

# Mountain State Sierran

Volume 43, Number 4

sierraclub.org/west-virginia

July/August 2017

## Upcoming ExCom Meeting Sun, Aug 6: Cacapon State Park

All members are welcome.  
Contact Jim Kotcon for details, [jkotcon@gmail.com](mailto:jkotcon@gmail.com)

## Sierra Club appeals certification for Mountain Valley Pipeline

*Jim Kotcon*

The Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) is a \$3.2 billion, 42-inch diameter, 301 mile-long, high pressure gas pipeline proposed for construction from Wetzel County to Monroe County, in West Virginia, and into Virginia. The proposed route would cross 986 water bodies, 33 of which are classified as fisheries of special concern.

To cross streams and wetlands, MVP must obtain a "404 permit" from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. That permit requires the state to "certify," under section 401 of the Clean Water Act, that the project would comply with all water quality standards.

In West Virginia, that 401 certification is issued by the WV Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Despite detailed comments explaining why the MVP project plans were incomplete and inadequate, DEP issued the certification on March 28, and rejected a request for a hearing in May.

That left no option but to appeal to the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals, which was filed June 9.

In the appeal, we presented reasons why the 401 certification should be overturned:

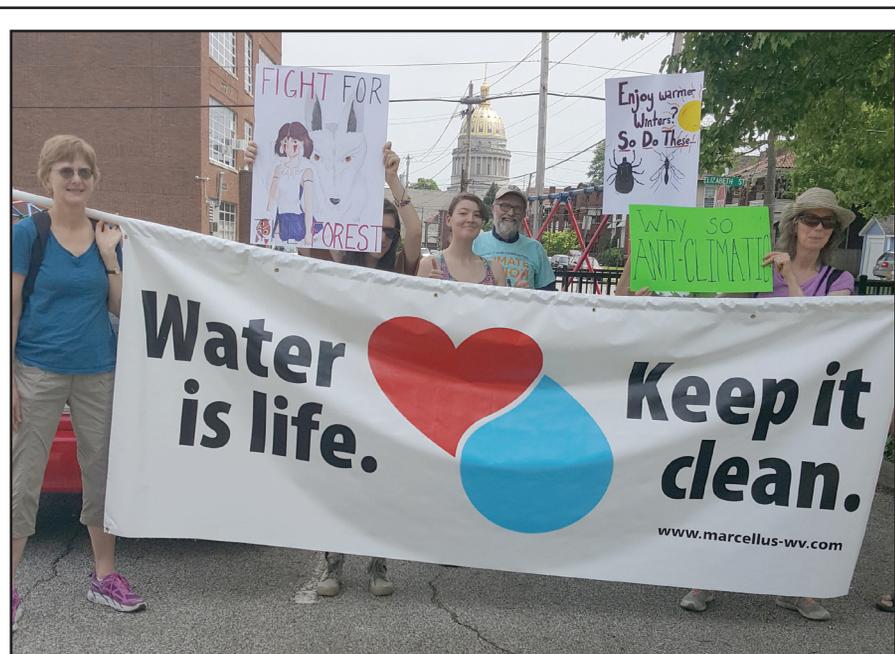
- The WV-DEP did not establish current water quality baseline data for streams that the pipeline would cross.
- DEP failed to adequately consider effects on water quality from land

disturbance and subsequent erosion unrelated to stream crossings.

- Because the pipeline's route is not yet final and property surveys are incomplete, the "locations and effects of discharges associated with the construction and operation of the Mountain Valley Pipeline [are] ill-defined and impossible to fully evaluate."
- DEP did not adequately evaluate the effects of the pipeline's construction and operation on public drinking water supplies.

In the State of New York, similar pipeline projects have been rejected because of the failure to properly prevent water quality impacts. The 401 Certification process is intended to assure that water quality is protected. Neither DEP nor the MVP have provided enough information to define where the water quality impacts might occur, how MVP plans to prevent them, and what site-specific obstacles would need to be addressed at each location. Unless DEP can reasonably assure that water pollution can be prevented, the certification should not be issued.

Joining the West Virginia Chapter were the WV Rivers Coalition, Appalachian Voices, the Indian Creek Watershed Association, and the Chesapeake Climate Action Network. The petitioners are represented by attorneys with Appalachian Mountain Advocates.



### Marching for the Climate

A contingent of Mon Group and WVU Sierra Student Coalition members carpooled to the state's capital, on April 29, to participate in one of many sister marches to the People's Climate March in D.C.

Pictured are Jody Jackson (left), Jess Shulman (behind sign), Nicole Ramos, Jim Kotcon and Ann D. King.

## 'Cancer Creek' bill passes, gets signed, then dies

One of the strangest tales to emerge from the 2017 WV Legislature is the "Cancer Creek" bill. Long sought by the WV Manufacturers Association, the bill would alter how water pollution permits are crafted to allow more pollutants.

WV water quality standards establish a maximum allowable concentration of pollutants, determined by the amount discharged from a facility and the flow or volume of water in the receiving stream. Currently, the "flow" is established based

on the low flow during drought conditions, following the policy that water should be safe even during low-flow periods.

The "Cancer Creek" bill changed allowable discharge to be based on the average flow in the stream, rather than the more protective low-flow conditions. This would allow, for example, a 10-fold increase in the amount of carcinogens permitted to be released in the Monongahela River in Morgantown, or a 12-fold increase in the Elk River, where

Charleston's drinking-water intake is located.

The bill was passed over strenuous objections by environmentalists and signed by Gov. Justice in March.

But then along came the WV Coal Association. They had their own bill to weaken water quality standards. Their bill amended the same section of code as the Cancer Creek bill, but in drafting it, they went back to the original version of that section of code. When that bill passed

and was signed, it undid the Cancer Creek language. WV Courts have established a policy that, when two bills alter the same section of code, the version passed last represents legislative intent, and the first version is therefore void.

West Virginians do not want a 10-fold increase in carcinogens. And while they probably did not mean to, the WV Coal Association did inadvertently help to protect our water. Even a broken clock is right once every 12 hours.



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## Several legal actions challenge pollution caused by mining

There has been a lot of legal activity challenging mining pollution over the past several months.

A federal suit was filed by Sierra Club and partners in May to challenge the discharge of pollutants from mountaintop removal coal mine sites currently operated by the Fola Coal Company in West Virginia. This is the second time legal action has been taken against Fola for water pollution at this site. Fola's parent company, Consol, recently paid Southeastern Energy to take ownership of the mine because the reclamation and treatment liabilities were too high. Mine waste "valley fills" at the site discharge high levels of conductivity pollution that violate water quality standards.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has estimated that nine out of 10 streams downstream from valley fills associated with coal mines are biologically impaired. But neither the state of West Virginia nor the EPA has acted to require compliance and cleanup of the impaired streams. Congress authorized citizen suits under the Clean Water Act to enforce the law directly against permit violators like Fola.

"Fola is trying to pass the buck on the dangerous pollution coming from its coal mines," said Jim Kotcon, Sierra Club's West Virginia Chapter Chair. "The companies who mine these sites have an obligation to clean them up. Our lawsuit seeks to hold the mine operator responsible for stopping this pollution and fully reclaiming the sites."

In a separate case, U.S. District Judge Robert C. Chambers found that contaminated runoff from Fola's Monoc #2 Surface Mine, in Nicholas County, had damaged Shanty Branch and Elick Hollow to the point that the streams violate key state and federal water quality protections. Having assessed responsibility for the poor water quality, that trial now moves to identify remediation requirements to treat the water.

Finally, in a third case, the Sierra Club and partners reached a settlement with WV-DEP in May to require a clean-up schedule for mine reclamation and water treatment at several abandoned mine sites. When a coal operator abandons a mine before reclamation is complete, the operator's "bond" is forfeited to WV-DEP. DEP must then assume responsibility for reclamation. Unfortunately, most bonds are inadequate to cover all costs, and DEP keeps issuing mining permits with these inadequate bonds, leaving the state and citizens on the hook when the mine forfeits. DEP had been letting these sites languish, sometimes for years. The settlement establishes a clear schedule for clean-up.

Legal work in other cases has resulted in more accurate ways to assess stream damage, requirements to clean up "conductivity pollution" caused by dissolved solids released from mines, and requirements to list and clean up other impaired streams. These lawsuits are part of an on-going effort in conjunction with the Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign to assure that coal companies that create a mess will have to clean it up.

## Public Lands Defense Heats Up, National Monuments Under Review

David Lillard, West Virginia Rivers Coalition

As the Trump administration took the reins in January, public lands advocates anticipated actions to review or undo at least a couple national monuments created by former President Obama in his final months of office. No one expected the breadth of the broadside announced in April.

Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke directed staff to review nearly every monument created by Presidential proclamation under the Antiquities Act since 1996. From there they would make recommendations whether to rescind or shrink the boundaries of each monument. That's 27 monuments created by both Republican and Democratic presidents. No president has ever attempted to revoke a predecessor's monument designation.

First on the list for potential elimination is the incredible Bears Ears National Monument in Utah — which protects more than 100,000 irreplaceable archaeological and cultural sites spread over 1.2 million acres of stunning lands. The comment period for Bears Ears closed May 26.

Public comments on the fate of national monuments have been flowing in to the Interior Department, with hundreds of thousands already filed in support of the monuments, according to conservation groups. The comment period is open until July 10. Sierra Club, a partner in West Virginians for Public Lands, encourages comments at <http://tinyurl.com/monumentcomments>, hosted by National Wildlife Federation.

### Poll shows WV support for Public Lands

According to a new poll of registered voters in West Virginia, conducted by Global Strategy Group, a solid majority of WV voters support conservation initiatives and public lands issues. This includes voters who cast their ballot for President Trump in 2016 by a 2-1 margin. The poll found that:

- 93% of West Virginians support protecting special areas like Birthplace of Rivers National Monument — 69% of those strongly support a monument designation
- 65% of West Virginians oppose removing presidential powers to set aside lands via the Antiquities Act
- 87% believe that national monument designations for protecting special places should remain in place
- 64% oppose turning public lands over to private companies for development or resource extraction
- 96% recognize that the hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities that these lands provide improve their overall quality of life

Public lands advocates will use this information to make the case to Congress to keep hands off our public lands. The findings have been shared with WV Senators and representatives.

### Many ways to volunteer for Public Lands

- Host a house party. The process is easy: Ask for postcards, buy some beer or other summer beverage, invite some guests to have a nice time and sign some postcards, return postcards in pre-posted envelope.
- Attend an "intercept event" and speak up for public lands. This simply means showing up at an event like the state fair or community meeting where one of our Congress members will be. Then find an opportunity to ask a question or say something in support of public lands.
- Take part in action alerts and phone call efforts.
- Carry brochures/postcards to take to community meetings.

For information about volunteering in any way, contact [DLillard@WVRivers.org](mailto:DLillard@WVRivers.org).

## Pleasants power plant transfer subject of three public hearings in September

First Energy now wants to get out of the competitive power production business. After decades of insisting they were the low-cost supplier of electricity and seeking competitive markets, they are finding that their coal and nuclear power plants are no longer competitive. First Energy has announced plans to get out of the business in de-regulated states, such as Ohio, and restrict their business to regulated markets, such as West Virginia.

Their next step is to transfer ownership of the Pleasants power plant from their Ohio affiliate to their West Virginia affiliate, Mon Power. As such, West Virginia ratepayers would be required to cover all costs, and provide a profit to First Energy stockholders besides. It is a good deal for them and a bad deal for West Virginia ratepayers. To make matters worse, the Pleasants plant is one of the

dirtiest coal-fired power plants in West Virginia.

The deal must be approved by the WV Public Service Commission. The PSC has scheduled three public hearings to take your comments on the deal.

Put one or more of these dates on your calendar NOW!

**Sept. 6, 6 pm.** Parkersburg Municipal Building Council Chambers, 3rd and Avery St., Parkersburg

**Sept. 11, 7 pm.** Martinsburg City Building Municipal Courtroom, 232 North Queen St., Martinsburg

**Sept. 12, 6 pm.** Monongalia County Judicial Center, 3rd Floor, Judge Tucker's Courtroom, 75 North High St., Morgantown.

Please plan to attend the hearing nearest you. Also, check out the Chapter webpage for a link to our petition.



Like us on Facebook to get more up-to-date information about our "happenings."

Sierra Club West Virginia  
Mon Group of the WV Sierra Club  
WVU Sierra Student Coalition  
WVSC Marcellus Shale Campaign



Join Online

Help your Chapter stay strong for the hard work we do to keep West Virginia wild and wonderful.

One fee covers membership in the national Sierra Club, the West Virginia Chapter and, if you live in the designated region, the Monongahela Group.

Make a quick and easy donation or join "the Club" from the Chapter's home page:

[sierraclub.org/west-virginia](http://sierraclub.org/west-virginia)



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# Blowing in the Wind

It's time for America to get smart about energy and become less dependent on fossil fuels.

We need to increase our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power.

**Giving's a Breeze. JOIN Sierra Club.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club

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| Membership Categories | Individual                       | Joint                            |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Special Offer</b>  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 15   | N/A                              |
| Standard              | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 39   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 49   |
| Supporting            | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 75   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 100  |
| Contributing          | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 150  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 175  |
| Life                  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 1250 |
| Senior                | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35   |
| Student               | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35   |
| Limited Income        | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 25   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$ 35   |

Contributions, gifts & dues to Sierra Club are tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen based advocacy & lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$ 7.50 for a subscription to SIERRA magazine & \$ 1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

Enclose a check and mail to:

Sierra Club, PO Box 421041  
Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041

F94Q W 5700 1

or visit our website: [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)

View from the Chair

— Jim Kotcon, Chapter Chair

## Membership Grows, Time to Get Active

Reports from our Chapter Membership Chair show that Sierra Club membership in West Virginia now tops 2,500. That is an increase of more than 20 percent from just a couple of years ago, with much of that increase occurring in just the past six months.

This growth mirrors what is happening nationally, since the election of Donald Trump coupled with Republican control of Congress. Obviously, citizens are voting with their dollars by paying dues and making financial contributions.

And we are grateful. Those dues and donations help us hold back the assaults on clean air, drinking water and our pristine public lands. Those contributions help protect endangered species and run our campaigns to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change.

But that's not enough!

We need something more!

If that sounds selfish, well, it is. But when we are down to our last planet, enlightened self-interest suggests that we need to do everything we can to protect our home.

"But what can I do?" you ask.

Well, start by doing one or two extra things.

- When you get an e-mail alert asking you to "Click here to send a letter," take a minute to edit that letter to express your personal interest. The politician who sees this knows that the extra time to write a personal paragraph means you have a personal interest and are paying attention. That matters.
- Better yet, make a phone call to the target, in addition to sending that letter. Phone calls from constituents actually carry more weight than an e-mail or a form letter.
- But if you are serious, join a Chapter committee. Every one of our campaigns needs new ideas and new volunteers. On these committees, you can help plan the next e-mail appeal. Now your message is from 100 people, not just yourself.

- You can organize events and attend public meetings on issues. If you speak up, others will join. Ours is a popular, common-sense message, if people will only speak up.

- Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper. Now your message is reaching 5,000-10,000 people.

- Or you can join a personal visit to a representative's local office. (The Mon Group has visits scheduled with WV's two U.S. senators' staffs in coming months.) Learn what your reps are thinking, and explain why our concern for the environment matters.

- What do you do if they don't listen? Endless pressure, endlessly applied. Our opponents are counting on you giving up. If the politicians just won't listen, join the Chapter Political Committee and find candidates to replace them.

- But, if you DON'T want to get political, we still need a lot of behind-the-scenes support: a fund-raising committee, someone who can enter data and track activities and supporters, or help with social media (yes, even social media!).

There are lots of benefits to joining the action, one of the best being working with pretty neat people who share your ideals. One of life's greatest rewards is working hard at work worth doing.

But, maybe you just want to have fun. The Chapter Outings program is a low-stress, high-fun option. Explore new places, camp, hike, ski, bike or just visit. West Virginia offers some of the most outstanding wild places in America, and just visiting them is a contribution to keeping them protected.

So please get active. You joined for a reason, and we need your help. Contact a Chapter leader today to find out how you can get involved.

## Climate Parents: Ready For 100!

Climate Parents is a national organization of diverse parents, grandparents and families mobilizing for climate and clean energy solutions. The grassroots power of parents is used to influence policymakers for bold climate action.

Their mission statement continues, "We work for solutions at the local, state, national and international level. We are motivated by love and concern for our kids, and all children. And we believe that parents and families, by the millions, must be a moral and political force to stop fossil fuels, to achieve 100% clean energy, and to build the livable, thriving communities our kids deserve."

One goal of Climate Parents is to accelerate the transition to clean energy and inspire leaders across the U.S. to commit to 100% clean and renewable energy, to help leave a healthy climate for our kids and grandkids. Other goals include promoting climate education in schools and saving the military's climate change and clean energy programs.

The Sierra Club's "Ready For 100" Campaign seeks to transition America to 100% clean, renewable energy by 2050, or sooner. By counting the savings in health and the reduction in climate impacts, renewable energy has half the cost of conventional fossil fuels. In many areas, renewable electricity generation is already cheaper than coal, and some renewables are cheaper than natural gas.

### What You Can Do

1) **Sign up** for Climate Parents at: [climateparents.org/get-involved.html](http://climateparents.org/get-involved.html)

2) **Get Ready For 100!** Start telling local elected officials that you are Ready For 100% Clean Renewable Energy. Write a letter to your Mayor. Send an e-mail to legislators. Call the Governor. Bring it up in conversations. That can be a challenge here in West Virginia, but it is especially important here in West Virginia. We need to confront our elected officials so they are thinking about how West Virginia can be entirely out of fossil fuels by 2050 (that is only 33 years, which is why investing in new fossil energy infrastructure is a serious mistake).

3) **Save Military Climate Programs.** House Republicans passed an amendment (H.A. 1195) to the defense spending bill that prohibits the DOD from spending money on its climate programs, and another amendment (H.A. 1205) prohibiting the military from spending money on any clean energy programs. The U.S. Senate has yet to take action on these issues. Please sign the petition to tell senators to reject the short-sighted, "crazy" House legislation that would stop the DOD's climate change and clean energy programs. Go to [climateparents.org](http://climateparents.org), scroll down and click on the Campaign.

4) **Start or join a local Climate Parents group** in your community. Contact the WV Chapter, at 304-594-3322, for easy, fun ways to get involved.

# Monongahela Group has fun, plans ahead

Autumn Long

The Mon Group of the WV Sierra Club is busy this summer enjoying, exploring and protecting the environment in our five-county area of Monongalia, Marion, Harrison, Taylor and Preston counties.

On May 24, we co-sponsored a Solar Happy Hour at Mountain State Brewing Co., in Morgantown, to celebrate the success of two recent WV SUN solar co-ops in Mon Group territory: Morgantown Solar Co-op and North-Central WV Solar Co-op. Several Mon Group members went solar through these co-ops, and the WV Sierra Club partnered with WV SUN and other local organizations to promote and support the co-ops. The Solar Happy Hour gave interested members of the public an opportunity to talk first-hand with solar homeowners, as well as with representatives of WV SUN and the co-ops' installer, Mountain View Solar. More than 30 people attended and had a good time.

The Mon Group's annual Ice Cream Social was at Cooper's Rock State Forest on June 11. Several members of the Mon Group and the WVU Sierra Student Coalition arrived early for a morning hike to the Henry Clay iron furnace and looped back around Rock City. Hand-churned lemon ice cream hit the spot on a hot summer afternoon, and with around two dozen attendees, there were plenty of hands to make light work of the churning.

The Mon Group executive committee met afterward to plan upcoming events. Here is what we have in store for the rest of the summer:

## Thurs., July 20, 9 am Meet with Sen. Manchin's staff to Support Public Lands

Sierra Club members and all supporters of public lands are invited to join Mon Group leaders and Matt Kearns, of the West Virginians for Public Lands coalition, when they meet with Senator Joe Manchin's staff to advocate for the sound management of our public lands.

Manchin's office is at 230 Adams St., Fairmont. For information: Matt Kearns, 304-444-4567, [mkearns@wvivers.org](mailto:mkearns@wvivers.org).

The WV Sierra Club is a member of West Virginians for Public Lands, a new coalition of people, organizations and businesses advocating for the sound management of our state and federal public lands.

## Thurs., Aug. 24, 6:30-9 pm End-of-Summer Corn Roast Krepps Park Shelter

This is our annual end-of-summer gathering when we savor the last tastes of summer, catch up with old friends and make new ones. The event is student and family friendly. Plates, flatware and soft drinks are provided, as well as the corn for roasting. Everyone is asked to bring food to share.

Krepps Park is at 1235 Parkview Drive, Morgantown. For information: John Bird, 304-864-8631, [johnbird@frontier.com](mailto:johnbird@frontier.com).



A small group hiked to the iron furnace at Coopers Rock State Forest, on a warm Sunday morning in June. They were rewarded later in the afternoon with delicious fare at the Mon Group's annual Ice Cream Social.

## Dates of interest to our electronic subscribers

For those who receive this newsletter electronically, and thus about 2-3 weeks prior to the mailed version, there are some late June dates to be aware of. Details for these events can be found on the Chapter's web site: [sierraclub.org/west-virginia](http://sierraclub.org/west-virginia)

## Tues., June 20, 7 pm

Attend the Morgantown City Council meeting to support the city's adoption of the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement.

## Tues., June 27, 1 pm

Join Mon Group leaders when they meet with Senator Shelley Moore Capito's staff to advocate for the sound management of our public lands.

# Group enjoys early spring hike to Elephant Rocks

Beth Little

Were we to do this hike today — early June as I write — we would be dressed quite differently. We wouldn't have had any more fun, though, than we did on this April 1 hike to Elephant Rocks, on the Forks of Cranberry Trail. Everyone looks reasonably happy in the photo, which was taken at the end of the hike. We defied the weather forecast and the light sprinkle falling when we met at the Cranberry Visitor Center and were rewarded with a fine early spring day.

Some of us had visited Elephant Rocks before (some of us, many years before), and we remarked on the changes. After fires burned everything in this area of the Monongahela National Forest, including the soil, in the early part of the 20th century, Elephant Rocks was left bare, and there was a 360-degree view. Not anymore. Nature is reclaiming it. The view is gone — maybe a few glimpses are left — and there are sizeable trees growing between, and even on, the rocks.

For those purists out there who notice that there are more than 10 of us (a rule limits parties to 10 in the Cranberry Wilderness), we were two parties almost all the time —



Two WV Chapter hiking groups met up for an April Fool's hike on the Forks of Cranberry Trail, on their way back from Elephant Rocks.

the slow ones and the not so slow ones. We even had different destinations — one group went further to see an outcropping of

moss-covered rocks. We did congregate at Elephant Rocks for lunch and palaver. It's a great place to gather and enjoy nature.

Please contact the Editor for submission guidelines or advertising rates. Contributions to the newsletter may be sent to the Editor at:

[celliot2@comcast.net](mailto:celliot2@comcast.net)

414 Tyrone Avery Rd

Morgantown, WV 26508

**Deadline for  
July/August issue**

**August 5**

Opinions expressed in the *Mountain State Sierran* are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Sierra Club. This newsletter is published bimonthly by the WV Chapter of the Sierra Club and distributed to all paid members.

# OUTINGS LIST

**Sat, July 15**

**Day Hike and Swim: Dolly Sods, Dunkenbarger Loop**

**Distance/Difficulty:** 7.6 miles, MODERATE/STRENUOUS

**Description:** Hike in Dolly Sods Wilderness, following along parts of Red Creek, with its cascading streams and waterfalls, through a forest canopy of spruce woods, and along high plateau and meadows. Trails can be wet, rocky. Depending on water levels, stream crossings may involve a change of footwear. Be a kid again and cool off in Red Creek's numerous swimming spots.

**Meet:** Contact leader to RSVP and for additional information.

**Leader:** Ann Devine-King, [atdking@gmail.com](mailto:atdking@gmail.com), 304-594-2636

**Nearest town:** Davis, WV

**Additional info:** Monongahala National Forest Hiking Guide, The Mid-Atlantic Hiker's Guide: West Virginia, [midatlantihikes.com](http://midatlantihikes.com)

**Sat, July 29**

**Day Hike: Canaan Valley NWR**

**Distance/Difficulty:** about 6 miles (3-4 hours), MODERATE

**Description:** We will follow Beall and Blackwater View trails. Beginners are welcome. Dress for the weather, bring water (1-2 liters) and a snack, and wear sturdy footwear (boots with good tread and water resistance recommended). The Refuge allows dogs on leash. Pet must be preapproved by leader. There is a vault toilet at the trail head.

**Meet:** Beall Trail parking lot in the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge, off Cortland Road in Canaan Valley, WV. Contact leader to preregister and for more information.

**Leader:** Brent Carminati, [brentcar1@frontiernet.net](mailto:brentcar1@frontiernet.net), 703-999-8679

**Nearest town:** Davis, WV

**Sat, July 29**

**Day Hike: Watoga Park, Honeybee Trail**

**Distance/Difficulty:** 4-5 miles, MODERATE

**Description:** Honeybee Trail is a loop that climbs from Dragon Draft to the ridge on the south and then circles Dragon Draft watershed and back down from the north ridge. There are lots of big trees. Bring water and lunch.

**Meet:** Arboretum trail head on Watoga Road (about 2 miles from the Greenbrier River) at 10 a.m. RSVP to one of the leaders is required so we will know you are coming and in case there is a change in plans.

**Leaders:** Susan Chappell, [susan2hike@frontiernet.net](mailto:susan2hike@frontiernet.net); Beth Little, [blittle@citynet.net](mailto:blittle@citynet.net)

**Nearest town:** Seebert, WV

**Wed, August 9**

**Day Hike: Cranberry Bogs, Cow Pasture Trail**

**Distance/Difficulty:** 6- to 7-mile, EASY

**Description:** The Cow Pasture is a gently rolling trail around the Cranberry Bogs. We are hoping to attract people on vacation or retired folks who might be interested in hiking on a weekday. Bring water and lunch.

**Meet:** Cranberry Bogs parking area at 10 a.m.; short access road off Rte. 39 about 6 miles from Rte. 219 to the east; or 22 miles from Richwood to the west. RSVP to one of the leaders is required so we will know you are coming and in case there is a change in plans.

**Leaders:** Susan Chappell, [susan2hike@frontiernet.net](mailto:susan2hike@frontiernet.net); Beth Little, [blittle@citynet.net](mailto:blittle@citynet.net)

**Nearest town:** Hillsboro, WV

**Sun, Aug 13**

**Day Hike: Laurel Fork River, VA**

**Distance/Difficulty:** about 6 miles, (3-4 hours), EASY/MODERATE

**Description:** Located in the George Washington National Forest, this hike will follow Buck Run and Locust Spring Run trails using old railroad grades. There will be several stream crossings. Hikers should be able to hike a moderate trail and rock hop small streams. Beginners are welcome. Please dress for the weather; bring water, snack, lunch and wear sturdy footwear (boots with good tread and water resistance recommended).

**Meet:** Locust Spring picnic area on FR 142 of Rte. 28, between Cherry Grove and Thornwood, WV. There is a vault toilet at trail head. Contact leader to preregister and for more information.

**Leader:** Brent Carminati, [brentcar1@frontiernet.net](mailto:brentcar1@frontiernet.net), 703-999-8679

**Nearest town:** Thornwood, WV

**Sat, Aug 19**

**Adopt-A-Trail Service Outing: Cooper's Rock SF**

**Distance/Difficulty:** 1.25 miles, EASY/MODERATE

**Description:** This will be the summer trail clean-up on our "adopted" Intermediate Cross Country Ski Trail and loop for 1.25 miles at Cooper's Rock State Forest. Much of the work will include cutting back vegetation, cleaning out and restoring drainage ditches/culverts and general trail clearing. We'll have time to ID trees along the way. Some moderate-intensity work will be necessary using shovels, rakes and pruners, and moving reasonably sized rocks. Anything requiring power tools or heavy lifting is deferred to the Forest Superintendent. Volunteers should wear sturdy boots and work gloves and carry water and snacks.

**Meet:** Work will begin in the morning. Contact leader for more details.

**Leader:** Ann Devine-King, [atdking@gmail.com](mailto:atdking@gmail.com), 304-594-2636

**Nearest town:** Morgantown, WV

**Web info:** [wvstateparks.com/community/adopt.htm](http://wvstateparks.com/community/adopt.htm); [www.coopersrockstateforest.com/coopersrock.org](http://www.coopersrockstateforest.com/coopersrock.org)

*Perspectives on Outings*

— Ann Devine-King, Outings Chair

## New Leader Recharges the 'Outdoor Meter'

Modern society places many of us indoors much of the time. Even those of us working to fulfill Sierra Club's mission to explore, enjoy and protect wild places spend numerous hours making phone calls, working at the computer, sitting in meetings and studying indoors.

Always at the core of our organization is the vital role that the Sierra Club Outings program plays. It gets people outdoors, it inspires, it rejuvenates, it reduces stress, it's healthy, it's fun, it promotes conservation, it recruits Sierra Club members.... the list goes on. If you feel your "outdoor meter" is getting low, the best way to "recharge" is to share an outing with other interested people.

On May 20, a small group of us were recharging our outdoor meter with new outings leader Laura Miller as she led us on a 3-mile hike in Kanawha State Forest, near Charleston. It was a beautiful day, and several groups were out enjoying the mid-spring weather, including bird watchers, bikers and hikers. The woods were a rich mix of deciduous and conifers filled with the voices of birds that were mostly hidden from view. Plenty of time was spent observing flora and fauna: listening, looking, smelling and keying flowers with *Newcomb's Wildflower Guide* (we saw four-leaved Milkweed and White Clintonia).

As an entomologist working with the WV Department of Agriculture, Laura brings a unique knowledge to outings, but her passion extends far beyond just bugs. Halfway into the hike, we rested on a large rock outcropping, where



Laura Miller holds the Three-Eyed Eastern Click Beetle.

Laura shared her reflections. For her, time in the forest is enjoyed more fully when connecting with nature — getting to know the woods, the bugs, the plants, the birds, the animals — and following the changes with each season and in different micro-ecosystems. All of this motivates her even more to protect the natural environment that she loves.

While she was speaking, what I thought was a twig near her foot was identified as a Two-Eyed Eastern Click Beetle. Pretty cool!

Congratulations, Laura, and thank you for becoming an outings leader and sharing what you love.

### Sierra Club Liability Policies For Chapter Outings

Sierra Club outings are open to everyone, members and non-members alike. Each outing is intended to be a wholesome, safe, and enjoyable experience in the outdoors. Participants must have suitable clothing, gear, and stamina, and are encouraged to select activities that match their individual abilities for outdoor adventures.

The Club offers a variety of outings from "easy" to "moderate" to "strenuous" that suit all activity levels. The difficulty of each outing is clearly designated in the announcement. Reservations are generally not required unless noted, but the outing leader may be contacted in advance for questions about the terrain, the difficulty and recommended gear.

Activities are normally held "rain or shine," but may be postponed at the leader's discretion for safety reasons in the event of inclement weather. Participants are reminded that all outdoor activities carry a degree of risk, and some take place in locations where professional emergency medical aid may be two or more hours away. People with health concerns should consult a physician to determine the advisability of participating in these or similar activities. The leader is responsible for the safety of all participants, and has the final authority to decide whether or not an individual may participate on a specific outing. Sierra Club safety policy requires that helmets be worn on bicycling outings, and a personal flotation device (PFD) be worn when using personal watercraft such as kayaks or canoes.

Unless noted in the announcement, Club outings are intended for adults. Children and

dogs are not normally permitted, unless an outing is so designated. Minors (under 18 years of age) must be accompanied by a parent or a legal guardian, or they must have both 1) a signed permission slip, and 2) the leader's prior consent to participate in the Club outing. Sierra Club outings officially begin and end at the trailhead.

Travel to the official starting point and back, even from an advertised meeting place, is the sole responsibility of each participant. While the Club encourages car-pooling, such arrangements are strictly between the riders and the drivers, and are not a part of the outing. Participants assume full responsibility and liability for all risks associated with such travel. All participants on Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver, which can be viewed at [www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms](http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms) or by calling 415-977-5630.

The Sierra Club does not charge for chapter outings, although payment of park entrance fees, a share of campsite rental costs, permit fees, equipment rental charges, etc. may be required from the participants. The Sierra Club practices "leave-no-trace" trail techniques, including hiking and camping on durable surfaces, minimizing campfire impacts, packing out all trash, respecting wildlife, being considerate of other visitors, and leaving the environment as it was found.

The Sierra Club's California Seller of Travel identification number is CST 2087766-40. Registration as a seller of travel does not constitute approval by the State of California.

#### West Virginia Chapter Outings

Updated outings are listed on the Chapter's website: [sierraclub.org/west-virginia](http://sierraclub.org/west-virginia), and also on two Meetup.com groups: "West Virginia Chapter Sierra Club" (Morgantown) and "WV Sierra Club-New River." Outings are added to these sites weekly.



**SIERRA  
CLUB**

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(Put name of recipient under subject)

Messages for legislators can be left at:  
1-877-565-3447 or 304-347-4836

Mail address:

Member, WV Senate or  
House of Delegates  
Bldg 1  
State Capitol Complex  
Charleston, WV 25305

website: [www.legis.state.wv.us](http://www.legis.state.wv.us)  
has contact information for all state legislators.

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

## *Preserve the Future*

Not everyone can make a large gift to protect the environment during their lifetime, but you can preserve the environment for generations to come by remembering Sierra Club in your will. There are many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter.

For more information and confidential assistance, contact:

**Sierra Club  
Gift Planning Program**  
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San Francisco, CA 94105  
[gift.planning@sierraclub.org](mailto:gift.planning@sierraclub.org) • (800) 932-4270

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