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11.03.2009 |  44°F

## Looking good

PUBLISHED MON, NOV 02, 2009 05:18 AM  
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The Blue Ridge Parkway, a jewel of our mountains, is a fragile gem indeed. It's vulnerable to scanty funding for maintenance and to disruptions of its scenic views. The former problem is mainly a federal one, but strategic land purchases and conservation easements, supported by generous donors and state agencies, can cut down on development beyond the parkway's narrow right of way.

That's what's happened in a laudable piece of conservation work along the parkway in McDowell County. The 1,500 acres involved, owned by the CSX railroad, will not be built on or logged. Fine views from parkway overlooks will be protected, as will drinking-water streams. And the fledgling Overmountain Victory Trail gets a boost.

The project took several years and \$3.7 million to bring off. Taxpayers, through two state-run trust funds, contributed. So did conservation groups and individuals. All definitely got something for their money. The proof lies between parkway mileposts 325 and 330.



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