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To: FAN Network
Subject: Appalachian Mountains FAN Update

Forest Action Network Appalachians Update

Youth Needed for PA Drummers Program

The PA Drummers program, a field school focused on the management and ecology of ruffed grouse and American woodcock is seeking applicants. The Drummers program, being held June 22-26 in Ligonier, PA, is part of the Wildlife Leadership Institute administered by the PA Institute for Conservation Education. RGS will play a heavy role in instruction of the Drummers program. Drummers is open to youth 14-17 years-old. The cost of the program is \$400, but there is significant scholarship money available to anyone interested. Please contact Mark Banker, Senior Biologist, 814-867-7946 or rgsbank@comcast.net for more information. This is an outstanding program emphasizing not only the conservation of our only two native upland small game birds, but also leadership and communication skills. The program is modeled after extremely successful quail and deer programs in Texas and PA Bucktails, which is a similar camp for deer that has been a tremendous success the last two years.

UPDATES

Cooperative Agreement with CONSOL Energy Signed

For almost a year, RGS has worked with CONSOL Energy of Pittsburgh to develop a cooperative agreement to manage 7,000 acres of CONSOL's timber lands in southwestern PA. That agreement has finally been signed and work should get underway this spring. RGS will work through a consulting forester to manage the forests for grouse, woodcock and other wildlife and with local chapters to further enhance the habitat and promote the program.

Third Timber Sale

Appalachian Forest Consultants will soon be accepting bids on behalf of RGS for a third timber sale on the Forbes State Forest timber tract (Somerset County, PA) managed by

the Society. This sale will be 90 acres and will bring the total acreage of timber managed to 240 acres. Unusually deep snow has delayed the bid process because it has been impossible to show the timber to potential bidders. That should change very soon.

Christmas Bash for Conservation at the Governor's House

On December 23, my wife and I had the unusual opportunity to attend a Christmas party at the home of Ohio Governor Ted Strickland. The party was organized and hosted by the Ohio Division of Wildlife, but Governor Strickland was very much the life of the party. My wife and I fretted over our attire and ended up going semi-formal, but the Governor was dressed in blue jeans and a sweater, looking much more like a Conservationist than we did. We were also very much surprised by the approximately 350 other representatives of conservation groups in attendance. We had no idea there were so many non-profit conservation groups in Ohio. The Governor looked comfortable singing with the band as well as posing for dozens of pictures with the attendees. We were impressed by Gov. Strickland and the many folks with ODOW who helped out. Many thanks to the Division and the Governor for a nice time.

Eastern Sports and Outdoor Show Attendees Chime In

It was a rough week for the annual Eastern Sports and Outdoor Show in Harrisburg, PA, which ended last Sunday (14th). The show opened on Feb 6 to one of the worst snowstorms in history, then got hit mid-week with another show-stopper that closed most major roads leading to the event. Finally, the Show itself closed for a day, despite its website that vowed "the show will go on despite the weather". Approximately half of the 25 RGS booth volunteers hailing from 3 different states were unable to make it. Too bad for them, because they missed the "annual report" from grouse hunters which tends to vary wildly and somewhat amusingly. To make a long story short, we present the

Top Ten Things Heard at the RGS Booth (really):

10. I couldn't find a woodcock this year.
9. I had no trouble finding woodcock this year.
8. I have a lot more grouse on my property in Virginia this year
7. I have not seen a grouse on my property (in the same part of) Virginia in 10 yrs.
6. I had a great year in upstate New York this year (several times).
5. I had a terrible year in upstate New York this year (several times)
4. The grouse hunting is terrible in western Maryland
3. The grouse hunting is really good in western Maryland
2. I can't find any grouse in Pennsylvania (several times).
1. I had very good hunting in Pennsylvania this year (many times).

******National Raffle******

Baby Frame 28-Gauge Shotgun
Made Famous by Winchester
(approx. retail value \$32,000)

28 inch barrels

Improved cylinder/Modified chokes

Straight English Stock, Walnut

Beavertail forend

Gold RGS Logo Engraving on bottom of receiver

Visit www.ruffedgrousesociety.org to order tickets or see a picture (it's a beauty) of this one-of-a-kind shotgun or contact any RGS staff person

Some Spring Banquets and Events

March 13 – Carlisle, PA/Clarksburg, WV/Johnson City, TN – Banquets

March 20 – Cinci, OH/Franklin, PA/Knoxville, TN/State College, PA - Banquets

March 27 – Meadville, PA – Banquet
Richmond VA Chapter – Woodcock Educational Field Day

April 3 – Reading, PA – Field Day

April 9 – Pittsburgh, PA – Banquet

April 22 – Media, PA – Banquet

Parting Shot...

EarthFirst! Goes on the Offensive – A Classic Case of Being Clueless

We just received this press release at RGS. EarthFirst! has decided to attack a run-of-the-mill timber sale near Asheville, NC that RGS has supported. In a nutshell, EarthFirst!'s "concerns" are completely out of context for western NC. See story below.

Earth First! says Forest Service Is Furthering Climate Change

USFS tries to sell off ancient trees in the Globe Forest

Asheville, North Carolina – Today protesters gathered outside of the U.S. Forest Service Supervisor's Office to demand the cancellation of the planned Globe Forest Timber Sale. The timber sale, which is part of the Pisgah National Forest, is planned for as early as June and will result in cutting over 200 acres of mature forests. About 1800 people from the Blowing Rock community appealed to the Forest Service to cancel the timber sale, but their requests were disregarded last year. Forty acres of the Globe Management Project Area has been documented as old growth, and some trees have been determined to be up to 300 years-old by conservation groups.

Activists from Earth First!, say the sale will negatively impact water and soil quality, harm fish populations, further climate change, and destroy nesting and breeding sites for migratory songbirds. Earth First! wants a hands-off policy of all old growth forests in North Carolina, because so little of it remains intact. "Mature forests are vital to slowing the process of climate change by consuming the carbon dioxide emitted by millions of cars," says one Earth First! demonstrator. "Unfortunately, most of the South's forests have been destroyed or converted to pine plantations, which are 95% less biologically diverse than mature forests." "In a time where ecosystems are being threatened with mass extinctions of plants and animals, it is more important now than ever to preserve any old growth forests that still exist," said protester Jennifer Simms.

Ironically, the Forest Service uses the excuse of creating wildlife habitat to justify cutting down healthy, mature forests, claiming that they are creating habitat for game species such as turkey, deer, and bear. Environmentalists say the majority of North Carolina's forests are already "early successional habitat" (or young forests), and that on private lands surrounding the Pisgah, game species do flourish. Environmental experts have also disagreed with the Forest Service's claims, saying that what many animals need, such as bears and songbirds, are mature forests which have already become increasingly rare. The forest service expects to make a profit of \$100,000 by carrying out this sale. The next Earth First! demonstration is planned for Friday March 19th at 1 p.m., also outside the USFS office, they encourage the public to attend and get involved in the campaign to save Globe Forest. For more information see www.savetheglobe.wordpress.com.

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