FLOATING, HIKING AND LEARNING
Nature hikers have fun at the Forks

2019 FLOATING NATURE WALK
The Foundation held its second floating nature walk on Saturday, September 28th. The float was led by Dennis Stottlemyer and Frank Coulter, with backup by Ed Maguire and Diana Green. The group of 16 launched kayaks at the new DNR stream access on Little Coal River at the Corridor G bridge.

The float trip highlighted the state of Coal River today and how things have changed since the mid-20th century. Restoration efforts on Coal River were described by Dennis Stottlemyer, who has been involved with those projects. There was also discussion of how the fish population has begun to rebound, and about what life was like for people who lived on the Forks of Coal prior to the 1960s.

The group turned upstream at the Forks of the river and paddled to where a sunken barge from the days of the locks and dams lies submerged in Big Coal River. The float ended at the Lions Club park area near the site of Lock 4 and everyone was treated to a tailgate lunch before being returned to the Forks of Coal parking lot.

OCTOBER HIKE COMBINES NATURE AND HISTORY WITH DOUG WOOD
Saturday, October 5th was a perfectly beautiful day for a hike through the stately woods at the Forks of Coal. Blue skies and cool morning temperature made for a great start to another memorable hike with renowned local naturalist/historian Doug Wood.

Doug provided an initial history lesson complete with his collection of Native American artifacts before leading a group of enthusiastic hikers into the woods on the Blue Trail.

Along the way he pointed out the differences among the huge trees, and explained how the name for Beech trees came from a word in the German language. He also identified a large, edible fungus at the base of an oak tree (“chicken of the woods”) and shared a lot of interesting Coal River history.

One of the highlights of the hike was seeing Monarch butterflies among the blooming wildflowers that were planted in the wildlife viewing area earlier this summer.

MEMBERSHIPS ARE DUE IN JANUARY. PLEASE START THE NEW YEAR BY RENEWING YOUR MEMBERSHIP. THANK YOU!
**PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE**

**WELCOME, CHRIS BARTLEY!**

They said, “Go west, young man!” And Chris Bartley did just that. He was hired as the new Superintendent at the Forks of Coal State Natural Area and Kanawha State Forest, coming by way of Douthat State Park, Virginia and Watoga State Park in Pocahontas County, WV. Chris served most recently the Park Naturalist at Watoga.

A forester and recreation specialist by education, Chris is also an Eagle Scout. He was hired as the new Superintendent in July and is quickly getting into his new job with energy and plans to complete several major projects in Kanawha State Forest in the next year. One of his first official acts at the Forks of Coal was to assess the tornado damage on the trails and get the trail clearing project started. The trails have now been cleared and all is well at the Forks.

Be sure to welcome Chris as he and his family get settled into their new community.

**Kim McCluskey**

**TRAILS UPDATE**

Thanks to good neighbor and trail user Mark Banyai, the Yellow Trail was cleared within a few weeks of the tornado that hit Alum Creek. Trail clearing continued in September with a major effort by the DNR Maintenance Crew. All trails are now open and new trail signs are being ordered and there is now a bench at what will become the wildlife viewing area at the junction of the Orange and Blue Trails.

**BAT HOUSE RAISING HELD ON OCTOBER 22**

The Girl Scouts of Troop 1839 built and donated two well-constructed bat houses to help create more resting and roosting habitat for the several species of bats that live in the Forks of Coal Area. Bats are beneficial animals that eat huge numbers of flying insects, including mosquitoes.

The bat houses were installed on the edges of the wildlife viewing area between the Blue and Orange Trails near Little Coal River on Tuesday, October 22 along with two additional bat houses donated by Carol Stevens of Alum Creek. The Forks of Coal bat population will now have four resting places to improve their habitat.

Many thanks to Frank Coulter and Greg Stamm for their work to have the bases ready for the posts to hold the bat houses.
FORKS OF COAL: GATEWAY TO THE ELK RESTORATION AREA

Several Forks of Coal Foundation representatives joined with DNR staff and members of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to participate in a special tour of the Elk Restoration Area in Logan County on Sept. 25th. The DNR anticipates using the Claudia L. Workman Wildlife Education Center at the Forks of Coal to serve as a “gateway” to the Elk Restoration Area.

The group met at and departed from the lodge at Chief Logan State Park led by the DNR’s Park Naturalist Lauren Cole. They arrived on a ridge just before sunset and were lucky enough to see several of the wild elk, including some impressive bulls, in the open meadows.

It was a special experience that no one will soon forget. Elk Management Area tours are held seasonally. This year they were held in September and October.

Thanks to the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and the WVDNR for arranging this wonderful opportunity to see wild elk in West Virginia.

RECOGNIZING THOSE WHO SHARE AND SUPPORT OUR MISSION

With sincere gratitude we thank the generous friends and neighbors who have recently provided donations and purchased bricks.

Ed Kessell
Brian Linville
Tommy H. Mullins
Tony and Lydia Politino
Jack and Faye Chafin
Barry Curry
Networkforgood
Leanna and Bret Preston
Brett and Paula Matthews
Mark and Kimberly Banyai
Kenneth and Cyndi Tawney
Steven Grau
Anonymous donors through Networkforgood
Tonya Cooper
Billy and Ella Smutko
Larry and Frances Miller
Mark Banyai
Tom Sims
Wendy Hatfield
Kay Rotz
David Winowich
Emily Hopta and Jack Hoblitzell
Girl Scout Troop 1839
Ian Burdett
Rachel Dash
Todd Schoolcraft
Sara Kell
Greg Adkins

Many thanks for your support!

BRICK SALES CONTINUE!

Buy and Brick - Build a Legacy

You can support the Foundation and the wildlife education center by purchasing a commemorative brick as a gift for Christmas, anniversary, birthday, wedding or any other special occasion.

For more information or to purchase a brick, visit our website at www.forksofcoalfoundation.org or our Facebook page.
The Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation was formed in 2016 to work with the West Virginia DNR to create a wildlife education center, educational programs and conservation area on the 102 acres at the Forks of Coal. The Foundation and the DNR are working together in the development of the center and nature oriented activities and programs which will benefit our local Coal River and Kanawha Valley communities.

We invite you to join us! To learn more, go to Facebook or our website at www.forksofcoalfoundation.org.

Name_________________________________________ Phone Number/E-Mail ___________________

Address______________________________________________________________________________
Street Number   City   State   Zip Code

Amount of Gift ____$25____$35____$50____$100____$250 ____$500____Other

Please make check payable to: Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation
P.O. Box 5556, Charleston, WV 25361 or visit our website and click the “Donate” button.

The Forks of Coal State Natural Area Foundation is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.