



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.

***ANF to Release Draft Plan in May
Public Will Have 90 Days to Respond***

As most readers are already aware, the Forest Plan revision process for the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) has been ongoing since September of 2003. The Forest Service is now finally approaching the later stages of that process, and recently announced that the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for Forest Plan revision will be released sometime in mid-May.

Once the DEIS is released, a 90-day public comment period will begin. The DEIS will contain four "alternatives" – four different potential versions of the revised Forest Plan. Some alternatives will recommend that little to no new wilderness be designated by Congress, and others will recommend that more wilderness be designated.

The latest information that Friends of Allegheny Wilderness has is that the maximum number of new wilderness areas the DEIS will recommend is four. Our *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest* (see www.pawild.org), of course, identifies eight potential wilderness areas.

Therefore, it will be very important for citizens to become actively involved in the DEIS public comment period to tell the Forest Service that all eight FAW proposed wilderness areas should be fully evaluated throughout the remainder of the revision process. It is important not to let wilderness be arbitrarily short-changed in this process.

During the first month of the 90-day comment period, a series of open houses and informative public events to roll out the DEIS will be held around the region and state. Watch the calendar section of www.pawild.org for specific locations, dates, and times.

During the second month of the 90-day period, the Forest Service will work with a number of organizations with specific interests, and evaluate their impact on future forest management practices.

The final third of the 90-day period will be a listening period for the ANF, with more public hearings to be held. After evaluating all of this input, the Forest Service hopes to release its final decision in December.

If you would like either a hard copy of the DEIS, or a CD-ROM with the full DEIS in electronic PFD format, you must make that request to the Forest Service **before April 15th** by sending an email to:

r9_anf_fpr@fs.fed.us

The DEIS will also be posted on the ANF website in PDF format following its public release in May, so you may simply wish to access it that way.

Even if you do not read through the full document, it will be critically important for all wilderness advocates to make their views known to the Forest Service that you want the maximum amount of wilderness possible recommended to Congress for permanent protection. This is it everyone –

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www.pawild.org

The following organizations are formally supporting FAW's A Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest. If you would like to add your business, organization, church group, etc. to this growing list, please contact Friends of Allegheny Wilderness using the above contact information.

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Butler Outdoor Club
Campaign for America's Wilderness
Eastern Native Tree Society
Explorer's Club of Pittsburgh
Finger Lakes Trail Conference
Howard County, Maryland Bird Club
Keystone Trails Association
Lake Erie Group Sierra Club
Lehigh Valley Audubon Society
Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club
Pennsylvania Native Plant Society
Pennsylvania Trout Unlimited
Pine Creek Headwaters Prot. Group
PrimalNature.org
Tiadaghton Audubon Society
The Wilderness Society

The Executive Summary and maps of our proposed wilderness areas and national recreation areas can be viewed online at the above listed web site.

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the Forest Service is now narrowing in on decisions for the ANF that we are going to have to live with for the next 10 to 15 years or longer! Please do take the time to get involved!

Howard Zahniser's 100th Celebrated

On February 25th, 2006 – the 100th anniversary of the birth of 1964 Wilderness Act author and Tionesta native Howard Zahniser – wilderness enthusiasts from around the country descended on Warren, Pennsylvania for a celebration recognizing the significance of Zahniser's life work toward establishing America's National Wilderness Preservation System (NWPS). The NWPS now permanently protects more than 106 million acres of precious wild lands around the country!



From left to right: David Zahniser, grandson of Howard and Alice Zahniser, Howard Zahniser's widow Alice, Howard and Alice Zahniser's son Ed at the 100th anniversary celebration in Warren.

The celebration was held in the beautiful and historic Struther's Library Theatre in downtown Warren. The Library Theatre is one of the oldest in the country, having been built in 1883, and provided just the right atmosphere for this significant event.

Starting off the evening's festivities, new Allegheny National Forest Supervisor Kathleen Morse gave an inspirational poetry reading and showed breathtaking slides that she has personally taken of California's Sierra Nevada wilderness.

Kathleen arrived to the ANF in September of last year to take over the reigns from departed Supervisor Kevin Elliott, who left for a Forest Service position in Utah. Kathleen was previously a District Ranger on the Inyo National Forest in California where she oversaw the stewardship of thousands of acres of protected wilderness.

Following Kathleen's presentation, Mark Harvey, professor of history at North Dakota State University in Fargo, and the author of *Wilderness Forever: Howard Zahniser and the Path to the Wilderness Act*, recounted his experience of researching and publishing last year the story of Zahnie's life and work with The Wilderness Society.

Mark's research was extensive and exhaustive and his presentation provided interesting insight into the life of this important American conservationist. *Wilderness Forever* is an excellent biography, and is highly recommended reading for any wilderness enthusiast.

Concluding the evening, Howard and Alice Zahniser's son Ed, a writer and poet from West Virginia, gave a moving talk on the history of the wilderness preservation movement, with a focus on the importance of wilderness protection in the East – where most of the nation's population resides.

Of the ongoing "disappearing roadless areas" problem in the ANF Forest Plan revision, where a number of qualified wild areas have been overlooked by the Forest Service due to arbitrary bureaucratic selection criteria (see Vol. 5, No. 4 of the FAW newsletter for more information), Ed reminded the audience:

"This ruling—that has no basis in law and is made by regional administrators you do not elect—this administrative ruling frustrates the sole legal authority of your elected representatives in the U.S. Congress. This clearly frustrates the intent of the statutory overlay of preservation that Howard Zahniser and Pennsylvania Congressman John P. Saylor—among so many, many others—labored eight years to see realized in the 1964 Wilderness Act...

...If you want to send a 100th birthday card to Howard Zahniser, you can address it to your public officials. Let them know you want more wilderness preserved on the Allegheny National Forest. By doing so you will gift yourself—and all the forest's other 298,169,241 owners-in-common—you will gift yourself and the womb of time, in perpetuity, with the wealth of benefits of a

wilderness forever future. You will bequeath to the future a wild remnant of the eternity of the past."

Ed is a truly gifted writer and speaker, and his talk was the perfect end to a great tribute to his father. Now it's up to the rest of us to extend Zahnie's wilderness vision right here in his home national forest!

White Mountain National Forest Wilderness Bill Introduced

Senators John Sununu and Judd Gregg (both R-NH) recently introduced the "New Hampshire Wilderness Act of 2006," legislation to formally designate 34,500 wild acres of the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF) as wilderness.

In November of 2005, the Forest Service recommended the designation of additional acreage as wilderness in its Forest Plan revision for the WMNF. The new legislation incorporates the recommendations of the revised Forest Plan by designating 23,700 acres in the area of the Wild River as wilderness and adding 10,800 acres to the existing Sandwich Range Wilderness Area.

Senator Sununu stated, "For a number of years, local and state officials, citizen groups and other concerned individuals have been working toward the goal of designating more wilderness in the White Mountain National Forest. Their dedication ... is to be commended, and will come to fruition with the passage of this bill."

Senator Gregg stated, "Consistent with the Forest Service's recommendations, the New Hampshire Wilderness Act of 2006 represents a balanced, consensus-based approach for designating additional lands as wilderness."

This action certainly bodes well for potential new wilderness in other Eastern national forests approaching the end of their Forest Plan revision processes. That includes the Green Mountain in Vermont, the Monongahela in West Virginia, and of course the Allegheny here in Pennsylvania as well!

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness
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American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) illustration taken from *A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold (1966 Ballantine Books paperback edition). The American woodcock utilizes Natural openings in the wilderness forest canopy for breeding Displays.

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 Other \$_____

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.

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Send to:
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