

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

To date, the Allegheny National Forest (ANF) wilderness campaign has made great progress in raising public awareness, influencing the U.S. Forest Service's forest planning process, making Pennsylvania's Congressional delegation see our issue's importance, and in many other ways. That credit goes to **you** for taking the time to write, call, and email decision-makers, and to otherwise advocate for wilderness protection.

We are facing some challenges, however. Designating wilderness, permanently protecting it in its natural condition for future generations to use and enjoy, requires an act of Congress. For the past seven years Friends of Allegheny Wilderness and our supporters have worked diligently to educate members of the state's Congressional delegation in Washington, D.C. that wilderness protection for the ANF is urgent.

Unfortunately, the linchpin in the delegation, John Peterson (who represents the vast majority of the ANF), announced unexpectedly shortly after the New Year that he will retire when his current term ends in January of 2009. Since his announcement, it has become clear that Representative Peterson will not have time to introduce and lead a wilderness bill through the labyrinth of Congress before leaving office. We must therefore set our sights on the 111th Congress, the state's two Senators Arlen Specter and Bob Casey, and the new representative from the 5th District. (There are twelve people,

Democrats and Republicans, vying for that position. The April 22nd primary will whittle the field down to one Democrat and one Republican candidate.)



Warren artist Thomas Paquette (www.thomaspaquette.com) works on a painting within the proposed Cornplanter Wilderness Area. Photo by Kirk Johnson.

Also problematic is the boom in oil and gas development in Pennsylvania, driven by the high price of crude oil – over \$100 per barrel now, where it had been in the low-to-mid \$20's per barrel prior to the September 11 event in 2001. Proposed wilderness areas such as Morrison Run and Chestnut Ridge are at high risk of being carved up with access roads and drilled in the near future.

But we do have reason for optimism. The ANF is a large forest – 513,200 acres – and this boom won't affect every acre. Though some of our...

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...proposed wilderness areas are at risk, many are not in immediate danger. Oil and gas deposits underlying the forest are not uniformly distributed, but concentrated in certain areas. Now is not the time to give up, but rather to keep the faith and redouble our efforts.

Campaigns to protect the environment often take time to bear fruit. If you've read Carsten Lien's *Olympic Battleground*, you know that it took decades from the time Washington State's Olympic National Park was first proposed until it was finally established in 1938 under President Franklin Roosevelt. Similarly, reintroducing gray wolves to the greater Yellowstone region was first proposed in the late 1960s by Park biologists concerned about the inflated elk population, and that triumph wasn't realized until 1995. We don't give up because of a few setbacks. The Pennsylvania Sierra Club started this wilderness work for the ANF in the early 1970s. It has always been a marathon, not a sprint.

I urge you to help sustain our campaign now by making a donation to FAW in whatever amount you can afford. You can use the convenient form on the back of this newsletter. And please continue to write those letters to Congress (see www.pawild.org for more information).

In the meantime, get psyched! Warm spring weather is just around the corner. Time to get back out in the woods and enjoy the great outdoors!

– Kirk Johnson

Join the Businesses for Wilderness Campaign

By John Bartlett

For John Baughman endorsing the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest* is not just about his love for the natural world and a desire to protect the best of the Allegheny National Forest, but good business as well.

"Designated wilderness will help bring people to the area," Baughman said. "It will be another thing we can offer, and that will be good for business."

Baughman, owner of Baughman's Market in the Allegheny National Forest community of Marienville, said wilderness areas are "priceless" and offer a particularly strong draw to urban dwellers that spend money while visiting the area. He also said wilderness areas as forever protected natural areas tend to increase regional property values.

It is clear that wild and natural areas are important to all of us and play a significant role in our quality of life and the health of our regional economy.

An economics report released in Sept. stated:

"Enacting this proposal (the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal*) would assist Pennsylvania and its Allegheny National Forest region by helping to attract and retain residents and businesses, support the growing market for active recreation and provide numerous other valuable benefits."

Of course, there is also the deep understanding that natural areas have an incredible value above and beyond the economic benefits they are likely to bring to the region, which is not lost on business owners.

Julia Eagles of Erie, one of the lead volunteers in the business endorsement recruitment drive, said many businesses she contacted noted how

few natural areas remain in the ANF and that those remaining areas need to be protected.

“We all want to believe that if enough of us band together we can do something that will benefit future generations,” Eagles said. “For me personally, I love the wilderness and in my travels with American Hiking Society as a crew leader I discovered that everywhere we went that wilderness is always endangered by encroaching civilization and any effort to preserve it is worthwhile.”

Wild and natural areas are important to all of us and play a significant role in our quality of life and the health of our regional economy. They boost tourism and help draw a high-quality workforce, as well as business owners seeking such amenities.

The number of businesses officially endorsing the *Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal* is growing rapidly and it is an important component of our wilderness campaign. Business endorsements help show Congress and others the depth and breadth of the commitment to protect the best of the diverse values of the Allegheny National Forest.

If you own a business, please become an endorsing business and proclaim your support for the eight additional wilderness areas totaling 54,460 acres called for in the *Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal*.

If you know of a business owner you feel might be interested, please ask them to become an endorsing business. And consider becoming an active volunteer in the business recruitment drive, or with any of our other many activities. It is your wilderness campaign.

For more information, including business endorsement forms and cover letters, please contact John Bartlett at (814) 676-4474, jbartlett@pawild.org or by mail at 304 Mayer St., Oil City, PA 16301.

To see the current list of businesses (now numbering more than 75 in all) from throughout Pennsylvania’s

3rd and 5th Congressional districts and beyond who have endorsed the Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal, log on to:

www.pawild.org/supporters.html

FAW newsletter naming contest!

This is the first issue of Volume 8 of the official newsletter of Friends of Allegheny Wilderness, bringing us up to 26 issues in all dating back to the summer of 2001. Whew, that’s a lot! However, in all that time the newsletter has been lacking a catchy name.

This is where you come in. FAW is announcing a naming contest for our newsletter, open to all of our members. Please feel free to send in your idea for a short but sweet nickname that captures the imagination and succinctly conveys our wilderness preservation mission for the Allegheny National Forest. It could be a tree or wildlife species name, or something completely different. It’s entirely up to you. The winner will receive a beautifully matted and framed 12” x 16” photo of an actual scene from a proposed area in the *Citizens’ Wilderness Proposal*, and acknowledgement in the newsletter.

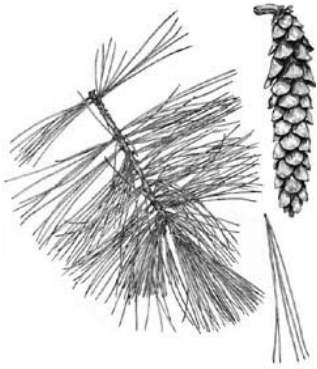
The deadline for submitting your name idea is April 30th, and the winner will be announced on May 16th. One entry per person please. The FAW board of directors will review the entries and make a decision by consensus as to the winner. The newsletter will carry the new name that you chose beginning with the June issue! Send your entry to: info@pawild.org, or to the mailing address listed at the top of page 2.

Thank you in advance for your participation, and we hope to hear from you soon!



Eastern hemlock (*Tsuga Canadensis*)

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness
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Eastern white pine (*Pinus strobus*), the tallest tree in the East. White pine forests originally covered much of northeastern North America, though only one percent of the original trees remain untouched by extensive logging operations in the 1700s and 1800s. In pre-colonial stands the white pine is reported to have grown to as tall 230'!

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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