thrive not because of industry and scientific progress but by the forces of nature alone, protected from significant human intrusion.

Mr. Paquette's paintings in "On Nature's Terms" were inspired by his journeys to federal wilderness areas all across the country. The great diversity and vitality of environments that comprise the National Wilderness Preservation System — from Southwest canyons and high peaks to lowland swamps and deserts — are reflected in these gouache and oil paintings.

Subjects include Okefenokee Swamp in the South to Boundary Waters Canoe Area in the North, and other wilderness areas from New Hampshire to California, including places in Arizona, Colorado, Georgia, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Pennsylvania, Utah and Wyoming.

The Quick Center's regular gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and noon to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Museum admission is free and open to the public year round. Visit the Quick Center online at www.sbu.edu/quickcenter.