



Moshannon Group News



Moshannon Group of the Pennsylvania Chapter of the Sierra Club

September 2003

September 10, General Meeting:

WINDS OF CHANGE

At the September Moshannon Group General Meeting, Sam Enfield, Vice President of Development for Atlantic Renewable Energy Corporation, will discuss utility-scale wind power development in Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, Atlantic Renewable has developed the Mill Run (15 megawatts) and Somerset (9 megawatts) wind projects, completed in 2001, and the Meyersdale project (30 megawatts), currently under construction. Atlantic Renewable also developed the 66-megawatt Mountaineer project in West Virginia, which went into commercial operation in December of last year, as well as two projects in New York, totaling 42 megawatts.



Mr. Enfield will discuss various aspects of wind power development, including: wind resources in Pennsylvania; power production and emissions offsets; project development issues, including environmental impacts; and state and federal policies to stimulate and wind power development.

October 8, General Meeting:

ALASKA WILDERNESS LEAGUE

Alaska's wild lands -- specifically the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge -- are under attack. This extraordinary treasure trove of lands set aside decades ago to be protected now and in the future for the benefit of the American people, is in danger of being destroyed forever by short-sighted politicians and the extractive industries. They want the resources these pristine areas can provide, regardless of the resulting devastation to the

EVENTS CALENDAR

GENERAL MEETINGS

Wednesday, **September 10**, 7PM: Guest Speaker: Sam Enfield will speak on wind energy. See article on Page 1.

Wednesday, **October 8**, 7PM: Eric DuMont of the Alaska Wilderness League will present a slideshow of the spectacular Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, showcasing its pristine and irreplaceable beauty. See article on Page 1.

Wednesday, **November 12**, 7PM: Geoff Brugler will speak on "Climbing in the Dolomites of Northern Italy." His presentation will cover such places as Venice, Florence, Greece, Santorini, the Acropolis and Olympia.

The General Meetings will all be held at the Centre Furnace Mansion and Historical Society at Porter Road and East College Ave.

OUTINGS

Sunday, **September 7**, hike in the Wykoff Natural Area/Quehanna Wild Area. A moderate hike of about 5 miles. Contact Ben Cramer at 237-4187 or doomsdayer520@yahoo.com.

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Local Developers Set Sight's On Public Lands

—by Dave Bonta

Local development boosters in Cambria County are attempting to take over some 70 acres of public land in Prince Gallitzin State Park as part of a privately leased golf course/resort. Reports indicate that this will include an 18-hole golf course, tennis courts and a resort lodge with up to 300 rooms.

Prince Gallitzin is a 6,249-acre park west of the Allegheny Front, surrounding the 1,600-acre Lake Glendale. It is part of a 45-mile-long, unbroken chain of public lands stretching from Altoona to Milesburg. Rather than assist the state in preserving the wild character of this region, the head of the Cambria Co. Industrial Development Corporation, Ronald Budash, touts the proposed resort's potential to spur residential and commercial developments and new highways. He told the Tribune-Democrat newspaper that the resort "would be a regional project to tie northeast Cambria County into Blair County and the Black Moshannon Valley."

From what we have learned of this project so far, it's likely it would be an economic and ecological dud, and would set a dangerous precedent for the entire state park system. The PA Sierra Club is currently planning a response.

To learn about our upcoming activities to protect Prince Gallitzin State Park, please contact Dave Bonta at bontasaurus@yahoo.com. Also watch for updates in the group and chapter newsletters as well as the Moshannon website (<http://pennsylvania.sierraclub.org/moshannon>) and the PA Chapter website (<http://pennsylvania.sierraclub.org>).

For More Information On Our Speakers

Alaska Wilderness League
122 C Street, NW, Suite 240
Washington, DC 20001
P: 202-544-5205
F: 202-544-5197
www.alaskawild.org

Atlantic Renewable's website:
<http://www.atlantic-renewable.com/>

Off The Chair

Dave Coleman

I want you to do something today – as in right now – something for our families and our future. I want you to write a letter. If each one of us writes a simple letter today, we can be part of a big change in the way our state Bureau of Forestry manages our forests. Read on.

I consider myself privileged to have been able to visit many state forest natural and wild areas this year. On many of the outings I undertook this summer, I would pause and take in the sights, sounds and smells of the forest. I would reflect on the value that this particular place had to me. Perhaps more important than the values of biodiversity, water quality and recreation is the value of the awareness that we live in a society that has the potential selflessness to leave a place – a piece of nature – alone – simply because we can, and believe that we should.

Many of our state forest natural areas that are comprised of old growth trees and groves are a result of mistakes in surveying or disputes between timber companies a century ago when we were busy making ship masts, roof shingles, toothpicks and waste out of practically all of Pennsylvania's forests. These state forest natural areas (as small and scattered as they are) are permanently protected from commercial extraction. This was a fairly obvious public policy decision.

In contrast, our more expansive state forest wild areas – mostly second growth forests – had been, over the last three decades, purposely set aside free from development by the Bureau of Forestry to provide for the remote recreational experience – for "peace and solitude". In addition, for the last few years, a temporary moratorium on timber harvesting in state forest wild areas has been imposed by the BOF. The current and final draft of the state forest plan proposes a more permanent protection for most of the state forest wild areas. These improvements in the way we treat our forests over the last century have not happened by accident.

It has happened because the citizens of Pennsylvania have demanded it. If enough of us insist on these things, it is more likely that we will get what we think is right.

But, this positive change is hardly yet set in stone. The state forest plan is a draft and could be much better. The BOF is accepting comments from the public until the end of September and will revise the final plan based – in part – on these public comments. We can't afford to be complacent. There are those who do not see the value in forests left alone. They do not see value in forests other than the wood fiber they can provide. They don't realize that we have plenty of other forest land – public and private – to provide the natural resources our society depends on.

But the state forests are **our** forests. If you are a citizen of Pennsylvania, these are **YOUR** forests. This is your chance to be a part of a positive change. This is your chance to be a part of creating large sections of old growth forest – once again in Pennsylvania. Tell the BOF that you want all of our state forest wild areas forever protected from commercial extraction. Tell them that we need large tracts of land – entire watersheds – included in their old growth management proposals. Tell them why you appreciate our state forest land. Tell them these things in a short letter – handwritten, word processed, or however. A simple short letter from you will have an impact. Even if you have signed one of the wild area campaign post cards, this letter will be YOUR comment, not that of the Sierra Club. Do it now. Why not get up **off the chair**, grab a pen or a keyboard and make Penn's Woods a better place?

Send your letter to:
DCNR – Bureau of Forestry
State Forest Resource Management Plan
P.O. Box 8552
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552

Alaska Wilderness League

(Continued from page 1)

habitat, wildlife, and cultures.

The Alaska Wilderness League is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation founded in 1993 to further the protection of Alaska's incomparable natural endowment. It supports legislative and administrative initiatives to protect Alaska's lands and waters, promotes national and local recognition of Alaska's spectacular environment through public education, strengthens grassroots activism on behalf of Alaska's environment, and provides leadership within the environmental community on selected issues that concern Alaska.

The Alaska Wilderness League's main projects currently include fighting for the permanent protection of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and the sus-

tainable future of Alaska's Rainforests. The Alaska Wilderness League is the only Washington, D.C.-based environmental group devoted full-time to protecting Alaskan wild lands values.

The Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is made up of more than 19 million acres of pristine mountains, forest, tundra, and coastal plain and is regarded by many as America's last great wilderness. The Refuge provides habitat for wolves, grizzly bears, polar bears, arctic fox, moose, musk oxen, and more than 140 species of birds. The 129,000-member Porcupine Caribou herd migrates annually to the Arctic Refuge. They come to give birth and nurture their young on the 1.5 million acre coastal plain. This essential habitat also provides nesting and staging grounds for migratory birds seen in all 49 states, including waterfowl such as Snow Geese, Tundra Swans, and Loons. The coastal plain is the biological heart of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, and center of wildlife activity.

make up 80 percent of their diet. To the Gwich'in, the coastal plain is the "sacred place where life begins."

Ninety-five percent of the United States' arctic coastline is open to oil and gas development. The 100-mile stretch of arctic coastal plain in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge is the last five percent of Alaska's North Slope still off-limits to oil exploration. Now, big oil companies are pushing for access to this fragile landscape. The oil industry and their political allies are pushing their agenda despite the objections of 500 leading American scientists, the Gwich'in people, and the majority of Americans who are in favor of protecting the Arctic Refuge. In addition, the US Geological Survey estimates that drilling would yield only 6 months worth of oil from beneath the coastal plain. The majority of Americans believe that the value of a 20,000-year-old native culture and birthing grounds for 129,000 caribou is far greater than 6 months worth of a polluting, non-renewable resource.

You are invited to join the Alaska Wilderness League as they present a slideshow of the spectacular Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, showcasing its pristine and irreplaceable beauty. See for yourself why this national treasure should remain forever wild.

Events Calendar (Continued from page 1)

Saturday, **September 27:** Hike in the Hook Natural Area, on trails that the Penn State Outing Club used to use for skiing, that are unknown to others and may be gone by this time. So it is not a trip for those afraid of being lost in the woods. This should cover less than 6 moderately strenuous miles. Also there might be a small amount of stream walking. Ralph Seeley a man to whom all who enjoy Central PA's many trails owe a huge debt of gratitude will lead this hike and share his insights into the area. Contact: Ralph Seeley at 355-2933 or rsbb219@pennswoods.net

Sunday, **September 28:** Pine Creek Gorge Rail-Trail, bike trip of about 15-20 miles. Contact Ben Cramer at 237-4187 or doomsdayer520@yahoo.com.

Sunday, **October 19:** 6-7 mile Hike in the Kettle Creek Wild and Natural Area 's. Contact Dave Coleman, 234-0839 or at dyatesc@aol.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS

These meetings are held on the **first Wednesday** of the month and they are open to all members. Call an Executive Committee Member for the next meeting location.

The Gwich'in people (the name means "caribou people") depend on the Porcupine caribou herd for subsistence as well as tradition and lifestyle. The Gwich'in have lived in harmony with the land, wildlife and harsh environment of the arctic region for over 20,000 years. Caribou and other wild game



A Recent Moshannon Group Outing to the Proposed Square Timber/Big Run Wild Area Photo by Dave Coleman

**Moshannon Group of the
Pennsylvania Chapter of the
Sierra Club**
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We're on the web!—<http://pennsylvania.sierraclub.org/moshannon/>

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