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April 21st and 22nd

Group Seeking Volunteers For Earth Day Weekend Cleanup

*by Friends of Allegheny
Wilderness*

The primary purpose of wilderness designation is not recreation. The first and highest responsibility we have in protecting wilderness is...protecting the wilderness. In perpetuity. As an end in itself. Recreation is good, but it is only ancillary to this primary purpose. We recreate in the wilderness on the wilderness's terms, we do not dumb down or diminish the wilderness character of an area in order to make it more comfortable or convenient for people to recreate in.

The seven principles of Leave No Trace ethics include items such as "leave rocks, plants and other natural objects as you find them," "do not build structures, furniture, or dig trenches," "minimize campfire impacts," and "pack out all trash and litter". For years, important principles such as these have been ignored by too many in the proposed Minister Valley Wilderness Area at a popular location along the North Country National Scenic Trail known as triple forks. This is not an official campground, nevertheless it is a popular location for camping due to its scenic qualities and abundant water.

Over the Earth Day weekend of April 21st and 22nd the Friends of Al-



legheny Wilderness trail crew will be dismantling gigantic fire rings and rock furniture, scattering massive amounts of ash and firewood piles, packing out litter, pulling nails out of trees, and conducting other related activities at triple forks.

The goal will be to transform the area from having the appearance of a trashy overused developed rec type of destination, to the untouched sacred nature reserve that the proposed Minister Valley Wilderness is intended to be, bringing

it closer to untrammelled Leave No Trace standards. We will leave from the Minister Road North Country Trail trailhead on Saturday morning, spend Saturday night in the proposed wilderness, and hike out on Sunday afternoon after completing our work.

Minimal tools such as shovels, trash bags, and elbow grease are all we will need to accomplish our goals, in order to help perpetuate the rustic wilderness character of the

national treasure North Country Trail. And of course, no power tools such as chainsaws are permitted in wilderness, so there will be no specialized training needed in that regard.

There is no charge to join this program, but participants will need to bring all of their own food, water and/or water filtration, camping equipment, and come fully prepared for any weather conditions we may encounter.

Trail stewardship is a fun and rewarding way to intimately experience the natural beauty of the proposed Minister Valley Wilderness firsthand, and help give back to America's National Wilderness Preservation System that is such an important treasure for everyone! Please contact Friends of Allegheny Wilderness if you would like to sign up or with any questions you may have at: info@pawild.org