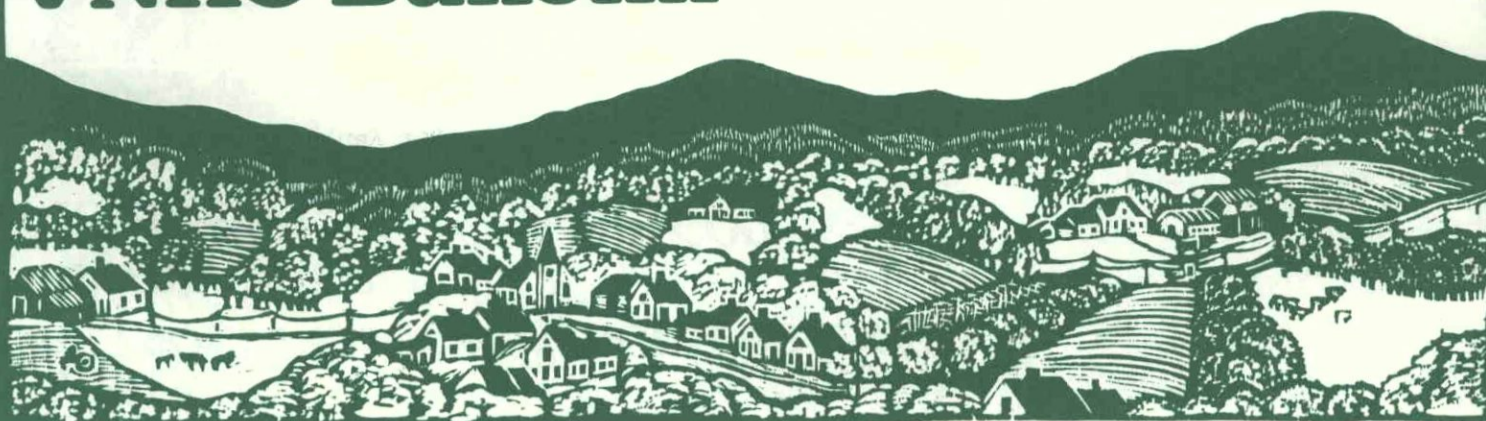


VNRC Bulletin



VERMONT WILDERNESS: TIME TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

The stage has been set and the curtain is about to go up on the third and perhaps final act of the Vermont wilderness saga. Observers on all sides of this issue hope that what happens in the next few months will resolve the status of 65,000 acres of the Green Mountain National Forest first proposed for wilderness designation six years ago. In 1975, Congress created two Vermont wilderness areas -- "Lye Brook" and "Bristol Cliffs" - totaling 17,000 acres. In 1977, four other areas in Vermont's Green Mountain National Forest - "Skylight," "Big Branch," "Lye Brook Addition" and "Yaw Pond Brook" -- were part of the second Roadless Area Review and Evaluation (RARE II), but only two were recommended for "further planning" by the U.S. Forest Service. Subsequent negotiations between friends and foes of wilderness broke down, and the campaign to "Keep One Per Cent Wild" coasted to a halt.

This March, Vermont Senators Stafford and Leahy and Representative Jeffords co-sponsored a bill designating 65,000 acres of additional wilderness. But Vermont's Congressional delegation made it clear that the fate of this bill will depend on public opinion in Vermont.

The first of two public hearings on the wilderness proposal is scheduled for Tuesday May 31st, at the Dana Auditorium on the campus of Middlebury College. The hearing will begin at 3:00 p.m., and will continue until all who wish to speak have had the opportunity to do so. All three members of Vermont's Congressional delegation will be there. If you have strong feelings about this bill or advice to offer on the forestry, wildlife habitat, scientific research, or recreational implications of designating additional wilderness in Vermont, it's very important that you attend this hearing and make plans to testify by calling any one of the delegation's offices

Senator Patrick Leahy (toll free)	1-800-642-3193
Senator Robert Stafford (call collect)	951-6707
Representative James Jeffords (toll free)	1-800-835-5500

The Vermont staffs will pass your name along to Washington and notify you of an approximate time to testify. If you are unable to testify, but have an opinion about additional wilderness designation in Vermont, please call or write members of the delegation and make your views known.