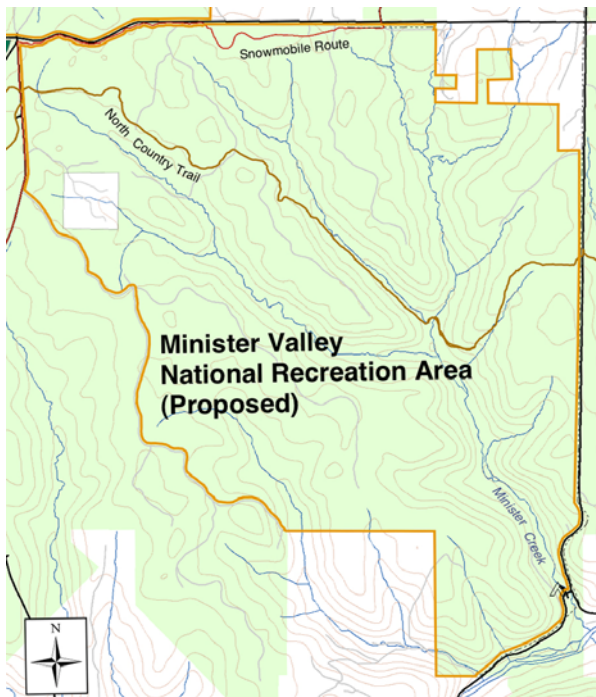


Friends of Allegheny Wilderness seeks to foster an appreciation of wilderness values and benefits, and to work with local communities to ensure that increased wilderness protection is a priority of the stewardship of the Allegheny National Forest.

Wilderness Designation for Minister Valley

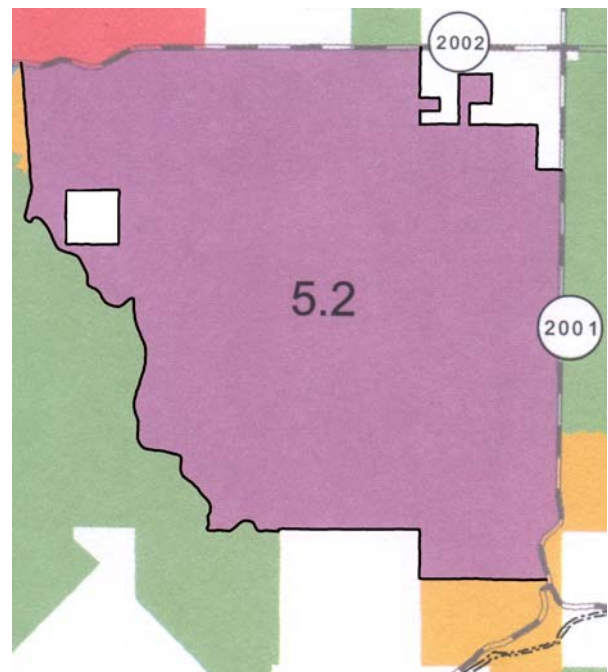
Ever since the U.S. Forest Service published their revised Forest Plan in 2007, Friends of Allegheny Wilderness (FAW) has received inquiries about the status of Minister Valley. As FAW and our many supporters and volunteers began developing what would become the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest* back in 2001, we identified the...

habitat. However, under the then in effect 1986 Forest Plan, most of Minister Valley was a "Management Area 6.2" – an agency prescription that meant it was open to logging activities for ten years out of every 40. There were four such MA 6.2 areas allocated under the 1986 Plan: Brush Hollow in Elk County, Lamentation Run in Forest County, Minister Valley, and Morrison Run in Warren and McKean Counties.



FAW's proposed Minister Valley National Recreation Area from 2003's *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal* (7,390 acres).

...wildly popular Minister Valley area in southern Warren County early on as a potential candidate for wilderness designation. As we performed our citizen evaluation, it was clear Minister Valley had a lot to offer in terms of remote backcountry recreation opportunities, and tremendous wildlife



The U.S. Forest Service's proposed Minister Valley Wilderness Area from 2007's Forest Plan (7,316 acres). Note the similarity in acreage and boundary placement to the FAW proposal (left).

Brush Hollow had been harvested under the Plan from 1986 though 1996. Minister Valley was the next MA 6.2 area scheduled for a decade-long timber management program, which commenced in 1997. Because this logging was active in scattered...

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...locations on the plateau tops in the northern end of the area as the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal* was under development, we determined that it was less favorable to propose wilderness for this area than it was for other ANF areas which had no active logging.

Fortuitously, the timbering of Minister Valley concluded in 2006 while the Forest Service was still revising their Forest Plan. The agency itself then concluded that Minister Valley was in fact qualified for wilderness designation, and surprised everyone by recommending it to Congress for wilderness designation in the new Forest Plan. To a degree this may have been a *de facto* trade-off on some level because to the chagrin of wilderness advocates everywhere, the agency *also* surprised everyone by eliminating the roadless and eminently qualified 9,700-acre Tracy Ridge area from wilderness recommendation in the final Plan. At least in part, recommending Minister Valley may have been a way for the agency to take a bit of the sting off of rescinding wilderness consideration for Tracy Ridge. (Bear in mind Congress can still designate Tracy Ridge as a wilderness, they are not restricted by the agency decision in that regard.)

FAW is certainly supportive of the Forest Service's proposed Minister Valley Wilderness Area (it even looks nearly identical to the FAW proposal on the map!). Particularly because some areas in the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal* may not remain viable wilderness candidate areas for very much longer due to oil and gas development, and for other reasons. Further, there is precedent for areas with some impacts by "the hand of man" in the recent past being included in America's National Wilderness Preservation System. Examples include the Shining Rock Wilderness in North Carolina (designated in 1964), the Great Swamp Wilderness in New Jersey (1968), and the Dugger Mountain Wilderness in Alabama (1999). So Minister Valley certainly belongs, despite having had some logging in its recent past.

Please take the time to hike the North Country

National Scenic Trail or Minister Trail in the beautiful Minister Valley soon, and then write to your federal legislators and ask them to protect the area as wilderness!

Bob Stoudt Named New Board President

Hello fellow friends of Allegheny wilderness. I am honored to write to you as the new President of FAW's Board of Directors. I am deeply grateful to Kirk Johnson, FAW executive director, and to the other members of the Board for the confidence they have expressed in my ability to help FAW achieve our ever-so-important goals. It is a privilege and a responsibility that I take very seriously.

I cannot stress enough my admiration for the tireless work that Kirk has done during the last decade on behalf of FAW and wilderness preservation in the Allegheny National Forest (ANF). More than any other individual in recent years, Kirk has been the face and voice of wilderness designation on the ANF; a position which has earned him little in the way of accolades, but an abundance of dislike and contempt from those who oppose FAW's efforts. On behalf of myself and my fellow FAW members, I would like to take this opportunity to extend our most sincere thanks and appreciation to Kirk for all that he has done and continues to do. This clearly is not a job that Kirk does to get rich, but rather because he cares so very deeply about wilderness.



New FAW Board President Bob Stoudt with a 44" muskellunge (*Esox masquinongy*) he recently caught in the West Branch Susquehanna River.

I first became involved with FAW in January of 2002. My wife and I attended a FAW meeting and learned about the mission of the then recently formed organization. The methods and goals outlined at that meeting were exactly what I'd hoped to hear; FAW's strategy for success was one in which I could very much believe. Rather than

vilify logging and other forms of resource extraction in and around the ANF, FAW approached the topics as legitimate uses of portions of the forest – as codified in federal law and as practiced in the area for generations. Though other organizations seek to eliminate logging on the ANF and other national forests, litigate repeatedly to block Forest Service planning processes, and oppose all oil, gas and mineral (OGM) activities on the ANF, FAW seeks instead to foster cooperation among seemingly opposing interests and work toward a sustainable, economically viable future for the region. It is by no means an easy or universally accepted way of doing things, but I believe it is the correct way.

My family has had a cabin in the ANF since the time of my grandparents. I have been spending time in the ANF literally since I was in diapers. My family has spent countless weekends hunting, fishing, hiking, canoeing, biking and generally loving to spend time in and around the ANF. It now gives me great joy to be able to introduce my kids to the beauty and the adventure of the area. I love the ANF area and am honored to have an opportunity to work more actively for its protection.

My training is in geography and mapping. I earned my B.A. in Geography/Environmental Planning with a minor in Anthropology from Bloomsburg University of PA, and my M.A. in Geography, with a Biogeography emphasis, from Indiana State University in Terre Haute, IN. My master's thesis focused on the impact of the Kinzua Dam on Crull's Island, one of the ANF wilderness islands in the Allegheny River. I have done internships with the (then) USDA Soil Conservation Service in Columbia County, PA, and with the Supervisor's Office of the Allegheny National Forest in Warren.

My current full-time job is being a stay-at-home dad for our three young kids, though as of the beginning of this year, I am now employed as the Deputy Director of the Montour Area Recreation Commission in Montour County. In addition to my work with FAW, I also volunteer as the Chairman of the Warrior Run Community Corporation's Pathways Committee, am a member of the Watsonstown Parks Renovation Committee, serve on the steering committee of the West Branch Susquehanna River Water Trail, am a member of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Nature Conservancy, Ducks

Unlimited, and a life member of the National Rifle Association.

Why the extensive biography? First, I want to give you some idea of what qualifications I bring to my new position. I believe that I offer a set of skills to the organization that will be of benefit to our mission. Second, because I believe that the range of experiences I've had in my education, work and volunteer background have helped to shape my views on wilderness in the ANF. During my schooling, my work duties and my volunteer experiences, I've had the opportunity to interact with a very wide range of individuals. I have learned that, contrary to popular belief, not all government employees are bad guys, nor are all timber or OGM folks; most are hard working men and women trying to earn a living in jobs that they love, yet that others might demonize. To be perfectly honest, I consider several such individuals to be very good friends. I believe that those friendships have enabled, maybe forced, me to take a more big-picture approach to my way of thinking, requiring me to consider the motivations and rationale behind what is often portrayed as the opposing side of the wilderness debate. Just as you and I feel confident in the justness of our cause, so too do others on the other side of the argument. And, in almost every case, I believe that the men and women of the U.S. Forest Service are dedicated public servants, stuck in the middle between opposing viewpoints on most issues, and trying to do their best in difficult jobs where they cannot possibly please everyone.

Ask any number of people to define wilderness and you will probably get a different answer from each of them. Some may offer the official Wilderness Act definition of "an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain." Most will offer something more personal: a completely natural area where they can get away from the hectic pace of everyday life and truly reconnect with nature; an area where human influence and technology are as remote as possible in today's world; nature as nature intended it; a chance to get lost, even if only for a short time – a prospect more exciting than frightening. To me, wilderness is each of those things and more. It is cherishing the increasingly rare wild places that still exist; those 'blank' places on the map; and knowing that their untrammelled nature is what makes them so very special and worthy of our best efforts for permanent protection.

Even when I can't be in a wilderness area, it's a comfort to know that those wild places still exist, forever protected, waiting for us to visit. It's knowing that secret little waterfall with the native brook trout hidden by the rhododendron thicket, the grove of enormous white pines, that bobcat of which we caught only a glimpse, those forest scents and sounds are still there, waiting for us to return. It's knowing that the next time we go back to those places, we won't be mortified to find a new road, a new gas well or a new timber cut where some of our favorite places once stood. The beauty of wilderness areas is that they will be there as a refuge not only for us and for the plants and wildlife, but also for our children, their children and their great-great-great grandchildren, because we cared enough to afford those areas the ultimate protection our nation can bestow.



Members of FAW and The Wildlife Society of Clarion University during a March 2010 backpack trip into the Hickory Creek Wilderness Area.

Wilderness has never been as precious or as threatened as it is today. The very idea runs counter to most of the driving forces of our modern society. Each day, Americans become busier, more dependent upon our technologies, more attuned to popular culture and media, and less connected to nature and the outdoors. I see it in my own life all the time. My Blackberry is an extremely useful tool, allowing me to be connected in any number of ways at the same time, but it sometimes feels more like a curse than a blessing. It's increasingly difficult to focus on the beauty around me when I'm constantly being distracted by incoming emails, phone calls, text messages, etc. It is exceedingly rare to be able to find a place where one can simply relax and reconnect with nature without being distracted by ringing phones, highway sounds, or barking dogs.

Each day too, we lose more and more of what was wild only the day before. New roads are being built, new subdivisions going up, new oil and gas

wells being drilled. Pennsylvania is facing a crushing onslaught of new oil and gas exploration and drilling, linked primarily to the Marcellus Shale deposits. The ANF area is not being spared. Because the subsurface mineral rights in the vast majority of the ANF are not owned by the Forest Service, the owners of those subsurface rights are legally allowed to develop their resources as they choose, as long as they follow basic environmental protections. Areas of the ANF that had for so long seemed remote and sheltered are proving to be neither.

The urgency of our mission cannot be overstated. With each passing day, we risk losing more of the potential wilderness areas that we wish to protect. Each day, new development chips away at the last remaining wild places, reducing bit by bit their size and their value for wildlife and for wilderness. The pressures to develop natural resources are simply too great. Our global society, as it is set up today, must continually find new resources to fuel our appetite for energy; it just so happens that Pennsylvania has much to offer in that regard.

Make no mistake about it; this challenge is not easy. If it was, it would almost certainly have been done already. Friends of Allegheny wilderness, in one name or another, have been trying to protect wilderness areas in the ANF since the 1960s. The obstacles facing us include: limited funding; lack of ownership of subsurface mineral rights; political resistance from some elected officials and resource extraction interests; limited support from the Forest Service; and relentless pressure from continued oil and gas development. Piece of cake, right? No exaggeration – we need your help now!

FAW has been working for nearly a decade to build support for additional wilderness designation in the ANF. FAW's *A Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest* is an exceptionally well-reasoned justification for doing so. If you have not already read the document, please get a copy today. It is available on our website at www.pawild.org, along with a wealth of other useful information.

We really do need you to get involved today. If you know of others who might be interested in becoming involved, please encourage them to do so. There are several ways that you can help. Please consider writing a letter to your Congressman and/or Senator today in support of FAW's proposal. For tips on writing an effective letter, visit our website. If you are able to do so,

please also consider making a financial contribution to FAW. We will need every bit of financial assistance we can get. Again, visit our website for ways to make a donation. Finally, please consider volunteering some of your time, even if it's only a few minutes each month, to help protect additional wilderness areas in the ANF. No matter what your talent or skills might be, we need your help.

Our mission is noble and it is good and it is worthy of your support. On behalf of FAW's Board of Directors, I thank you for your continued commitment to the remaining wild places in the ANF. We'll hope to see you out in the woods sometime soon.

Sincerely,

Bob Stoudt
mrec2sto@ptd.net

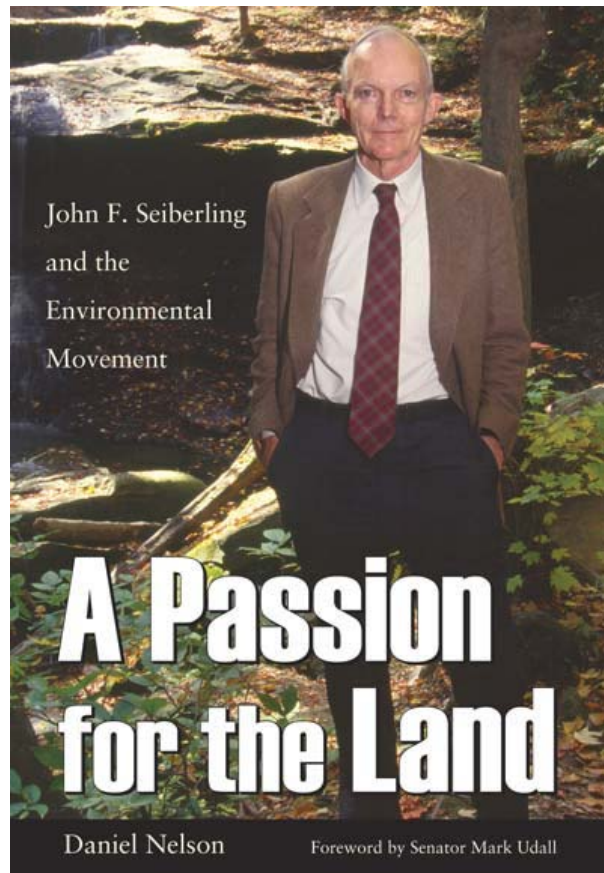
***A Passion for the Land: John F. Seiberling and the Environmental Movement* by Daniel Nelson**

Book Review by George Alderson

The monumental Alaska Lands Act of 1980 and wilderness laws for 18 states were among the bills John Seiberling (Democrat of Ohio) brought to enactment during his 16 years in the House of Representatives. Historian Daniel Nelson tells the story with a fine sense of humor, drawing on a wealth of anecdotes from unpublished sources. He shows that Mr. Seiberling relied on grassroots activists to counteract industry opposition and took advantage of the timber industry's fear of environmental lawsuits to bring timber-state legislators to the bargaining table. – *George Alderson (This review first appeared in In Brief magazine published by Earthjustice.)*

George highlights the following passage from page 174 of *A Passion for the Land* for us, in a section about Congressman Seiberling's site visits to proposed wilderness areas:

"Seiberling's first such expedition, in May 1979, was to the Allegheny National Forest north of Pittsburgh. He, Rep. Peter Kostmayer (D-PA), Wiessner, and Neumann, together with a Forest Service representative from Washington, D.C....



... flew by Forest Service plane to Bradford, Pennsylvania. A reception and dinner at the local Holiday Inn enabled them to meet interest group representatives, including Sierra Club members from northeast Ohio, who Seiberling insisted be included, and a local congressional representative. The following morning they flew over the forest, visited a roadless area that had been the subject of much controversy, and had a picnic lunch and a hike. During the afternoon they toured parts of the forest where oil and gas exploration was occurring and possible wilderness areas before returning to Bradford and then to Washington. "

George Alderson is a long time supporter of Friends of Allegheny Wilderness, and was a founder of the Atlantic Chapter of the Sierra Club in the 1960s.

Even though he was from Ohio, Congressman John Seiberling was influential in efforts that led to the passage of the Pennsylvania Wilderness Act in 1984, which designated the Hickory Creek and Allegheny Islands Wilderness Areas.



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Black bear (*Ursus americanus*): North America's most common species of bear. It is a generalist, able to exploit many habitats and foods. Up to 85 percent of the black bear's diet consists of vegetation. Black bears are fond of honey, and will gnaw through trees if hives are too deep for them to reach with their paws. Most of the black bear's animal diet consists of insects and their larvae. They also occasionally prey on white-tailed deer fawns.

Your contribution to Friends of Allegheny Wilderness goes directly to saving wilderness!

Yes, I want to support Friends of Allegheny Wilderness and help protect Pennsylvania's Wilderness.

Yes, I want to contribute! Here is my donation of (circle one):

\$20 \$35 \$50 \$100 \$500 \$1,000 \$_____

Please make checks payable to "Friends of Allegheny Wilderness." Friends of Allegheny Wilderness is an IRS 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. Donations are tax deductible. The official registration and financial information of Friends of Allegheny Wilderness may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

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