



2011 FALL NEWSLETTER

YOU'RE INVITED! CRF ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

All members of the Coopers Rock Foundation are invited to a meeting on Tue, October 11 in Pavilion One at CRSF. The meeting will start at 6pm with a potluck dinner, followed by updates on committee work, and information about the upcoming timbering project in the forest and the October meeting in Charleston regarding management of the forest. CRF will supply the food and soft drinks. Please make plans to attend! Your thoughts and opinions are very important!

VOLUNTEER FOR CLIFF HABITAT RESTORATION DAY - SIGN UP TODAY!



The Annual Cliff Habitat Restoration Day is October 2nd from 11am – 4pm. Come for all or part of the day. Wear clothes that can get dirty and sturdy shoes. Bring work gloves if you have them and a water bottle and snacks. We provide pizza midway through the workday. There will also be prep days prior to the event if you can't make it October 2nd. If you are interested or have questions please contact Adam Polinski at trailwork@coopersrock.org.

NEW RECREATION PROGRAMS A SUCCESS

This summer, CRF sponsored two new recreation and education initiatives at CRSF - Campground Talks and Hike the Trails. Volunteer Mike Breiding led two Hikes that provided information for participants on CRSF history and the natural environment and CRF Board member Alan Collins organized Campground Talks for visitors to CRSF. Among these were a History Alive Presentation of Anne Bailey and a Stream Critters Walk to Scotts Run. The portrayal of Anne Bailey was presented by Patty Cooper of Parkersburg, and attracted over 30 campers and others. Look for more activities like this next summer.



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Mission Statement: *To preserve and protect the past, present, and future of Coopers Rock State Forest and the Snake Hill Wildlife Management Area*

ON THE PROPERTY RIGHTS OF SURFACE AND SUBSURFACE OWNERS

At the July 25 special meeting of the Select (Legislative) Committee (to discuss Horizontal Fracturing Drilling), the specific question of property rights, i.e., the distinction between surface ownership and subsurface ownership, was elided by the broader question of rights of citizens versus rights of corporations. That's the rhetorical shape of the arguments of the vast majority of most speakers on both sides of the fracking issue. The citizens have rights. The corporations have rights. However, two speakers did construct arguments that sharply focus on the specific issue of surface and subsurface rights.

Tim Mansion (D – Marion) used Argument by Implication. He concluded his welcoming remarks by citing the historical record, reminding the audience that the roots of subsurface owners' rights date far back to English Common Law. His implication seemed to be that the citizens fighting horizontal fracturing faced a stiff challenge from hundreds of years of legal precedent. He is no doubt right about the historical record. And he was effective to end his welcome right there, start the sequence of speakers, and give both anti- and pro-drillers something to think about through the long procession of speakers.

Now consider the remarks by Mountain Party gubernatorial candidate Bob Henry Baber. During his allotted two minutes, Baber managed to conclude his speech by speed-reading aloud his grandfather's, now his, deed to property, which spelled out in such exhausting detail the rights of industry to utterly decimate his farm, that he was nearly breathless at the finish. As he caught his breath, Baber's punch line struck the audience as a very effective strategy, indeed: "About the only thing grandpa owned was the air."

Is what's true for Baber's grandfather true for the citizens of West Virginia, and us in CRF? Every one of us citizens owns a piece of Coopers Rock and the other public lands throughout the state. Are we merely surface owners? Perhaps, but *surface* is much larger and carries much more societal impact than the sum of its parts of air, land, water, plants, and animals, each of which is in itself intrinsically priceless. As specifically identified in CRF's Certificate of Incorporation, Coopers Rock State Forest embodies many other types of "resources," including "recreational, aesthetic, conservational, ecological, educational, historical research, and natural resources."

The Coopers Rock Foundation Board stands unequivocally opposed to the practice of horizontal fracturing on West Virginia's state forests, parks, and wildlife management areas.

At minimum, common sense dictates that impacts of Marcellus industrial practices are incompatible with the mission of a state forest as defined in the state code 19-1A-2: "to provide for and promote the management of state forests for conservation and preservation of wildlife, fish, forest species, natural areas, aesthetic and scenic values, and to provide developed and undeveloped outdoor recreational opportunities, and hunting and fishing for the citizens of West Virginia and its visitors."

Permits for drilling in the Marcellus Shale have already been issued for Chief Logan State Park, in Logan County. The negative effects of this permitting, including the possibility for spills, surface run-off, water table depletion, road degradation, and light, noise and air pollution, directly contradict the mission of a state forest as quoted above.

In recognition of this fundamental contradiction, the members of the Coopers Rock Foundation Board respectfully insist that any legislation pertaining to regulation of the Marcellus industry include a provision banning hydraulic fracturing on West Virginia public lands.

OTHER CRSF NEWS

- Interested in the history of Coopers Rock State Forest? Well, get involved! The CRF Historical Committee will meet on Sept 27, 6:30pm at 420 Hill St., Morgantown. All interested CRF members are invited to attend. For more information contact Jan Kiger at jan@theadventuresedge.com
- CRSF has a new Assistant Superintendant -- Patrick Saffer, a WVU graduate. He started this summer and we wish him well in his new position!
- The CCC-constructed planters in the Overlook Area Parking Lot have finally been replanted with native trees and shrubs as an Eagle Scout project. Check it out!
- Trailwork at CRSF will be done on Oct 2. Volunteers are welcome! Sign up for the Trailwork Email List (see below) to get more information.
- *1st Annual CRF Winter Fest* – Feb 11, 2012 (Make-up date Feb 18) - Come try out cross country skiing or snowshoeing. Hike the three mile roadside trail to the CCC overlook and see it blanketed in snow. Warm your insides with hot chocolate. Roast a marshmallow. Experience the unique beauty of Cooper's Rock in the winter!
- *Celebration of Outdoors* - Saturday, June 9, 2012

TRAILWORK EMAIL LIST - SIGN UP TODAY!

Several times a year, volunteers get together to do some important work on the trails at Coopers Rock State Forest. By joining this email list, you will receive bulletins about trailwork, either because you have an interest in coming out to work or because you have email lists of your own to which you can forward the information.

This is a great activity for a family or organization looking for a valuable community service project. If you would like to be part of this list or have questions, contact Trail Coordinator, Adam Polinski, at trailwork@coopersrock.org

WVU STUDENTS HELP WITH CLEANUP

Twenty-six incoming WVU freshman with the Adventure West Virginia Program, doing volunteer work through the efforts of the WVU Center for Civic Engagement, contributed 117 hours of work at CRSF in August. It was the biggest volunteer day at Coopers Rock so far this year. Accomplishments included:

- cleaning 22 CCC-constructed stone grills in the Lower Picnic Area
- raking/clearing Eagle Trail and the "Old Picnic Area Trail"
- drainage maintenance/improvement on Eagle Trail.
- re-establishing the embedded rocks that line Roadside Trail in the Upper Picnic Area.
- gravelling a new trail that connects the Large Gravel Parking Lot to the Restrooms via the recently uncovered CCC-constructed stone staircase.
- placing a signpost at the upper end of the new restroom trail.

The Coopers Rock Foundation plans several additional clean-ups this fall. Please make plans to help!