

[Exhibit opening and children's book launch](#)[View this email in your browser](#)

AFHA National Heritage Area Bill Introduced!

After years of hard work, AFHA accomplished a huge step forward this week!

Sen. Jay Rockefeller, with co-sponsors Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia, and Sen. Ben Cardin and Sen. Barbara Mikulski of Maryland, introduced a Senate bill this week to designate the Appalachian Forest Heritage Area as a National Heritage Area. Senate Bill 1641, "West Virginia National Heritage Area Act of 2013" also extends the existing NHAs in West Virginia, the National Coal Heritage Area and Wheeling National Heritage Area, until 2017.

"We are thrilled that our Senators are sponsoring this bill to bring national recognition to the forest heritage of West Virginia and Maryland,"

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National Heritage Area designation will designate the area as nationally significant, and would authorize National Park Service technical assistance and funding. AFHA completed a Feasibility Study several years ago, which was reviewed and approved by the National Park Service as meeting the criteria for a National Heritage Area. Over 120 communities and organizations have provided support letters for this designation.

“Our accomplishments include wide-ranging partnerships, conservation improvements, heritage tourism development, a vibrant AmeriCorps program, and the new Appalachian Forest Discovery Center opening soon in Elkins,” said Baxter. “Our region is rich in natural resources, cultural heritage, and scenic beauty, but often lacking in economic opportunity. National Heritage Area designation will bring national recognition and helpful tools and support to help utilize our forest assets to benefit and improve our rural communities.”

AFHA stakeholders are encouraged to add your support, through a new or renewed support letter from you as an individual, or from your business or organization. Support letters are crucial in getting a companion bill introduced in the House, and encouraging passage of the bills. Send your letter directly to AFHA and we will share it with our representatives. See www.appalachianforest.us/heritagearea.htm for more details.

You can also contact your Senator directly, through their website or by phone, to thank them for sponsoring this bill and to share your support. Contact your Representative to ask them to support a companion bill in the House.

Don't forget, Going on this Weekend:



Exhibit Opening

Come see AFHA's new exhibit, *Discovering the Appalachian Forest*, for the first time! There will be an open house on Friday, November 8th from 4pm - 6pm and on Saturday, November 9th from 10am - 4pm at the [Darden](#)

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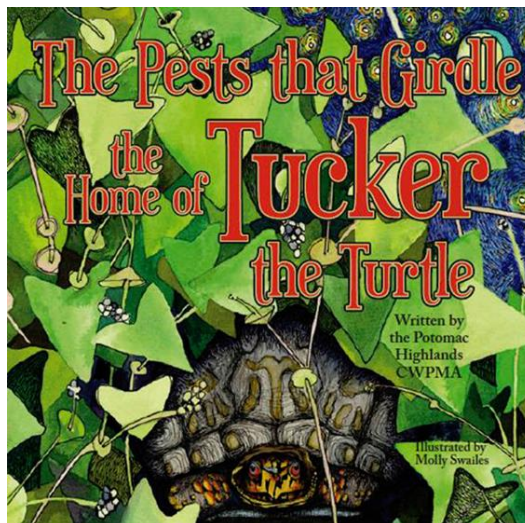
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welcome!

Tucker's Big Bash!

The Pests that Girdle the Home of Tucker the Turtle is a brand new WV children's book and a project of AFHA and the [Potomac Highlands CWPMA](#). The book tells the story of a native turtle and how non-native invasive species are affecting his home. On Saturday, November 9th from 4pm - 6pm at the [Darden Mill](#), Tucker's Big Bash will be a celebration of the release of the book!



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