



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.

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Confirmed In Warren County Hemlock-attacking insect found

By BRIAN FERRY

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Hemlock woolly adelgid, a tiny bug that poses a major threat to hemlock trees, has arrived in Warren County.

Signs of the invasive bugs were spotted by Kirk Johnson of Friends of Allegheny Wilderness while he was in the Webbs Ferry boat launch area of the Allegheny National Forest.

ANF Silviculturist Andrea Hille went with Johnson to the site where he found cottony, white tufts at the bases of needles on hemlock branches. She took samples and sent them to U.S. Forest Service Entomologist Rick Turcotte for confirmation.

From there, the samples were sent to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture.

Both the state and the feds confirmed Johnson's evaluation - Warren County is now positive for hemlock woolly adelgid. "The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid has been confirmed in Warren County," Department of Agriculture Deputy Press Secretary Nicole Bucher said. "This is an insect that has been in Pennsylvania since the 1960s and devastates the state tree the Eastern Hemlock."

The pests were found on the national forest, but that they were in Warren County, Pennsylvania, took precedence. "It's a big deal when we find something in a new county," Turcotte said. The

department "does all of the final determination."

Johnson has been keeping his eyes open for signs of the creatures, but he didn't want to find them.



The underside of a branch of an HWA-afflicted tree in the proposed Cornplanter Wilderness is shown. Note the tell-tale small white cottony tufts. Photo by Kirk Johnson.

"This is a day I've been waiting for with trepidation for 10 years," he said.

"It kills hemlocks," Turcotte said. "In areas it's been there a while, we have seen extensive mortality."

Hemlock makes up about seven percent of the tree population on the Allegheny National Forest.

There used to be a greater percentage of hemlocks. Because their numbers have already dwindled, the trees have become even more valuable. "Now it's more important ecologically," Hille said. "Hemlocks are home to a huge number of insects."

The popularity of the tree with insect species is...

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...part of the problem regarding hemlock woolly adelgid. Birds that land in a hemlock to snack on some insects might carry HWA to the next tree they visit.

During their crawler phase, the adelgids can also be carried by the wind, Turcotte said.

They are also spread by human activity. "They've been moved around a fair amount on nursery stock," Turcotte said.

There is no "landscape scale" treatment for hemlock woolly adelgid, he said. "You can't treat a forest." Once identified, individual trees can be treated with chemicals. There are also biological agents that can be used on a small scale.

Due to limited funding, the Forest Service has to evaluate the extent of problems like an area of hemlock woolly adelgid infestation and what action is required.

"We need to delineate the extent of that infestation now," Hille said. "As a forest, we have that site and the one along the Clarion River, we're going to have to determine how we're going to approach those sites."

The public can help slow the spread and minimize the damage.

Johnson said he makes a habit of taking a look at hemlocks. Until two weeks ago, he had not found anything troubling. When he did, he contacted Hille and showed her the problem area.

"He did all the right things," Turcotte said.

The agencies have experts who know just what to look for, but their numbers are limited.

"The first thing is you have to find it," Turcotte said. "It's really hard to find, especially at a new infestation."

"That's why having the public's help is a major component of any of our insect and disease programs," he said. "We always tell people to, if they see dying trees or something unusual in the trees, let the land manager know."

"It's amazing how something so tiny could be so devastating to a whole species of tree," Johnson said.

"They feed at the base of the needles...on the food reserves in the twigs," Turcotte said.

After the trees lose that source of nutrients, they decline and stop producing new growth, he said. Most of the trees' photosynthesis takes place in new growth areas.

Over a period of five to seven years, the tree dies.

Every hemlock woolly adelgid on a hemlock is female, Turcotte said. They essentially clone themselves twice a year, laying 50 to 300 eggs each time.

"They have a complicated life cycle," he said. The creatures spend the second half of their lives on spruce. In that stage, some of the insects become male.

Johnson, who is executive director of Friends of Allegheny Wilderness, is arranging a volunteer survey for hemlock woolly adelgid for Sunday, Sept. 8, in the proposed Cornplanter Wilderness Area.

"Members of the public with an interest in helping can contact FAW at info@pawild.org to sign up or to ask for additional information," he said.

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The Wilderness Society condemns anti-wilderness bill H.R. 1526

The 112th U.S. Congress was infamous for being the most anti-wilderness session of Congress in history. Not only were no new wilderness areas designated, but many anti-wilderness bills were actually put into the hopper which would have significantly eroded the integrity of America's National Wilderness Preservation System, as

well as candidate additions to the NWPS. Thankfully none became law, but unfortunately *some anti-wilderness activity of the 112th Congress has carried over to the 113th Congress.*

The latest manifestation is the Orwellian-named “Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act” (H.R 1526), which would deemphasize wilderness preservation as part of the overall multiple-use of national forests. Friends of Allegheny Wilderness is not opposed to sustainable timbering of the Allegheny National Forest – correctly, there will still be cherry logs going to the marketplace from the ANF in 2063 and 2113, just as there are in 2013.

The problem with H.R. 1526, however, is that it throws balance under the bus in favor of making logging in essence the *only* priority use of our national forests. This would be a radical departure from the multiple-use concept we have today that includes wilderness, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, and so many other important uses.

The House of Representatives unfortunately passed this radical forest bill on Friday, September 20th. H.R. 1526 would undermine more than 100 years of bedrock forest management laws, carving gaping loopholes in laws designed to protect our forests and our environment and would essentially lead to what The Wilderness Society terms “logging without laws” in our national forests.

TWS is pleased to note that President Obama has in fact threatened to veto the bill, should it actually pass the Senate. Please read the statement on this important issue from TWS President Jamie Williams below.

Statement on H.R. 1526 by The Wilderness Society President, Jamie Williams

WASHINGTON (September 20, 2013) – The following statement is from Jamie Williams, president of The Wilderness Society, upon the U.S. House of Representatives vote on H.R. 1526:

“The ‘Restoring Healthy Forests for Healthy Communities Act’ is anything but healthy. Our national forests filter our air, provide clean

drinking water, and afford all Americans the opportunity to experience the great outdoors. H.R. 1526 could clear-cut America’s national forests, from North Carolina to Washington state, without regard to local input or environmental consequences.



“The Wilderness Society supports sustainable forest restoration and timber harvesting, but this radical measure would require ‘logging without laws,’ supersede any local collaborative forest efforts, and mandate huge increases in logging. H.R. 1526 would carve gaping loopholes in the Endangered Species Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and other bedrock environmental laws. This would lead to dirty water and air, and destroy recreational opportunities.

“Americans love our national forests. We enjoy hunting, fishing, hiking and camping in these places that make America great. And with these activities come local, sustainable jobs that support rural communities across the country.

“The Wilderness Society applauds the Obama administration for issuing a veto threat, and urges the U.S. Senate to reject this radical legislation, and instead to work to protect America’s natural legacy.”

Erie Times-News

Sunday, September 15th, 2013

National Wilderness Month deserves consideration

By MIKE BLEECH
Erie Times-News

Some feelings and thoughts can surface only

after a period of time away from civilization, away from artificial stimulation such as television, telephone, radio or tape players.

From the moment a person leaves civilization, things change. Sitting by the first evening campfire, surrounded by darkness, one of the first feelings is fear. Not terror, but a primitive fear that urges us to sit closer to the small fire. Then, staring into the constantly changing hues of the hot coals, the fact that you are all alone sinks in.

I believe that artificial stimulation is perhaps the most powerful thing separating modern humans from our natural selves.



FAW hikers embarking on a backpacking trip deep into the wild undeveloped interior of the 9,705-acre proposed Tracy Ridge Wilderness Area, on the Johnnycake Trail. Photo by Kay Thompson.

I have lived through the changes from radio to black-and-white television, to color television, then computer imaging. With each of these changes, the necessity of using our imaginations decreased. This is why I feel that everyone in this country should be reasonably close to a wild area, or better, wilderness, so that, from time to time, we can go there to remember what we really are.

We are very fortunate to have had Theodore Roosevelt as president, and the timing of a few other individuals who had the ability, perseverance and energy to establish our National Park System, and several areas designated as wilderness forever.

We commemorate this with National Wilderness Month, proclaimed by President

Obama.

National Wilderness Month stands out this year as the precursor to the 50th anniversary of the National Wilderness Act. The act was signed into law September 1964 by President Lyndon Johnson.

Almost 30 years ago, President Reagan signed the Pennsylvania Wilderness Act of 1984. This established for perpetuity the Allegheny Islands Wilderness, the smallest of our National Wilderness areas, and the Hickory Creek Wilderness. Both are on the Allegheny National Forest.

Northwestern Pennsylvania played a vital role in the wilderness that remains in America today. Tionesta native Howard Zahniser, one of those individuals who played key roles in preserving wilderness in the United States, wrote the Wilderness Act of 1964.

On Sept. 3, we passed the 49th anniversary of the Wilderness Act, and now we are counting down the days until the 50th anniversary.

Throughout this coming year, there will be close to 500 events across the country to look at the many ways Americans value wilderness. A calendar of these events is available at www.wilderness50th.org.

Two events are scheduled in Northwest Pennsylvania, and there still is time to add more events.

From Aug. 1, 2014, until Sep. 30, 2014, the Erie Art Museum will host an Environmental Impact exhibit. For information, visit www.lakeeriegroup.webs.com.

The Crary Art Gallery, in Warren, along with Friends of Allegheny Wilderness, will host an exhibition of wilderness images that will feature many high-profile photographers. The exhibition will begin Aug. 30, 2014, and continue until Sept. 27, 2014. For information, visit www.crarygallery.org.

It seems disrespectful that so little of the National Forest near Zahniser's home has achieved the status of National Wilderness Area.

Less than 2 percent of the Allegheny National Forest is designated wilderness, a total of about 9,000 acres from the 513,000 acres of public land. Compare this with 18 percent of all U.S. Forest Service land nationwide which has been designated as wilderness. About 11 percent of the Forest Service Eastern Region which is wilderness.

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness is a non-profit group formed to promote wilderness designation to specific areas of the Allegheny National Forest. They pointedly are not opposed to the multi-use principles by which management of the national forest is guided. Their goal is including more wilderness as part of the multi-use.

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness has identified 54,460 acres of the Allegheny National Forest which could be designated wilderness.

However, there is nowhere in the Allegheny National Forest that can be called wilderness such as the term has been used elsewhere.

For information on Friends of Allegheny Wilderness, visit www.pawild.org.

MIKE BLEECH can be reached by e-mail at mikeb73@verizon.net. Read more of his columns at nwpaoutdoors.com.

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Volunteers Needed for 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act Next September

The 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act is still a year away, but we want to get the word out that proctors will be needed for our "Wilderness at 50: Photographic Reflections on the Legacy of Tionesta Visionary Howard Zahniser" high-profile photography show co-hosted with Warren's own Crary Art Gallery:

www.wilderness50th.org/events.php?useraction=detail&e_id=98

Many nationally-known wilderness photographers have already been confirmed,

and more are to come. We will announce a list of names soon, once more details are firmed up. The president of The Wilderness Society, Jamie Williams, will be our keynote speaker at the show's opening on Saturday, August 30th, 2014!



Tionesta native Howard Zahniser of The Wilderness Society, principle author of the Wilderness Act of 1964. He is holding a copy of TWS's magazine *The Living Wilderness*, of which he was editor-in-chief.

The Crary Art Gallery is run solely by volunteers. During the month of September 2014, volunteer proctors will be needed during open hours (Thursday 11-5 p.m., Friday 11-8 p.m., Saturday 11-5 p.m., Sunday 12-4 p.m.). If you would like to help wilderness, and help keep the arts vibrant in Warren, please consider 'gallery sitting' as a proctor during the exhibition (even if only for two hours during one day of that month). It is a pleasant way to spend some time with the exhibition, and a helpful gift to the community.

If this is of interest to you, please contact FAW at info@pawild.org. No rush, you have almost a year to decide, but we did want to get this on everyone's radar screen early.



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Mountain lion (*Puma concolor*) is a large feline whose range is the largest of any mammal in the Western Hemisphere. An efficient predator, mountain lions once roamed Penn's Woods helping to keep deer in check, but were extirpated by the early 20th century. Its legacy remains in the Commonwealth in the form of team names such as the University of Pittsburgh Panthers and the Penn State Nittany Lions, among others.

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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