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The Burn

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The Burn

After a poem by Galway Kinnell

Years ago I came here
after the lightning burn.
Now I come alone
in search of spruce hens
hidden in the tender growth.
I go deep
into your singed forest
of birch and spruce
whose roots once drank
from the blue waters
of rainbow trout.
And resting on a burnt log
among lupine and larkspur,
I see in the ashes
beside the fireweed
a single wild rose.

John Smelcer

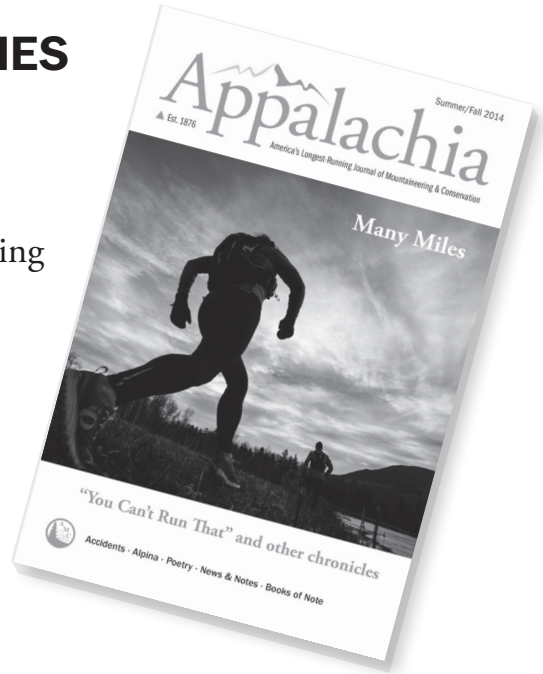
JOHN E. SMELCER, an Alaska Native American, is the author of 40 books, including *Songs from the Outcast* (American Indian Studies Center, UCLA, 2000) and *Without Reservation* (Truman State University Press, 2003). He teaches literature and creative writing at Binghamton University, State University of New York.

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