



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.

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Howard Zahniser's 1937 Allegheny River Journal Now Available Rare Writings of Conservation Giant Published by Friends of Allegheny Wilderness

WARREN – Howard Zahniser (1906–1964), longtime director of The Wilderness Society and primary author of the federal Wilderness Act of 1964, hailed from Tionesta, Pennsylvania, along the Allegheny River.

In June of 1937, Zahniser and his wife of one year, Alice (1918–2014), took an epic 14-day, 100-mile canoe trip down the Allegheny River from Olean, New York, to Tionesta. It was a continuous river trip then, there being no Kinzua Dam. North of Tionesta, the couple camped on Thompson's Island, now part of the 110-million-acre National Wilderness Preservation System that the Wilderness Act created.

The Warren-based non-profit organization Friends of Allegheny Wilderness (FAW) has published Zahniser's journal from that 1937 trip, *Alisonoward*, which is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/alisonoward>. In the second to last entry of *Alisonoward*, Zahniser observed his surroundings as they drew closer to Tionesta:

It was a clear blue June day. The sky was especially beautiful, with cumulus, cirrus, and stratus clouds all day. As we went under a bridge at West Hickory, we saw two eagles flying high over the "narrows." ...We were much interested in fish jumping and in the green herons, standing on an anchored boat. A duck flew up from the river as we neared Tubbs Run's mouth and circled high in the air in ascending spirals and up Tubbs Run Valley....As we came near Tionesta we followed small currents close to the left bank, despite the shallow water, as we hoped to land at the cemetery.

"The Zahniser family applauds Friends of Allegheny Wilderness for making this journal widely available," said Howard and Alice's son Ed Zahniser. "It gives insight into our parents' love of birding, nature, and camping. More of the Allegheny and its watershed need higher levels of protection as the great public treasures they are."

The Wilderness Act that Zahniser authored provides mechanisms for setting aside significant tracts of federal land in perpetuity for primitive recreation, hunting, and fishing opportunities. Wilderness, according to the Wilderness Act, is an area "...where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Designated wilderness nationwide has grown from nine million acres in 1964 with the passage of the Wilderness Act to nearly 110 million acres today. There are now 762 wilderness areas in 44 states, as well as Puerto Rico – with more to come.

In Pennsylvania's Allegheny National Forest (ANF) there are two designated wilderness areas: Allegheny Islands Wilderness and Hickory Creek Wilderness, totalling approximately 9,000 acres – less than two percent of the 513,300-acre forest. FAW has proposed that an additional 50,000 acres be protected under the Wilderness Act.

"Having been born and raised, and lived all of my adult life in Warren – canoeing frequently on the Allegheny River and hunting and hiking in the Allegheny National Forest – I am pleased to see the publication of *Alisonoward* come to fruition," said area resident and longtime FAW board member Dr. Ronald Simonsen. "It is exciting to think that the local writings of one of America's conservation giants are going to be available to the public for the first time since Howard Zahniser wrote these words nearly eighty years ago," Simonsen concluded.

Wilderness is important because among other reasons it is the only land in the country where nature is the primary influence across the landscape, and where threatened and endangered species can find undisturbed refuge and high quality habitat.

Howard and Alice Zahniser are laid to rest beside their beloved Allegheny River in Tionesta's Riverside Cemetery. With characteristic wordplay, Zahniser named their canoe and his journal *Alisonoward*, linking the couples' first names. The journal is published to support designating more wilderness in the ANF.

Alisonoward clocks in at 76 pages, and includes actual photographs from the Zahniser's canoe trip, as well as three rare appendices. Bookstores and other booksellers can order multiple copies for resale from FAW at a reduced rate per book. Contact FAW at info@pawild.org to find out how.

Individuals may purchase a copy of the book from Lulu.com at:
<http://tinyurl.com/alisonoward>

Proceeds from the sales of *Alisonoward* go to benefit FAW.

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