



SHENANDOAH MOUNTAIN

National Scenic Area
(introduced in the U.S. Senate in March 2022)

photograph by Brad Striebig

Friends of Shenandoah Mountain

The Shenandoah Mountain Act of 2022

On March 23, 2022, Virginia's senators introduced the Shenandoah Mountain Act of 2022 (S.3911) in the United States Senate. The bill would designate over 92,000 acres of Shenandoah Mountain in the George Washington National Forest as a National Scenic Area with four embedded Wilderness Areas and 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

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.

“The establishment of this National Scenic Area will help us share the gifts of Shenandoah Mountain and the George Washington National Forest with visitors from near and far, while also boosting our local economies, protecting drinking water sources, and preserving the wildlife that make this area so special.”

—Senator Tim Kaine



Why Support the Shenandoah Mountain Act of 2022?

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

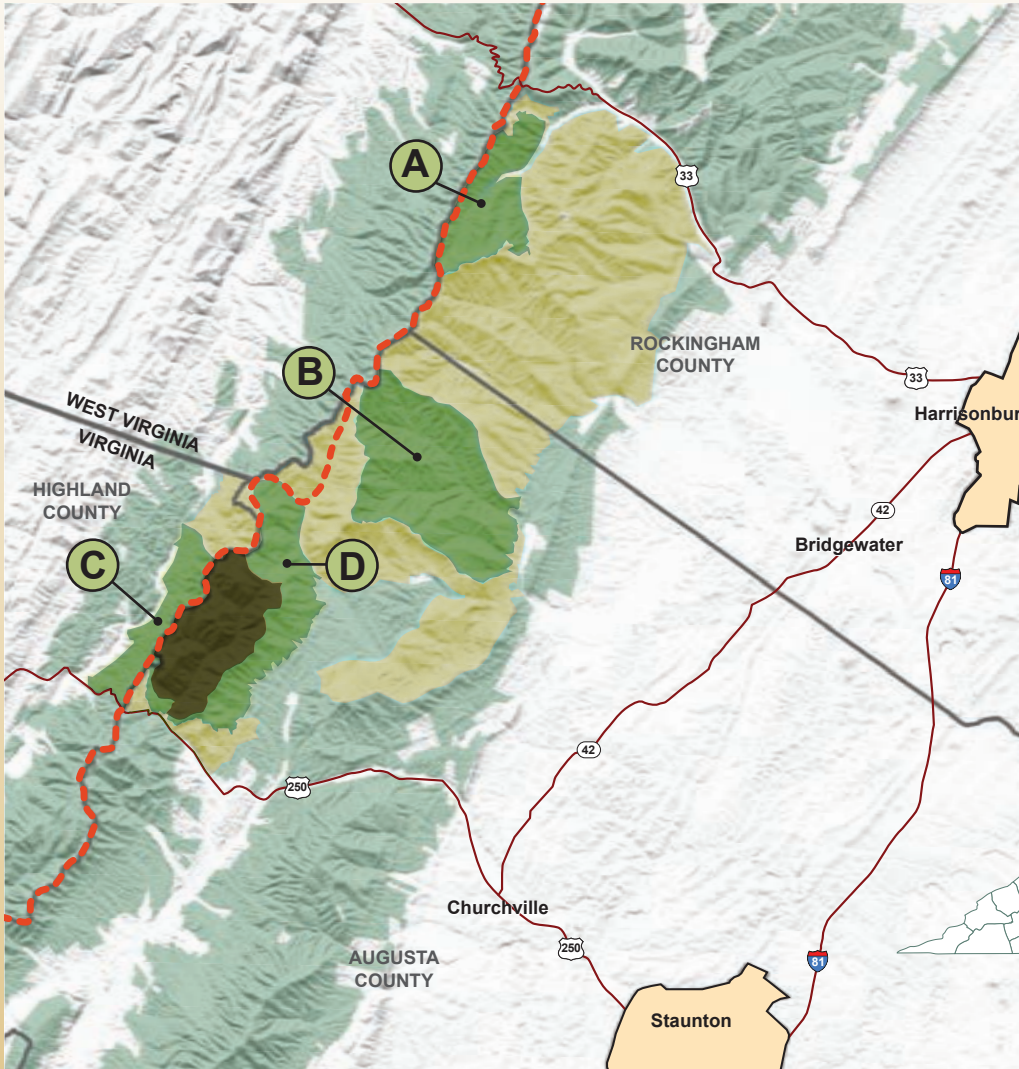


Lynn Cameron







Bill Lea

Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area

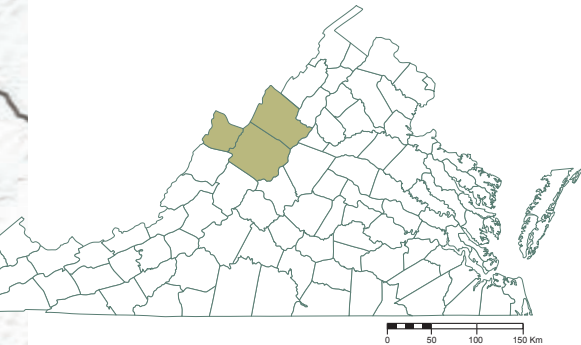


- **Roads:** Current roads will remain open for access.
- **Inholdings:** Owners of private inholdings within the National Scenic and Wilderness areas will retain all their rights.

Legend

- Great Eastern Trail
-  New Wilderness
-  National Scenic Area
-  Ramseys Draft Wilderness (existing)
-  George Washington National Forest

See detailed map and take a Virtual Tour at www.friendsofshenandoahmountain.org



- **Fire Control:** The Forest Service can use any means necessary to control wildfires to protect public health and safety.

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 Strebbig

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—92,449 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, Calfpasture 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—5,079 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—12,461 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 accomodates 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—3,574 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



Ramseys Draft Addition

AUGUSTA COUNTY—6,973 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 recommended a national scenic area on Shenandoah Mountain.

“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



Steve Wise



Kyle Lawrence



Brad Striebig

Supporters

Local governments for Augusta and Rockingham Counties and the cities of Staunton and Harrisonburg have passed resolutions supporting the Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area, and over 400 local businesses, organizations, and faith groups have endorsed it.

- Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley
- American Shakespeare Center
- Audubon Naturalist Society
- Augusta, Rockingham and Bath Highland Bird Clubs
- B & S Contracting
- Back Country Horsemen of Virginia
- Bear Conservation
- Big Fish Cider
- Bridgewater, Bolar and Weyers Cave Ruritans
- Cowpasture River Preservation Association
- Creation Care groups, Harrisonburg and Park View Mennonite Churches
- Cross Keys Vineyards
- Dayton Tavern
- Factory Antique Mall
- Farm Choice Country Stores
- Fisher Auto Parts
- The Frazier Quarry
- Friends of the Middle River
- Friends of the North Fork of the Shenandoah River
- Great Eastern Trail Association
- Harrisonburg Downtown Renaissance
- High's Restaurant
- Highlanders for Responsible Development
- Highland Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Council
- Highlands of Rawley Home Owners Assn.
- International Mountain Bicycling Association
- Massanutten Trout Unlimited
- Mid Valley Press
- Mossy Creek Fly Fishing
- Mountain View General Store
- National Wildlife Federation
- North River Country Store
- Pale Fire Brewing
- Potomac Appalachian Trail Club
- Rockfish Gap Outfitters
- Scenic Virginia and Scenic America
- Shenandoah Valley Beekeepers Association
- Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition
- Shenandoah Valley Travel Association
- Sierra Club—Virginia Chapter
- Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards (SAWS)
- Staunton-Augusta Isaac Walton League of America
- Stokesville Market
- The Steel Wheels
- Trinity and Mt. Horeb Presbyterian Churches
- 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 Adventure
- Wildlife Center of Virginia
- The Wilderness Society

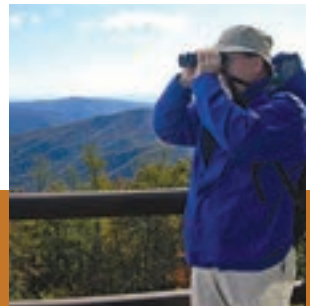
(See full list of supporters at www.friendsofshenandoahmountain.org)



Nancy Sorrells



Brad Striebig



Lynn Cameron



YOU can help!

The introduction of the Shenandoah Mountain Act of 2022 in the United States Senate was a huge milestone! Now the Senate and House of Representatives need to make it a priority to pass this bill as quickly as possible to ensure that Shenandoah Mountain remains wild for generations to come. Learn more about how you can help at www.friendsofshenandoahmountain.org

photograph by Jim Waite

www.friendsofshenandoahmountain.org