



FRIENDS
of Allegheny
Wilderness

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.

Volume 7, #3 *The Official Newsletter of Friends of Allegheny Wilderness* September, 2007

From the Director

Well, it has been a while since I have opened our newsletter with a *From the Director* message. However, a lot has been happening with the Friends of Allegheny Wilderness campaign this year, and it seems like a good time to touch base with all of our old – and welcome new – friends.

Due largely to the enterprising work of our new grassroots organizer John Bartlett, who came on board in March, our membership numbers have grown substantially in recent months. Also, organizational endorsements of the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest* have continued to roll in (we are now up to 27 local, regional, and national organizations!). Renowned wilderness historian Doug Scott has visited our region twice this year to promote the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal* and his excellent book, *The Enduring Wilderness*, and many other exciting developments are underway. Momentum is clearly growing on a number of different levels!

The bad news is, the Forest Service only recommended two wilderness areas totaling a little under 13,000 acres in their revised Forest Plan, which was published in March. This is far short of the eight areas and 54,460 acres outlined in the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal*. Also, oil and gas development on the Allegheny continues to expand. Due to overarching geopolitical conditions, a boom period for the industry is underway – not just in Pennsylvania or nationwide, but worldwide. This has translated into

hundreds of new wells being drilled locally in the Allegheny National Forest in recent years, with hundreds – if not thousands – to come. Some of this new development is even beginning to affect the most remote areas of the forest, such as the areas we have proposed for wilderness protection.



Pink lady's slipper (*Cypripedium acaule*) in the proposed Chestnut Ridge Wilderness Area. Photo by Tessa Campbell.

We are truly in a race against time, though certainly all is not lost. With your help and perseverance, and the help of your friends and family in your community, we will ultimately succeed in convincing the Pennsylvania...

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...Congressional delegation to act decisively and go beyond the small agency recommendation to permanently protect all of the remaining wild areas of the Allegheny as part of America's National Wilderness Preservation System.

It really is up to you to help make a difference! If you haven't done so already, please take the time today to write a letter to your Representative in the U.S. House, Senator Casey, and Senator Specter. And please have your friends and family do so as well. Also, please contact us to find out other ways you can help make a difference – distribute literature, enlist the formal support of environmental organizations, churches, or hiking groups you belong to. Have businesses you are close to endorse the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal*. Host a Wild Party (see below article). The possibilities are endless!

Thank you very much for all of your help and support. We couldn't have made it this far without you, but there is still a lot of work to do.

– Kirk Johnson

Where To Write

It is time for wilderness advocates to focus like a laser beam on Congress, who will be the final decider on which areas of the ANF will be permanently protected for future generations. Please write to the following decision-makers and **ask them to support wilderness legislation that will protect all eight special wild areas in the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal***. For information about what to say in your letter, log on

to www.pawild.org and peruse our catalog of newsletters, newspaper clippings, and other information posted there.

United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Phil English
Member of Congress
208 East Bayfront Parkway, Suite 102
Erie, PA 16507

The Honorable John Peterson
Member of Congress
127 West Spring Street, Suite C
Titusville, PA 16354

United States Senate

The Honorable Bob Casey
United States Senator
17 South Park Row
Federal Building, Suite B-150
Erie, PA 16501

The Honorable Arlen Specter
United States Senator
17 South Park Row
Federal Building, Suite B-120
Erie, PA 16501

Finally, please send a letter to your own Congressperson, if different from Reps. English or Peterson, asking for his or her support as well. If you don't know who your Representative is, or if you need their mailing address, contact FAW or log on to www.house.gov.

Watch For a Wild Picnic Near You

By John Bartlett

Stir together Allegheny National Forest wilderness advocates, beautiful locations and lots of good food and you get a Wild Picnic.

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness is hosting a series of Wild Picnics for volunteers and others to join in fun and friendship and learn more about the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest* and how to become involved in the wilderness campaign.

About 25 people attended the first picnic held Aug. 23rd at Presque Isle State Park in Erie.

"I had a lot fun. It was a great family atmosphere," picnicker Abby Texter said. "And I thought the music was great."



Participants at the Sunday, September 16 FAW Wild Picnic at the Buckaloons Campground, Allegheny National Forest. Photo by Kirk Johnson.

Abby's husband Matt Texter served as the official campaign troubadour for the picnic, entertaining with an eclectic collection of musical Americana finishing with a rousing rendition of This Land is Your land.

Burgers and hotdogs disappeared from the grill and the dishes brought by guests were abundant and tasty. "The potluck really added to the picnic," Abby Texter said.

Our second picnic was held Sept. 16th at the Buckaloons Campground just west of Warren in the Allegheny National Forest. With a smaller group, it was an intimate affair with lots of shared personal stories about the Allegheny National Forest.

By the time you read this we will have held our third picnic Sept. 23rd in Bradford's Callahan Park.

On Oct. 21 our traveling Wild Picnic crew hosts an event at Millbrook Marsh Nature Center, State College. The picnic will be held in the nature center's multi-use barn come rain or shine and could be our biggest event yet. For more information please contact John Bartlett at (814) 676-4474 or jbartlett@pawild.org.

Don't despair if you haven't made it to a picnic yet. The good food, camaraderie, entertainment, information and opportunity to become more involved in the Allegheny National Forest wilderness campaign will likely soon be coming to an area near you.

Future picnics are planned for the Meadville and Titusville/Oil City/Franklin areas and other locations in coming weeks and months.

And, individuals can host their own Wild Parties to help spread the word and gain support for the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal*. We will provide you with all the information and support you need, just set a date. If you wish, we can provide a staff member or key volunteer to help out.

FAW Wild Conference 2008: Save the Dates

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness is planning a wilderness training conference for next spring. Our last conference of this kind was held in October of 2005 in Ridgway, and featured talks by such well-known environmental writers such as Ed Zahniser and Doug Scott, interesting and informative workshops on how individuals can improve their wilderness advocacy skills, and two different outings to the proposed Clarion River Wilderness Area.

Next spring's conference will be held on the weekend of **April 11-13** at the beautiful Parker Dam State Park southeast of the ANF. We anticipate a lineup of activities at least as impressive and informative as the 2005 workshop, and encourage you to attend to find out what you can do to help permanently protect the ANF's last remaining wild areas, to meet like minded wilderness aficionados, and to have a great time in the great outdoors!

Save the dates now, more information to come in the December newsletter!

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness
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Fisher (*Martes pennanti*): Predator and member of the weasel family (*Mustelidae*). The fisher has a narrow body, bushy tail, tapered muzzle, and low, rounded ears. Adults are usually 31 to 47 inches long. Once abundant in NW Pennsylvania, fishers were unable to cope with the unregulated trapping and widespread clearcutting of the 1800s, and so were extirpated. Reintroduction began in 1994, and since then about 190 fishers have been reintroduced in PA.

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:

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