

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.

Pocono Record

Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania
Sunday, August 5, 2012

Do not give up your 'big backyard' to anyone or any agency

By Ed Perry
National Wildlife Federation

For the past 35 years, my wife, two sons and I have camped and fished all over the vast network of public lands out west. The experiences we've had will be with us forever, and are the subject of conversation at many of our gatherings. We are fortunate that in our country, we have millions of acres of public lands that me and other sportsmen and women can enjoy. These lands are our nation's shared wealth – the "big backyard" that affords us a place to hunt, fish and enjoy the outdoors.

Public lands for hunting and fishing are a uniquely American idea in a world where the pursuit of fish and game in the wild is often reserved for the privileged few. But America's public lands are under attack from a few in Congress who are ignoring this basic right. And as sportsmen and women, it is time for us to stand up for our public lands wealth.

Just recently, the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill that would essentially hand over public lands within 100 miles of the northern and southern land borders to the U.S. Customs and Border Protection, circumventing 16 conservation and environmental laws.

This means that in areas like the Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana, the Boundary Waters in Minnesota, as well as the Allegheny National Forest in Pennsylvania, the Border Patrol could

ignore the Wilderness Act, the Endangered Species Act, Solid Waste Disposal Act, and National Environmental Policy Act along with many other federal laws on countless refuges, wilderness areas, and conservation areas.



Friends of Allegheny Wilderness hikers high above the Allegheny River in the proposed Scandia National Recreation Area during a day-long hike on Monday, July 2nd, 2012.

The House passed this bill despite the fact that the Border Patrol and the Department of Homeland Security testified that it wasn't needed.

The border bill is the opening salvo on this Congress' effort to open up backcountry lands to oil, gas and mineral development. There is also legislation to prevent the creation of new public lands where we can hunt and fish, systematic attempts to gut conservation funding, proposals to open up 43 million acres of backcountry to development and even a bill that would sell off millions of acres of public lands.

This just isn't right. Sportsmen and women know that the better the habitat, the better...

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

...sporting pursuit – and with the spread of urbanization and suburban sprawl, these public lands are often the last bastions of high quality habitat for fish and wildlife. Undermining wildlife conservation through the degradation of public lands is an attack on our outdoor traditions.

But beyond the habitat and spiritual values, Congress is turning its back on the public land resource that drives an important part of the nation's economy. Hunting and fishing on public lands, and wildlife viewing, together pump \$122 billion into the American economy every year. Besides outdoor recreation, these public lands also support appropriate energy development, house critical water supplies, and so much more.

As a sportsman who has taken his family on many fishing and backpacking trips on public lands and can't wait to take my next trip out West, I can say that these proposals in Congress are bad for wildlife and for those of us who enjoy the outdoors. We need to stand up for the backcountry to make sure that we don't lose our best places to hunt, fish and camp.

The vote in the House to suspend environmental protection all along our border is the first shot across the bow, and unfortunately representatives Lou Barletta and Tom Marino didn't recognize the full implications of their vote.

But as Congress decides to move forward with other attacks on our public lands legacy, I call on you to let them know that this has to stop, that as sportsmen and women we have just one simple request: Keep it like it is. We cannot afford to remove protections for our backcountry areas.

Keep public lands in public hands.

Ed Perry is global warming outreach coordinator for the National Wildlife Federation. He is retired from a career as a biologist for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He lives in Boalsburg. More information: paglobalwarmingoutreach@gmail.com

Reprinted with the permission of Ed Perry and the Pocono Record.

Note: National Wildlife Federation is an endorsing organization of FAW's Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest.

For more information about the "National Security and Federal Lands Protection Act" that Ed Perry writes about here, and other hostile anti-wilderness legislation pending in the U.S. Congress, log on to wilderness.org/wilderness-under-siege

150 Years of Sustained Wild Imagination

Remarks by Ed Zahniser, National Park Service Publications Group, Harpers Ferry Center for Media Services

at the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding to Commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act of 1964

U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., August 23rd, 2012

What an honor it is to be here today. What a great way to anticipate the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act and the National Wilderness Preservation System. I was going to tell you I grew up with the Wilderness Act – literally. But to honor my father Howard Zahniser's precise use of words, I should say I grew up with the Wilderness Act – *actually*. My father wrote the first draft of the first bill, by hand, in 1956, at our dining room table. I was ten years old. My father's term as president of the Thoreau Society began in 1956, too. A most important – but least-quoted – part of the Wilderness Act is its formal title: "An Act To establish a National Wilderness Preservation System for the permanent good of the whole people...."

When President Johnson signed the Wilderness Act on September 3, 1964, Zahnise, as my father

was known, was not there. He died four months earlier – but he knew the legislation would finally succeed that year. My mother Alice Zahniser, now 94 years old, represented him in the White House Rose Garden. The late Mardy Murie represented her husband Olaus Murie who died the year before.



Left to right: Kirk Johnson, executive director for Friends of Allegheny Wilderness; Ed Zahniser of the National Park Service and son of Wilderness Act author & Tionesta native Howard Zahniser; and Leanne Marten, former ANF supervisor and currently the national director for Wilderness and Wild & Scenic Rivers for the U.S. Forest Service. Taken at the signing of a memorandum of understanding recognizing the importance of the approaching 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C., August 23rd, 2012.

Many people believe Zahnie had an antagonistic relationship with the House of Representatives committee chairman who personally blocked enactment of the Wilderness Act for over two years. In fact, they had a deeply respectful, personal relationship. Zahnie, son of a pastor in the Free Methodist Church, didn't make enemies. He hoped the chairman would become part of the consensus behind the bill. Indeed, the chairman stood proudly behind President Johnson in the Rose Garden that day. As its formal title says, our wilderness system is " . . . for the permanent good of the whole people. . . ." Terry Tempest Williams rightly calls protected natural areas "the open space of democracy."

Wilderness and wildness are integral to who we are. As Henry Thoreau wrote in 1851, ". . . in Wildness is the preservation of the World." Wilderness, then – whose essential quality, Zahnie wrote in 1957, is its wildness – wilderness plays a role in preserving the world. But notice: Thoreau does *not* say *we* preserve wildness. Thoreau says *wildness* preserves *us*, the world. Thoreau uses the Greek word for *World*, *kosmos*, spelled with a K. It means not only world but beauty, pattern, and order: in wildness is the preservation of the world, beauty, pattern, and order.

Thoreau said every town should have its own wilderness close by. So, we still have much work to do. We should not forget that it took over 150 years of sustained wild imagination to establish our National Wilderness Preservation System. We ought, each of us, to apply our own wild imagination to add to this great tradition. We owe nothing less to every form of life traveling the planet with us.

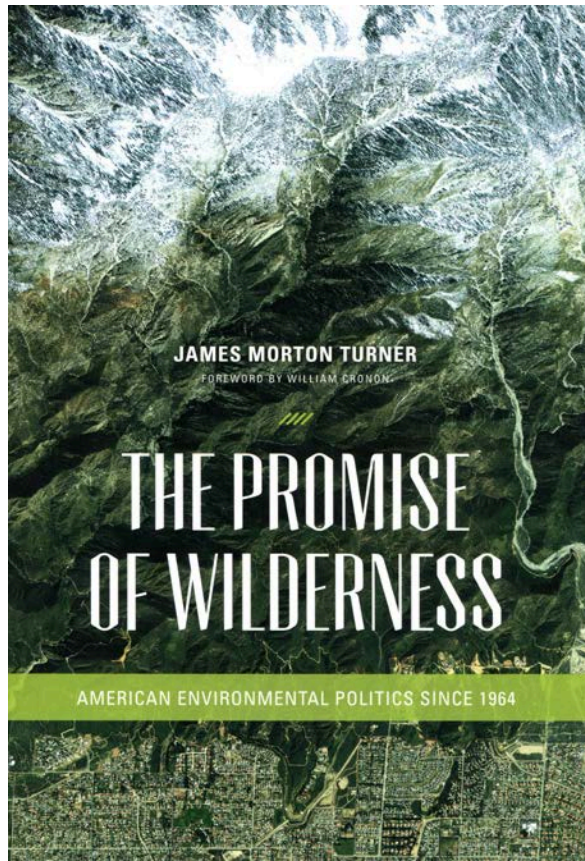
So let our hope here be that this historic Memorandum of Understanding will send thousands of Americans forth into our culture to celebrate and perpetuate wilderness and wildness, to celebrate and perpetuate their "open space of democracy" "for the permanent good of the whole people."

A New History of the Wilderness Movement

Since enactment of the Wilderness Act in 1964, Congress has extended its strong protection to an additional 100 million acres – including Pennsylvania's 8,630-acre Hickory Creek Wilderness and a number of wild islands in the Allegheny River, both designated in 1984.

The story of how each of these additions was propelled to success in Congress is, more than anything, a story of the vital importance of broad grassroots support built by citizen organizations such as Friends of Allegheny Wilderness. It is also the story of strong bipartisan support for wilderness preservation in Congress, which continues to this day (notwithstanding the media's tireless focus on how partisanship has

divided our country and our elected representatives on so many other issues).



This is the history traced in an important new book by Wellesley College history professor James Morton Turner: *The Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics Since 1964* (University of Washington Press, 2012, 520 pages). Based on extensive interviews and archival research for his Ph.D. dissertation at Princeton, Turner shows how the work for wilderness protection fits within the context of the larger environmental awakening of the 1970s and prospered under administrations of presidents of both political parties: President Jimmy Carter signed laws designating the greatest acreage of any president (notably the huge Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980), while President Ronald Reagan signed the largest number of wilderness designation laws – including the Pennsylvania Wilderness Act of 1984.

This rich history has many important lessons for those who work for wilderness protection today. As historian Mark Harvey (who wrote

the biography of Howard Zahniser, the Pennsylvanian who led the campaign for the original 1964 Wilderness Act) says: “James Turner’s insightful book demonstrates the continued vitality and centrality of wilderness within American environmentalism.”

By Doug Scott
Campaign for America's Wilderness

Jamestown Post-Journal
Jamestown, New York
Thursday, September 6, 2012

Wilderness Expansion is a Good Thing

This week marks the 48th anniversary of the signing of the 1964 federal Wilderness Act.

The law directed that parts of existing federal wild lands be set aside – protected forever from development – for the benefit of Americans today and always. The United States was the first nation in the world to set aside pristine lands for permanent protection in their natural state.

Our region is lucky to have two forever-wild areas within the nearby Allegheny National Forest. The Allegheny Islands Wilderness consists of seven islands in the Allegheny River between Buckaloons Recreation Area and 56 miles down river to Tionesta.



Just east of one of the islands near Tidioute is the Hickory Creek Wilderness – a 8,630-acre tract that will forever offer opportunities to hike and backpack in an undisturbed dense northern hardwood forest with a tall canopy that enables flowers, ferns, shrubs and mosses to grow in abundance.

The designation does not bar humans from enjoying those lands. Rather, it means no development will ever be allowed. Further, unless Congress specifically says it is OK in a particular area, no motorized equipment nor equipment used for mechanical transport is allowed on federal lands designated as wilderness. Camper, hikers and day visitors are encouraged to follow the seven standards of the Leave No Trace principles.

Today, the National Wilderness Preservation System contains 109,501,022 acres – more than half of that in Alaska. There are 757 designated federal wilderness areas in 44 states and Puerto Rico. The excellent website wilderness.net notes that only about 2.7 percent of the contiguous United States – an area about the size of Minnesota – is protected as wilderness.

Although recreation and scenic beauty are obvious benefits, they are by no means the only – nor most important – wilderness values.

Wilderness areas protect watersheds for many cities and rural areas. They serve as critical habitat for threatened wildlife. They improve air quality because of the filtering action of green plants and forests. They maintain gene pools to provide diversity of plant and animal life.

And wilderness areas are simply good for our nation’s collective soul.

We salute the wilderness preservation system and support its continued reasonable expansion.

FAW Donates to Warren County Historical Society

FAW recently donated two books to the collection of the Warren County Historical Society. The first is a copy of the organization’s *Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania’s Allegheny National Forest*, which during the most recent ANF Forest Plan revision received the enthusiastic support of more than 80 percent of the public commentators. The second is a professionally-bound 180-page volume

containing all of FAW’s newsletters from August 2001 through December 2011, as well as several dozen newspaper articles related to the organization’s wilderness protection campaign from that same time period.

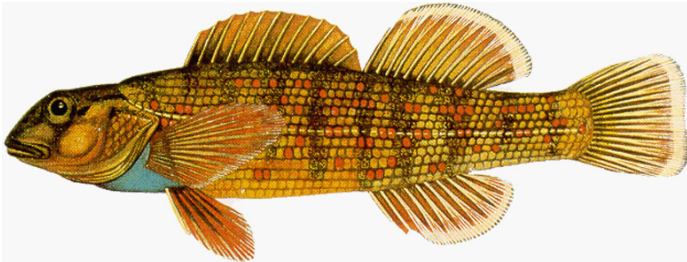


Pictured are Dr. Ronald Simonsen, right, member of the board of directors for FAW, and Michelle Gray, left, managing director for the Warren County Historical Society.

“Friends of Allegheny Wilderness is proud to contribute to the Warren County Historical Society’s permanent collection, so that county residents and others will always have the opportunity to learn about our important campaign to protect wilderness in Pennsylvania’s only national forest,” noted Dr. Simonsen.



Friends of Allegheny Wilderness
220 Center Street
Warren, PA 16365



Bluebreast Darter (*Etheostoma camurum*), a *Pennsylvania Threatened Fish Species*, is a snub-nose fish reaching three inches which requires medium to large rivers with swift flow. In Pennsylvania, it only occurs in the upper Allegheny River watershed. ANF wilderness preservation can safeguard quality habitat for the bluebreast darter.

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.

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____
Email _____

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