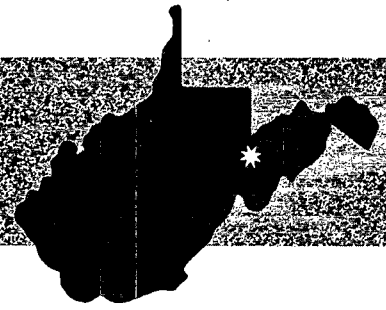


# CANAAN VALLEY

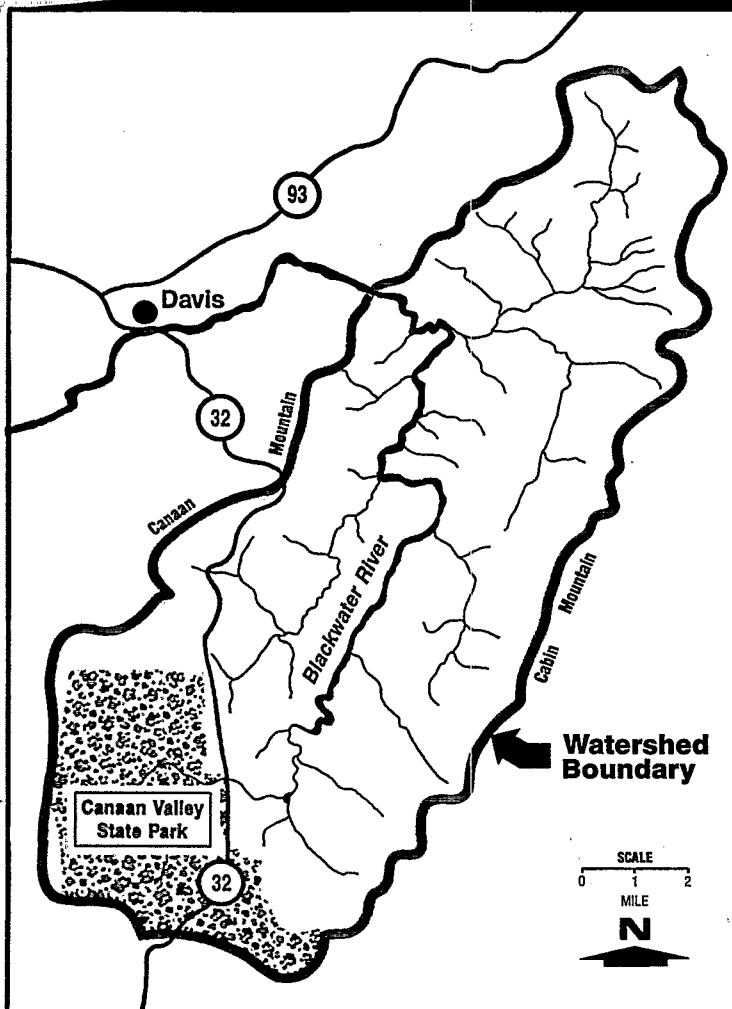
*A National Treasure*

# CANAAN VALLEY



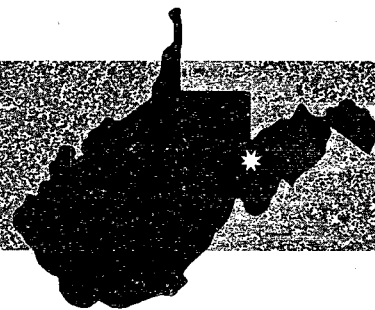
## CANAAN VALLEY CHARACTERISTICS

- ✦ *located in Tucker County, West Virginia*
- ✦ *14 miles long and 5 miles wide*
- ✦ *55 square-mile watershed (35,000 acres)*



- ✦ *3,200 feet elevation*
- ✦ *drainage by Blackwater River and tributaries*
- ✦ *more than 6,700 acres of wetlands*

# A NATIONAL TREASURE



Sitting high in the Allegheny mountains in eastern Tucker County, West Virginia, is a unique and beautiful area known as Canaan Valley. With an average elevation of 3,200 feet above sea level and a 35,000-acre watershed, it is the highest valley of its size east of the Rocky Mountains. Its northern forest character and unique wetlands support many plants and animals that are unusual and rare, not only in West Virginia but also the eastern United States.

Residents, government officials at the local, state, and federal levels, and concerned citizens across the nation are engaged in a cooperative effort through the Canaan Valley Task Force to ensure that the Valley will always be a national treasure.



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"... the total valley is a thing to be experienced ... it ranks with Yosemite and Yellowstone Valleys, though not, of course, quite their size. In the east however, there are very few areas of its grandeur and magnificence."

U.S. Department of the Interior, 1974  
National Natural Landmark Evaluation

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# NATURAL RESOURCES

In 1974 the Secretary of the Interior designated a portion of Canaan Valley as a National Natural Landmark. The designation was given, in part, because the Valley contains a boreal ecosystem: a collection of plants and animals in an environment that is usually found much farther north in areas of New England and Canada. In fact, the area has been referred to as "a little bit of Canada gone astray."

The high altitude and cool moist climate of Canaan Valley have maintained this assemblage of plants and wildlife that reflect Ice Age influences. Logging and farming in the past century have also left their legacy in the Valley's current plant life and wetlands.

Predominantly shrub swamps and bogs, Canaan Valley's 6,700 acres of wetlands comprise the largest wetland area in West Virginia and in the central and southern Appalachian Mountains. Forty different wetland and upland plant communities intermix in the Valley and support more than 580 different species of plants. These range from the delicate sundew and showy cotton-grass to the stately red spruce and fragrant balsam fir.

The diversity of plants and habitats in Canaan Valley supports equally varied wildlife -- more than 280 species of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and fishes are known or likely to occur in the Valley.

The rich and diverse habitats, combined with the Valley's scenic beauty and spectacular mountain vistas create a land of great complexity and endless fascination. Nowhere else is there a place with all of the characteristics of Canaan. It is, indeed, a national treasure.



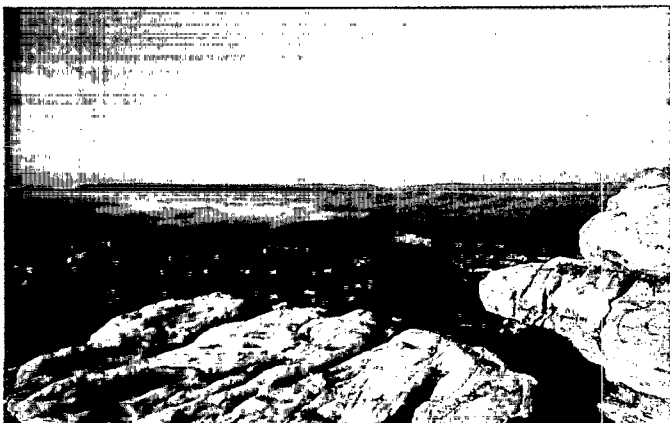
Dick Poe



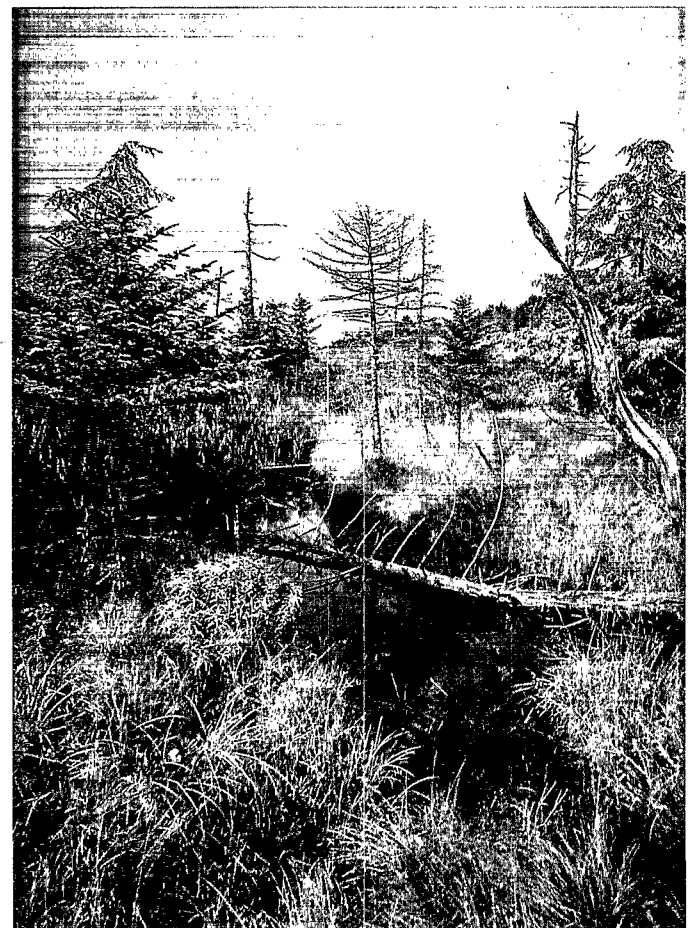
Joe McDonald



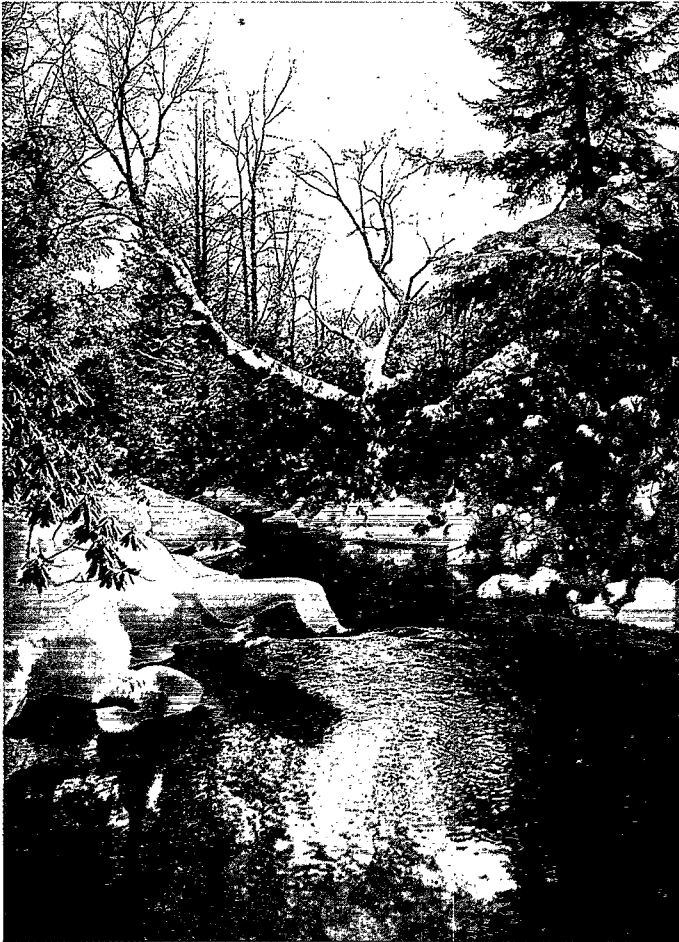
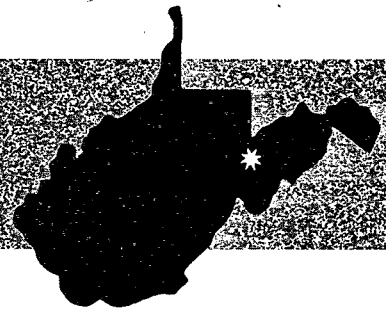
Joe McDonald



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Stephen J. Shaluta, Jr., WV Division of Tourism & Parks



© Crede Calhoun



Tom Fegely



Tom Fegely



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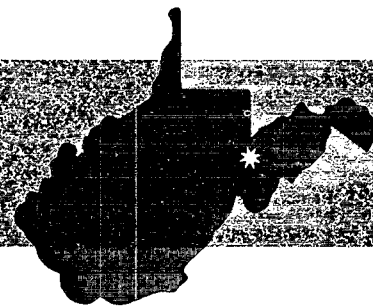
"Wetland" is a collective term for swamps, bogs, marshes, wet meadows, and similar areas that form a transition zone between dry uplands and open water. Wetlands have both essential and desirable benefits to human populations.

#### Wetlands:

- provide fish and wildlife habitat
- improve water quality
- reduce flood damage
- recharge groundwater
- offer recreational opportunities
- add aesthetic dimensions to the environment

For more information, contact the state or federal agencies listed at the end of this booklet.

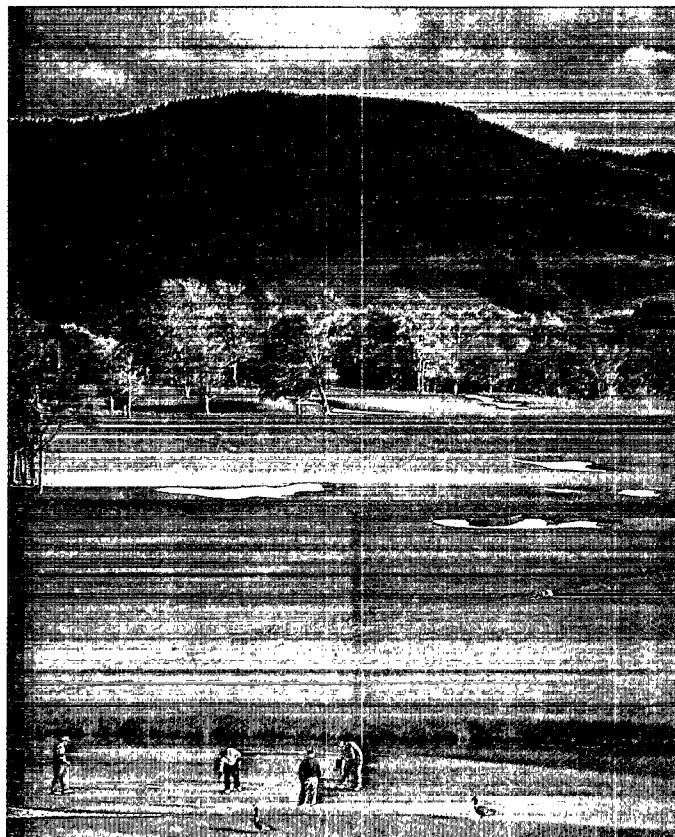
# HUMAN RESOURCES



The natural resources and recreational opportunities found in Canaan Valley are enjoyed by the residents, both permanent and seasonal, and by more than 1.5 million annual visitors. Management and preservation of its natural resources are intimately tied to an understanding of and consideration for human needs and land uses.

At present, Canaan Valley is the permanent home of more than 160 families, many of whom have ancestral ties to pioneers who settled in the Valley more than 100 years ago. In addition, it is a seasonal home to more than 1,100 second-home or vacation-property owners.

Of the 35,000 acres in the Canaan Valley watershed, approximately 10,000 acres in the southern portion have been developed for residential, resort, and recreational uses--4,000 acres privately and 6,000 acres publicly as the Canaan Valley State Park.



Stephen J. Shaluta, Jr., WV Division of Tourism & Parks



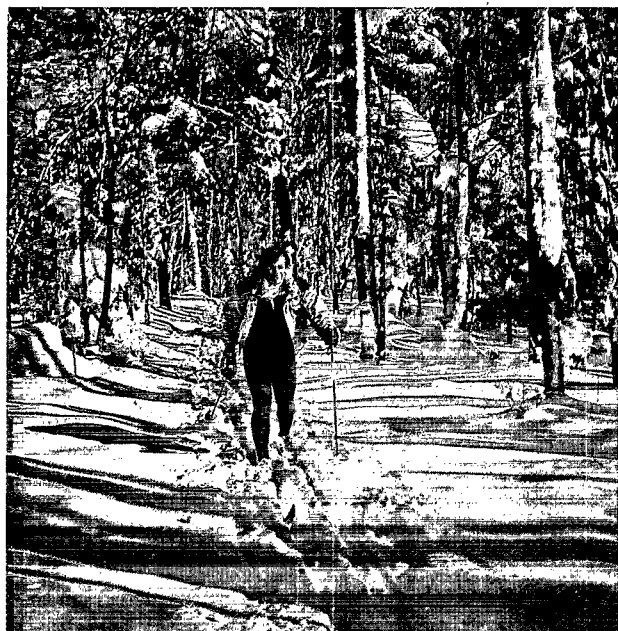
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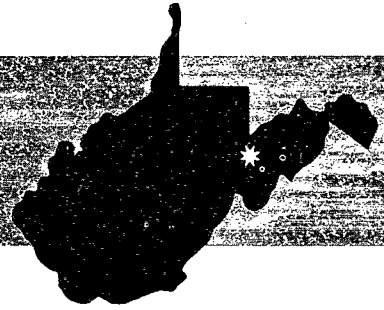
Recreational opportunities include hiking, bird watching, hunting, fishing, camping, canoeing, and mountain biking. First rate facilities also provide down-hill and cross-country skiing, ice skating, golfing, swimming, tennis, and horseback riding.

Revenues generated from tourism and associated services help to maintain Tucker County's economic vitality. Future growth, development, and employment throughout Tucker County are, therefore, linked to activities within Canaan Valley.



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# ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATIONS



Several local, state, and federal regulations protect Canaan Valley's natural resources, particularly wetlands and water quality.

**The Canaan Valley District Zoning Ordinance**, enacted in 1987, restricts specific activities, facilities, and industries that would adversely affect the natural resources and inherent beauty of the Valley.

**The Clean Water Act, Section 404**, regulates discharge of fill material into all waters of the United States, including wetlands. A permit, issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, is required for any activity involving the filling of wetlands.

**Wasteload allocations** are used by the West Virginia Division of Natural Resources to limit how much treated wastewater can be discharged into a stream and the concentration of each pollutant allowed to remain after treatment. Discharge permits are issued to qualified applicants until the wasteload allocation of a stream is reached. In Canaan Valley domestic sewage is treated through the use of septic tanks or package treatment plants to produce water that is safe for return to the environment.



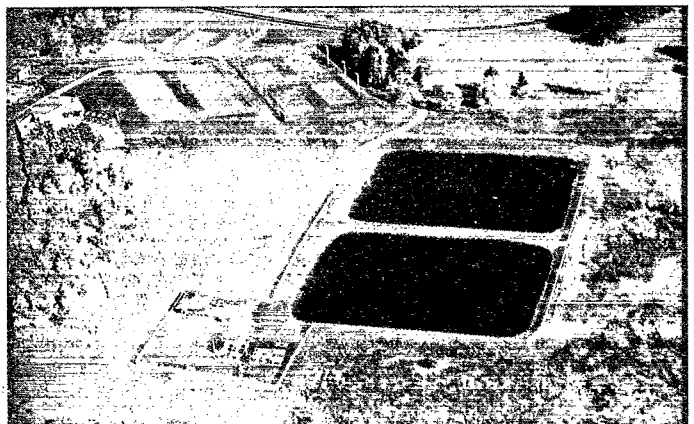
Jim Hudgins



Jim Hudgins

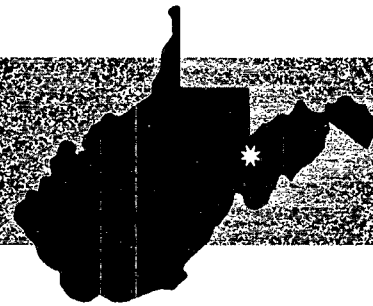


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Jim Hudgins

# PROTECTING THE VALLEY



Protecting Canaan Valley's unique environment requires a long-range strategy that focuses on the entire valley. Tucker County officials, along with federal, state, and local participants on the Canaan Valley Task Force, are addressing key issues that affect the natural resources and residents of the Valley.

The Task Force serves as a public forum to share ideas, increase understanding, and seek solutions. Toward this end, the Task Force and County officials have initiated several studies. For example, ongoing studies of surface and ground water will aid in water management in the future. Efforts are also underway to track patterns of development and changes in habitat, and to map wetlands, which will provide valuable tools for land use planning. Another study addresses unregulated off-road vehicle (ORV) use which is impairing the functions and beauty of wetlands and uplands, particularly in the northern end of the Valley.

Also of concern is nonpoint source water pollution which occurs when sediments or pesticides are washed into streams and when septic systems fail and wastes seep into groundwater. These problems lower water quality, damage fish spawning beds, deplete oxygen, and poison fish.



Larry Klotz



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In addition to seeking a better understanding of resource issues, Tucker County officials and the Task Force have facilitated discussion of topics such as wetland values and the proposed National Wildlife Refuge. Through this cooperative effort, we can gain a better understanding of today's problems and make sound recommendations for protecting the Valley's resources for the future.

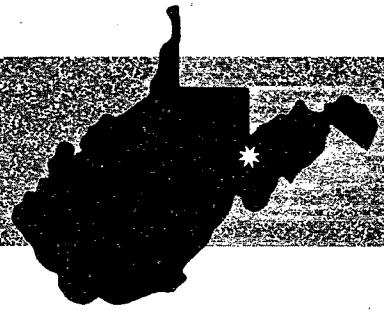


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# NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



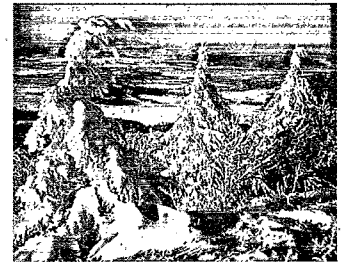
Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge was formally proposed in 1979, when the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service issued a final environmental impact statement. A refuge will provide long-term protection of the existing natural beauty and unique habitats of Canaan Valley: features that draw many visitors and residents to the Valley.

Unlike parks, refuges are established and managed with fish and wildlife needs as the top priority. In addition, the Service strives to provide visitors with educational and recreational opportunities such as wildlife observation and photography, environmental education, hiking, hunting, and fishing when these uses are compatible with the primary purposes of the refuge.

When acquiring lands, the Service will follow its long-standing policy of working with willing sellers -- that is, those landowners who want to sell their land to the government at fair market value. The Service is not interested in acquiring properties in Canaan Valley that have significant residential or recreational development or undeveloped lots within existing developments. Properties not acquired within the Valley would be subject only to existing federal, state, and local laws and not to any additional restrictions.



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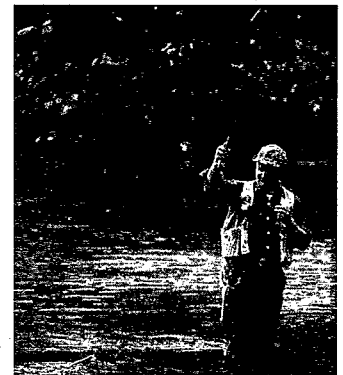


Gerald S. Ratliff

The local community will benefit from an annual payment from the federal government to local government through the Refuge Revenue Sharing Act as compensation for lost tax revenues. The community will also benefit from refuge expenditures during construction of facilities and through annual operations. Also, refuge visitors will spend tourist dollars, thus enhancing the local economy.



Stephen J. Shaluta, Jr.,  
WV Division of Tourism & Parks



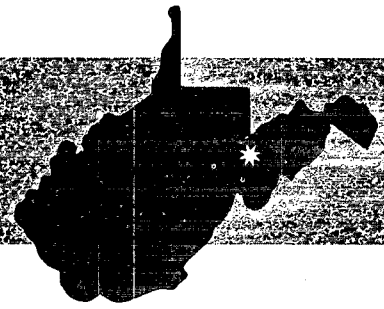
Tom Fegely



Hawk Mountain Sanctuary



# THE FUTURE



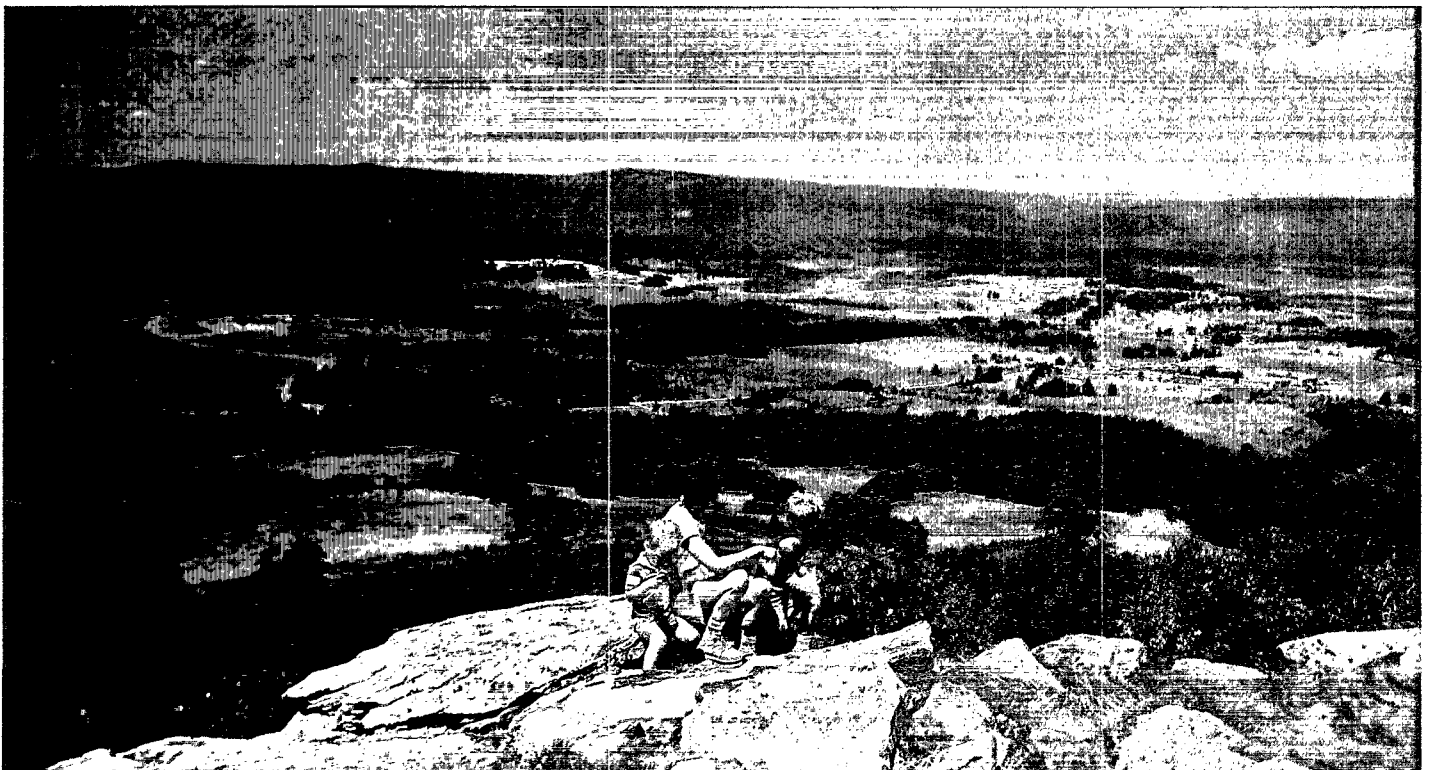
Each of us shares in determining Canaan Valley's future, and how the Valley will be experienced by our children and their children. Before us are complex issues such as the proposed National Wildlife Refuge, continued development, water quality, and ORV use. The decisions we make today to address these issues will determine the Valley of tomorrow. Through responsible action at all levels, Canaan Valley will remain a national treasure.



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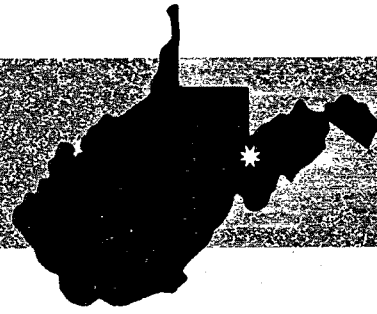


Jim Hudgins



Stephen J. Shaluta, Jr., WV Division of Tourism & Parks

# FOR MORE INFORMATION



This booklet was prepared by the Canaan Valley Task Force, composed of officials from federal and state agencies; representatives from Tucker County government, Canaan Valley organizations, and conservation organizations; and land and business owners. The purpose of the Task Force is to protect the unique ecosystem and natural resources of Canaan Valley while considering local community needs.

Additional information may be found in Task Force Fact Sheets, available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (address below), and by contacting:

**Tucker County Commission**

213 First Street  
Parsons, WV 26287

**WV Division of Natural Resources**

Capitol Complex, Building 3  
Charleston, WV 25305  
304-348-2754

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

Post Office Box 1278  
Elkins, WV 26241  
304-636-6586

**U.S. Environmental Protection  
Agency (3ES42)**

Environmental Assessment Branch  
841 Chestnut Building  
Philadelphia, PA 19107  
215-597-9301

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**

Regulatory Division  
Federal Building  
1000 Liberty Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222  
412-722-6874

**WV Highlands Conservancy**

Route 1, Box 227  
Rock Cave, WV 26234  
304-924-5802

**Sierra Club**

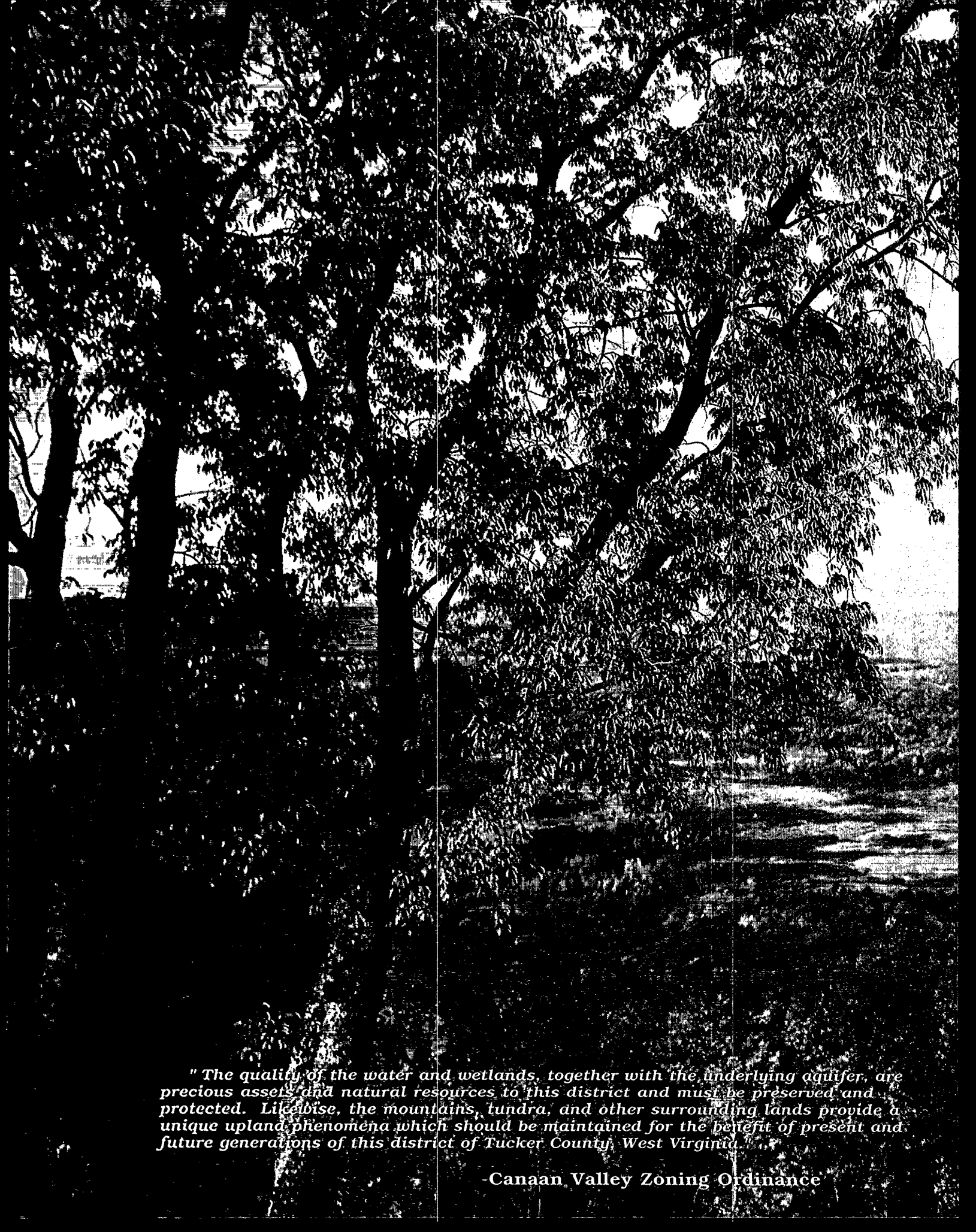
P.O. Box 4142  
Morgantown, WV 26504  
304-598-0136

**National Audubon Society**

Mid-Atlantic Regional Office  
1104 Fernwood Avenue, Suite 300  
Camp Hill, PA 17011  
717-763-4985

**National Wildlife Federation**

Mid-Atlantic Region  
1400 16th Street, N.W.  
Washington, D. C. 20036-2266  
202-797-6693



*" The quality of the water and wetlands, together with the underlying aquifer, are precious assets and natural resources to this district and must be preserved and protected. Likewise, the mountains, tundra, and other surrounding lands provide a unique upland phenomena which should be maintained for the benefit of present and future generations of this district of Tucker County, West Virginia."*

**-Canaan Valley Zoning Ordinance**