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Proposed Tracy Ridge Wilderness Area on the ANF featured in national hiking magazine

WARREN — The proposed Tracy Ridge Wilderness Area on the Allegheny National Forest is featured on the front cover of the newest issue of North Star: The magazine of the North Country Trail Association.

The photo of the proposed Tracy Ridge Wilderness Area featured in the new North Star, titled “Johnnycake Run Sunset,” was taken by FAW executive director Kirk Johnson in the Johnnycake Run area near the Allegheny Reservoir.

Tracy Ridge, located in McKean and Warren counties, is more than 9,500 acres in size — by far the largest roadless area on the Allegheny — and contains a nine-mile segment of the North Country National Scenic Trail.

The magazine chose to fea-

ture the site due to its being such a contiguous tract of wilderness-quality land containing a portion of the North Country Trail.

The Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club first proposed Tracy Ridge for wilderness designation in 1973, and their proposal was supported by then-U.S. Sens. Hugh Scott and Richard Schweiker.

In 2003, the Warren-based non-profit organization Friends of Allegheny Wilderness again proposed the pristine Tracy Ridge area for wilderness designation in their Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal — supported by the vast majority of public comments received.

Tracy Ridge and three other formally recognized roadless areas on the Allegheny, as

well as tens of millions of additional roadless national forest acreage nationwide, are currently threatened by legislation pending in the U.S. Congress titled the Wilderness and Roadless Area Release Act (H.R. 1581/S. 1087). This act, commonly referred to as the Great Outdoors Giveaway bill, would release all roadless acreage to forms of development that are inconsistent with the preservation of wilderness values.

The North Country Trail is America’s longest National Scenic Trail at more than 4,500 miles, and passes through seven states from North Dakota to New York state. The Pennsylvania segment of the North Country Trail is 265 miles long in all.