



OTZINACHSON

For your Enjoyment: A Greate Buffaloe Swamp Presentation

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QUOTE

*"The greatest
danger to our
future is apathy."*

-Jane Goodall

Come enjoy an evening that will feature a panoramic view of one of Pennsylvania's most interesting areas, known historically as the Greate Buffaloe Swamp. Our speaker, Mr. Ralph Seeley has done extensive research into the history of this region for his book -- *GREATE BUFFALOE SWAMP* a trail guide and regional history for the Moshannon State Forest and nearby parts of Clearfield and Centre Counties--. Mr. Seeley was a long time advisor to the Penn State Outing Club, a founding member of the Quehanna Area Trails Club and the guiding force behind the establishment of the Allegheny Front Hiking Trail.

Please note: Should hazardous weather conditions prevail on the 13th this talk will be postponed. Call 570-925-5285 for last minute update.

Brush Valley Partially Preserved

Members of the Brush Valley Preservation Association (BVPA) joined Governor Ed Rendell, Michael DiBerardinis, Secretary of the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (DCNR), and various local officials to officially dedicate 9,000 acres of Brush Valley as state forest land.

The property is approximately 10 miles in length and follows along the valley between Big and Little mountains in Coal and Mount Carmel townships in Northumberland County and Conyngham Township in Columbia County.

The land contains three reservoirs, ranging up to 266 acres, as well as contiguous woodlands. The

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Urgent Update: Brush Valley At Risk Again

Just when Northumberland County seems to be showing some common sense for recognizing the importance of open space, the proponents of destroying Brush Valley rear their ugly heads. In a recent letter to the editor, the Executive Director of the Brush Valley Chamber of Commerce (yes, they named themselves after the very same land that they want to destroy), prints an editorial letter explaining since we have preserved a portion of Brush Valley, we must now destroy the Trout Run portion of Brush Valley for a prison. Three days later, the Chamber's propaganda machine, The News-Item, our local newspaper, issued an editorial stating basically that

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Message from the Chair: A Friendly Nudge

Have you been waiting for a friendly nudge in order to get more actively involved in the SIERRA CLUB?

Or is the spark going to come from the horrendous realization that the Bush troglodytes are disemboweling 33 years worth of environmental protections, dismembering 39 years worth of wilderness preservation and giving extractive industries a looting spree on our federal public lands. Its shameful, and that's not the half of it.

Everything that happens on the group level of our club is done by volunteer effort. Often chaotic, sometimes quixotic but always motivated by a passionate belief in healing the wound. Otzinachson needs your energy, ideas and willingness to help build a more effective voice to fulfill the mission and responsibility of the Sierra Club.

Ed Lawrence, Chair

OTZINACHSON

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Sierra Club Member Saves Red Tail

The hawk pictured here was saved by John R. Faraguna of Coal Township and Gary Sosnoski of Elysburg while small game hunting in Schuylkill County.

Coming across the hawk, the two hunting companions realized immediately that the bird was having trouble flying and appeared stranded in a small clearing.

Faraguna cautiously approached the bird from behind with Sosnoski (somewhat reluctantly) acting as a decoy. Faraguna, using a light jacket, gently covered the bird, instantly calming it. He then contacted the State Game Commission and was given the number of the Red Creek Wildlife Center, located in Schuylkill Haven (Schuylkill County).

Peggy Sue Hentz, Director of the wildlife center, obtained the hawk from Faraguna and immediately diagnosed a broken wing. According to Hentz, the bird was dehydrated and probably would not have survived the night.

The raptor, which Hentz identified as an immature red tail hawk, and was later nicknamed Majestic, may not fully recover from her injuries, which means she may never fly again. Luckily for Majestic, she is a very intelligent and manageable bird, which means she will mostly be used by the wildlife center as an educational hawk.

The Red Creek Wildlife Center is licensed to receive all birds and mammals (except mature deer and bear), and with the assistance of the Kutztown Animal Hospital, nurses and rehabilitates the animals back to good health. When and if the animals are healthy enough to live in the wild, the Center releases them into the appropriate habitat.

For information about the Red Creek Wildlife Center, or to become a volunteer, visit their website at www.redcreekwildlifecenter.com or call 570.739.4393.



Allegheny Wild! Revisioning the Allegheny National Forest

Letter from Allegheny Defense Project's Board President (Originally printed in Hellbender Journal)

This is a critical time for Pennsylvania's only national forest. The 513,000-acre Allegheny National Forest is home to a rich variety of wildlife and habitats, including the largest old-growth forest between the Great Smokeys and the Adirondacks. The Forest Plan Revision process now underway offers a rare opportunity for outdoors enthusiasts to help shape the future of the Allegheny.

In 1923 President Calvin Coolidge designated the Allegheny National Forest specifically for watershed protection, not timber production. Today, under the U.S. Forest Service's 1986 Forest Management Plan, the Allegheny National Forest is one of the most heavily timbered and drilled national forests in the country.

The Forest Service's heavy-handed timber extraction policy relying on clearcuts to create a black cherry tree farm has contributed to a road network that exceeds 4,000 miles. For comparison, the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire has only 250 miles of roads in the entire national forest despite being nearly 300,000 acres larger than the Allegheny. The Allegheny currently hosts more oil and gas wells than the other 154 national forests combined.

Over 90% of the Allegheny is available for logging and oil & gas drilling. While the Allegheny National Forest is within a day's drive of one-third of the United States population, many other facets of forest management have been ignored or severely underrepresented. The Allegheny has a low percentage of its land base in special management areas including Wilderness, National Recreation Areas, Scenic Areas, and Natural Areas when compared to other national forests.

The Allegheny Defense Project has put together a unique, comprehensive plan called "Allegheny Wild!" This citizens' vision aims to restore the Allegheny to its rightful status as a source of clean air, clean water, wilderness values, and recreational opportunities, including camping, fishing, hunting, hiking, boating, horseback riding and cross-country skiing. "Allegheny Wild!" envisions more than 200

miles of new hiking, bicycle, and horse trails, five new Wilderness areas totaling nearly 50,000 acres, three new National Recreation Areas totaling 18,000 acres, eight new Natural Areas totaling 6,500 acres, and the first new Scenic Area in the Allegheny in over 30 years. The Allegheny has enormous potential to provide quality wilderness and other recreational experiences that will align it more with other eastern national forests.

Instead of clearcuts and oil fields, the new Allegheny National Forest will emphasize tree planting, wildlife habitat projects, road removal, and stream restoration.

How do citizens, who live great distances from the "very few" Forest Plan Revision meetings are being held, direct the Forest Service to

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Note From Member Chair

With Christmas fast approaching, some of us have the problem of what to get for some of our friends and family. How about a Sierra Club membership? They will remember your gift every month when they receive the Sierra National magazine. Bi-monthly, they will receive our Otzinachson Group newsletter. The state chapter newspaper will also be a nice reminder. If you can't get a member form, simply do this: Send \$25 for membership to:

Sierra Club
Attn: Membership
PO Box 52968
Boulder, CO 80321-2968

Send the new member's name, address, city, state, ZIP and be sure to write this code so the member will be in the Otzinachson Group: F94QB-4111-1

Have a very nice Holiday Season.
Joseph F. Rebar
Membership Chair

Allegheny Wild! (continued)

bring about this desired vision for the Allegheny National Forest? Time and time again, public surveys have revealed that the majority of Americans do not want commercial logging, grazing, mining, or oil & gas drilling on our National Forests.

During this critical time for the Allegheny, citizens do not have to be experts-much less Pennsylvania residents-to submit valid comments to the U.S. Forest Service along with endorsements of the ADP's citizens' vision for "Allegheny Wild!" Citizens can endorse "Allegheny Wild!" as individuals and/or encourage their businesses or organizations to sign on. Since it was posted on June 1, the citizens' proposal has garnered endorsements from such varied folks as Dr. A. Carl Leopold, Greenline Paper Co., the PA Environmental Network, Communities for Sustainable Forestry, the Wyoming Valley Audubon Society, biologist Thomas P. Rooney, and naturalist writer Marcia Bonta.

Go to <http://www.alleghenywild.org> to view the Allegheny slide show. A user-friendly form for endorsements is available from the main page. Click on "White Paper" to read the Executive Summary, the 66-page main report (which includes a lengthy list of sources), a 20-page supplement with area-by-area descriptions of management proposals, and a number of attachments.

Citizens can participate in a new vision to shape the future of the Allegheny National Forest - one that ends the longstanding abuses of commercial logging practices and oil and gas extraction that have created an unnatural, fragmented forest.

Otzinachson Members:
Please use the enclosed endorsement form . . . Spend 37¢ so that the Allegheny & Our Children don't get short changed!!

Persistent Organic Pollutants

A 2001 study by Pesticide Action Network North America (PANNA), based on government sources and university research, calculates that 20% of foods consumed in the U.S. are contaminated with residues of organochlorine pesticides prohibited in the U.S., especially dieldrin and DDE (a metabolite of DDT) and with dioxins (occurring as unintended pollutants). These contaminants were found in fruits, vegetables, beef, chicken and dairy products.

The organochlorine insecticides and dioxins constitute part of the group of chemicals called Persistent Organic Pollutants (POP's) that persist in the environment for decades and accumulate in the food chain. The PANNA report shows that although the level of POP's contaminants found in each source was small, when total dietary consumption of all foods was considered, the levels approached or exceeded those established as health protective thresholds by the EPA and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

For more information: <http://www.panna.org>

www.pantsonfire.net

*What George W.
Ain't Telling ya!*

U.S. Government Ok's Serving School Children Irradiated Food: Schools May Choose Not to Serve It

By Erica Hartman

Children nationwide may be served irradiated hamburgers and meat-loaf in school cafeterias as early as next year - despite the opposition of thousands of parents, children and teachers.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) approved the use of irradiation for its federal nutrition programs in May. By offering schools the option of purchasing irradiated meat for school lunches, which feed 27 million children each year, the USDA could become the largest distributor of irradiated food in the world.

Beginning in January 2004, children who participate in the National School Lunch Program will become guinea pigs in a government experiment approved by Bush administration officials who neglected parental concerns and disregarded numerous studies suggesting potentially harmful health effects from eating irradiated food, said Wenonah Hauter, director of Public Citizen's Critical Mass Energy and Environment Program.

"This horrendous decision benefits the meat industry at the expense of society's most vulnerable citizens - our children," Hauter said. "Approving irradiated meat for school cafeterias nationwide means the USDA is willing to put our children's health at risk to help cover up the meat industry's sanitation failures."

Irradiated food had been kept out of the USDA's nutrition programs. But lawmakers slipped a provision into last year's farm bill requiring that the agency reconsider its ban. The USDA's decision to allow irradiated food into the nutrition programs could be a blessing to the irradiated food industry. Citing industry estimates, *The Washington Post* reported that irradiated meat accounts for less than 5 percent of overall meat sales.

Shortly after the 2002 farm bill passed, Public Citizen launched a grassroots campaign to oppose irradiated meat's inclusion in

the National School Lunch Program and to ensure that parents, students, teachers and school administrators knew they had a say in the matter. More than 91 percent of the comments submitted to the USDA opposed the agency's proposal.

Under the plan, schools will have a choice between irradiated and non-irradiated meat. The boxes of irradiated meat arriving at schools will be labeled. Labeling in the cafeteria or parental notification is not required; however, the USDA said it will "encourage" schools using irradiated meat to let parents know. The USDA estimates that irradiated ground beef will cost an additional 13 to 20 cents per pound. This is a financial disincentive for cash-strapped schools to spend extra money on an unnecessary and potentially harmful food item, Public Citizen said.

"Irradiation is not an acceptable antidote for food safety problems," Hauter said. "From strengthening government meat inspection to addressing the appalling disrepair in many school cafeterias, there is much that should be done to improve the safety of food served to our children at school. But using the purchasing power of the federal government to bail out a struggling industry and serving this questionable product to children have no place in a sensible food safety plan."

For more information, visit www.safelunch.org.

(Originally published in the *Public Citizen News*, July/August 2003.)

**Check out the Group's Website
at
www.sierraclub.org/chapters/pa/**

Brush Valley (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 1)

entire Roaring Creek Watershed lies within the property's boundaries.

The state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) acquired the tract earlier this month from the Pennsylvania Suburban Water Company, which managed the lands to protect the public water supply derived from the watershed. Suburban Water acquired the land in 1999 with the purchase of Consumers Pennsylvania. Water company ownership of the land dates back to the late 1800s. Half of the project's \$4.4 million cost comes from the Richard King Mellon Foundation, with DCNR's Community Conservation Partnerships Program providing the other \$2.2 million through a land trust grant to The Conservation Fund. The Conservation Fund facilitated the transfer of land to the Commonwealth by acquiring it from the water company and donating it to the state. Pennsylvania Suburban donated 2,000 of the 9,000 acres.

DCNR will incorporate the lands into its state forest system as part of Wyoming State Forest, managed out of its Bloomsburg-based district office. The property will be used for public recreation such as hunting, fishing, hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, wildlife watching and other yet-to-be-identified uses. Because the water company still maintains ownership of the reservoirs and continues to operate its facilities to provide water for thousands of customers, some uses - such as ATVs, snowmobiles, power boating, and swimming - are permanently prohibited in order to protect the water supply. Non-powered boating on the two eastern-most reservoirs will be permitted.

BVPA commended the state's acquisition and preservation of the 9,000 acre tract of land; however, this parcel was never really in jeopardy of being destroyed for development, since it is a public water source. It is the 2,000 acre Trout Run Watershed, also owned by Philadelphia Suburban Corporation, that has been the center of controversy for the last four years and is still at risk for being destroyed by future development.

See article on page 1, Urgent Message.



From left to right, John R. Faraguna (BVPA President), Nicole Faraguna (BVPA Vice President & Secretary), DCNR Secretary Michael DiBerardinis, Jere Snyder (BVPA Researcher), and Joseph Rebar (BVPA Treasurer)

Urgent Message (Cont'd)

(Continued from page 1)

since a portion of Brush Valley has been saved, the public will be more supportive of the destruction of its counterpart.

The Brush Valley Preservation Association (BVPA) was formed in 2000 when Northumberland County Commissioners' Allen Cwalina and Charles Lewis, proposed Trout Run as the site for a federal prison. BVPA fought the reckless plan to develop Trout Run by promoting alternate sites for the prison and educating the public on the value of open space. In addition, BVPA worked closely with state and federal agencies, which later went on the record supporting alternate sites for the prison rather than development of Trout Run.

BVPA has worked tirelessly over the last four years to convince county, state and even federal leaders that Brush Valley must stay intact and can not be destroyed. Please contact Senator Arlen Specter and tell him that you don't want your tax money used to destroy a pristine forest for the sake of another prison in our area. Email, phone or write a quick message and let him know that we do have a voice. BVPA was able to save Brush Valley the first time it was proposed. Help us save it for good!

Senator Arlen Specter
711 Hart Senate Office Bldg
Washington DC 20510
202-224-4254
arlen_specter@specter.senate.gov

Visit BVPA's website, www.penweb.org/bvpa.



Letters to the Editor

CONCERNS FOR SPROUL STATE FOREST

I am very concerned about overuse along Rattlesnake Run in Sproul State Forest. During the past 20 years I have grown very attached to this exceptionally unique area that has one of the best and most diverse riparian areas in the Sproul State Forest. Rattlesnake Run, has massive hemlock, white pine, black cherry, sycamore, and tulip poplar. There are impressive 30 ft. rhododendron, and the diversity of woodland wildflowers is remarkable for central Pennsylvania.

In comparison to neighboring watersheds, the Rattlesnake Run valley seems to maintain the best diversity of plant life, and could be a sterling example of a healthy forest and your program. The stream also contains excellent populations of wild brook and brown trout and the beauty of the valley is obvious.

Rattlesnake Run Road parallels the stream for several miles. The road provides access to two camps, and two roads. Kingston Road joins Rattlesnake Road 1/2 mile above Rattlesnake Camp, and Left Hand Sugar Camp Rd. joins Rattlesnake Road at a bridge crossing 1/2 mile above Kingston Road. From the bridge crossing, upstream to the private property boundary, Rattlesnake Rd. is in poor condition and is now causing serious runoff into Rattlesnake Run. ATV's, 4-Wheel drive vehicles, and motorcycles are now using the road recreationally, and are creating large ruts in the road. There is even evidence that the stream bed itself is being used as a road. Several years ago I noticed ruts in the stream bed just above the washed out bridge. The washed out bridge is approximately 1 mile above the intersection with Left Hand Sugar Camp Rd.

There are also two huge camping areas along the stream that are littered and unsightly. It has become obvious to me the majority of those using Rattlesnake Run above Sugar Camp, are destroying a beautiful area. This area is showing serious signs of overuse and abuse. I certainly do not advocate a ban on camping, but I feel restricting motor vehicle access will deter those who do not respect this beautiful area. This area should also be given consideration to be designated as a Natural

Area.

It is my opinion that the road should be gated or blocked with stone above Sugar Camp Rd. There is no reason that folks who want to access upper Rattlesnake Rd. can not do so by foot. The road still provides a relatively flat trail for foot travel, and there are no camps or other roads that need motor vehicle access.

Please consider gating or blocking the upper reaches of Rattlesnake Run.

David R. Ferry
Williamsport, PA

We would like to hear your comments:

Send Letters to the Editor:
c/o Otzinachson Regional
Group of the Sierra Club
P.O. Box 65
Lewisburg, PA 17837
or email nddhome@ptd.net

Just A Reminder:
Group Outings Participants can
earn a copy of the
Keystone Trails Association's

HIKING TRAILS IN PENNSYLVANIA

by logging 50 miles with the Edward Abbey Hiking Society. This book is the best compendium of information on hiking trails in Pennsylvania available. Outing leaders will also earn a copy.



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*You are invited to a slide show and talk about the
Moshannon State Forest Area:*

*HISTORY, MYSTERY & HIKING
in the GREAT BUFFALOE SWAMP*

presented by Ralph Seeley

TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 04 at 7:00 PM
upstairs at THE BULL FROG BREWERY
229 West 4th Street, Williamsport
(across from the Community Arts Center)

For more details, see article on front cover.