

SHENANDOAH MOUNTAIN



National Scenic Area
(Proposed)

photograph by Brad Striebig

Friends of Shenandoah Mountain

Our Proposal

To designate 90,000 acres of Shenandoah Mountain in the George Washington National Forest as a National Scenic Area with four embedded Wilderness areas. Requiring an act of Congress, legislation supporting this proposal will permanently protect important resources we all value:

- clean water
- healthy outdoor recreation
- wildlife habitat
- our cultural heritage
- our vibrant tourism-based economy

Mining, drilling (including fracking for gas), pipelines, and other destructive development will be permanently prohibited.

“I would die a happy man knowing my grandchildren and yours will have a chance to experience the beauty of this area of the forest, as I have.”

—Bob Cramer, Professional Fly Fishing Guide, Clover Hill

“This proposal will ensure years of quality hunting to our community!”

—Peter Barlow, Outdoorsman, Harrisonburg

photograph by Lynn Cameron

Passing on the Legacy

The Old Dominion is blessed with a rich natural heritage of majestic forests and rushing mountain streams. Shenandoah Mountain is one of the largest tracts of unfragmented wild land, not only in Virginia, but in the whole Eastern United States. Drawn by its breathtaking scenery, abundant wildlife, and solitude, generations of families from the Shenandoah Valley have hunted, fished and camped there.

That is why Friends of Shenandoah Mountain have come together. We are friends, neighbors, hunters, fishermen, local business owners, people of faith, nearby landowners, and folks who have, over the years, enjoyed this special place. Our goal is to act as good stewards and pass on this legacy to our children and grandchildren.

“Scenic recreational lands are one of the most important assets in attracting visitors to our region. Designating Shenandoah Mountain as National Scenic Area and Wilderness will greatly enhance the Valley’s tourism economy.”

—Shenandoah Valley Travel Association

photograph by Brad Striebig

Why Support the Shenandoah Mountain Proposal?

As a National Scenic Area, Shenandoah Mountain will be permanently protected in its current state as one of the wildest, most scenic parts of Virginia. A National Scenic Area will also support:

- **RECREATION** People can hunt, fish, hike, camp, canoe, picnic, backpack, view wildflowers, birds and other wildlife, ride horses, go rock-climbing, lead educational outings, drive on roads, and ride mountain bikes on designated trails.
- **TOURISM** The George Washington National Forest is one of the top ten most visited national forests in the nation. The Forest Service estimates that visitors to Virginia's national forests spend about \$1.4 billion annually for mostly local businesses and services. The Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area will draw even more visitors to the Shenandoah Valley.
- **WATER** Almost 4 million people—in Harrisonburg and Staunton, and in communities farther downstream—get their drinking water from rivers and streams that begin on the George Washington. Protecting these watersheds benefits people in a variety of ways.
- **NO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT** The Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area and Wilderness areas will not be available for gas development by fracking or other commercial development.

“I applaud Friends of Shenandoah Mountain for doing the work of good trustees of God’s universe and working hard to protect Shenandoah Mountain and the multitude of life forms it supports.”

—Phil Kniss, Pastor, Park View Mennonite Church, Harrisonburg



David Wendelken



Brad Striebig



Steven David Johnson



Brad Striebig

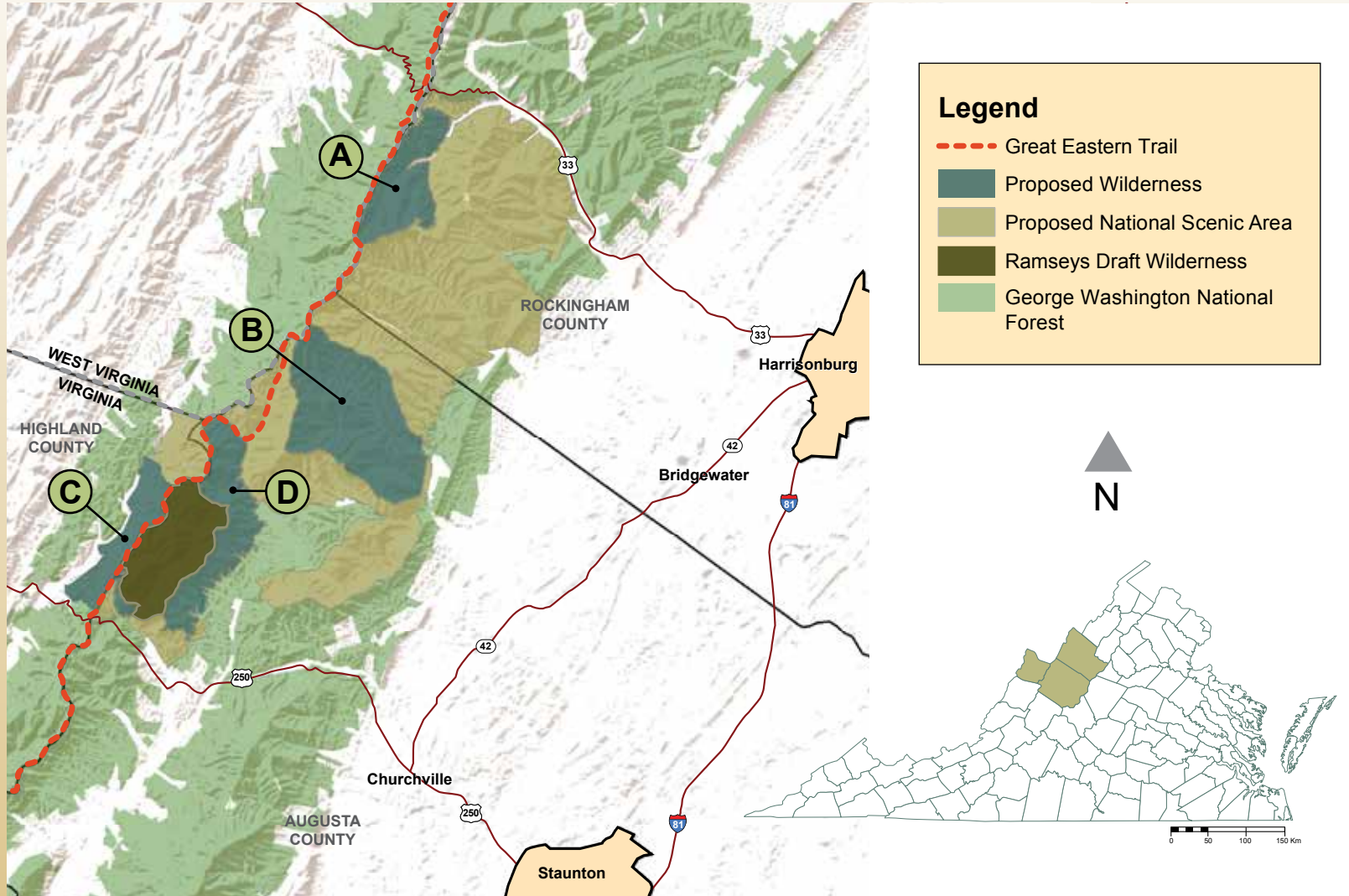


Lynn Cameron



Bill Lea

Shenandoah Mountain Proposal



- **Roads:** Current roads will remain open for access.
- **Inholdings:** Owners of private inholdings within the National Scenic and Wilderness areas will retain all their rights.

WHAT IS A National Scenic Area?

An area of public land established by Congress to protect its scenic, cultural, historic, recreational, and natural resources. Compatible uses include hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. Public roads remain open. Industrial development, such as fracking for gas, is not allowed.



Brad Striebig

WHAT IS A Wilderness Area?

Established by Congress, this is the highest protection for our public lands. Hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, and horseback riding are allowed in Wilderness. To preserve the land's wild nature and the kind of solitude only true wilderness can offer, roads, permanent structures, logging, mining, fracking, motor vehicles, and mechanized vehicles, including mountain bikes, are not allowed.

Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area

ROCKINGHAM, AUGUSTA, AND HIGHLAND COUNTIES—90,000 ACRES

Shenandoah Mountain's long, rolling ridgeline provides the celebrated western backdrop of the Shenandoah Valley. With 10 peaks, including Reddish Knob, rising above 4,000 feet, it offers some of the most spectacular vistas in Virginia. The 90,000-acre tract between Rt. 250 and Rt. 33 is one of the largest remaining expanses of undisturbed forestland in the Southern Appalachians and is a haven for black bear, deer, wild turkey, grouse, native brook trout, and some 250 species of birds. A network of 150 miles of trails offers some of the best hiking and mountain biking in the East.

The mountain's eastern flank forms a divide for the headwaters of the historic Shenandoah, Potomac, and James Rivers. Cold, clear streams, including North River, Ramseys Draft, Calpasture River, Briery Branch, Hone Quarry Run, Skidmore Fork and other tributaries of the Dry River support native trout and provide clean drinking water for Harrisonburg, Staunton, and other Valley towns.

Shenandoah Mountain has important cultural and historic landmarks, among them High Knob Fire Tower (constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps and WWI veterans), Reddish Knob, Hone Quarry, Todd Lake, Confederate Breastworks, North River Gorge, North River CCC Camp (now a campground), and Camp Todd.

Shenandoah Mountain has been identified as a "Biodiversity Hotspot" by The Nature Conservancy and an "Outstanding Ecological Core" by the Virginia Natural Heritage Program. It has some of the darkest skies on the eastern seaboard, making it a popular place for viewing the starry night sky.

Within the proposed Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area are four remote wild areas that deserve Wilderness designation.



Lynn Cameron



Skidmore Fork Wilderness

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY—5,300 ACRES

Hikers and bikers who climb to the top of the historic High Knob Fire Tower enjoy a sublime view of the entire Skidmore Fork watershed, which includes 1,400 acres of rare old-growth forest and provides much of Harrisonburg's drinking water. The popular Dry River trout stream at Rawley Springs is fed by cold water from Skidmore Fork.

Wilderness designation will safeguard the municipal water supply and protect one of the best trout streams in the region by prohibiting fracking, logging and road building. It will also minimize the impacts of floods on Switzer Dam and the city's reservoir. Existing access roads will remain open for hunters and other forest users.



Little River Wilderness

AUGUSTA COUNTY—12,600 ACRES

One of the most remote and pristine places in Virginia, Little River is the heart of the Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area. It ranges from 1,600 to over 4,000 feet in elevation, with Reddish Knob as the highest point. For generations, local residents and tourists have come to hunt, picnic, camp, hike, watch birds (including eagles and peregrine falcons), and simply enjoy the panoramic view. Access roads will remain open under the proposal.

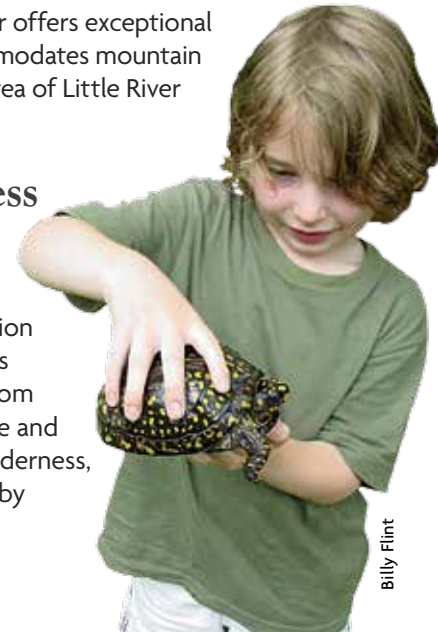
The extensive trail network in and around Little River offers exceptional backcountry hiking and camping. The proposal accommodates mountain biking on surrounding trails while holding the core area of Little River and Middle Mountain for non-mechanized use.



Lynn Hollow Wilderness

HIGHLAND COUNTY—3,400 ACRES

Located on the western slope of Shenandoah Mountain, Lynn Hollow is a popular birding destination with spectacular views of Allegheny Mountain ridges receding far into the western horizon. Accessible from Rt. 250 and Forest Road 95, it is exceptionally remote and undisturbed. In conjunction with Ramseys Draft Wilderness, it will create an impressive wild area separated only by Shenandoah Mountain Trail.



Billy Flint

D Bald Ridge Addition to Ramseys Draft Wilderness

AUGUSTA COUNTY—6,000 ACRES

This area runs from the crest of Bald Ridge down to 2,600 feet, and to the north extends to the popular camping spots along North River. Easily accessible for hunters and other forest users from Camp Todd and Braley Pond, the area includes several scenic peaks and Dividing Ridge, which, as its name suggests, divides the headwaters for the Shenandoah and Potomac, on the north side, and the James on its south side. Horseback riders and hikers have long enjoyed the trails and scenic beauty of this area with spectacular views from Big Bald Knob.



David Wendelken

Forest Service Recommendation

The 2014 George Washington National Forest management plan recommends a 90,000-acre Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area for Congressional designation with similar boundaries to our Proposal, but with less Wilderness within. Congress has final authority over boundaries and designations, which would be refined through consultation with the Forest Service and other stakeholders.

Fire Control

Congress has directed the Forest Service to use any means necessary to control wild fires to protect public health and safety. Chain saws, helicopters, bulldozers, and other aggressive methods are permitted on all Forest Service lands when necessary. Prescribed burning may be used to reduce unnatural fuel build-up.

Making it Happen

Through more than a decade of sustained, collaborative effort involving many people with varying interests, Friends of Shenandoah Mountain has developed the Shenandoah Mountain Proposal and gained support from hundreds of businesses, organizations, and faith groups.

- American Shakespeare Center
- Augusta and Rockingham Bird Clubs
- Back Country Horsemen of Virginia
- Bear Conservation
- Buckhorn Inn
- Bridgewater and Weyers Cave Ruritans
- Byers Street Bistro
- Cowpasture River Preservation Association
- Cranberry's Grocery & Eatery
- Creation Care groups, Harrisonburg and Park View Mennonite Churches
- Cross Keys Vineyards
- Fisher Auto Parts
- Friends of the Middle River
- Great Eastern Trail Association
- Hank's Bar & Grille
- Highlanders for Responsible Development
- Home Owners Assn. of the Highlands of Rawley Springs
- International Mountain Bicycling Association
- Jake's Convenience Store
- JMU John C. Wells Planetarium
- Military Officers Assn. of America (Central Shen. Valley Chapter)
- Mossy Creek Fly Fishing
- Mountain Valley Preservation Alliance
- National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association (NARFE) Chapter 164
- National Wildlife Federation
- Pampered Palate Café
- Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
- Rockfish Gap Outfitters
- Scenic Virginia and Scenic America
- Shenandoah River Outfitters
- Shenandoah Riverkeeper
- Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition
- Shenandoah Valley Travel Association
- Sherrie Good Design
- Sierra Club—Virginia Chapter
- Sigora Solar
- Staunton-Augusta Isaac Walton League of America
- Staunton Steam Laundry
- Trinity and Mt. Horeb Presbyterian Churches
- Union Station Restaurant
- Valley Conservation Council
- Virginia Chapter of the Intl. Dark Sky Association
- Virginia Conservation Network
- Virginia Interfaith Power & Light
- Virginia Native Plant Society
- Virginia Society of Ornithology
- Virginia Wilderness Committee
- Walkabout Outfitter
- White's Wayside
- Wilderness Adventures
- The Wilderness Society

See full list of supporters at www.friendsfshenandoahmountain.org



Steve Wise



Kyle Lawrence



Brad Striebig



Nancy Sorrells



Brad Striebig



Lynn Cameron



YOU can help!

Friends of Shenandoah Mountain is a coalition of businesses, individuals, faith groups, hunters, fishermen, conservationists, hikers, mountain bikers and other forest stakeholders who are working together to protect this special place. With your help, we can ensure that Shenandoah Mountain remains wild for generations to come. Join our growing list of supporters at www.friendsofshenandoahmountain.org

photograph by Jim Waite

www.friendsofshenandoahmountain.org