

The Wilderness Society's mission is to protect wilderness and inspire Americans to care for our wild places.



AMERICA'S WILDERNESS



Helping Wildlife and Wild Places Adapt to a Changing Planet

The lynx is one of the species that will need protected land corridors to survive changes in the Earth's climate. © U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Spoon-billed sandpipers depend on coastal feeding grounds that are at risk from rising sea levels. Polar bears need ice platforms to hunt for seals, and the loss of ice is a serious threat to the bear's survival. Changes in water temperature are endangering salmon.

"The unprecedented pace of change in our climate has put untold numbers of species in jeopardy," says Dr. Wendy Loya, a Wilderness Society ecologist in Alaska. "And the changes occurring in our national forests, national parks, and other landscapes limit their ability to provide services that many of us are either unaware of or take for granted." These places help scrub our air, filter our drinking water, and curb flooding, to cite just three examples.

Help may be on the way. In May the House Energy and Commerce Committee approved a landmark bill that would create a cap-and-trade system to reduce the production of greenhouse gases. This measure will be reviewed by other committees in both the House and Senate as congressional leaders push for passage before a United Nations conference in Copenhagen during December to address global warming.

"The movement of this legislation represents a tremendous breakthrough," says David Moulton, a 25-year Capitol Hill veteran who now heads our climate change policy program. "The required emissions reductions are not as large as they need to be, but this bill finally

continued on page 7

In Alaska, Oil and Gas Drilling Remains a Concern

Caroline Cannon is president of the Native village of Point Hope, on Alaska's northwestern tip. Ongoing proposals to drill for oil and gas in the Chukchi Sea alarm her. "It feels as if the government and industry want us to forget who we are, what we have a right to, and what we deserve," she told a federal court. "They repeatedly overwhelm us with information, requests and deadlines and it seems as if they hope that we will either give up or die fighting."

In April communities and environmentalists had taken heart from a ruling by the U.S. Court of Appeals for District of Columbia Circuit. That court found that a five-year national plan for offshore drilling was "illegal" because of an irrational analysis of the impacts of oil and gas activities on the fragile Arctic ecosystem. The offshore drilling program, which took effect in July 2007, opened more than 750 million acres in the Beaufort, Chukchi and Bering seas to unprecedented levels of environmentally risky oil and gas development.

continued on page 2



We are part of an effort to improve public access to North Carolina's popular Catawba Falls and other natural areas in the state.

SOUTHEAST

Catawba Falls, in the Blue Ridge Mountains, is one of North Carolina's most beautiful waterfalls. Located in Pisgah National Forest 30 minutes east of Asheville, the U.S. Forest Service's acquisition will secure access by the public to the falls. Access is also a problem in the Uwharrie National Forest. If Congress provides the funding that our coalition is proposing, the U.S. Forest Service will be able to acquire the King's Mountain parcel, the highest point in the forest, and thereby connect three hard-to-reach areas in the Uwharrie. Third, we are urging Forest Service purchase of two scenic tracts that Appalachian Trail hikers in the Smokies see as they gaze to the east. Both are attractive to major developers. Please urge your representatives on Capitol Hill to support appropriations from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to protect these and other special places across the country.

Brent Martin ☎ 828-369-7084
brent_martin@tws.org

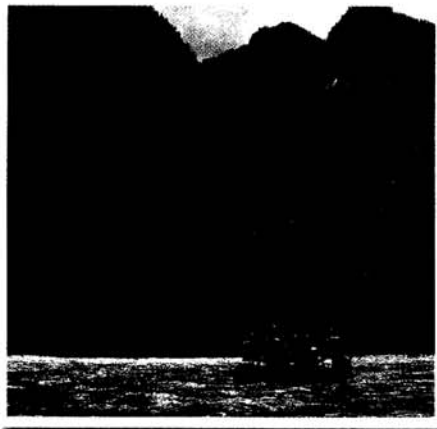
MID-ATLANTIC

Pennsylvania is a big state, but it has only two national wilderness areas, totaling just 9,031 acres. Those lands represent two percent of Allegheny National Forest in northwestern Pennsylvania. In 2006, when the U.S. Forest Service proposed a long-term plan for the forest, 6800 of the 8200 public comments urged protection

PACIFIC NORTHWEST

The Alpine Lakes Wilderness, within an hour of downtown Seattle, is one of the most-visited of the 756 areas in the National Wilderness Preservation System. If Congress passes legislation (S. 721, H.R. 1769) introduced by Sen. Patty Murray (D-WA) and Rep. Dave Reichert (R-WA) 22,000 acres, including lush river valley forests, would be added to this popular area. Since most of Washington's wilderness is higher-elevation, the lowland acreage would be an especially important addition. These lands not only provide world-class recreational opportunities; they help ensure cleaner water for downstream communities and provide habitat for elk, deer, and cougars, among others. The proposal also would protect the Pratt River and the middle fork of the Snoqualmie by designating them as wild and scenic rivers.

John Chelminiak ☎ 206-624-6430
jchelminiak@twsnw.org



© Thomas O'Keefe

A bill now before Congress would add 22,000 acres to Washington's immensely popular Alpine Lakes Wilderness.

of more wilderness in the Allegheny. We have been working with Friends of Allegheny Wilderness to build a citizen effort to create eight wilderness areas, protecting 54,460 acres. These forest lands are popular with campers, hunters, anglers, birders, and boaters, and the areas' watersheds provide clean water to downstream communities. But we are



We are teaming up with varied partners to protect the spectacular Tongass National Forest.

ALASKA

The Tongass National Forest is the only largely-intact temperate-zone rain forest left on the planet—and the main attraction for the legions of tourists who take Alaskan cruises. For decades our coalition has been fighting to curb the logging of giant old-growth trees in the Tongass, and now a transition to logging younger trees is starting to gather momentum. Our staff is working closely with Pacific Log & Lumber, the U.S. Forest Service, and others to create a pilot project that will demonstrate how restoring damaged parts of the Tongass can improve ecosystem health while creating much-needed jobs for rural communities. Among the beneficiaries would be brown bears, Sitka black-tailed deer, salmon, and bald eagles.

Eleanor Huffines ☎ 907-272-9453
eleanor_huffines@tws.org

in a race against time as development threats loom large. To find out how you can help protect this wilderness, visit www.pawild.org.

Fran Hunt ☎ 202-429-2657
fran_hunt@tws.org