

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.

FAW to Publish Proposal

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness will soon release our formal wilderness proposal, titled *A Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest*. From the Tionesta old-growth to the Clarion River roadless area, Chestnut Ridge and other tracts, we hope to permanently protect the most spectacular remaining wildlands in the ANF. The following is the Executive Summary from our proposal.

In delivering the keynote speech at the Denver 'Wilderness 2000' conference in September of 2000, then Forest Service Chief Michael Dombeck stated that "Approximately five percent of the United States landbase is designated wilderness. That may not sound like much and in fact it is not nearly enough. In revising our Forest Plans we must deliberately look for areas suitable for inclusion in the Wilderness system." Friends of Allegheny Wilderness (FAW) has taken Chief Dombeck's admonition to heart as the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) undertakes revision of its Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) here.

Currently there are just two ANF areas designated as wilderness under the 1964 Wilderness Act - the Hickory Creek and Allegheny Islands Wilderness Areas - together encompassing approximately 9,000 acres, or less than two percent of the 513,000-acre Forest. This compares to 18 percent of Forest Service land designated as wilderness nationwide, and 11 percent in the Forest Service's Eastern Region, of which the ANF is a part. This *Citizen's*

Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest identifies a total of 54,460 acres of public land in eight different tracts within the proclamation boundary of the ANF that we believe qualify for inclusion in America's National Wilderness Preservation System. We have also identified three additional parcels totaling 14,330 acres that could be designated as national recreation areas. Together, these proposed designations include public lands within Elk, Forest, McKean, and Warren Counties. In some cases our proposal corresponds to past inventory work of the Pennsylvania Sierra Club or the Forest Service's own roadless analyses. In other cases, it includes public lands which have wilderness qualities but have previously been overlooked.



The FAW proposal seeks federal wilderness protection for two state designated 'Wilderness Trout Streams' in the ANF - Crane Run and East Hickory Creek. Photo by Mike Bleech

The ANF, Pennsylvania's only national forest, is located in the densely populated eastern United States and is within a day's drive of half of the country's population. Large urban centers such as Buffalo, Cleveland, Detroit, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh,

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Washington, D.C. and others are all within easy reach for those seeking a weekend wilderness retreat. While the eastern United States holds about 60 percent of the nation's population, it contains only about four percent of the National Wilderness Preservation System. The 1986 ANF Forest Plan identifies the acute wilderness shortage here, stating: "It seems obvious that the demand for wilderness designation on the Forest is high, and the available supply in the regional area is low." Further, the 1975 Eastern Wilderness Areas Act recognized that "In the more populous eastern half of the United States there is an urgent need to identify, study, designate, and preserve areas for addition to the National Wilderness Preservation System." Although more than 30,000 acres of ANF wilderness was originally proposed in this legislation, none was included in the final version of the bill. While we recognize the importance of continued ANF timber production to the regional economy, it is vital at this juncture to complete the mandate sought by Congress more than a quarter century ago with the Eastern Wilderness Areas Act here on the ANF. Our goal is not to impede or reduce timber production or other multiple uses of the Forest, but simply to permanently protect the remaining wild areas here for the benefit of current and future generations of Americans.

Although a great deal of planning has gone into the forging of this proposal, it cannot be said that it is a perfect document; nor should our proposed wilderness and national recreation area boundaries necessarily be viewed as static. Our proposal is based on the most current information that we have been able to gather through extensive field inventory, from Geographic Information Systems data, from information provided by the Forest Service and other organizations, through interviews with various agency personnel, through hours of

discussion with key stakeholders and experts, and as the result of much internal debate with regard to which ANF lands should be included in our final proposal. We welcome dialogue on this document and realize that the process for any public lands legislation requires the constructive exchange of information, and communication amongst the stakeholders involved. Please direct your comments to FAW.

FAW's proposed wilderness areas are as follows:

- *Allegheny Front, 6,906 acres, Warren Co.*
- *Chestnut Ridge, 5,191 acres, McKean Co.*
- *Clarion River, 6,009 acres, Elk Co.*
- *Cornplanter, 3,022 acres, Warren Co.*
- *Hickory Creek addition, 1,780 acres, Warren Co.*
- *Morrison Run, 6,887 acres, Warren and McKean Cos.*
- *Tionesta, 14,960 acres, Elk, McKean and Warren Cos.*
- *Tracy Ridge, 9,075 acres, McKean and Warren Cos.*

For more information or to request a copy of the proposal document, please contact FAW.

Book Review by Ed Zahniser
The First Full Biography of Benton MacKaye

Once when I was a small child and our family was returning in mid-day from vacation to a house-sitting Benton MacKaye, he greeted us in the suburban Washington, D.C. summer doldrums wearing skivvies and an undershirt. We had had no refrigerator during our vacation, so I rushed to our home refrigerator, opened its door, and scanned the contents: a partial quart of milk and a half dozen or so oranges. Benton MacKaye was one of the most Thoreauvian inhabitants of modern life I've ever known. He was also one of the most singular thinkers I've ever known.

It wasn't until after MacKaye (1879-1975) had died and I had read a lot more of Thoreau that I realized how much the singularity of his thinking had to do with his ingrained Thoreauvian stance. So it was

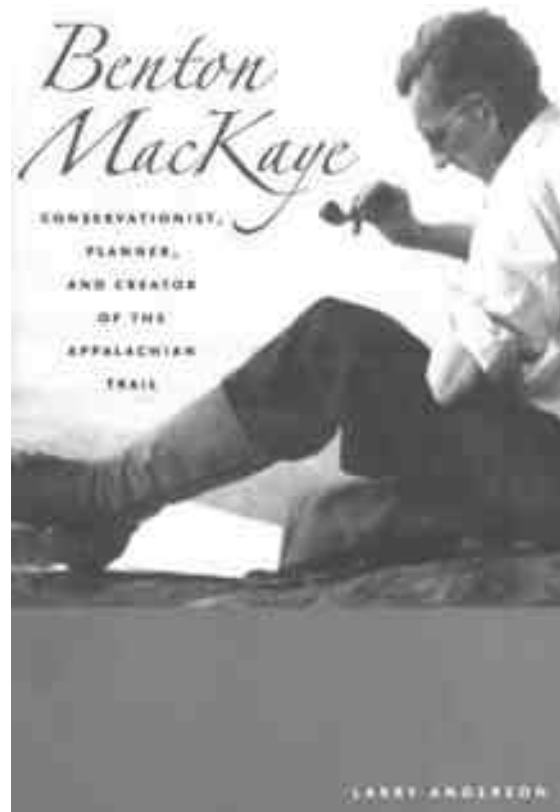
with great fascination that I read the recent, first full-length biography *Benton MacKaye: Conservationist, Planner, and Creator of the Appalachian Trail* by Larry Anderson (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002).

I recommend Anderson's book to all who are interested in conservation, planning, and long distance trails as well as preserving wilderness and wildness. MacKaye was one of the great wilderness thinkers and one of modern conservation's premier imaginers. His life spanned all three great modern surges of conservation: under Theodore Roosevelt and Franklin D. Roosevelt and in the Kennedy-Johnson-early Nixon years. Anderson's close biography fleshes out MacKaye's intellectually fascinating although sometimes physically trying and emotionally harrowing life.

As an Appendix, Anderson reprints MacKaye's October 1921 article in *The Journal of the American Institute of Architects* that is considered the original proposal for an Appalachian Trail. Friends of Allegheny Wilderness will be interested to see MacKaye describing the possibilities of eastern U.S. wildness as though seen through the elevated eyes of a giant: "First he notes the opportunities for recreation. Throughout the Southern Appalachians, throughout the Northwoods, and even through the Alleghenies that wind their way among the smoky industrial towns of Pennsylvania, he recollects vast areas of secluded forests, pastoral lands, and water courses, which, with proper facilities and protection, could be made to serve as the breath of a real life for the toilers in the beehive cities along the Atlantic seaboard and elsewhere." It is fitting—and in the spirit of MacKaye—that the relatively new North Country Trail plays a role in the new wilderness proposals that FAW has developed for today's Allegheny National Forest.

Members of FAW and other wilderness cooperators who have ground-truthed the new wilderness proposals for the ANF will no doubt hearken to what MacKaye told a meeting of Appalachian Trail Conference in 1930: "Speak softly and carry a big map." Reading Anderson's biography of Mac-

Kaye, you may well find yourself thinking: "What wouldn't Benton MacKaye have done with GIS mapping technology on his desktop?"



Anderson covers most facets of MacKaye's long career. Born on March 6, 1879, MacKaye died on my birthday, December 11, 1975. He was graduated from Harvard University in forestry in 1905 and received a masters degree there in 1911. He was in on the early years of the Forest Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. He did forest studies preparatory to the Weeks Act of 1911 that created eastern national forests. He was one of the small group who formalized the discipline of regional planning. He proposed the Appalachian Trail. He prophesied the Interstate Highway System as a "townless highway." He was one of the eight founders and an early president of The Wilderness Society. MacKaye's list of accomplishments goes on and on, despite recurrent money problems and personal tragedies. The latter included the suicide of his activist feminist wife Jessie "Betty" Hardy Stubbs and the deepening mental illness of his sister Lucy, for whom

MacKaye provided substantial personal and financial care for many years, as he did for their mother. Anderson ties together the many strands of MacKaye's long life and his many enduring friendships and associations. My mother Alice Zahniser has said that she thought MacKaye had more good friends than anyone she ever met.



Thanks largely to the groundbreaking work of Benton MacKaye, America now has a large system of National Scenic Trails, including the North Country Trail which passes through the ANF. Hiking enthusiasts can earn a patch like the above by completing the 95-mile segment of the NCT in the ANF.

If you read the early documents of The Wilderness Society, from 1935 to 1950 after having read MacKaye's books *The New Exploration* and *From Geography to Geotechnics*, there is no mistaking the imprint of MacKaye's thinking on the philosophy and early history of the organization. Indeed, although the Appalachian Trail was eventually completed by the energetic work of recreational hikers, MacKaye conceived of the trail as "a wilderness belt" that would keep wildness connected to the metropolitan cores of the fast-growing eastern megalopolis. At points along the trail there would be craft communities that would keep alive the folk culture of the Appalachian region. MacKaye believed, with Thoreau, that a full life, a real life, developed with access to a full spectrum of environments, from high culture through

the rural to wild nature. He called it "habitability."

Those who join with FAW in advocating more wilderness designation for the ANF do so in the MacKaye tradition of working to maintain the true habitability of North America. Reading Anderson's biography of Benton MacKaye can connect you to the roots of our modern American wilderness movement and introduce you to one of its most imaginative and multi-faceted players.

Marshmallows and Mud

By Kristen Setterlof

I started out my summer experience as the wilderness ranger assistant not really knowing what to expect. All I knew is that I would be spending much of my time in the great outdoors, and that I was excited about it. My summer turned out to be much more than that. I've had many a good times, one being a weekend of trail work in the Hickory Creek Wilderness Area. We had a crew of 5 including myself, my boss Eric (the real wilderness ranger), Kirk (director of Friends of Allegheny Wilderness), Taffi (a local volunteer), and Jennifer (my friend from Indiana up visiting). We started out on a Friday, divided up the supplies and hiked in to set up camp near Coon Run. We reached our campsite in time to set up and spend some time talking. We woke up the next morning to some hot oatmeal and some really muddy trail. We began our work by clearing the trail of excess mud and muck; we then collected large rocks and began placing them on the trail by digging holes and fitting them in place. We were joined that day by Linda (my supervisor's supervisor) and a near-by camper who offered to help. We worked on that particular section of the trail most of the morning and then took a break for lunch. We then finished that section and headed on to the next, which was in even worse condition. We spent probably the first hour just shoveling off the muck and mud and trying to clear a way for the water to run. We again made a way for hikers and strengthened the trail by digging holes and placing rocks. We finished that section and ended the day with Eric's famous vege-

tarian marinara with pasta, mmm. The following day we continued the same type of work further down the trail. All together we completed about 120 feet of trail.

Many of my weekend experiences were firsts. It was my first time shoveling mud, which I never knew could be so heavy. I also laid rocks for the first time and have the muscles to prove it. Another first was roasting marshmallows over an open stove-flame. That was an experience in itself. But a marshmallow's a marshmallow, and it's hard to go wrong with that one. Overall the experience was great. We all put in two good days of work, got a little sweaty, got a little dirty, but that was only half the fun. We shared in good times talking and telling some good and not so good jokes (of course we still laughed, we didn't want to make Eric feel bad...). We accomplished a lot as a team and it was a great feeling hiking out our last day knowing that we had made a difference. I left that trip with more than just a good feeling and sore muscles; I left with some really great memories.

FAW embarks on several maintenance projects every year. To get involved with our adoption of the Hickory Creek Wilderness hiking trail, please contact FAW at 814-723-0620 or alleghenyfriends@earthlink.net.

Leave No Trace Principle 5: Minimize Campfire Impacts

By Eric Flood, ANF Wilderness Ranger and Master Educator in Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics

Greetings! My name is Eric Flood, and I'm a Wilderness Ranger (and a Leave No Trace Master Educator) for the Allegheny National Forest. This article is number six of a series of columns I am writing on Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics for the Friends of Allegheny Wilderness newsletter. If you are a new reader to the newsletter and have an interest in low-impact backcountry travel and camping techniques, I highly recommend going back and reading my preceding articles archived on the FAW website (www.pawild.org).

I usually embark on each column with a brief review explaining the definition of Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics, and its origins. On this occasion, I also have a name change to notify returning readers about: The organization I discussed in prior columns, Leave No Trace, Inc., is now known as The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics.

Leave No Trace is a public education program designed to promote responsible outdoor recreation through education, research, and partnerships. This program was first conceived and developed by the USDA Forest Service, in cooperation with the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS). Over time Leave No Trace has been expanded to include a wide range of partners in federal, state, and local agencies, as well as the private sector. The Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics is responsible for managing the program. The name change was made just to clarify the role of the organization in promoting the Leave No Trace program. *"The Leave No Trace message is more than a campaign for clean campsites. It's a program dedicated to building awareness, appreciation, and most of all, respect for our public recreation places.... Leave No Trace is about enjoying the great outdoors while traveling and camping with care."* -From the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics website (www.lnt.org).

The seven principles listed below are the foundation of the Leave No Trace outdoor ethics program:

1. Plan Ahead and Prepare
2. Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces
3. Dispose of Waste Properly
4. Leave What You Find
5. Minimize Campfire Impacts
6. Respect Wildlife
7. Be Considerate of Other Visitors

My first article featured a general overview of Leave No Trace, as well as the role of the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics (formally Leave No Trace Inc.) within the program. The next four articles examined the first four principles, which now brings

us to the “hot” topic of principle number 5: Minimize Campfire Impacts.

To many people, it just isn't a camping trip without a campfire. However, while you may consider a fire to be a major part of your outdoor experience, it is one of the highest impact activities you can engage in – especially in popular backcountry areas.

Popular campsites usually become completely picked clean of all down and dead wood for a large surrounding area, deteriorating the untouched natural appearance that we seek to find in the back-country. And more importantly, removing all of the down and dead wood, thus preventing it from enriching the duff and soil on the forest floor, interferes with the natural processes of the forest ecosystem.

Less ambitious firewood gatherers also tend to break the lower branches off of trees when firewood can't be easily found close by. Even worse, some less-informed individuals may even fell standing trees for wood. It is as important not to cut standing dead snags, which provide a source of food and habitat to a variety of wildlife, as it is to not injure live trees. Besides the ecological damage you will cause, felling trees around your campsite leaves ugly stumps that further contribute to diminishing the natural appearance of a backcountry area already likely to be absent of woody debris for ground cover.

Fire rings in popular campsites show a remarkable tendency to grow tremendously large over time, and after repeated use become over-filled with unsightly (and unnatural) ash and unburned debris. Many uninformed people will then simply abandon that ring and construct a new one, resulting in ugly multiple fire rings at a single campsite. Even worse, some campers attempt to burn logs far larger in diameter and length than is appropriate, “feeding” it into the fire slowly as it burns. This is a contributing factor to a fire ring steadily increasing in size. It also creates a double impact of large, half-burned logs littering campsites, and the danger of starting a wildland fire when the log burns down its

length outside of the fire ring or is removed while still smoldering.

Unfortunately, many people seem to view backcountry fire rings as convenient trash receptacles. Even when a site is unoccupied, if a fire ring looks well used they will toss their litter there instead of doing the correct thing by packing their trash out with them (remember principle three - *Dispose of Waste Properly* - always pack out all of your trash).

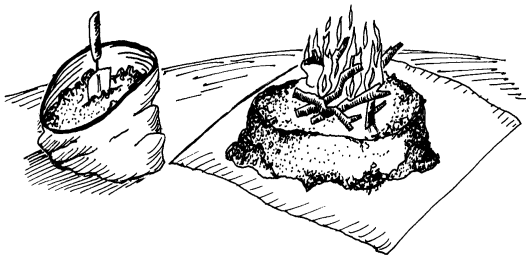
One of the most prevalent sources of litter in fire rings is the aluminum foil that many folks use to cook their food in, and then attempt to burn in the fire. This is a phenomenon I like to call “The Myth of Burning Aluminum.” There is a “back-country urban legend” that if you have a hot fire, aluminum cans and foil will burn up entirely. Please, take my word for it--this simply isn't true! Instead, the aluminum congeals into lumps that are hidden from your view by the fresh ashes until the next rain. You can trust me to know this as a fact, because I spend a great deal of time cleaning unburned aluminum from fire-rings and carrying the mess out with me. My job would actually be easier and less messy if these individuals simply littered on the ground next to the fire ring!

Again referring back to LNT principle three: you should never, ever burn food scraps or trash in your fire. No matter how hot your fire is, there will be some fragments and odors left over which will leave litter in the backcountry and attract animals like porcupines and bears to campsites.

Despite the high-impact nature of campfires, many who are otherwise very mindful of being low impact in their outdoor pursuits simply cannot abide the idea of camping without a fire. If you are one of these folks, there is no need for despair – it is still possible to enjoy a small fire while greatly minimizing your impacts on the land. However, if you are open to trying just one trip without a fire, you may find you won't miss it nearly as much as you may think.

If you do decide to have a fire, there are a number of ways to limit your impacts. The simplest is to always use established fire rings when they are available. Of course, this implies that you will also use your best judgment regarding principle two: *Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces*. Be sure to reduce the dimensions of the fire ring if it is oversized, and leave the camp cleaner than you found it. You should always keep your fires small, and gather only down and dead firewood over a wide area away from your campsite. Only use wood that can be easily broken by hand because larger wood will not be completely consumed, leaving half-burned logs and large chunks of charcoal. Make sure to burn all of the wood down to white ash, put your fire completely out, then scatter the cool ashes over a wide area.

If you camp in an area where there aren't any established campsites, avoid building a fire-ring. Instead, use a fire pan or build a mound fire. Pit fires are no longer recommended as a low-impact method of having a fire, because the heat remains trapped in the ground for a long time, may unnecessarily damage surrounding roots and vegetation, and can cause a fire to flare up long after you have departed. A low impact mound fire is the best choice to Leave No Trace of your visit on the land.



(Mound fire illustration copyright LNT inc., used by permission)

To build a mound fire, collect some mineral soil (sand or gravel) from an already disturbed source, such as under the roots of a blown down tree. Lay a ground cloth or sheet of plastic on the fire site and spread the soil into a circular, flat-topped mound at least 3-5" thick. The thickness of the mound is critical to insulate the ground below from

the heat of the fire. Again, use only small diameter wood for your fire, so it will be fully consumed. When breaking camp, scatter the cold ashes over a wide area, and return the mineral soil to where you collected it.

On the side of not building a fire, it's good to consider that a campfire is a messy, time-consuming, and not terribly efficient way to cook your meals. If you make the low-impact choice to bring a camping stove, and are careful to bring adequate fuel, the need (and temptation) to build a fire is by and large eliminated. It is far easier to regulate your cooking heat with a camp stove; it won't blacken your cookware, and is much easier to start than a fire.

There are also some very good substitutes for the social aspects of a campfire. If you pack a candle with you, you have a low-impact source of light as well as a center for social gathering with that "firelight" feel to it. You may not believe it until you try it, but a candle can be more enjoyable to sit around than a fire, because smoke doesn't blow into your eyes, you don't have to keep getting up to add fuel, and it is very easy to put out.

As I did in my last column, I would once again like to end this installment with a final thought from the great conservationist and wilderness advocate Aldo Leopold: "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

Thank you once again for your interest in Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics, and if you would like to find out more about reducing campfire impacts or any of the other principles, visit the Leave No Trace website at www.lnt.org, or contact me here at the Bradford Ranger District of the Allegheny National Forest 29 U.S. Forest Service Drive, Bradford, PA 16701 (814) 362-4613 ext. 126, email eflood@fs.fed.us. Until next time, Happy Trails!

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