



*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.*

## Warren Times Observer

Thursday, May 21, 2009

### **Two ANF areas get national attention *Tracy Ridge, Chestnut Ridge noted in national magazine***

By STEPHANIE HAMM  
[shamm@timesobserver.com](mailto:shamm@timesobserver.com)

Two proposed wilderness areas in the Allegheny National Forest, Tracy Ridge and Chestnut Ridge, have been thrust into the national spotlight.

The two areas were featured in the June 2009 issue of *Backpacker*, an outdoor recreation industry magazine. *Backpacker* is published nine times annually and has a national circulation of 340,000.

"We are very excited not only for our wilderness campaign, but also for the national attention brought to the Allegheny National Forest in general by this *Backpacker* article," said Warren native Ronald Simonsen, M.D., president of the board of directors for Friends of Allegheny Wilderness (FAW) in a statement Wednesday.

The *Backpacker* article, "Hike It, Save It" by Charlie Wood highlights ten areas of federal public land around the country that are in need of the protection brought on by wilderness designation.

Tracy Ridge and Chestnut Ridge were proposed for wilderness designation in 2003 in the Warren-based FAW citizens' proposal.

At 9,705 acres Tracy Ridge is the largest roadless area in the ANF, situated along the eastern shoreline of the Allegheny Reservoir in Warren and McKean Counties. Chestnut Ridge is 5,191 acres and located directly east and adjacent to Tracy Ridge on the other side of State Route 321.



**The June 2009 cover of *Backpacker* magazine.**

Chestnut Ridge is qualified for inclusion in the National Wilderness Preservation System, and has been recommended to Congress. Tracy Ridge has been removed from consideration by the Regional Forester in Milwaukee, citing desire for developed overnight accommodations along the reservoir shoreline and possible use of prescribed fire within the area.

*Friends of Allegheny Wilderness*  
220 Center Street  
Warren, PA 16365  
814-723-0620  
info@pawild.org  
www.pawild.org

*Field Office*  
304 Mayer Street  
Oil City, PA 16301  
814-676-4474

“While we were certainly disappointed with the agency’s decision to backtrack and withdraw Tracy Ridge from recommended wilderness status, fortuitously the area remains undeveloped at this time and eminently qualified for wilderness designation,” said Kirk Johnson, executive director of FAW in a statement Wednesday.

FAW is offering free guided hikes in Tracy Ridge and Chestnut Ridge for individuals or groups who are interested in exploring the area. For more information, contact FAW at 723-0620 or www.pawild.org.

The website for *Backpacker* magazine is www.backpacker.com.

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### **Allegheny River Cleanup Sept. 19th FAW Volunteers Needed**

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness has climbed on board as a sponsor of an Allegheny River cleanup slated for September 15th through the 19th that is being spearheaded by the Allegheny Outfitters and Indian Waters canoe liveries, and we are looking for FAW volunteers to pitch in and help!

The segment of the river targeted for cleanup runs from the Kinzua Dam down to the town of Tidioute. There are four Allegheny Islands Wilderness Area islands in that stretch. We are looking for FAW volunteers to adopt three of those islands and scour them during the cleanup to remove all trash.

The four wilderness islands situated north of Tidioute are:

**Crulls Island** (96 acres): this island has already been adopted for cleanup by a local boy scout troop.

**Thompsons Island** (67 acres): needs FAW adopters.

**R. Thompson Island** (30 acres): needs FAW adopters.

**Courseon Island** (62 acres): needs FAW adopters.

All supplies will be provided such as canoes, trash bags, and trash hauling. All you need to supply is yourself, a willingness to help clean up the National Wild and Scenic Allegheny River, and a deep appreciation for protecting the Allegheny Islands Wilderness Area in this, the 25th anniversary year of its designation! (You might want to pack a snack/lunch and bring drinking water as well.)

The primary cleanup day will be Saturday, September 19th so your participation is strongly encouraged on that day if you wish to volunteer. However, if you wish to volunteer but will not be available on the 19th, some work will be done from the 15th to the 18th as well to a lesser degree.

More details to come, please contact FAW today if you are interested in helping and want to adopt one of the wilderness islands – info@pawild.org or 814-723-0620. FAW volunteers will receive a free FAW trail crew t-shirt (while supplies last).

Note: the spotlight species for this issue of *FAWN* is the American paddlefish (see back page), in honor of the Allegheny River cleanup.

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### **Keystone Wilderness Film Now Available**

The Allegheny National Forest is Pennsylvania’s only national forest, but it currently has too few permanently protected areas. Located in northwest Pennsylvania, it includes many additional wild gems that may be designated as wilderness areas under the Wilderness Act of 1964 – part of America’s National Wilderness Preservation System.

A new 16-minute film utilizes stunning photography and video of the prospective areas to be protected – more than 54,460 acres in all of the 513,300-acre ANF. *Keystone Wilderness: A Citizens' Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest* is professionally narrated and explains what YOU can do to help protect wilderness in the Keystone State's only national forest. The film was produced by B.J. Gudmundsson of Patchwork Films and Friends of Allegheny Wilderness.



**A scene from the film *Keystone Wilderness*, this image depicts a tributary to Dry Brook in the proposed Chestnut Ridge Wilderness Area.**

This film will be a tremendous outreach tool that any wilderness advocate can utilize to help spread the good word. If you are interested in receiving a DVD of *Keystone Wilderness* to show to friends, family, church groups, business leaders, and other conservation groups, please contact FAW. While we have not yet mass-produced the film, plans are in the works to do so, so RSVP your copy today!

In the meantime, *Keystone Wilderness* can be viewed online on YouTube. Go to our YouTube page: [www.youtube.com/fawweb](http://www.youtube.com/fawweb), or simply Google "Keystone Wilderness."

Special thanks goes out to the Campaign for America's Wilderness for making *Keystone Wilderness* possible.

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### Science Letter Up to 61 Signers

In January a letter from Pennsylvania's scientific community advocating that Congress and Governor Rendell support the *Citizens'*

*Wilderness Proposal for Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest* was released to the public with an initial 53 scientists signed on.

The full letter from the scientific community with the current 61 signatories can be downloaded as a PDF document from the FAW website. The direct link to the letter is:

[pawild.org/pdfs/fawscienceletter41009.pdf](http://pawild.org/pdfs/fawscienceletter41009.pdf)

If you are a Pennsylvania scientist (or know one) with a Ph.D. in a field such as biology, ecology, economics, forestry, or closely related fields and have an interest in signing on to the letter, please contact FAW at [info@pawild.org](mailto:info@pawild.org). We could really use your help, as we will continue to add signatories until Congress passes new wilderness legislation for the ANF.

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### Social Networking With FAW

Friends of Allegheny Wilderness has in recent years joined the "social networking" craze online. We now have MySpace, YouTube, and most recently, Facebook pages established.

Please stop by our pages on these networking sites and get involved. Watch the *Keystone Wilderness* campaign film and other related videos, "favorite" our videos, send us a "friend request," post a message, or send us an email. We would love to hear from you! Also, please spread the word to friends and family who you network with about our pages and invite them to join as well. The more the merrier.

You can find links to each of our three networking pages from the links page on the main FAW website.

Another way to get involved and receive regular updates on our campaign is to sign up for our email listserve. Just go to [www.pawild.org](http://www.pawild.org) and enter your email address where it says "Subscribe to our Email List." Your email address will not be shared or sold outside FAW.

And as always, PLEASE write to Congress in support of the *Citizens' Wilderness Proposal*! A convenient template letter is available for download on our front page, along with names and mailing addresses. Thank you!

**Friends of Allegheny Wilderness**  
**220 Center Street**  
**Warren, PA 16365**



**American paddlefish** (*Polyodon spathula*) was extirpated from Pennsylvania almost a century ago because of water pollution, installation of locks and dams, and dredging. They can grow to 7 feet and weigh up to 220 lbs. Paddlefish are primarily filter feeders, swimming with their mouths open, indiscriminately filtering water. They are being reintroduced into the Allegheny River ecosystem in New York and Pennsylvania, and have recently been spotted downstream of the Kinzua Dam.

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**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:  
**Friends of Allegheny Wilderness**  
**220 Center Street**  
**Warren, PA 16365**