Appalachian Alternatives

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New Project: Non-Timber Forest Products. ASPI wants to investigate environmentally benign non- timber forest products and is thus seeking funding to explore Virtually Wild Ginseng (see Technical Paper #38) and Native Vermiculture.

Appalachians are panicked by the procession of logging trucks and unsustainable logging practices, the advent of chip mills, mountaintop removal in certain areas, and the ravages of unplanned development. How can we preserve our forest treasure and still offer a livelihood to our people? Some are tempted to describe every profitable forest product but on second thought need to prefer to favor forest products that are good for both environment and pocketbook. Several years ago the great Cherokee medicine person Hawk Littlejohn's refused to assist us in cutting a videotape on Appalachian herbals. He did not fault our intentions, only the inevitable consequences. Viewers with a little knowledge and less ethics would simply decimate the native herbal stock. So we are concentrating on forest products that can be enhanced, protected, sustainably harvested, and easily propagated. Let's establish clear criteria and encourage existing alternative forest product groups such as the Boone Ginseng Cooperative.

Native Vermiculture

Shorts

ASPI as well as the Rockcastle River Rebirth and the Rockcastle County Judge executive were recognized as "Kentucky Watershed Showcase Site" award. Frank Elson, president of the Kentucky Waterways Alliance says he is using this cooperation among regional and local environmental groups with county government as a model so that others will "emulate the successes seen on the Rockcastle River." ASPI's work includes both the annual River Day and the series of talks on forested watersheds given to over 15,000 school children in the past three years.

Than Hitt of the Appalachian Restoration Campaign (ARC) has undertaken an unprecedented ecological assessment of the Central Appalachian forest as a project of Heartwood. If you wish to assist contact him at P.O. BOX 5541 Athens, OH 45701 E-Mail: appalachian@envirolink.org