

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.

From the Director

On Sunday, August 11 the U.S. Forest Service forestry sciences laboratory in Irvine, Pennsylvania was burned by an arsonist or arsonists. Friends of Allegheny Wilderness strongly condemns this arson. We are proud and humbled to work on forest issues in the same national forest in which researchers such as H.J. Lutz, Ashbel Hough, Ted Grisez, David Marquis, and more recently Steven Horsley and Susan Stout (among many others) worked and contributed so significantly to our understanding of the Allegheny Plateau forest ecosystem. Over the years, the forestry sciences lab has performed exhaustive research in such areas as the impact of deer on the forest, the rate at which the forest grows, and under what conditions it thrives.

In other news, it appears at this point that the Forest Plan revision for the ANF will not likely begin in earnest until December or January, so there is still time to express your interest in getting involved. We have included a convenient form on page 7 of this newsletter to clip or photocopy, fill out with your name and address, and submit to the Forest Service so that you can be made aware of upcoming revision hearings and announcements. Also, on Saturday, October 12, FAW will be leading a clean-up of the Hickory Creek Wilderness trail -- details are included in this issue of the newsletter.

As always, please contact Friends of Allegheny Wilderness for your own CD copy of the 1986 ANF Forest Plan (and amendments). That's all for now, please stay in touch!

-- Kirk Johnson

Letter to Friends of Allegheny Wilderness

July 19, 2002

Dear Kirk,

As a former resident of Warren (in the 1960's), I appreciate the recreational and aesthetic wilderness value of the Allegheny Natl. Forest, and remember the quiet walks in Heart's Content. I applaud you and the FAW for the work you are doing to increase the wilderness designated areas.

At the same time, we do need harvested timber at a sustainable yield. And local jobs do depend upon the timber industry. Other jobs depend upon tourism, which seeks nice forested areas. So I support your goal of adding significantly to the wilderness, but not seeking to eliminate all cutting or even most of the cutting. A balanced approach is surely possible, and I commend your efforts in that direction.

I will await word this fall as to when public input from non-local residents might be helpful to the USFS as they formulate their forest plan revision.

Keep up the good work!

Rev. John P. Harman
Greensburg, Pa.

Book Review

By Ed Zahniser

Paul Sutter's new book *Driven Wild: How the Fight against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002) is a must-read for

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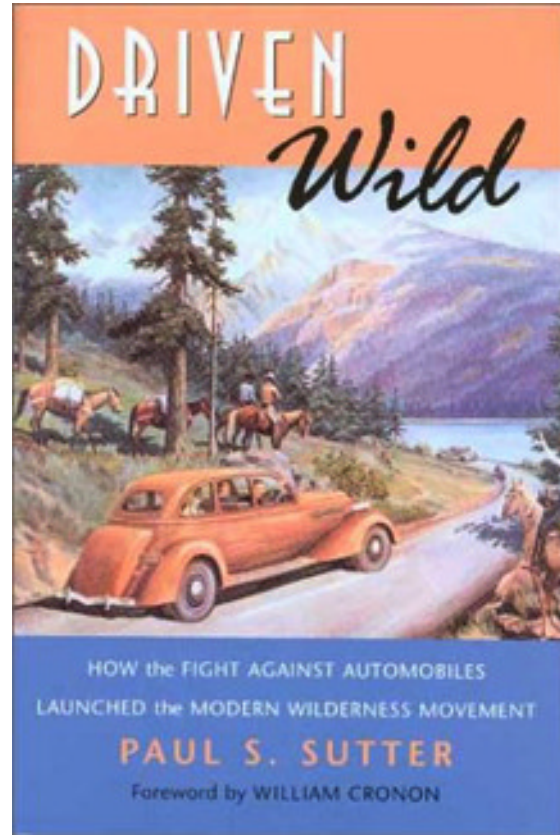
wilderness advocates even if you don't get beyond Chapter 1, which ends on page 18—but I am very confident you will!

In that chapter, “The Problem of the Wilderness,” Sutter outlines the present-day critiques of the wilderness idea and shows that they are a-historical. They simply do not square with the development of the modern wilderness idea. Those critiques largely take present-day concerns and extrapolate them backwards as the origins of the idea. Critics of wilderness have erred in examining the Progressive Era of conservation, for example, by looking through post-World War II binoculars. Sorting out such errors is what makes the work of earnest environmental historians like Sutter so important.

What Sutter does is examine the development of the modern wilderness idea in the years between World Wars I and II. The famous roadside formation of the Wilderness Society on October 19, 1934 near the Great Smoky Mountains is emblematic. That day Robert Marshall joined Benton MacKaye, Harvey Broome, and Bernard and Miriam Frank on a field trip to a Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp near Knoxville, Tenn. The field trip was part of an American Forestry Association conference.

“The Wilderness Society’s roadside creation was rich with symbols of the founders’ motivating concerns,” Sutter writes. “Foremost among those concerns were the road and the car. The group had come together to define a new preservationist ideal because of a common feeling that the automobile and road building threatened what was left of wild America. Wilderness, as they defined it, would keep large portions of the landscape free of these forces. And yet, despite their flight from the Franks’ car, a gesture evocative of their agenda, they could not escape the fact that, literally as well as figuratively, the automobile and improved

roads had brought them together that day. The very conditions that had prompted their collective concern for protecting wilderness had also enabled their concern. That paradox gave wilderness its modern meaning.”



“Historians have long seen the founding of the Wilderness Society as a watershed event,” Sutter writes three pages later, “but few have recognized the origins of modern wilderness sentiment. This book is about those origins—the various streams of thought that came together to launch a new idea and, equally important, the context in which that confluence occurred.” And later he writes: “*Driven Wild* is thus both an attempt to correct traditional narratives of wilderness history and an effort to temper and redirect recent wilderness criticisms.”

Sutter’s book heartily fulfills the promise of his thesis statements.

Driven Wild also includes brief biographies of four of the Wilderness Society’s founders: forester and ecologist Aldo Leopold, parks publicist-turned wilderness advocate Robert Sterling Yard, forester and regional planner MacKaye, and forester Marshall. These biographies bring to life the various tributary streams of broad social concerns—for labor,

livability, social equity, and the common good—whose confluence creates the context of the modern wilderness idea. The value of this material for today's wilderness advocate, as Sutter ably crafts it, can hardly be overstated.

The four present-day critiques of wilderness that Sutter puts into historical context are the ecological critique, the dispossession of Native Americans critique, the class-bias critique, and the consumer-construct critique. Sutter outlines each critique and the basis of its formulation, providing understandings very valuable to today's advocate, whose work for wilderness inevitably confronts one or the other, often in forms not well understood by those who raise them.

“Rather than attending to the complex history of wilderness advocacy,” Sutter writes, “wilderness critics have conveniently or inadvertently lumped wilderness advocates together, intimating that all hold to an idea of wilderness that is by turns ecologically naive, dispossessive, class-biased, consumerist, and hopelessly separated from concerns for social justice. These critics have abstracted the wilderness idea from politics, reified it, and built by logic and selectivity a profile of advocacy that misses complexity, contingency, and context.”

Sutter then critiques each of the critiques. Here is just one: “Of all the categories of wilderness criticism, I am most heartily in agreement with the cultural critique. I too am fascinated and troubled by the recreational relationships that Americans have crafted with nature during the twentieth century, and I too believe that a full explication of how Americans came to embrace modern wilderness must involve a serious reckoning with consumerism. But, contrary to the upshot of the cultural critique, I do not think that the trouble is with wilderness. Modern wilderness, as the founders conceptualized it, was certainly a recreational ideal, but its more important function was as a recreational critique. The founders' preoccupation with the automobile and roads was part of their broader discomfort with consumerism, tourism, mechanization, advertising, landscape architecture, and the various other forces that remade outdoor recreation during the interwar period. What made modern wilderness distinct, separate from the national park ideal, was the critique of consumerism that was central to it. For the founders of the Wilderness Society, modern wilderness advocacy sprang from a sense that as roads and the automobiles carved up the nation's remaining wild space, the American desire to retreat to nature, traditionally a critical

gesture, was becoming part of the culture's accommodation to the modern social and economic order. No feature of interwar advocacy is more relevant to the current debate than this one.”

Sutter shows very compellingly the value of understanding the origins of the modern wilderness movement today. “The founders of the Wilderness Society offered wilderness as a new preservationist paradigm because they were concerned with how the automobile, roads, and a boom in outdoor recreation were changing both the natural world and Americans' relations with nature.”

Doesn't that pretty much describe the predicament today's wilderness advocate grapples with?

Riches of the Forest

By Jeff Wagner

Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Earlier this year, scientists from Western Pennsylvania Conservancy began collecting information about the species and natural communities that exist in Elk County. This effort is part of Western Pennsylvania Conservancy's County Natural Heritage Inventory (CNHI) Program – a program designed to identify important ecological areas in the counties of western Pennsylvania. This state-wide effort seeks to provide the first compilation of information describing the rare and unique species and exemplary natural communities that call the commonwealth home.

In partnership with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and The Nature Conservancy, Western Pennsylvania Conservancy began CNHIs in 1990 with Centre County. Since that time, nearly two-thirds of the counties in the state have received their first inventory. With the start of Elk County, the program is moving to the large, forested counties of northern Pennsylvania including those containing the Allegheny National Forest. The work here represents a continuation of the partnership between the Allegheny National Forest and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, and part of the funding for the study of the four county region comes from the Allegheny National Forest.

CNHIs collect existing information from state agencies, local groups and organizations, residents familiar with the county and the Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory

(PNDI) program. Aerial photographs and over flights assist in choosing sites to visit on the ground. In fact, a large part of these studies involves site visits to catalogue species, assess quality, and determine the viability of the species and communities that exist in any particular area. Scientists working on the study contact public and private landowners to receive permission to visit and to collect additional site information. Although the methodology of the inventories is the same, the size and remoteness of many of areas in northern Pennsylvania provides some real challenges.



Clarion River roadless area, Elk County, Allegheny National Forest. Photo by Kirk Johnson

More and more, scientists and land managers are recognizing the unique ecological value of large, contiguous forests. These matrix or core forests create the overall ecological context for the myriad species and natural communities that call them home. The biological diversity of the northern tier forests is intimately tied to the habitats that these large forests provide and although we ultimately tract diversity species by species, taking into account the large-scale events and processes within these forests will be important to the outcome of the study.

As with all CNHIs, those for the northern counties are meant to provide unique biological information to counties and municipalities for comprehensive planning, to state and local agencies to assist in land management, to local and regional conservation groups to aid them in their planning and prioritization, to economic development groups to help reduce project conflicts, and to the residents of the county to help them better understand and appreciate the living resources of their county.

Please watch for announcements of future meetings and presentations. For more information, please contact Jeffrey Wagner at Western Pennsylvania Conservancy at 412-586-2392 or jwagner@paconserve.org.

Please Help With the Hickory Creek Wilderness Trail Clean-Up!

As many of you know, Friends of Allegheny Wilderness has adopted the 11-mile Hickory Creek Wilderness hiking trail in the Allegheny National Forest, and will be organizing at least two trail clean-up events each year. Primary duties include clearing the trail of branches, tree trunks, and other debris that have fallen across the trail during wind events and other disturbances. In federal wilderness areas like Hickory Creek, chain saws or other mechanical devices are not allowed so we will be making use of one and two-man crosscut saws and axes. These tools are efficient, easy and fun to use.

Our fall clean-up event is scheduled for Saturday, October 12. We will meet at the Heart's Content parking lot at 9am. Please make note of this date and plan to join us. The more the merrier, and the more problem areas of the trail get taken care of (not to mention getting to spend a crisp fall day in the Allegheny wilderness!). Participants are also welcome to spend the night at the Heart's Content campground (or the Hickory Creek Wilderness Area itself) and continue clean-up duties on Sunday. Please contact FAW for additional information.

Leave No Trace Principle 2: Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces

By Eric Flood

*Allegheny National Forest Wilderness Ranger
Master Educator in Leave No Trace Ethics*

In my first column (FAW vol. 1, no. 2) we looked at a general overview of Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics, the seven principles of Leave No Trace, and the mission of Leave No Trace Inc. In my next installment (FAW vol. 2, no. 2), we addressed more in depth the first principle, to plan ahead and prepare. Now we will move on to talk more about the second principle of Leave No Trace: Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces.

In many instances, it requires little effort to follow principle number two. This is made easier because most state and national parks and forests have provided us with trails and campsites that are already hardened and maintained to make their surfaces able to withstand the constant flow of recreation user traffic. Sometimes however, the appropriate

surface to travel or camp on isn't as obvious, and we are left to make our own best judgment of the right choice.

While land managers may work hard to maintain trails with proper drainage and treadway hardening, most agencies have many miles of trails and many campsites to care for, and conditions on each trail and campsite can vary with time. A steep section of trail may eventually begin to erode, making the going much rougher than was intended. Soils may become compacted in wet areas, leaving muddy stretches of trail that are less than pleasant to walk through. So what is the ethical thing to do in these situations?

The main consideration in these predicaments, as it is in all Leave No Trace situations, is to ask, "How can I cause the least damage without putting my own safety, or that of others, in jeopardy?" If the trail is muddy, your first inclination may be to simply walk to the side and go around it. To most people it is just common sense to avoid stepping in mud. This is understandable, but this often results in the trail widening out as the mud hole expands into the areas along the side of the trail that are now also becoming compacted and muddy. If you had followed the first LNT principle prior to your trip, then you should be wearing proper footwear that would enable you to easily just walk right through the mud hole. Eventually the land managers will fix the problem, but in the meantime, take a little mud as an added challenge to your hike, and help to not exacerbate the problem further.

Similarly, when encountering a blown-down tree across the trail, stepping over it instead of around it (if you are physically able, and you are not jeopardizing your safety), is the low-impact thing to do. This avoids "bootleg" trails from forming in areas next to the trail that are hard to restore once the land managers can clear the tree from the intended treadway. Keep in mind also that on some foot-use-only paths, land managers may deliberately leave blowdowns that can be safely negotiated by hikers in order to discourage inappropriate use of the trail by motorized vehicles, mountain bikers or pack stock.

Cutting across trail switchbacks on steeper slopes is also problematic. Trails are not switchbacked just to make it easier for hikers traveling uphill, but in reality have the primary purpose of draining water runoff away from the trail before it gains enough force to cause erosion. The "bootleg" paths that form from hikers

cutting down across switchbacks provide a path of less resistance for runoff just as it does impatient hikers, and soon a gully can erode straight down the hillside.

What about when you are not traveling by trail, but are bushwhacking, or traveling cross-country? First of all, if you are traveling in a group, keep the group size small and spread out over a wide area, rather than single file, which is appropriate when on an established trail. Also, take a different route each time to keep from creating a user-developed trail in an area intended to be trail-less. You should already be well-prepared with a map, compass and the skills to use them rather than relying on blazing with paint, flagging tape, or breaking or cutting vegetation to find your way back out again. When possible, choose surfaces to travel on that resist impacts, including rock, gravel, dry grasses, and snow. Try to avoid areas where impacts from use are just beginning to occur.

Campsite selection is relatively simple in popular areas. Merely select an existing site rather than creating a new one. However, this does not provide you with an excuse to camp in an inappropriate area. If you have your pick between two existing sites, one of which is in a poorly chosen location too close to a stream, then the other one located the appropriate distance away is the right choice. Avoid sites used only once, or a few times, that may quickly recover to a natural state if not impacted further. It is appropriate when discovering such a lightly impacted campsite to dismantle any fire rings, scatter ashes, and restore the spot by scattering it with dead wood and debris. The previous occupants should have done this when they were finished, had they been using Leave No Trace practices.

If there are no existing sites available, remember the LNT rule: *Good campsites are **found**, not made!* When you select a good site, it should not be necessary to make any alterations to it to make it habitable. Pick a location at least 200 feet from lakes, streams, and other water sources. Remember to look for the same types of durable surfaces to camp on that you would use when traveling cross-country. Avoid trampling or clearing live vegetation, and replace any debris you move when you leave.

Minimize your campfire impacts by making a mound fire, using small diameter wood, and scattering the ashes over a wide area. If you build a conventional fire ring, always dismantle it, and place rocks so that fire scars are not visible. Better yet, use no fire at all by cooking

with a light-weight backpacking stove, and use a candle for that “firelight” feel to your camp after dark. No one should be able to tell that you had camped in a location once you have packed up your gear and departed.

A final note on pit-fires: digging a fire-pit, and restoring the sod plug to disguise it afterwards is no longer considered to be a good Leave No Trace practice. This is because coals remain hot in the ground for some time, sometimes later starting fires in the surrounding sod and duff. Digging a fire-pit also causes far more disturbance to pristine areas than using a mound fire. It is not recommended that you use this technique for a low-impact campfire, but build a mound-fire instead. Mound fires will also be discussed in a later article in this series.

To summarize Leave No Trace Principle #2 – Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces:

- Durable surfaces include established trails and campsites, rock, gravel, dry grasses or snow.
- Protect riparian areas by camping at least 200 feet from lakes and streams.
- Good campsites are found, not made. Altering a site is not necessary.

In popular areas:

- Concentrate use on existing trails and campsites.
- Walk single file in the middle of the trail, even when wet or muddy.
- Keep campsites small. Focus activity in areas where vegetation is absent.

In pristine areas:

- Disperse use to prevent the creation of campsites and trails.
- Avoid places where impacts are just beginning.

Thanks for your interest in Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics, and good-bye until next time, when we will look at Leave No Trace principle 3: Dispose of Waste Properly. More information on LNT is available online at www.lnt.org. Or, feel free to contact me at the Allegheny National Forest, Bradford District Office, HC1 Box 88, Bradford PA, 16701, (814) 362-4613.

Tionesta Scenic Area Field Trip

*On Saturday, August 24, veteran forest scientist **Ted Grisez** led a field trip through the Tionesta Scenic Area old-growth forest west of Kane, Pennsylvania. Friends of Allegheny Wilderness is seeking wilderness protection for this important ancient forest tract. FAW supporter **Paul Brown** organized the event for the Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania and summarizes the findings of the trip here.*

The Tionesta Scenic Area is a 2,018-acre old growth hemlock- beech forest. In recent years two major disturbances have occurred to this landscape. In 1985 a tornado leveled 800 acres of the forest and within the past few years beech bark disease (beech scale and *Nectria fungi* complex) has killed or severely weakened most of the mature beech trees. The understory consists mostly of beech coppice which has sprouted from the living roots of the mature beech trees that succumbed to the tornado or to beech bark disease.



1985 tornado swath through the Cherry Run drainage in the Tionesta Scenic Area. Photo by Kevin Mack

Many of the beech leaves had turned brown, which Ted Grisez attributed to a hard frost in May. Beech tree seedlings were common and hopefully some will have resistance to beech bark disease. While hemlock seedlings were seen in fair numbers, hemlock saplings were absent. It appears that deer browsing is preventing the regeneration of hemlock trees. As Ted pointed out, oaks and white pine do not grow in the Scenic Area, and we saw no evidence of them. Striped maple was a common understory shrub. Only one hobblebush plant was observed. Pin cherry, blackberry, stepplebush, and Hercules-club were not seen in the forest interior. These species were only observed along the edge of the circle drive at the entrance to the Scenic Area.

I recently received a letter from Ted Grisez. He said he returned to the Scenic Area since our Botanical Society of Western Pennsylvania field trip. He said the long bristled smartweed or *Polygonum caepitosum* had previously not been documented for McKean County. Since this species is an alien from Asia it is not a great find as far as I am concerned. It is a pretty common weed in my neighborhood. He said he also found *Gnaphalium obtusifolium* (catfoot or sweet everlasting) near the old overlook and "a strange aster" which resembles *Aster laterifolius*. He said this aster species would be another plant species previously not documented for

McKean County. He sent samples of the aster and the smartweed to Carnegie Museum's herbarium.

Special thanks to: American Wilderness Coalition, Campaign for America's Wilderness, Environmental Background Information Center, Environmental Systems Research Institute, Mytopo.com, Norcross Wildlife Foundation, Peradam Foundation, Sierra Club, The Wilderness Society, The Wildlands Project, Tortuga Foundation, Patagonia, Inc., and all of our individual donors.

Get involved in wilderness advocacy on the Allegheny National Forest! Copy or clip & mail the below letter to sign up to receive information and updates from the Forest Service as they begin to revise their management plan for the ANF.

Kevin Elliott, Forest Supervisor
Allegheny National Forest
222 Liberty Street
P.O. Box 847
Warren, PA 16365

Date _____

Dear Supervisor Elliott,

There are presently two federally designated wilderness areas in the ANF – Hickory Creek and Allegheny Islands – protecting approximately 9,000 acres, or a mere 1.74% of the ANF's 513,000 acres. The mean for national forest land protected as wilderness nationwide is 18%. There very nearly was, and should have been, approximately 50,000 acres designated as wilderness in the ANF during the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act legislative debate in the mid 1970's. The 1986 ANF Forest Plan recognizes the wilderness shortage here in Chapter 2, on page 5 where it states: "It must be concluded that the demand for wilderness experience on the ANF is very high, given that half the country's population lies within a day's drive of the Forest....It seems obvious that the demand for wilderness designation on the Forest is high, and the available supply in the regional area is low."

At the National Wilderness Conference in Denver, Colorado in September of 2000, U.S. Forest Service Chief Michael Dombeck stated: "In revising our forest plans, we must specifically look for areas suitable for wilderness designation. Eighteen percent of the National Forest System is already wilderness; we must consider more. We need millions of additional acres of wilderness." I personally expect the ANF to take this top directive quite seriously during its own Forest Plan revision.

(1) Please add me to your mailing list for all Forest Plan revision announcements and correspondence. I wish to participate in the revision process every step of the way. (2) Please be sure that making significant ANF wilderness additions is a main focus of the "need for change" from the 1986 Forest Plan. At a minimum, I believe the Tionesta Scenic and Research Natural Areas old-growth forest (and surrounding Forest Service land), Tracy Ridge, Allegheny Front, Minister Valley, Hickory Creek North, and the Clarion River Roadless Area should receive full scrutiny during the revision process. There should be a goal of designating as much as 50,000 additional ANF acres as wilderness.

Thank you very much for you time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness
220 Center Street
Warren, PA 16365

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