"In the woods we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life – no disgrace, no calamity... which Nature cannot repair."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson
**GFW EDITORIAL by Brent Martin, Executive Director**

For you members who are new, or didn't know it, I live in Ellijay, Georgia, the scenic town where our office is located in Gilmer County, just an hour and a half north of Atlanta. We sit on the edge of the Chattahoochee National Forest, one of the two eastern Urban National Forests, so designated because of its proximity to four and a half million people. Our county population approaches twenty thousand, which was half that number less than a decade ago. We’re the Apple Capital of Georgia, one of the top fifty outdoor recreation towns in the nation according to Sports Afield magazine, and we suffer growing pains that would accompany any town within an hour’s drive from the raw edge of the fastest growing city in the history of human civilization. Uncontrolled growth, declining water quality, second home development, poor land use planning (no land use planning) and cultural revolutions are but a few.

"Local" residents, which as a rule date their family history here back to the time of the Cherokee, areware the mountains are owned by Atlantans, who, in the eyes of many locals, apparently have no family history (or one far removed from Georgia), and who generally look down on the local population as backward and uneducated. A good many of the local residents and the Atlantans look down on the ever increasing Guatemalan population, which staffs the local poultry processing plant and does most of the manual labor at the apple orchards. The middle class Atlantans love the natural beauty, the mountains, the National Forest, the two local wilderness areas, the low property taxes and real estate prices, and the quaintness. The local residents love the natural beauty, the mountains, the national forest, the two local wilderness areas (a love/hate relationship, and they want no more) the low property taxes, are getting rich off of rising real estate prices, and capitalizing on the quaintness. They generally dislike the newcomers, but love their money, and the jobs they create.

I am somewhat of an anomaly. I wasn’t born here, but my family moved into the region just a few miles west of here in the 1850s. They were as every bit poor and redneck as the next guy, and made mediocre livings exhausting the land until they picked up and moved on southward towards rural Cobb County (about fifty miles south of here) in the early 1900s. Where they remained dirt poor and redneck. I grew up in rural Cobb County, though it is rural no more, spending my youth in a vast forest full of wildlife and wondering when I would ever get to see things like a true wild place like Alaska or the Yukon. But family builds strange ties, and the wildest setting I have yet escaped to live is this very town, Ellijay, growing less wilder every day. I am not accepted by the locals, even though I hunt, fish, speak southern dialect, and know some local history. Although not being from here is the main reason for this, another is that I work for Georgia Forest Watch, which, as you know, works to protect national forest land, and which depends largely on the financial support of the newcomers and out of state foundations. Local folks, for the most part, don’t trust environmental organizations. When I talk to them about our work the first thing they usually want to know is if we’re part of the Sierra Club. They see the environmental movement as something alien, something that seeks to control the land, and urban. When I talk to locals, I usually try to turn the conversation to hunting, farming, or fishing. I want their support. I want them to respect the work our organization does. I want them to support the protection of this amazing 750,000 acre national forest.

The incredible thing is that they do, for the most part, support protection of this 750,000 acre national forest, they just don’t want anyone telling them how to protect it, particularly if they speak with an out-of-state accent or advocate wilderness, or are against hunting. Most of them want more access (or fear losing it), some of them want timber, a good many of them hate the government, and a significant majority (as mentioned) don’t trust the environmental movement. Their landscape is being devoured by urban sprawl, the timber industry is vanishing to second home development, and, yes, subdivisions, a recent phenomenon in the southern part of the county, advertising 75 minute commute times to north Atlanta (at 3:00 AM on Sunday morning, maybe) and homes starting at $120,000. Starter castles. Some hunters complain that it is getting harder and harder to hunt with the mountains going up and the developers taking over.

The environmentalists are moving in.

I sympathize and am torn between the proper course of action. I want the rural landscape and rural culture to survive; I want the local timber industry to survive. If forced to choose, I want and prefer 200 acre loblolly pine plantations over Super Wal Marts and those disgusting little homogenized strip malls. I prefer to hear ginseng prices being discussed in the hardware store, much more than I want to hear technical discussions about mountain bikes or news of the latest trendy cafe to open in town. I am afraid that it is way too late to try to slay this particular dragon. There is absolutely nothing that will stop the spread of Atlanta northward in to these mountains short of economic collapse or the rise of a north Georgia Green Party – neither of which appears likely in the near several decades. I would add ecological collapse, but given that we are absolute geniuses at surviving with a devastated landscape and likely to make it living in plastic bubbles, I refrain). Yet our hopeful organization continues to work for more wilderness and more protected wildlands, as we see the land eaten up by woodlots, subdivision, lodges, and more roads and wildlife food plots, and more ORVs being hauled up from Atlanta behind $30,000 dollar pickup trucks to run wild over the forest for the weekend. We see what is coming because most of us have lived there at one time or another and understand the mindless momentum of it and the irreparable damage it leaves in its wake. And we are it.

So how do we close this seemingly bottomless chasm? How do we redefine rural culture so that those of us who choose to live here for the same reasons as the "locals" can be "local"? It may not be
Extinct in North Georgia: The Fisher *martes pennanti*

A small, sleek animal that once lived in these forests is now gone. The fastest of the weasel family, the fisher, once inhabited the Southern Appalachian forests. Why is he extinct from these regions? Will he ever return? It remains a mystery to this day.

Analyzing the behavior patterns of this interesting carnivore may shed some light on its habitat needs and why he has not returned to the Southern Appalachians. The fisher is “a clever hunter” who preys on small creatures, according to Encarta Encyclopedia. Tane Crossley mentions that its diet is varied among “mice... squirrels, snowshoe hares, rabbits, birds, shrews, deer carcasses...”. He also mentions that it is “one of the few animals capable of preying on porcupine.” Interestingly, the Predator Conservation Alliance comments that in the 1900s, when fisher populations decreased “porcupine populations, and damage to trees, increased.” Therefore, this animal would have remained an essential part of the Southern Appalachian food chain, had it continued to inhabit these forests.

What kind of habitat does the fisher prefer? The Predator Conservation Alliance answers, “the fisher inhabits dense forests with extensive overhead canopy and usually avoids open areas... dens in hollow trees and logs, and seeks shelter furring the winter in logs, brush piles and snow dens.” Since it prefers “dense forests” one must conclude that its basic instinct is to live in areas with trees that are old enough and within canopies dense enough to please its solitary personality. Reports show that *martes pennanti* is a solitary animal, very aggressive with its own kind and only uniting for mating. The fisher also avoids human contact due to this trait. What kind of territory range does the fisher take up? Crossley also mentions it can vary “in total area from 100-800 km.”

The fisher has been reintroduced in many forests (through different studies and programs since its near extinction in the 1930s. Although its obvious enemies are “road building, logging, trapping and... human exploitation” (Predator Conservation Alliance) there are other factors to be considered. One example is a recent study using small-scale spatial comparisons between fishers and snow. It states that it is “hypothesized that deep snowfall can limit fisher.” It’s interesting to note that current distribution numbers came from detection surveys from the Forest Service. It concluded that “climatic and interspecific factors deserve more attention as factors potentially affecting fishers...”

However, other organizations believe that there are not nearly enough population surveys. Legacy, the Landscape Connection, one organization whose mission is to include California’s community with watershed groups proposes a watershed program that will include the fisher in their conservation strategy. Other organizations in Canada and the US are doing the same. The re-introduction of this species is only the beginning. There are so many other animals that lived here once and needed protection. Will the Southern Appalachians ever be restored from the damage of decades? Only time will answer that mystery. (By Jennifer Rodriguez, GFW Office Manager) Photo by of Roger Powell

Gilmer County’s Endangered Coosawattee Crayfish Receives Due Support by Angela Faye Martin, Watershed Program Coordinator

For several years Dr. George Folkerts of Auburn University has been telling GFW, “If you want to do something great, get a survey done of crayfish in North Georgia!”

Last year, Georgia ForestWatch received funds from Patagonia, Inc. for a critically needed survey of the federally and state endangered crustacean, Camburus coosawattae/Coosawattee crayfish we have dubbed, “C.C.”.

In 1981, Dr. Horton H. Hobbs, Jr. found the habitat/range of C.C. to be restricted to Gilmer County, Georgia. Specifically, the upper Coosawattee watershed. Exactly twenty years later, GFW invites Dr. Guenter Schuster of Eastern Kentucky State University to the Coosawattee watershed to conduct the survey that will determine how these creatures have survived the recent onslaught of developmental pressure from a thriving mountain real estate industry and a lack of zoning laws. The streams in which C.C. has been known to occur, lie within and just outside of Mountaintown Roadless Area to the west, Rich Mountains and the unprotected Rocky Mountain Roadless Area to the east.

Dr. Schuster will determine whether the Coosawattee crayfish has been sustained and still exists in the riffles of these mountain streams by next summer.

GFW Forest News – Winter 2000
You Are Invited to Attend GFW 2001 Outings Programs

January 27  Winter Tree Identification led by James Sullivan, GFW District Leader of the Chattooga District.

February 24  Activist Training - for those interested in learning how to be active in saving Georgia’s National Forests and Mountain Treasure areas.

March 24  Hike in the Oconee National Forest with UGA Ecologist and GFW District Leader, JP Schmidt.

March 31  Volunteer Training Workshop, open to GFW members to learn how to staff booths and deliver presentations.

April 21  Botanical Hike - A Botanist will lead a trip so you can witness the wonders of Georgia’s botanical treasures.

May 19  Hike to Kelly Ridge Roadless Area led by Dr. John Pickering, UGA Entomologist, and GFW Board Member. This is a unique opportunity to learn how crucial insects are to forest ecosystems.

June 23  Trip to the Southeastern Aquatic Research Institute in Cohutta, GA. See how Federally endangered mussels, snails and sturgeon are being brought back from the brink.

July 28  Snorkeling on the crystal clear Conasauga River. It’s like being in a giant aquarium. One of our favorites, led by Jim Herring, Fisheries Biologist and Angela Martin, GFW Watershed Program Coordinator.

August 18  Snorkeling on the Conasauga River (Family oriented).

September 28 - 30  GFW Annual Retreat - This is a wonderful opportunity for membership to meet with staff and Board Members, learn from experts and have a good time. (Date Tentative)

October 27  Hike to one of Georgia’s Mountain Treasure areas.

November 17  Hike to one of Georgia’s Mountain Treasure areas.

December  There will not be any outings in December.

For Specifics and to RSVP call Jennifer at (706) 635-8733

Thanks to the members and staff of Sevananda

Sevananda Co-op has invited GFW to be part of their Community Challenge program during the month of June 2001. Please mark your calendars and make a special trip to support GFW. Ask for our coupon each time you make a purchase during June. Sevananda will donate a portion of your sales to GFW.

A Review of the 106th Congress

by Steve Holmer, Campaign Coordinator, American Lands Alliance

After one last rider flight to strip protections for endangered sea lions, the 106th Congress adjourned on Dec. 15. President Clinton, showing his lame-duck status, was forced to concede on a number of spending priorities and anti-environmental riders. In addition to agreeing to drop conservation measures for the sea lion, the Administration also signed a six-month delay in implementing the National Park Service ban of snowmobiles. However, there were a number of positive accomplishments including a substantial increase in funding for land acquisition programs and the permanent protection of threatened wild lands as Wilderness or National Conservation areas. Over a million acres of Wilderness were created by the 106th Congress, including over 750,000 acres in Nevada’s Black Rock Desert and High Rock Canyon region, doubling the amount of Wilderness in the state. This is fitting legacy for retiring Sen. Richard Bryan (D-NV) who has been an outspoken leader for forest protection in the Senate.

Other bills passed have protected significant areas in Colorado (Spanish Peaks, Black Canyon of the Gunnison and Black Ridge Canyons), Virginia (11,000 acres of the George Washington National Forest), Oregon (Steens Mountain), Alabama (Dugger Mountain), and California (Otay Mountain). Congratulations to all the activists who worked over the years to protect these wild places.

Unfortunately, Congress also passed several potentially harmful measures, including the Hazardous Fuels Rider (pushed by Pete Domenici, R-NM) and the County Payments bill (initiated in the Senate by Nathan Deal, R-GA) that will require continued monitoring and involvement by activists. In both cases, new funding is being made to the agencies, without adequate safeguards to ensure that scientifically sound fuels reduction or restoration will take place.

Further, local advisory committee may be formed on many National Forests which could have significant influence on what projects are promoted by the agencies.

(The many flowing to the USFS from the two measures mentioned above will come to the Chattahoochee-Oconee national forests too. GFW and our allies will need to be vigilant about how these are spent. We anticipate that the current chief of the USFS, Mike Dombeck, will be swiftly replaced by the Bush administration, and the emphasis will very likely shift sharply away from conservation toward extraction. The language of these new laws will potentially allow damaging timber sales and prescribed burns, and incentives for local governments to favor commodity production over other forest values. Stay tuned.) —Randall F. White, GFW Board President
Mountaintown: The Story of a Roadless Area

by Brent Martin, GFW Executive Director

The Mountaintown roadless area is 12,500 acres of some of the wildest country left in the state. Located southeast of the Cohutta wilderness, and separated by FS road number 64, it is home to the headwaters of Mountaintown creek, a high biodiversity watershed that bisects the area as it flows southward to the troubled Coosawattee river, the focus of James Dickey’s classic and controversial novel, Deliverance. It is also home to our state Champion Tulip Poplar (Liriodendron Tulipifera), known locally as the Gennett Poplar, so called due to its existence being spared by the benevolent Gennett lumber company, which logged the area to the bone at the turn of the last century. Lush coves, such as Devil’s Den, exist in the northwestern corner of the area, where the headwaters of Fightingtown creek flow northward toward the Toccoa river and the Tennessee drainage. Rich in botanical and aquatic biodiversity, and high on the solitude scale, it represents a great opportunity for lasting protection in a wilderness designation.

Indeed, wilderness is the Forest Service’s current recommendation for the area in the new forest plan being written for the Chattahoochee and Oconee National Forests (Year 5 and counting). The big question is whether or not the recommendation will stick. Opposition from the Wildlife Resources Division of our state DNR, Trout Unlimited, Mountain Bikers, Off Road Vehicle enthusiasts, as well as FS employees at the local level, threaten the area’s future if we are not vigilant and engaged heavily in the forest planning process. Hopefully, by highlighting the reasons for opposition, you can gain an understanding of the complexity of the wilderness designation, and, in turn, work to see that the designation sticks.

The reason for the state DNR’s opposition is that the area is almost entirely within the boundaries of the Cohutta Wildlife Management area. If the area goes wilderness, they will lose access to almost nine (yes, nine) acres of wildlife food plots. Deer and Turkey could go extinct without the DNR being able to get in and do regular scheduled maintenance on them (herbiciding, burning, cutting, etc.). They are also concerned that they would lose options to go in at some future point and create more openings (more roads, more logging, more burning, and more herbiciding). Keep in mind that DNR budgets are big because they charge nineteen dollars for a WMA stamp, which is required if you want to hunt or fish on your federal lands, of which zero goes to the Forest Service. That’s right, the DNR leases 330,000 acres of National Forest land and pays nothing for the lease. Just think if some of those millions collected in WMA stamps could go back to the Forest Service for land acquisitions, or watershed restoration, or even law enforcement.

The DNR’s solution to the Mountaintown wilderness question is to make Mountaintown a National Recreation Area. This would, supposedly, make everybody happy. If they need to make more openings, they can. If they want to put a hike inn lodge in, they can. If the state DOT decides they want to put a super highway through the middle of it, they can. If the Forest Service’s roadless policy doesn’t survive the next administration, the FS can log it and road build it in, depending on what type of NRA emerges after Congress finishes with it. (The Mount Rogers NRA in Virginia is open to both). As you can see, it clearly would compromise the area’s intact and unfragmented character.

Jim Jontz, Director of American Lands Alliance, (center of tree) hiked with GFW staff and members to the Gennett Poplar, Georgia’s Champion Tulip Poplar.

Trout Unlimited, an organization that originally signed the GFW Conservation Alternative for the new Forest Plan, is opposed to the wilderness designation (Georgia TU is now categorically opposed to all new wilderness, despite the fact that many of their members are pro-wilderness) because of stream structures that they would like to someday put in Mountaintown Creek. The opposition is a little confusing. They currently have some structures in Mountaintown creek, and they have complained that they would lose access to them if the area became wilderness, but the proposed wilderness boundary is a half mile north of the existing structures. Furthermore, they have already lost access to them due to a road closure by private property owners, who became disgusted with the trash, partying, and off road vehicle use that accompanied the road. They were also disgusted with the sight of a backhoe sitting in the middle of Mountaintown creek digging out the streambank and the stream bottom. What is curious to me, is that last summer I fished Mountaintown creek several times, and every fish I caught was way north of the structures. Regardless, I can’t seem to see the point in sacrificing an area in order to stock a few non-native trout. Nor can many of the Georgia TU members I’ve talked to.

Mountain bikers oppose the area going wilderness because they would lose a 6 mile mountain bike trail that runs the entire length of Mountaintown creek. The popular Bear Creek mountain bike trails would remain open, however, as the FS has drawn the boundary around them. The Mountaintown creek trail is a problem trail that should be closed anyway. It fords the stream numerous times, causing erosion and sedimentation problems that will only increase as the area grows in popularity. Concessioners have eyed this trail in the past for shuttle service, which would increase its use greatly, for in order to use the trail currently, one must drive over an hour to leave vehicles at each end. It is also only usable part of the year. The stream is too cold and high to cross in the fall and winter, and was closed almost the entire year last year due to winter storm damage.

Last Summer I hiked most of this trail with the Director of the Southern Off Road Biking Association (SORBA), Tom Sauret. Tom is a wilderness, and understands the need to keep our wildest places intact. The beauty of the area struck him, particularly the rugged Mountaintown gorge. He wanted the area to go wilderness, but wanted to cherry stem out the trail (draw the wilderness boundary on each side of the trail, with the trail not in wilderness). This was truly getting difficult. What kind of wilderness area would this be with a mountain bike trail running straight through the center of it? After our trip, Tom wrote to state SORBA’s position. They supported our Conservation Alternative, which includes 38,000 acres of additional wilderness proposals, but in order to support Mountaintown, we would have to agree to leave the trail in. After much discussion with active members of GFW, I wrote Tom and explained our position – the trail would have to go.

We had compromised enough on Mountaintown. The FS had already reduced the

Continued on page 7
As the hard freeze on Forest Planning thaws, the treatment of watersheds and riparian areas get closer attention. After last winter’s planning halt, Regional Forester Elizabeth Estill, said in her May, 2000 letter to Forest Supervisors that, “The Forest Service is charged with managing riparian ecosystems in a manner that protects, enhances and restores their inherent functions and values.” She goes on to say that she, “...anticipates...there will be continuing comments and debate surrounding the delineation of these ‘riparian management areas’.” She was right.

Leading the charge is a team of Forest Service planners, biologists, and hydrologists from various forests within Region 8 (our region), known as the “Riparian Team”. With regular check points from Forest Supervisors and the input of experts such as game and non-game biologists, this team continuously faces the daunting task of delineating, describing and recommending how our aquatic resources will be protected and managed under the new forest plan.

As currently recommended by the team, 30% of the land base will be protected as riparian. Upland seeps, intermittent and ephemeral streams and their buffer zones are beginning to receive due attention at the behest of team experts. The enhancement of native aquatic habitat with less emphasis on non-native sports fisheries is an increasing concern for planners as they try to establish strict riparian standards in this plan revision. An accomplishment of this magnitude will prove to be a historically recognized endeavor on the part of the U.S. Forest Service and a true victory for science.

As forest plans gain momentum in 2001, and as good forces within the Forest Service suffer the new, political undertow it will become increasingly important for Forestwatchers to show their support for aquatic resources on National Forest lands. The leadership of the new administration and its apparent to our public lands (and streams) will be expected to avoid under-cutting the recent strides fisheries biologist and Forest Service Chief Mike Dombach and others have made toward true watershed integrity.

If you would like to help show the Forest Service your support for riparian area protection write: Gary Pierson, Regional Planner, Southeast Region 8, US Forest Service, 1720 Peachtree Rd. N.W., Atlanta, GA 30367 & Dave Smith, Forest Planner, Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest, US Forest Service, 1755 Cleveland Hwy., Gainesville, GA 30501. It is always important to let your Congressperson know, too. If you need Congressional info call GFW, 706.635.8733.

(by Angela Faye Martin, Watershed Program Coordinator)

GFW Welcomes Clara Johnson, Georgia’s Newly Appointed Forest Supervisor (Forest Service Press Release)

Clara Johnson has been an employee with the United States Forest Service for more than twenty years.

Born in Indianola, Mississippi, she lived there for only three years before her mother, Leola Johnson, moved her eleven children to Natchez, Mississippi.

Her upbringing in agriculture laid the foundation for her future studies at Alcorn State University, a historically Black College and University. After graduating from college in 1982 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Agronomy, Clara took her first permanent assignment with the Forest Service as a Soil Scientist. Clara is seven of the eleven children who attended or graduated from college.

Her mother kept her family in tack by growing multiple agriculture products on their family farm where they raised hogs, goats, chickens, cows, fruit trees, peas, beans, corn, carrots, peanuts, cabbage and baked their own bread.

Clara has held several positions in the Forest Service through details or permanent assignments such as Planning Forester, Resource Officer, Assistant District Ranger, Deputy Forest Supervisor and Forest Supervisor throughout California, Mississippi and Washington, D.C.

Most recently, she worked in Congress for seven months as a Legislative Assistant for Congresswoman Eva Clayton of North Carolina. In this capacity, Clara served as the technical expert on agriculture, education, rural development, biotechnology, teenage pregnancy, veteran affairs, and defense issues.

“I am pleased to be on the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forests. As I move into this assignment as Forest Supervisor, forging relationships and partnerships will be one of my top priorities. It is imperative that we listen to the needs of the people as we seek common understandings which can be applied towards maintaining the integrity of our National Forests for our enjoyment, our children and future generations to come.”
proposed Wilderness boundary to less than 9,000 acres. This included the Bear Creek mountain bike trails, an area they want to put in a ruffed grouse management prescription, a.k.a. clearcutting (there just happens to be some huge white pine timber there), and a large oak dominated area that is being taken over by the new Darrah Vader of the forest, white pine. I could spend a lot more time going into these last two items, but some other issue. Let it suffice to say that the FS has been trying to carve Mountaintown up for years, and there is still a large timber sale on the books, which has only recently, we hope, been dropped for good.

Need I say anything about the ORV interests? They are opposed to wilderness because they can't get in and ride. Despite the fact that they have miles of legal trails in every district, and hundreds of illegal, they can't get enough. A Brasstown Ranger District employee recently told me that he estimated 300 miles of illegal trails on that district alone. Of our 850,000 acres of National Forest land in Georgia, only 114,000 is currently protected as wilderness and closed to motorized access. We have 63,500 miles of inventoried roadless areas (less than .5 miles of road per 1000 acres), and of that we are proposing that 48,000 acres become wilderness. That leaves almost 700,000 acres open to some type of "management" activity, such as logging, or creation of off road vehicle trails. In other words, I don't think I need to spend any more time on the ORV folks.

Local FS employees have spoken to adjacent landowners about threats to their property from a wilderness designation - wildfire could burn your house down. The ones I've talked to haven't been convinced. They know that if there is a threat to their property, big equipment is just one phone call away - just like the rest of the forest. Our FS Cohutta district employee also testified in plain clothes at a roadless policy hearing that "ecosystems need roads." Figure that one out. They were hired to cut timber, and it's taking a lot to change that old school philosophy. Keep in mind that the FS has never woken up one morning and said "I think we'll create a wilderness area today." Every protected area on this forest is the result of a lot of citizen works to create political and community support for it.

And we are getting that for Mountaintown. One local hunter has a petition with almost 60 signatures of hunters who use Mountaintown and want it protected as Wilderness - despite the DNR's attempts to convince hunters that wilderness is bad for hunting. Walter Riggs, who lives adjacent to Mountaintown, has collected almost 400 signatures to protect Mountaintown as Wilderness. The GFW Conservation Alternative is now endorsed by over 60 State, Regional, and Local organizations. You can write Congressman Nathan Deal today and tell him that you would like to see the Mountaintown roadless area protected as wilderness. Then go pay it a visit, if you haven't already. With enough continued to support, we will someday see a bill. It begins with these small, critical, steps.

Critical Time for Federal Roadless Policy:
Senator Miller Needs to Hear from You

The Final EIS for the proposed Roadless Policy has been released, with improvements, such as no commercial timber harvesting, but it is still a long way off from being incorporated as policy. Several western Senators are threatening to dismantle the proposed policy under provisions of the Small Business Act, and if that doesn't work, I'm sure they've got other cards up their sleeves. Please take the time to write Senator Miller and ask him to support the policy. It is important to write Senator Cleland also (our Roadless champion), but Senator Miller is new, and letters to him are far more important. If possible, send a copy of your letter to our office. Senator Miller's address is on the key contacts listing on page 2.

Regional Lawsuit Furthers Protection of Georgia's National Forests

A regional lawsuit against the Forest Service has led to several timber sales being dropped on Georgia's National Forests. The lawsuit, which is based on the 11th Circuit Decision issued last April, and of which Georgia Forestwatch was a plaintiff, was filed by Earth Justice, Stack and Associates, and several Conservation groups in the southeast. Much like the original lawsuit, the plaintiffs charge the Forest Service with not providing adequate population data on threatened and endangered species on the forest, an essential component of knowing the effects of proposed timber sales. The Forest Service's response to the 11th Circuit decision was to attempt and amend their Forest Management plans to circumvent the decision, a response of questionable legality. How this will play out in the region remains to be seen, so look for updates in the next issue.
Why is your membership important at GFW?

Thirty percent of our finances should come from membership dues. This ensures continuation of GFW in the event we are denied a grant in any given year.

Membership is also important because it helps us get grants. Increased membership lets grantors know we have a large support system within the state - this is a good thing!!

Membership also leads to volunteers that are extremely valuable to GFW. We continually need help with mass mailings and other light office work.

GFW utilizes volunteers to man booths at area festivals. If there is an annual festival near you, please contact Valerie with details.

Volunteers are also needed to help monitor Georgia's National Forests. To volunteer in a district near you, contact one of the District Contacts listed on the bottom left of page 2.

All other volunteer inquiries should be addressed to Valerie at (706)635-8733 or valerie@ellijay.com. • by Valerie Ansted Warden, GFW Outreach Coordinator

Organizational Endorsements of the Georgia ForestWatch Conservation Alternative for the New Forest Management Plan Grows to Over Sixty

The following organizations currently endorse the Georgia ForestWatch proposal for the protection of over 234,000 acres in the new Forest Management Plan:

- Georgia ForestWatch
- South Carolina ForestWatch
- Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition
- Georgia Appalachian Trail Club
- The Georgia Conservancy
- Georgia Rivers Network
- Georgia Wildlife Federation
- Georgia Chapter, Sierra Club
- Chattooga River Watershed Coalition
- Alabama Environmental Council
- Cherokee Forest Voices
- Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics
- Soque River Watershed Association
- Upper Chattahoochee River Keeper
- Gilmer Guardian
- Friends of the Mountains
- Georgia Canoeing Association
- The Wilderness Society
- Wild Alabama
- Southern Appalachian Council
- Southern Environmental Law Center
- Atlanta Audubon
- Mountain Conservation Trust of Georgia
- Georgia Botanical Society
- Mountain Communities Alliance
- Mountain High Hiking Club
- League of Conversation Voters Ed. Fund
- Trees Atlanta
- Southern Appalachian Heritage Asso.
- Yahoola Creek Watershed Project
- Friends of Georgia
- Action for a Clean Environment
- Geared To Go
- Winer Industries

Center for a Sustainable Coast
EarthKeepers
Ens and Out
Pace Academy EcoKnights
Berry College SAVE
Georgia Interfaith Alliance
The Sabbath Project
Community Watershed Project
Vegetarian Solutions
Southern App. Biodiversity Project
Appalachian Voices
Patagonia
The Environmental Forum, GA Tech
Western North Carolina Alliance
Altamaha Riverkeeper, Inc.
Southeast Alliance for Sustainable Dev.
Atlanta Botanical Garden Conserv. Prgm.
Coalition for Jobs and the Environment
Georgia Public Interest Research Group
Hidden Lake Academy Appalachian Club
American Lands Alliance
Physicians for Social Responsibility
Atlanta Botanical Garden
Students for Environmental Action, UGA
Chattoahab Open Land Trust
Environmentally Concerned Oglethorpe Students
Appalachian Ecological Consultant

Georgia ForestWatch would like to thank the following sponsors of our 2001 Georgia's Last Wild Places Calendars:

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All are tax deductible

Georgia's Last Wild Places 2001 Calendars are on sale. The first one is $10, all others are $5.

# of calendars ordered $ ______ amount

GFW T-Shirts on sale at a reduced price for $10

# of T-shirts ordered $ ______ amount

Checks should be payable to Georgia ForestWatch, 4 River St., Ste. C, Ellijay, GA 30540 or come by the office.