

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.

Giving Away Our Great Outdoors

The 112th U.S. Congress has been the most overtly anti-wilderness Congress in the nearly 50 years since the landmark Wilderness Act of 1964 became law. We are witnessing an attempted giveaway of our great outdoors that threatens wild places and the clean air, clean water, and economic support they provide to surrounding communities. With their ongoing unprecedented legislative attacks, some in Congress have demonstrated that they are badly out of touch with the people they serve.

National Security Federal Lands Protection Act

Trading on the tiresome 'fighting terrorism' canard, H.R. 1505 hands "operational control" over to the Department of Homeland Security for all federal lands within 100 miles of the Canadian and Mexican borders. The bill also exempts the DHS from having to comply with dozens of environmental and public land statutes including the Wilderness Act. Under this bill, many of our most iconic places – such as Olympic National Park, Big Bend National Park, Allegheny National Forest, and the Boundary Waters Wilderness – are at risk.

H.R. 1505 passed the House on June 19th as Title XIV of the larger H.R. 2578, and goes on to the Senate for consideration. It is opposed by conservation groups, Department of the Interior, Department of Agriculture – and the Department of Homeland Security itself!

Sportsmen's Heritage Act

A benign-sounding bill to improve access for hunting and fishing (activities FAW strongly supports), H.R. 4089 in fact contains a provision that would eviscerate the Wilderness Act by allowing motorized uses within designated wilderness. Ironically, allowing motor vehicles

in wilderness would harm the very fishing and hunting opportunities the bill purports to protect.



Many members of the 112th Congress have made it abundantly clear that they would do away with long-fought-for special wild places like the Hickory Creek Wilderness, pictured above, if they could.

To protect wilderness values, the Wilderness Act generally prohibits the use of motorized vehicles and equipment. However, a "Trojan Horse" provision buried in H.R. 4089 would open designated wilderness areas to ATVs, snowmobiles, and other motorized vehicles.

Other environmentally harmful bills were combined H.R. 4089, which then passed the House on April 17th. It has been sent to the Senate for consideration.

Wilderness and Roadless Area Release Act

H.R. 1581, better known as the Great Outdoors Giveaway, would eliminate the Forest Service's roadless rule, which protects over 58 million acres of national forest roadless lands, as well as 6.7 million acres of Bureau of Land Management Wilderness Study Areas.

During a hearing in mid-summer of 2011, former Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt testified...

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness
220 Center Street
Warren, PA 16365
814-723-0620
info@pawild.org
www.pawild.org

...that H.R. 1581 "...is the most radical, overreaching attempt to dismantle the architecture of our public land laws that has been proposed in my lifetime."

This bill gives developers, who already have access to 76 percent of all national forests and BLM lands, access to even more of America's vanishing wildlands in more than three dozen states. The agencies responsible for the land covered in the Great Outdoors Giveaway manage these lands for multiple uses, including wildlife habitat, wilderness preservation, recreation, and ecosystem services like clean water. H.R. 1581 would take some of the most pristine remaining examples of our natural heritage - such as the proposed Cornplanter Wilderness and proposed Tracy Ridge Wilderness here in the Allegheny - and make them vulnerable to development.

Please contact your Congressman or woman and especially two Senators today and ask them to oppose H.R. 1505, H.R. 1581, and H.R. 4089!

U.S. House: www.house.gov

U.S. Senate: www.senate.gov

For more information see:

www.wilderness.org/wilderness-under-siege

The Bradford Era

Saturday, April 28, 2012

FAW wilderness proposal gaining support

By Amanda Nichols, Era Reporter
a.nichols@bradfordera.com

The Friends of Allegheny Wilderness proposal seeking wilderness designation for certain areas of the Allegheny National Forest has gained the endorsement of nearly 50 organizations from around the country and local region.

The most recent edition to the growing list of those in support of setting aside ANF land for the highest level protection only to be granted

by and act of Congress comes from the Elk Township Historical Society.

At a meeting earlier this month, the society's board voted unanimously to endorse the proposal which was first published by FAW, a Warren-based non-profit organization, almost nine years ago.

Dr. Julie Lindblom Boozer, a board member of the Elk Township Historical Society, said the group endorsed the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal* in full, but is most acutely interested in two of the proposed forest reserves located in Elk Township.

These are the 3,022-acre proposed Cornplanter Wilderness Area between the Webb's Ferry boat launch and Camp Olmstead and the 4,752-acre proposed Scandia National Recreation Area covering most of Camp Olmstead to the Kinzua Dam.

"Our overall goal is to preserve the heritage of Elk Township, but I feel - and apparently the board does too - that our heritage goes beyond restoring a wooden building," Boozer told *The Era* Friday. "Our forest and wildlife are vital components of Elk Township's natural history and ecological heritage as well."

She said these areas are representative of the type of landscape Swedish immigrants first discovered when they settled in the township, and for this reason hold historical value as well.

"The Swedish immigrants of Scandinavia came here for the clean water, trees and woodland setting and rolling hills that looked like southern Sweden where they came from," Boozer explained. "I would like to see that heritage preserved because (the proposed areas) are pretty undisturbed and look like what they would have when they first came here."

"The woodland and wildlife - that's why we live here and that should continue so that future generations can come here to live for the very same reason," she added.

The Cornplanter and Scandia proposed areas make up the west shore of the Allegheny Reservoir which has been the focus of several attempts over the decades as a location for massive commercial development.

In the 1960s, Warren County Commissioners commissioned a report that outlined “maximum commercial development (including) golf courses, airports, hotels, resorts – the works,” according to FAW Executive Director Kirk Johnson.

“It comes up from time to time,” Johnson said. “There are very focused locations along the Allegheny Reservoir where some development would probably be okay such as at the Kinzua Beach area and Willow Bay which are already developed – but it probably shouldn’t expand beyond those two existing locations.”



Some of the wilderness advocates who attended a June 16th Elk Township Historical Society screening of the Robert Redford documentary *Wilderness Forever in Scandia* relax by a bonfire ahead of time. Photo by Debbie Fitzsimmons of the ETHS.

He pointed out that Kinzua Beach and Willow Bay already have developed facilities, water and electrical service, paved access from Route 59 and other qualities that would eliminate the need for major infrastructure investments if someone should want to expand on them, rather than develop wilderness quality areas elsewhere in the forest.

The proposal outlines a total of eight tracts of land comprising a total of 54,460 acres that retain enough of their original composition to make them eligible for wilderness designation. The Forest Service has recommended two of the proposed areas, Chestnut Ridge and Minister Valley, to Congress in support of their sought wilderness designation, but Congress has not reacted, Johnson relayed.

Chestnut Ridge represents 5,191 acres along the north branch of Sugar Run east of Route 321 in Corydon Township, and Minister Valley comprises 7,390 acres off of Route 666 south of Sheffield.

With the wilderness recommendation by the Forest Service – made part of the ANF’s 2007 Forest Plan – these two areas have become “in essence de facto wilderness areas,” Johnson said.

“They almost have to be treated as designated wilderness areas either until Congress acts and designates them or until the forest plan is revised again,” he continued. “It’s important to understand that the approval of the agency, in this case the forest service, is not a prerequisite to getting an area designated wilderness, but it can usually be pretty helpful.”

According to Johnson, Congress can put forth a bill and pass a wilderness designation at any time, and such does not have to coincide with any standing forest plan.

Currently, less than two percent of the ANF has been designated as wilderness at a total of 9,000 acres split between the Hickory Creek and Allegheny Islands wilderness areas.

“Having wilderness areas draws people in from far outside the region,” Johnson stated. “The ANF is located within a day’s drive of one-third of the nation’s population. (Eco-tourism) drawing people in to visit wilderness areas has the effect of being very beneficial to local businesses.”

Reprinted with permission.

Please Keep Up With FAW Online!

To keep up with the campaign to protect wilderness in the Allegheny National Forest, please sign up for our email list online at www.pawild.org, and use the “**Subscribe to Our Email List**” box on the upper right.

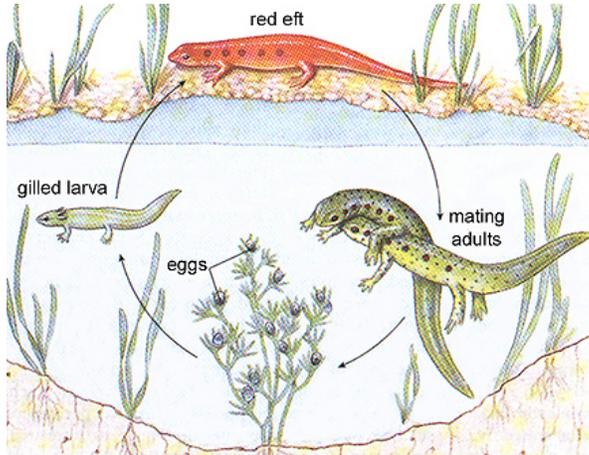
Are you on **Facebook**? If so, please also consider following FAW there for more frequent updates:

Facebook.com/FriendsofAlleghenyWilderness

Simply click on the “**Like**” button.

This issue of FAWN is dedicated to the memory of Mr. David Smock of Meadville. David spent many years hunting and fishing in the Allegheny’s wilderness during his lifetime. He taught his children to fish and hunt here, and especially to enjoy and respect the forest.

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness
220 Center Street
Warren, PA 16365



Red-spotted newt (*Notophthalmus viridescens*) is a common salamander of eastern North America dwelling in wet forests with small lakes or ponds. The strikingly orange juvenile, which is land dwelling, is known as a "red eft." After a rain, the red eft is frequently seen when hiking in the ANF.

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." A self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience. 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.

Name _____
 Address _____

 Phone _____
 Email _____

Send to:
Friends of Allegheny Wilderness
220 Center Street
Warren, PA 16365