

Recent Wild Virginia Adventures

by Ernie Reed

July 9-10: Paddy Timber Sale Overnight Trip

Several members of Wild Virginia met Dr. Robert Hunsucker, noted Appalachian botanist, at the Paddy Timber Sale west of Strasburg, VA in Vance's Cove. This deep valley is home to state threatened species and a good trout stream, Paddy Run. Still the U.S. Forest Service insists it must be logged.

We spent all day Saturday hiking up the valley and then into several of the timber sale units. We learned a lot about native flora and natural history from Dr. Hunsucker. This area is slated for logging this summer and into the fall despite our appeal filed jointly with the Southern Environmental Law Center.

We hiked on and found several of the state-threatened species (because of the sensitive nature of this species, we will not identify it in print) and documented their locations.

Late Saturday night, as we sat around the campfire, one of the founders of Wild Virginia (founded as Shenandoah Ecosystems Defense Group or SEDG) surprised us and joined the camp. Eric Nielsen, a recent Masters Graduate from University of Maryland, helped start SEDG in 1996. It was great to see an old friend and reminisce. Overall an excellent trip despite the imminent logging.



Botany lessons from a master: Wild Virginia members learn from Dr. Robert Hunsucker at Paddy Timber Sale, Lee Ranger District, George Washington National Forest. This area is scheduled for logging this summer despite Wild Virginia's attempts to stop the timber sale.

March 6: Crawford Mountain

It was a cool and cloudless day, with a sky of impeccably bright blueness that greeted us as Mike Kruse led 18 Wild Virginians from the foot of Crawford Mountain to its peak. Three miles in and a quarter of a mile up we "cruised" often in knee-deep snow that kept our pace to a saunter and maintained our feet in various degrees of cold and wet, depending on the individual's choice of footwear.

We passed through a low, flat river bottom area under a canopy of young to middle aged hemlocks, up through random rhododendrons then up where red, white and chestnut oaks dominate. A large, twisted red oak stands at the peak of Crawford, marking a point where we could look see Elliot Knob to the south, Jerkentight Roadless Area to our west

and to the north, Little River, Ramsey's Draft and the entire lower portion of the Shenandoah Mountain Conservation Area. There we rested and ate and dreamed of natural history's past here and it's restorative future.

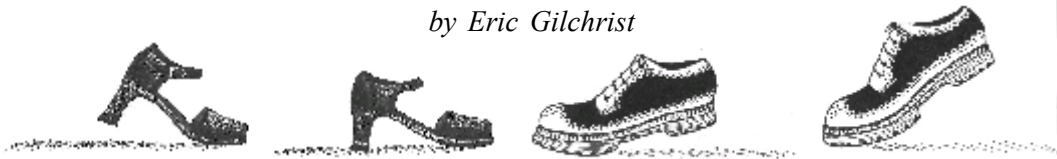
February 27: Forest Protection Workshop

Better Than Television, a new Charlottesville Community Activist Center, hosted a Forest Defense Workshop that brought together many folks engaged in forest protection in Virginia and across the US with local citizens hungry for information and experiences. Mike Kruse of Wild Virginia presented a slide show that highlighted the work of Wild Virginia and our Shenandoah Mountain Conservation Campaign. Participants answered the call, as we received new

see *Adventures* p.2

Annual Party set for September 16th! BRING YOUR FRIENDS!

by Eric Gilchrist



Friends and members of Wild Virginia will gather again for our annual party on Friday September 16 at the Charlottesville Community Design Center on the Downtown Mall. Please come. We'll have light snacks, refreshments, music and a brief presentation. Last year well over 60 attendees had a good time listening to live music performed by "Bobby St. Ours and Friends" at CCDC's new space located conveniently on the downtown Charlottesville mall. Also featured was a brief presentation by the Wild Virginia Board of Directors highlighting achievements made in the past year and alerting the audience to continued threats to our wild Virginia forests. Many members took action that evening writing letters to the U.S. Forest Service expressing their concerns about logging and road building that affects roadless areas.

But for most of the evening it was a chance to catch up with new and old friends, listen to real "Mountain Music", and eat delicious food. Food was donated by Ernie Reed, Jen Creasy, and Sylvia's Pizza. Of course, how could any event like this go without local Starr Hill ale donated by Kevin Lynch. Thanks to all those who helped make the evening possible and we look forward to seeing all of you in September.

Adventures from p.1:

memberships and much interest in attending future hikes with us in the George Washington National Forest.

This was not just an evening of local forest activism. Susan Curry, the Executive Director of the National Forest Protection Alliance spoke of the nationwide forest protection movement and of legislation for which her organization provides such important leadership. Ernie Reed of Heartwood, a coalition of grassroots forest protection groups in the central and eastern US, presented stories of multi-group organizing and of using outreach, litigation and appeals to slow and stop the destruction of forest habitat. Together the vision was one of unity and of the organizing of energies and strategies that make our movement so effective and that has been able to maintain the beauty, stability and integrity of our national forests.

Wild Virginia Needs YOUR Help!

We are a small organization seeking members and volunteers to help protect our favorite wild places in Virginia. If any of the tasks listed below interest you, please contact Jason Halbert: jhalbert@wildvirginia.org or call our office: 434-971-1553.

Website management

Listserv management

Newsletter layout/production

Tracking timber sales in our database

Ground-truthing timber sales

Recruiting new members

Giving presentations to local groups

Grant writing

Shenandoah Mountain Conservation Campaign planning

Wish List:

New members (please don't recycle this newsletter, pass it on to a friend)

GPS Unit

Stamps

Hike leaders (show us where your favorite place is!)

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Editors & Contributors

Jennifer Creasy, Eric Gilchrist, Jason Halbert, Steve Krichbaum, Mike Kruse, and Kristin Taverna

Submissions

We welcome submissions of articles, op-ed, poetry, cartoons, photos, drawings, etc. Please try and keep text under one typed page. Please be advised that we reserve the right to edit for space. Our next issue will be coming out in late Fall 2005 so please submit by September 30th. Thanks!

Donations to Wild Virginia are gratefully accepted. Please make checks payable to VOP (our fiscal sponsor) and send to address above.

Ancient Mountain Sentinel is printed on 100% recycled, non-chlorine bleached paper. Your use of this or similar paper will prevent the destruction of native forests. Recycle.... Pass this newsletter on to a friend!

Species Spotlight: Serviceberry

By Kristin Taverna

If you drive along rural roads of Virginia in early Spring, you've probably noticed your glance being pulled away from the road and into the woods toward a bright burst of white amongst the otherwise dark forest. In Virginia there's only one thing that could be, and that's Serviceberry – the tree whose delightful blossoming typically occurs from early April through May. It's hard not to notice these brilliant little white flowers growing on understory trees, providing a delightful preview of things to come. By midsummer, each five-petal flower develops into a sweet berry, similar in size and color to the blueberry.

The name 'Serviceberry' typically refers to *Amelanchier arborea*, the most common species of *Amelanchier* in Virginia, often found on hillsides in open woods and along woodland trails and borders. As the story goes, the name Serviceberry was given by people living in isolated hill towns in Appalachia who were cut off from having church services in winter because of snow clogged trails and roads. When Spring's advance eventually led to the opening of these byways it enabled the preacher to make his first visit and thus hold the first service of the new year. In another interpretation, the blooming of the Serviceberry tree meant the frozen soil had finally thawed and graves could be dug and delayed funeral services held.



Photograph courtesy of Dan Tenaglia,
www.missouriplants.com

Others in the region might refer to this tree as Shadbush. The name Shadbush came about because it's blooming coincided with the time when shad, one of Virginia's anadromous fish species, migrated upstream to spawn. In other parts of the country not so lucky as to have a shad run, the name Juneberry is also used and refers to the month when its tasty berries ripen and are collected for eating and making items such as jelly, wine, muffins or pie (which I have been told is the best kept secret in the woods). For those who would like to try the berries, be sure to collect them soon after they ripen since a Serviceberry laden with berries never goes unnoticed by wildlife!

Amelanchier species are part of the Rose family, Rosaceae, and seven species of *Amelanchier* are native to Virginia (with perhaps twice that number of hybrids and local varieties). Some of the more common species of *Amelanchier* are considered understory trees, rarely reaching more than thirty-five feet tall. *Amelanchier arborea* (mentioned above) can be found throughout the state and is tall and treelike, as suggested by the Latin word *arborea*.

Within the higher elevations of Virginia is *Amelanchier laevis* (also known as smooth serviceberry), considered one of the showiest *Amelanchier* species with petals that are quite large at 1/2"-1" long. A third arboreal species is *Amelanchier canadensis*, the Canadian serviceberry, which is found largely in the coastal plain province of Virginia and is singular in its tolerance of swampy soils. A less-common smaller tree species (often more shrub-like in appearance) is *Amelanchier sanguinea*, the Roundleaf serviceberry. This species favors calcium-rich soils and is generally found within the Ridge and Valley province of Virginia. It is currently on the watchlist for the state of Virginia, primarily due to its specific habitat preferences.

The more rare species of *Amelanchier* tend to be low-growing shrubs that occupy particular habitats and are stoloniferous, meaning they spread by means of underground stems or runners. On the Virginia rare plant list is *Amelanchier nantucketensis*, the Nantucket serviceberry, known only to occur in Fairfax County, with fewer than 60 populations worldwide. It grows in the cracks and fissures of exposed rock outcrops along the Potomac River. Also growing in similar habitat (but more common and not on the state rare plant list) is the low serviceberry, *Amelanchier stolonifera*. The coastal plain serviceberry, *Amelanchier obovalis*, is also a low-growing colonial shrub species, but as the name implies, it is largely confined to the Virginia coastal plain. It can be found in low woods and streamsides.

For more information on the distribution of *Amelanchier* in Virginia, visit the Digital Atlas of Virginia Flora at: www.biol.vt.edu/digital_atlas/index.php. More information on the full U.S. distribution of *Amelanchier* can be found at the National Plants database: <http://plants.usda.gov>.

Legislative Update

by Ernie Reed

WRITE A LETTER – SEND AN EMAIL – MAKE A CALL

Yes, there are bills in congress that project a more positive future for the wild forests of Virginia. Senators, congresspeople, aides, and just plain folks need to know about them and know that the support for them is great and growing.

Virginia Ridge and Valley Act of 2005 (HR 1975, S 942) has been introduced by **Senator John Warner** and Congressman **Rick Boucher**. It would create seven new wilderness areas and two new national scenic areas and expand six existing wilderness areas in parts of Bland, Craig, Grayson, Giles, Lee, Montgomery and Smyth counties within the Jefferson National Forest.

The National Forest Roadless Area Conservation Act (HR 3563), sponsored by **Jay Inslee** (D-WA) and **Sherwood Boehlert** (R-NY), was introduced on July 28, 2005, with 148 original co-sponsors. The legislation would protect approximately one-third of undeveloped national forests from most commercial logging and road building. The bill codifies the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule, one of the most sweeping land conservation measures in a generation, which was overturned by the Bush Administration in May. 98% of the 45,000 plus comments from Virginia supported the Rule. Write your Congressperson and Senators today.

National Forest Protection and Restoration Act: Representatives **James Leach** (R-IA) and **Louise Slaughter** (D-NY) introduced the National Forest Protection and Restoration Act (HR 3420) on July 26, 2005. The bill puts America's National Forests off-limits to commercial logging, which would save taxpayers billions of dollars by redirecting funds to restore forests and help diversify the economies of communities that receive revenues from federal logging activities. The bill addresses - in a comprehensive manner - a host of forest management issues, including the need for science-based provisions to reduce the risk of forest fires and prioritizing community protection.

Activists Organize to Support National Environmental Policy Act:

The "NEPA Task Force" chaired by Eastern Washington Representative **Cathy McMorris** (R), has been holding Congressional hearings across the country. So far, there have been four hearings in Washington, Arizona, Texas, and New Mexico and two more will be scheduled in September (likely to be held in the Southeast and Mid Atlantic). The Republicans on the task force have stacked the panels with industry Represent-

A Thank You to Representative Moran

by Steve Krichbaum

In the summer of 2004 I made requests to a half dozen Congressman, asking them to urge the Forest Service to drop the Paddy timber sale on the GWNF in Shenandoah county. One Congressman came through.

James Moran represents the Eighth District in northern Virginia. He has long been one of the brightest lights in Congress for animals and nature. Wild Virginia is very grateful for his willingness to take action for forest protection.

Representative Moran, please accept our profound thanks for coming to bat so assuredly for the good of the forest. We could not have asked for a stronger, more informed, or clearer communication to the agency.

I also want to mention the efforts of Mr. Moran's Legislative Director, **Tim Aiken**. Mr. Aiken showed great attention to our concerns from day one. His involvement was crucial throughout the process and our sincere thanks go to him as well.

tatives with the intent to pad the record with biased testimony that supports making legislative changes to the National Environmental Policy Act. The public and even Democrats on the task force have not been told where or when the hearings will take place.

Wild Virginia Conservation Director Steve Krichbaum is following this process closely; please contact him for more info: steve@wildvirginia.org, 540-886-1584.

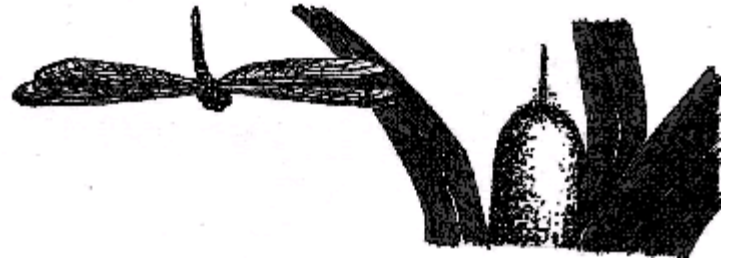
The Clean Water Protection Act: (HR 2719) would protect communities and water quality by outlawing the dumping of mining waste into streams. An administrative rule change by the Bush Administration now allows the burial of mountain streams beneath mountains of rock, rubble, and construction and mining waste originally illegal under the original Clean Water Act. This bill would significantly limit and regulate mountaintop removal coal mining in southwest Virginia, Kentucky and West Virginia.

You can contact your senator and congressperson via the Capitol Switchboard, 202-224-3121, or through e-mail on their websites, through www.senate.gov and www.house.gov. Or via good old fashion letter:

Senator _____, US Senate, Washington, DC 20510

Representative _____, US House, Washington, DC 20515

Wild Virginia Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2004



Balance Sheet

December 31, 2004
Wild Virginia is a project of
Virginia Organizing Project (VOP)

ASSETS

<i>Cash and Bank Accounts</i>	
<i>VOP Account</i>	31,892.52
TOTAL Cash and Bank Accounts	31,892.52
TOTAL ASSETS	31,892.52

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

LIABILITIES	0.00
EQUITY	31,892.52
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	31,892.52

2004 Income & Expense Statement

Wild Virginia is a project of
Virginia Organizing Project (VOP)

INCOME

<i>Grants</i>	22,708
<i>Membership</i>	2,190
<i>Reimbursement</i>	*797
<i>Rental Income</i>	4,400

TOTAL INCOME	30,095
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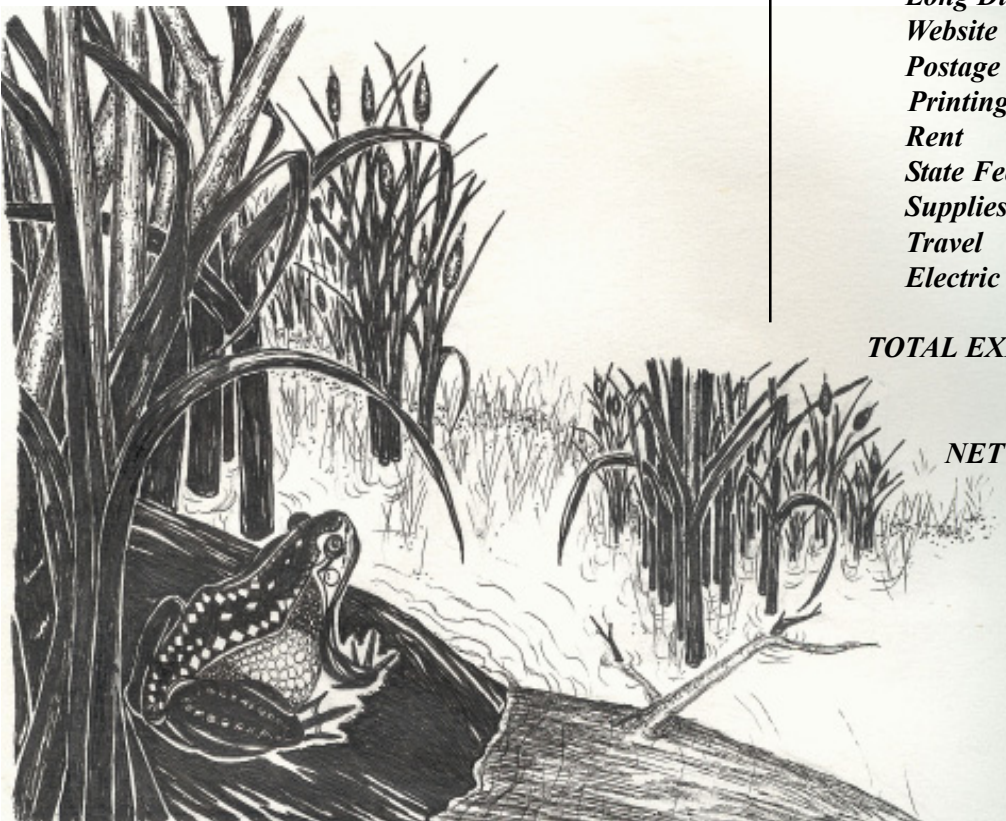
EXPENSES

<i>Accounting Fees</i>	200
<i>Salary: Conservation Director</i>	12,389
<i>401(K)</i>	459
<i>Health</i>	2,554
<i>DSL</i>	*1,019
<i>Local phone</i>	490
<i>Long Distance</i>	63
<i>Website</i>	250
<i>Postage</i>	239
<i>Printing & Reproductions</i>	597
<i>Rent</i>	*5,700
<i>State Fees</i>	25
<i>Supplies</i>	62
<i>Travel</i>	752
<i>Electric</i>	134

TOTAL EXPENSES	24,933
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NET	5,162
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*We sublet rental space and share our DSL connection.



EVENTS CALENDAR

Wild Virginia/Events Hotline: (434) 971-1553, or email us at info@wildvirginia.org for more information and carpool details.

Meetings

When: 1st Tuesday of the month at 7:00pm.

Where: Rm106 in the Old Michie Building, 609 E. Market St., Charlottesville.

September

6: Regular monthly meeting. All are welcome, volunteers needed.

16: SAVE THE DATE!!! Annual Wild Virginia Membership Party. Charlottesville Community Design Center on the Downtown Mall 7-9pm.

October

4: Regular monthly meeting. All are welcome, volunteers needed.

21-23: National Forest Protection Alliance Annual Conference, Camp Horizons, Harrisonburg, Virginia. For more information contact Susan Curry at scurry@firstva.com or (434) 293-7401.

November

1: Regular monthly meeting. All are welcome, volunteers needed.

December

6: Regular monthly meeting. All are welcome, volunteers needed.

WILD VIRGINIA

Protecting Your Favorite Wild Places



P.O. Box 1065
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www.wildvirginia.org