

The Environmental Bi-Weekly

High Country News

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Friday, August 3, 1973



Off-road vehicle travel takes many forms. And in the West, much of it takes place on public lands. It all leads to growing controversy on the use of the lands.

Photo by F. A. Barnes

Off the Road

by Joan Nice

Outdoor recreationists are finding themselves in a stand-off battle for the land. Where once they fought off developers, miners and timber companies, now they fight each other. Since World War II, some aspects of outdoor recreation have changed dramatically. Millions have gone motorized.

The users of more than five million off-road recreation vehicles (ORRVs) — motorcycles, four-wheel drive vehicles, campers, and snowmobiles — are having difficulty sharing the public lands with advocates of the more traditional forms of outdoor locomotion — hikers, skiers and snowshoers. Industry estimates indicate that the competition for space

will become keener by 1976 when ORRVs will number about 7.75 million.

The conflict rises because the self-propelled say they wish to preserve the quality of their sport, which is dependent upon the quality of the land. They object to the sight, sound, and tracks of the motorized. They suspect that the land may be irreparably damaged.

ORRV TRACKS

Although it seems urgent to divide up pie between all of these land users, it is also essential to assess their impacts. We have photos and eyewitness accounts, but little scientific information.

The Department of the Interior 1971 ORRV Task Force said that although "There is absolutely no question that environmental impairment occurs. . ." there is "a paucity of factual information regarding long-range or irreparable detrimental effects."

We know that the damage potential of a four-wheel drive vehicle is greater than that of any other ORRV. The FWD weighs 2,600 to 3,800 pounds and exerts, depending upon its load, about 10 pounds per square inch. Abundant power in all four wheels increases danger to the terrain due to spinning.

A well-planned ORRV race may have less impact than intensive casual use of ORRVs in

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HIGH COUNTRY

By Jane Bell

Watergate, astringent as it is on the American soul, should be a purgative on other matters. The corrupting influence of money, dispensed liberally by special interests to buy that influence, is a malignancy in the body politic. Add to that the blind, unswerving subservience of seemingly intelligent, capable men to a "duty" above honesty and honor and you have the insidious cancer reaching into the heart of the Republic.

"What has it done to us, and where will it end?" you cry out in torment.

It obviously hasn't ended yet. Stark, naked power was evident in all its manifestations in the halls of Congress last week. Oil money sat in every congressional office in Washington and demanded its tribute. When the vote came on the Alaska pipeline, money had captured the fiefdom. Many honorable men held out but it was the capitulation of other honorable men that we may hold up to light in horror and dismay. The public interest certainly has a place in decisions on the Alaska pipeline, but the public interest was not served by the display of power by the oil companies.

Some of the same kind of power is in evidence on our national forests. The rape of the resources continues in spite of scientific warnings and the pressure of public opinion. The timber industry had its way at the highest levels of government in Washington. And as a result the sustained-yield principle of the national forests is further abrogated. The men who man the forests are under orders to produce an additional ten per cent more timber than was already programmed. It came in spite of the fact that some national forests are already being systematically overcut.

G. M. Brandborg of Hamilton, Montana, points to the Bitterroot Forest as an outstanding example. In a statement to the Environmental Protection Agency (June 16, 1973), he said, "Under the present allowable cut, the high quality timber supplies on the Bitterroot Forest will be completely exhausted in ten years or less. This opinion is based on the judgement of active and retired Forest Service employees, local people, forestry scientists, a former employee associated with the timber industry and my own personal knowledge after serving as Forest Supervisor of the Bitterroot Forest for 20 years." Brandborg retired in 1955.

Where will it end unless there is a literal revolt from within and without? But the revolt must emanate from us who have the vote. We need to write our congressional delegations and tell them we have had enough. We need to tell them to issue proclamations of protection for any government employees who will say no when they know that improper practices are threatening natural resources. The national forests would be a good place to start.

The climate of fear and paranoia so evident in Watergate should not be allowed to happen to the men of the Forest Service. Observers from outside say morale of the Service generally is at rock bottom. The reason may well be that many dedicated public servants are being forced to do what their conscience and their training tells them is wrong. A clear indication of that surfaced in Washington in April. Forest Service Chief John McGuire sent a memorandum out to the field men. His memo said: "At a staff meeting yesterday, Secretary (of Agriculture) Butz spoke with extreme force on the need for 'team players' in the current budget-manpower 'crunch.' (Butz said) 'There is no room for others.' The comment was triggered by the allegation that below the agency head level there was active opposition and/or nonsupport of the administration position on funding reserves and constraints." The implication was clear, play ball with the politicians or heads would roll.

Write your senators and representatives and tell them this is unconscionable. That we cannot tolerate the abuse and misuse of our natural resources by special political interests, and the prostitution of honorable men. Ask them if they would not offer assurances of help to any Forest Service employees who will step forward and protest what is happening on the land. This is not an outrageous request. Laws passed by Congress mandate that sustained yield must be the guiding principle on national forests. If the law is being subverted it can no more be condoned than the misdeeds of Watergate.

Let this be a purging of the evils of all forms of Watergateism.



The Multiple Use-Sustained Yield Act requires that the national forests be managed so as to provide a constant flow of renewable resources. Many reliable observers of the Bitterroot Forest in Montana (above) and other forests across the West maintain the Act is being violated. Wyoming Sen. Gale McGee toured the Bitterroot in 1971 and came away saying, "... it was a horrifying experience." The overcutting still goes on.

Letters

Dear Mr. Bell,

While I was pleased to find the Idaho League of Voters featured in the July 6 issue of the *High Country News*, in the interest of accuracy I must clarify the League's position in relation to the matter of minimum stream flows. I assume your information was taken from Mindy Cameron's article in the June 20 issue of the *Idaho Statesman*. Although you have quoted correctly statements which I made as a panelist at a seminar on Ecology, the Law and Public Policy, there has been no official decision made on the part of the Idaho League to launch an initiative drive. Often, I believe, in the give and take of a panel discussion an organization's strongly held opinions are translated into official positions. In this particular case we also believe the issue of assuring viable minimum flows for Idaho's streams is a much bigger and more important job than should be tackled by any one organization.

I am happy to say that there is a growing movement to try the initiative route, started in northern Idaho by Scott Reed, with the clear understanding that in order to be successful it must involve many organizations throughout the state. Thus far the Idaho Wildlife Federation is the only one to have come out in official support of an initiative to establish minimum stream flows. After our mid-August state board meeting I am confident the League can be added to what I hope will be a growing list.

I thoroughly enjoy your paper and applaud the service you provide to western environmentalists. If at any time I can be of service in giving you information from the Idaho League I would be most happy to do so.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Doli Obee
Environmental Quality Chairman
League of Women Voters of Idaho
Boise, Idaho

Dear Tom:

Next to your splendid editorial (July 6) regarding the importance of national perspective on wilderness and land use decisions, rather than relying solely on local planning where special economic interests tend to prevail, I see a Letter-to-the-Editor from a resident of Rhode Island that pin-points the issue: the need for a National Wildlife Refuge for the Tule Elk in California, more than 3000 miles from Rhode Island.

Fortunately, people everywhere are beginning to realize that the nation's Public Lands are a precious heritage that belongs equally to all Americans now living or ever to be born. And from Rhode Island to Hawaii, from Florida to Maine, and Texas to Wyoming, they want a goodly heritage of wild lands for wildlife set aside NOW, while we can.

With such as *High Country News* and the people who care enough to support it and the good earth for which it eloquently pleads, we CAN "develop a new set of values in which progress will be wedded to a commitment to environmental quality."

Cheers!
Beula Edmiston
Los Angeles, California

Dear Tom:

A correction probably should be made concerning the news item in your July 6th issue of *High Country News*, concerning funding of the Dallas. You may run this as a letter to the editor.

The Dallas Project was one of five Bureau of Reclamation projects in Colorado which were authorized by Congress in 1968, to be completed with the Central Arizona Project. For years, there has been considerable opposition to the Dallas dam and reservoir, but it built dramatically when we learned of the changes being made for allocations of the water, most startling of which was an option

Guest Editorial

Why the Delay?

Reprinted from the LOS ANGELES TIMES
Dec. 8, 1972.

Recent controversy over motorcycle races in the California desert points up the need for early action on President Nixon's executive order calling for a uniform policy for all federal agencies covering the more than 5 million off-the-road vehicles now in use in the United States.

That order was signed 10 months ago, but the regulations are still being studied by the Office of Management and Budget. The result and confusion as to ground rules promulgated by the various agencies having jurisdiction over public lands.

Why the delay? One reason may be the tremendous pressures being generated both by recreation vehicle organizations and conservationists. Some vehicle groups apparently feel that they should not be restricted in any way in the use of public lands. Conservationists, on the other hand, opt for stringent regulations. Thus, as one Department of Interior official noted, "it's a hot, very hot potato."

There should be a middle ground. Obviously,



our water district had secretly granted to Kemmerer Coal Company for 24,000 acre-feet of water to allow a planned large coal plant to be built in our valley in Ouray County. The battle raged all the way to Washington, and those opposing the Dallas were pleased when the House Appropriations Committee denied any funding for fiscal 1974 for the project. However, it is still possible that funding may go through if the Senate Appropriations Committee approves it, and can swing enough weight for it. This would provide "start money" for the project, which is in final planning stages now.

In other words, it's still a cliffhanger. We haven't won the battle yet — just one of the skirmishes. The suspense is awful, but we have hope that another strong look will be taken at the real reasons (we think there are no valid ones) for construction of the Dallas before it goes any farther.

Keep up your good work. We're being pinched by the newsprint shortage, too, but wonder why (if, in fact, it is a true shortage and not a contrived one) more is not being done toward use of recycled newsprint, or simply recycling of paper generally. I'm told the crisis surpasses that of World War II, but in that era we were recycling paper and had collection points in every hamlet in the nation.

Best regards,
Joyce Jorgensen, Editor
Ouray County Plaindealer
Ouray, Colorado.



"Recreational development is a job not of building roads into lovely country, but of building receptivity into the still unlovely human mind."

— Aldo Leopold, Sand County Almanac



recreation vehicles must not be allowed to tear up rich archaeological grounds, as Bureau of Land Management officials fear will be the case. Nor should they be permitted to create noise pollution and other nuisances. Yet there obviously are areas in the vast desert where they could be allowed to operate without detriment to the ecology or annoyance to others.

Unfortunately, the Bureau of Land Management does not presently have either the money or the manpower to delineate such areas. In fact, it does not have enough manpower to police adequately the 150 million acres under its jurisdiction. Its staff includes only a dozen desert rangers and two archaeologists. The district attorney of Imperial County points out that the bureau lacks power to enforce even its present regulations and has no authority to provide money to counties to assist in the enforcement.

Regardless of the outcome of a pending test case on bureau powers, there is need to expedite implementation of the executive order for a uniform regulatory policy.

Rival pressure groups should not be allowed to stall the Washington bureaucracy on dead center. It may be necessary for Congress to step in with remedial legislation. At the very least, the Bureau of Land Management should



be given manpower and money so that it, with other agencies controlling public land, can protect that land while assuring a balance in its recreational use. The public land belongs to all Americans, and its use should take this into account.

Editorial

Oil, Oil Everywhere

There is an oil spill on Capitol Hill. The oil industry's coffers are spilling over into every congressional palm that needs a little greasing. The occasion is the showdown on the trans-Alaska pipeline.

Congress is not the only power that has capitulated to the influence of oil. The State Department is caught in the spill as well. In the aftermath of the Senate vote, which blessed the pipeline and crucified the National Environmental Policy Act, a dirty deal or two came to light as the oil subsided.

Foremost was the misrepresentation of the Canadian government's position by the State Department. The Department cabled the Canadians asking what their current assessment of the Canadian pipeline alternative was. The response was cabled back to the State Department, but the reply was never forwarded to the Senate. When Sen. Birch Bayh threatened to delay floor action on a pipeline amendment the Department revealed a response, but the response was doctored by omission.

By phone and letter, the Canadians told the State Department that they did not require 51 percent ownership in a Canadian pipeline, as indicated in their original statement. This information was withheld from the Congress until after the Senate vote which would have required further study of the Canadian route.

Another Canadian position that appears to be disregarded in Washington is their opposition to shipping Alaskan oil through Canadian waters. Acting Prime Minister Mitchell Sharp announced last week, "Canada has just begun to fight the proposed shipment of Alaskan oil through the waters bordering British Columbia."

According to Earth News Service, "If the pipeline across Alaska is built, oil would have to be shipped from the southern Alaskan port of Valdez through the hazardous Straits of Juan de Fuca to a refinery at Cherry Point, Washington. Canadians are worried about oil spills from these tankers, whose size alone



would increase the likelihood of accidents. Critics point out that the 'stopping distance' for a 200,000 ton super-tanker is two and one half miles — and takes 21 minutes."

The State Department appears to be indifferent to Canadian concern over oil spills in her territorial waters. In the case of Pittston Oil seeking permission to bring super-tankers through Canadian waters to Eastport, Maine, the Canadian authorities said this represented an "unacceptable risk" to the area's valuable fisheries. Despite this extremely strong language, the State Department has not intervened in the hearings nor has it denied Pittston the required permits. Similar disregard for Canadian sovereignty can be expected off the British Columbia coast.

Oil, oil everywhere. But not a drop in Denver. Soon we will have coated the coasts of New Brunswick and British Columbia. After all, a government that is run by oil money can't afford to run short. —BH

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This land in the Red Desert near the Oregon Buttes in Wyoming (above) is part of the 452 million acres of public land managed by the Bureau of Land Management. BLM land has traditionally been open to motor vehicles. Attempts to close certain areas have been met with strong opposition from ORRV groups. Environmentalists have called the status quo "no management at all."

Off the Road . . .

(Continued from page 1)

an area. Races have marked courses on suitable terrain and sanitary facilities are usually provided for racers and onlookers. Casual users ride anywhere and make camp where they please.

ORRV impacts which can be seen on the land are:

- 1) erosion, causing stream siltation, destruction of fish habitat and degradation of trails, streams and stream banks.
- 2) destruction of plant life
- 3) destruction of archeological, scientific, historical and rare natural features of the land.
- 4) disturbance of wildlife

A bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife study found that the presence of snowmobiles increased the movements of deer and rabbits during winter stress periods. Compaction of tunnels and air spaces at the surface of the ground killed ground squirrels, mice and shrews. Changes in soil temperature due to compaction killed micro-organisms in the area.

PEACE AND QUIET

Noise is the major human complaint. The ORRV driver's speed and sound allow him to dominate more than his share of the federal lands. A walker, out for serenity, sky and wildlife might amble for many days and still hear and see motorcyclists.

"People who go to parks and forests go there for peace and quiet and relaxation. These vehicles just are not compatible with that and they never will be," said David Click, Deputy Director of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources.

Although it is no comfort to an escapist user, the Interior Task Force reports that the noise ORRVs produce is no worse than other noises in the modern world. A snowmobile in the woods, they say, is no more disturbing "than the sound of unmuffled powersaws now so prevalent throughout the countryside."

But even if ORRVs were silent, they would be an annoyance to non-users. Their drivers place heavy demands on rescue services. In addition, the problems which appear with rapid growth of any kind of use — litter,

vandalism, and the need for more facilities — are evident. Until we find the money and the men to handle these problems, the public may have to tolerate these impacts.

THE GAP

The human conflict is intense. "ORRVs should be melted down into something useful," one non-user said.

"Conservation values are in direct conflict with values which four-wheel drive clubs cherish: unrestricted mobility, the assault and conquest of remote, difficult terrain, the freedom from established camping and sanitary facilities," said Thomas A. Meacham in an ORRV study funded by the Ford Foundation.

A writer for Cycle News, a newspaper for motorcyclists, reported hostilities on the other side. "Is it really true that the Sierra Club underground agents infiltrate ORV clubs and sabotage routes and machines during ORV competition events?" he asked.

AGENCIES UNPREPARED

Federal land management agencies have ORRV regulations, but the rapid growth in numbers of vehicles has left these institutions unprepared to cope with user demands. Relatively strict regulations have been adopted by the National Park Service, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife and the Department of Defense on its military operations. More liberal use is allowed on land managed by the Bureau of Land Management, the Bureau of Reclamation, the Forest Service and the Corps of Engineers.

In February, 1972, President Nixon issued Executive Order 11644, requiring government agencies to update their policies for ORRV use. He required them to adopt procedures "that will ensure that the use of off-road vehicles on public lands will be controlled and directed so as to protect the resources of those lands, promote safety of all users of those lands, and minimize conflicts among the various users of those lands." Each agency was to complete the new policy statement within six months.

Some ORRV users saw the executive order as a threat to the "public" nature of public

lands. Alfred H. Kramm, chairman of the Western Rockhound Association, suspected the government of "collusion" with the Sierra Club. The executive order had followed the release of formal Sierra Club policy by two days and "was so similar in content to the Sierra Club's tough policy as to suggest collusion at the highest level of government," Kramm said.

DRAFT REGULATIONS

Advocates of tighter ORRV controls have criticized agencies for their hesitancy to implement the order. Now, almost a year and a half after its issuance, neither of the two largest land managing agencies, the Forest Service and the BLM, have their ORRV policy in final form. Both agencies expect to issue regulations by this fall, however.

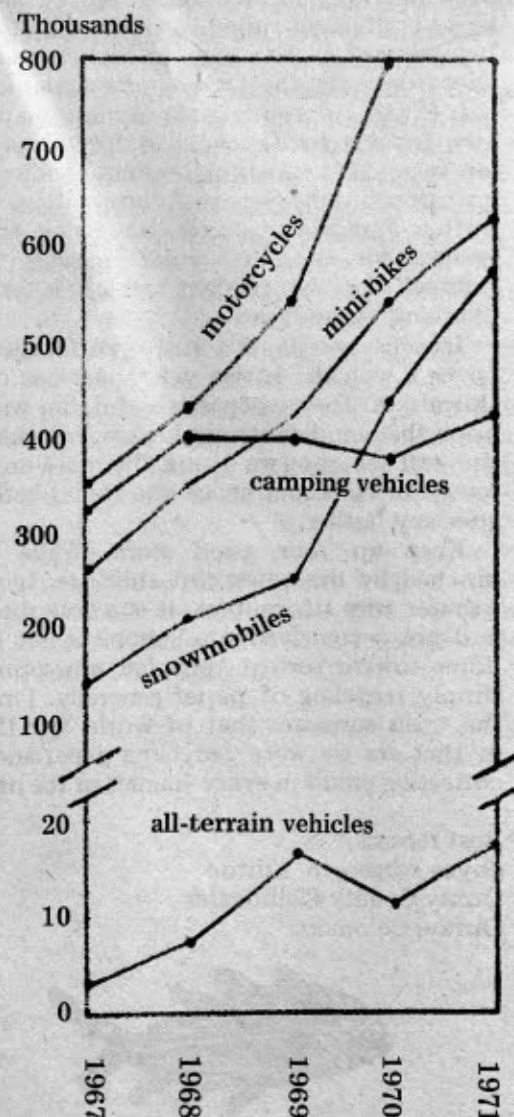
In draft regulations, the BLM declared all of its 452 million acres to be an open zone. Public lands, the regulations state, "shall remain open to off-road vehicle use and are hereby designated as open use areas and trails."

The Forest Service has drafted a similar policy, stating that, "... the use of off-road vehicles is prohibited in areas and trails on National Forest system lands during any period when such areas and trails have been closed to vehicles or certain types of vehicles."

This policy, if adopted, would not basically change present USFS ORRV management policies. Of the 186 million acres of USFS lands, 168 million acres are open for some form of ORRV use. The Forest Service has 72,297 miles of trails open to ORRVs.

A HOLE FOR MINERS

Both BLM and USFS management policies include a large loophole for miners. As USFS draft regulations put it: "Except for use in connection with mining activities under the provisions of the General Mining Act of 1872, the use of off-road vehicles is prohibited. . ."



Recreation Vehicles Manufactured for Sale for Sale in the U.S., 1967-1971

Statistics from Off Road Recreation Vehicles; a Department of Interior Task Force Study, Nov. 1971.

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Friday, Aug. 3, 1973

Off-Road Vehicles

Spokesmen for the Public

by Bruce Hamilton

Doris Milner, president of the Montana Wilderness Association, objected to the mining clause in Forest Service regulations.

"Every ORV with a pick, shovel, pan, bore, etc. is ostensibly engaged in mining activities," Milner said. "It will be virtually impossible for the Forest Service or any other land-managing agency to enforce regulations with such loopholes."

"Your proposed regulations for off-road vehicles are no regulations at all," said Thomas L. Kimball, executive vice-president of the National Wildlife Federation, in response to the BLM draft. "In effect you would make . . . one-fifth of the nation's land an open zone."

Other criticism of the proposed regulations came from some of the ORRV users. Accustomed to freedom on the public lands, they objected to any agency rules which would "control and direct" their sport.

The BLM and the Forest Service's inability to please anybody may reflect the intensity of the ORRV conflicts. It also reflects the agencies' lack of money and manpower. Closing off lands which have become part of the ORRV driver's habits, requires careful inventory — a knowledge of each acre and its best use — and enforcement power. In the Lander, Wyoming, District Office of the BLM, 18 men are expected to cover 2.8 million acres of land, 155,000 acres each. That makes careful inventory a slow process. In addition, the BLM lacks an "organic act" which would give them the power to enforce any closures they make. Thus BLM's draft policy, which states closures may be made later at the local level after inventory and public participation, is easier said than done.

Unfettered by the please-all-of-the-people multiple use doctrine, the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife responded to the executive order with relative speed. In land managed by the BSF&W, motorized vehicles are permitted only in designated areas.

"Prior to the opening of any area for use by off-road vehicles," their policy states, "a study shall be made to determine the effects of such use on habitat in general, recreational values, wildlife and unique physical resources."

Since 1968 at least 29 states have passed legislation relating to registration, operation and safety of ORRVs. Only 17 of the state laws include ORRVs other than snowmobiles. No state has passed legislation about the broader land-use issues.

THE COMMITTEE APPROACH

The California State Advisory Board to the BLM took the lead in recognizing the ORRV problem and in inviting participation from all corners. Motorcyclists, rockhounds, Sierra Club members, Woolgrowers and others met as an Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Council (ORVAC). The group produced a report which is now used as management guidelines by the BLM.

The ORVAC came up with basically an open policy: "The public lands are open to motorized vehicle use except for certain areas that are restricted or closed in order to preserve special public values such as archeological, scenic, biotic or historic sites, to protect certain natural resources such as critical watersheds or newly vegetated areas, to coordinate with other land use and to assure public safety."

Idaho is organizing a similar group to make recommendations for the use of public lands in their state.

"I think we've got the problem licked," said John Taliaferro of the Idaho State Department of Parks and Recreation. "People are sitting down and talking to each other."

Some are not so optimistic about the satisfactions to be gained from the ORVAC approach. Ray Moon, conservation coordinator for the California Association of Four Wheel Drive Clubs, said, "I, too, have talked with the Sierra Club, and have received a sore throat for my efforts."

In a day and age when there are so many public involvement meetings to attend, it's a relief to find a spokesman for the public interest. Some people let Ralph Nader watch out for their interests. Others prefer G. Gordon Liddy or E. Howard Hunt. But I have a special interest. It is in restricting off-road vehicle use. And I need a special spokesman for my views.

The need for a spokesman came to me while I was attending a Wilderness hearing. At the hearing, everyone seemed to claim to be a spokesman. I must admit that I felt a little out of place and impotent just representing myself.

One able-bodied snowmobiler at the hearing thought it was his place to represent all Vietnam veterans without legs who would be excluded from going into the area. He didn't see it fitting to represent the veterans' children who might be denied a wilderness heritage by his testimony.

An overweight professional vacationer who owned a Winnebago (equipped with a trailer full of snowmobiles and a trailbike strapped on the front) came to testify. He claimed to represent the poor people in the ghetto who could not afford to backpack. It would be a crime to financially exclude these citizens from using their wild lands, he contended. I've yet to understand how it takes money to walk, or how a pack can cost more than a deluxe camper.

Spokesmen were also heard who represented crippled children against roadless areas, old men with arthritis in their backs against hiking, and CCAMHF (Conservationists Concerned About Motorcycle Hoodlums at the Falls). Every conceivable snowmobile, four-wheeler and trailbike club in the woodwork was out in full force.

With two hundred people attending the hearing I think I heard testimony that claimed to represent a force nearly double this country's population. One man was even there to "speak for the deer and elk in the proposed wilderness." Yet who could claim to represent me?

In the aftermath of this hearing I was determined to find myself a spokesman. What I had seen was a case of power in numbers demonstrated. I needed to find others of a like mind so we could be heard at the next public meeting.

About this time I heard about a "tremendously broad-based organization" called The Outdoor Nation. Jonathan Ela wrote in a Sierra Club Bulletin article, Ford and Funsville: Big Wheels for Little People how "anxious policy makers in the U.S. Government and elsewhere simply have no place to turn to for getting views of the American public on off-road vehicles." The Outdoor Nation has solved that problem. Although The Outdoor Nation stresses that it is not a lobbying organization, its reason for being is to provide "anxious policy makers" with the last word on what the public wants and needs in the way of outdoor recreation.

The positions of the two co-founders of The Outdoor Nation illustrate their firm's broad-based constituency. Bob Honke is sales manager for the Ford Motor Company's Recreational Vehicle Division. Jerry Marten is president of the Jerry Marten Company, "a mini-conglomerate which specializes in the sale and distribution of mechanized recreational equipment." Citizens concerned about off-road vehicle abuse of our public lands can sleep well, knowing these public-spirited men are representing their interests in Washington.

And fair representation you can expect. Each issue is investigated by an impartial task force before policy stands are set. Take, for instance, the task force concerned with off-road vehicles. They were given the directive to find "a measure of what truly is the general feeling on the subject" because "widely divergent views are expressed on the use of off-road vehicles in wilderness and not-so-wilderness areas." Gene Wirwahn, legislative director of the American Motorcycle Association was asked to chair this public interest research effort. The impartial study is forthcoming.

There are other spokesmen for the public besides The Outdoor Nation on matters concerning off-road vehicles. Take for instance

(Continued on page 15)



In Defense of Trail Cycling . . .

By F. A. Barnes

According to the sleek, commercial ads for trail-type motorcycles, these agile machines are the key to unbounded happiness. According to some of their more extreme critics, trail cycles are the root of all evil.

The truth of the matter lies somewhere in between. Riding one of these energetic two-wheeled steeds along a challenging trail through broken terrain or a remote scenic area can provide a genuine thrill, no matter what your age. But the careless, inconsiderate use of cycles can also abuse delicate forest or desert lands, and can be very annoying to others within the confines of a campground or settled community.

Fran Barnes is a very knowledgeable environmental writer from Moab, Utah. Here he gives his reasons for use of off-road vehicles in the Colorado Plateau. In answer to questions I had about the article, he also wrote the accompanying letter. Without endorsing his position, I thought he had some cogent arguments which merited publication.

The editor.

I would not even attempt to defend the thoughtless misuse of trail cycles, any more than I would defend motorists who litter highways, or tent campers who turn public campgrounds into raucous, unsightly rural slums, or backpackers who leave lovely, remote campsites cluttered. Neither would I defend the widespread and uncontrolled use of trail cycles in some parts of this nation, where population density, or the nature of the terrain, are such that off-road cycle use can cause problems.

But I will take a stand in favor of the use of trail cycles within the vast, state-sized geologic entity called the Colorado Plateau, or "canyonlands" by those who live there. The Colorado Plateau is wild, rugged and spectacular, and virtually empty of human population. Yet it offers endless possibilities for exploring with off-road vehicles such as trail cycles, because it is laced with countless thousands of miles of rough jeep trails.

To see any appreciable part of this beautiful semi-arid country, except for cursory glimpses from the air or from the very few paved roads that traverse it, off-road vehicles are necessary. The country is simply too big, wild and rugged to permit any but the most limited exploration on foot.

Despite this, there are purists who would prohibit the use of off-road vehicles, especially trail cycles, in major desert areas within the Colorado Plateau. Such thinking is both ridiculous and illogical in this land of little water and temperature extremes. One pointed question will dispose of such extremists. Would those who abhor the use of civilization's machines within the desert wilderness of canyonlands country, be willing to explore this arid, sun-scorched land on foot — without the use of such civilized amenities as clothing and footgear? After all, using purist logic, both vehicles and apparel are unnatural products of civilization, and both are designed to protect their users from the rigors of natural environment!

Aside from the impractical, simplistic notions of purists, the two principle objections to the use of trail cycles are that they are noisy, and are destructive to the terrain. I contend that neither of these objections is significant within the Colorado Plateau, even though both may be elsewhere.

To dispose of the "noise pollution" problem first, how possibly could the pop-popping of a few hundred, or even several thousand, trail

cycles be a problem within a vast open area the size of the state of New Mexico?

True, within the outskirts of some of the few small and widely-scattered communities within the Colorado Plateau, young cycle enthusiasts sometimes annoy those who value the quiet, desert serenity that is natural there, especially those who have forgotten what it is like to be young and active and enthusiastic about life. But this is a local problem, best solved by local measures, not blanket prohibitions.

Some such steps have, indeed, already been taken. Near Moab, Utah, at the suggestion of local citizens, the Bureau of Land Management has established a "Slickrock Bike Trail" specifically for trail cycle use, and BLM authorities have recently received other proposals suggesting that certain areas be set aside for the hill-climbing activities that are so popular with teenage cyclists. These are reasonable approaches to the minor problems that trail cycles may cause near settled areas.

But the noise of trail cycles is, and always will be, insignificant in the vast hinterlands of canyonlands country. Its very size and broken nature assure this. These, and the fact that only responsible adults care enough about the beauty of such country to penetrate it for any distance on trail cycles.

I can verify this. Over the past seven years, I have traveled many thousands of miles on backcountry trails within the Colorado Plateau, and every trail cycle that I have seen more than a couple of miles from some community was ridden by an adult who was simply using the cycle as a means for getting into and enjoying the scenic splendor that is there.

Trail cycle "noise pollution" in the Colorado Plateau? Nonsense! Noise pollution is there, but it doesn't originate from trail cycles. It comes instead from the whining of commercial jet planes flying overhead, the sonic booms of military aircraft hurrying senselessly from nowhere to nowhere, the roar of bulldozers scraping hideous scars across virgin land, the blat-blat of heavy ore trucks, or the destructive blasts of dynamite set off by mineral search teams or miners or the builders of poorly-designed roads. And those who complain about trail cycle noise, yet remain voiceless about these other destructive sounds, would probably carp about the buzzing of a fly in a window, while elephants were stampeding through the same room!

But what about destruction to trails, and off trails, by the churning, spinning wheels of trail cycles? Is this a problem within the

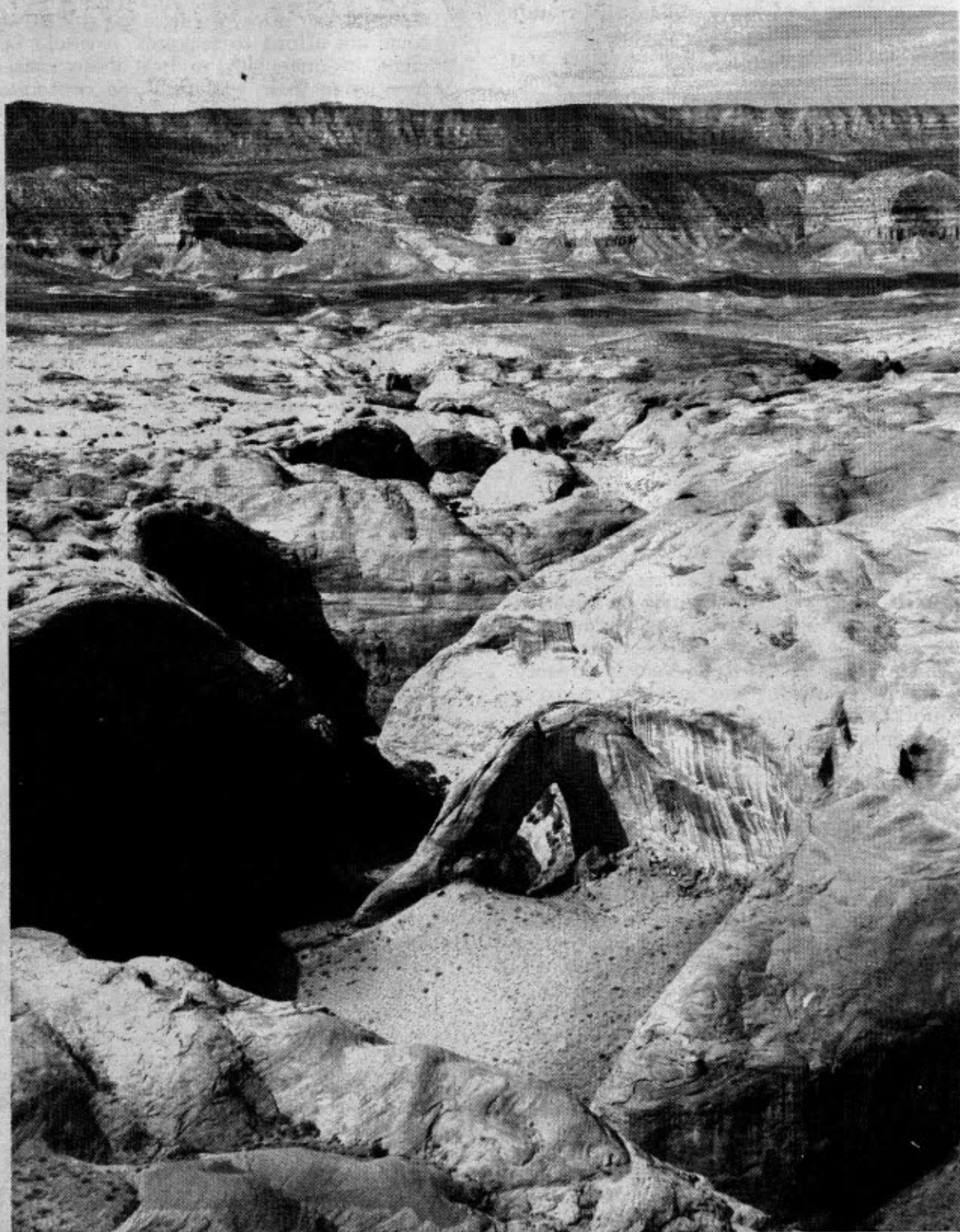


Photo by F. A. Barnes

Broken Bow Arch in Willow Gulch, a tributary to the Escalante Canyon. This is part of the Colorado Plateau of which writer Fran Barnes tells in his accompanying article.

... on the Colorado Plateau

High Country News-7
Friday, Aug. 3, 1973

Colorado Plateau?

Again, my answer is an emphatic "no." Those who think cycles could significantly damage this rugged and broken land of sand and rock and appallingly deep canyons, simply have not seen this country, or tried to negotiate a motorcycle over the broken trails that penetrate it.

In my own explorations, principally with four-wheeled vehicles, I see very few cyclists, but occasionally see the traces of their passing. Invariably, the weaving, twisting cycle tracks reveal that the driver is having a genuine struggle keeping his machine under control as the jeep trail he is following travels alternately through soft drift sand, over broken rock and rocky ledges, and along drywash bottoms.

Further, for the most part, the terrain through which these trails travel is so broken and hazardous, that any cyclist who attempts to "make trail" is courting death or serious injury. The extremely rugged nature of Colorado Plateau country enforces the reasonable usage of trail cycles.

Again, those who would object to the faint and very few traces left in canyonlands country by trail cycles, are those who would complain about the transient sounds of

youngsters having fun, while ignoring the blast and roar of heavy industry invading and abusing this lovely and unique land.

Trail cycles leave a few wheel marks in sand that are erased by the next breeze or rainfall, but everywhere I travel within this spectacular and colorful plateau land I find permanent scars left behind, or still being made, by men in search of mineral wealth, or by men seeking to "develop" or "improve" a land that needs no improvement.

I find broad, ugly, erosion-promoting swaths cut by bulldozers across virgin desertlands, with piles of desert brush, juniper and pinyon trees thrust into careless heaps. I find the colorful cliffs and canyons of the Colorado Plateau defaced with countless abandoned mine holes, with the land around these dangerous shafts piled with junk and trash, torn up by vehicle trails and ruined by huge piles of mine tailings. I see thousands of acres of delicate juniper-pinyon forestland being leveled by bulldozers, in questionable attempts to "improve" that land for cattle grazing. I find wide stretches of irreplaceable scenic beauty leveled, flattened, ruined forever, for the convenience of those seeking to extract the minerals from this unique land. And I find giant power plants being built that will

blight and blur and begrime everything that is lovely within the Colorado Plateau.

Yet surprisingly, some of those who actively encourage and advocate this type of massive and permanent destruction, would ban trail cycles from the same lands. Ridiculous!

In sum, there is no reasonable justification for prohibiting, or even regulating, the use of trail cycles within the Colorado Plateau. The terrain itself provides all the regulation needed, and the public lands within this broad and broken country belong as much to the users of recreation vehicles, as to those who use it for personal profit.

If noise or destruction are to be criteria for banning uses of the Colorado Plateau, then trail cycles will be next to last to go, just before backpackers, and industry will be first.

But the Colorado Plateau is immense, and rich in both minerals and beauty. There is room in it for all reasonable uses, provided the users show respect for its irreplaceable beauty. It is possible to use trail cycles there for recreation or exploration, without harming that beauty. It is also possible to extract mineral wealth without permanent destruction of that beauty, provided enough of us learn to care.

Shall we all start caring — today?

Do You Really Mean the Entire Escalante?

Dear Tom,

I am happy to hear that you plan to run my article in defense of the use of off-road vehicles in Colorado Plateau country. I am also glad that you asked me to clarify my thinking on this subject with respect to the Escalante canyon system, because there are many extreme opinions being circulated about that area these days. The subject is both complex and simple, and I could write a whole article on it alone, but I'll try to summarize.

Your letter asked me, "... but do you really mean the entire Plateau area? What are your thoughts on an Escalante Wilderness? ... I must confess I have never seen the Escalante country, but I know that many people are concerned with the proposed wilderness."

Now, of course I do not advocate the use of off-road vehicles in areas that are protected, such as National Parks and Monuments, except on clearly designated trails. And I thought I made it clear that I do not favor the use of vehicles ANYWHERE except on existing trails. In this respect, within whatever part of the Escalante canyon system that falls within the borders of the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, the rules established by the Park Service should apply and be observed.

But what of the rest of this lovely canyon complex, the part that isn't now, but may become, a wilderness area? In this, the Escalante is different from many hundreds of other potential wilderness areas in only one respect — it has been fought over publicly. Like many other such areas, most of them rejected by their administering federal agencies for candidate wilderness status, the Escalante is not truly a "roadless" area. Off-road vehicles can and do penetrate the canyon system. But, as with trails in many canyons in this region, the wheel tracks are in wash-bottom sand and are erased by the next rain or heavy runoff. So there are no "permanent" roads in the canyon bottoms, nor could there be, ever.

Above the canyon system, the land through which it meanders is virtually solid slickrock and blow sand, both equally impervious to off-road vehicle wear.

So, given only temporary and very minor damage to the canyons and their surroundings, hardly more than from foot tracks, what are the big objections to vehicles? Only aesthetic, so far as I can see. Hikers object to being

overtaken and passed by noisy trail bikes and jeeps. They resent it when the cathedral-like atmosphere of the deep canyons is shattered by the sounds of machinery and the voices of people enjoying the same place in another manner.

Of course, if the Escalante does become a wilderness, then recreation vehicles will be prohibited, and I would be the last to object to this. But I do resent the fact that while recreation vehicles would be prohibited, the machinery and vehicles of prospectors, miners and ranchers would not, at least until after 1984. Mining interests had too big a finger in the contents and wording of the Wilderness Act. Result? When a wilderness area is established, all recreation vehicles are completely and immediately barred from the area, but vehicles and equipment related to mineral exploration, mining and grazing — and the construction of access roads — are not. Because of this unfair and hypocritical situation, I am sometimes less than enthusiastic about the Wilderness Act.



But, say the backpacking advocates, why can't off-road vehicle enthusiasts use some OTHER area for their noisy sport? Why motor down the Escalante?

First, hikers should understand that not everyone is physically able to backpack, yet many would like to see the same wonders that attract a hiker. Of all those who penetrate into canyonlands wilderness areas in off-road vehicles, a great majority are using such vehicles only as a means for getting there. They are not riding the machines just for the sake of riding. Most of those who have such limited interests find plenty of challenge in this land much closer to civilization. Thus, most of those in vehicles are there for the same reason as the hikers — to enjoy the scenery — and to do this, they suffer the noise continuously, not just now and then as do the hikers.

I can sympathize with such people. Should the Escalante be closed to vehicles, I shall never see it by land, because a foot and ankle injured years ago playing volleyball make hiking more than a mile or two pure agony. Thus, to get around in this wild and broken country, I must either ride or fly.

The second reply to "Why not go elsewhere with your vehicles?" is a question: "Why not go elsewhere with your hiking?"

This is not being flippant. Much has been said about the Escalante canyon system. Its rare and genuine beauty and magnificence have been widely extolled. Yet those who live in and know this country could show you a hundred other similar canyons — perhaps not as big in total complexity as the Escalante, but individually just as rich in the same elements of beauty — most of them with never a wheel track to mar their primitive majesty. And most of them so broken and inaccessible that the chances of a vehicle entering them are virtually nil.

So why not "wilderness hike" in these, away from all those noisy trail cycles and jeeps? Could it be because even the most veteran and hardnosed hiker needs his vehicle to get within convenient range of his hiking route? Do the hikers who want the Escalante all to themselves get into the canyon system by WALKING all the way from the town of ESCALANTE? or do they RIDE in off-road vehicles over the many miles of blazing desert rock and sand to reach their chosen trail head? As a matter of hard fact, if an Escalante Wilderness Area is, indeed, established, and if much of the land surrounding the actual canyons is included, even hiking will be limited by the very nature of the approach to the canyons.

You see, Tom, this land, the Colorado Plateau, is just not like other places. Purists who would get TOO pure, would simply not survive here for long.

So, to answer your question, YES, I do mean the entire Colorado Plateau, within the limitations noted earlier. To bar vehicles from large expanses of this region is to bar all human usage except in those few areas where water is readily available. Even so, I am in favor of the establishment of wilderness areas here PROVIDED access to them is prohibited to ALL vehicles. I simply cannot bring myself to agree that for the next 10 years, recreation vehicles should be barred from wilderness areas, yet industrial and agricultural users should not. This is ludicrous! And I am certain, Tom, that were you to see and know this country as I do, you would be the first to agree.

Sincerely,
F. A. (Fran) Barnes

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BIRDS OF THE D



COMMON EGRET



BLACK-CROWNED NIGHT HERON

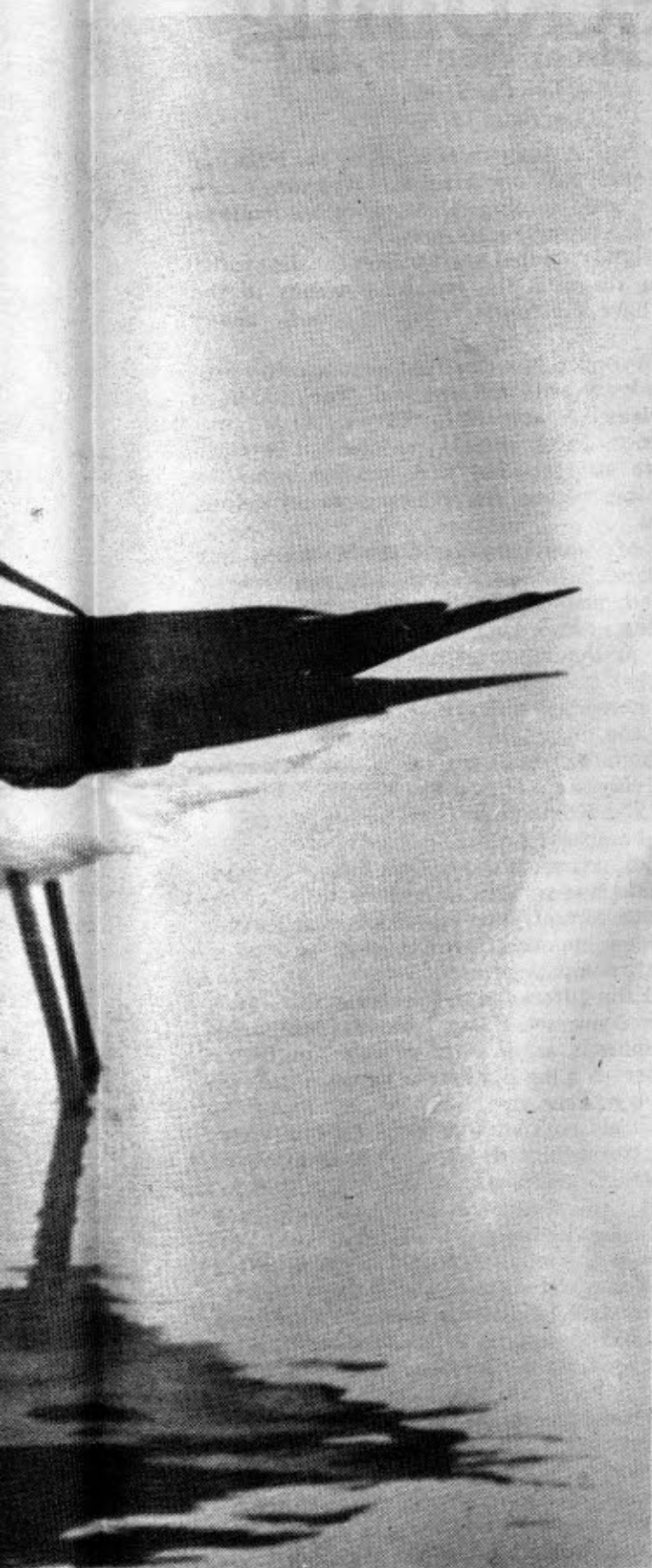


BLACK NECKED STILT

Photos by Thomas

E DESERT MARSH

High Country News-9
Friday, Aug. 3, 1973



BLACK NECKED STILT



KILLDEER



AVOCET

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Friday, Aug. 3, 1973

Threat to the Plains

Energy companies and utilities, with the encouragement of the federal government, threaten to turn portions of Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota into an exploited and despoiled colony — into another Appalachia — according to an article by Alvin M. Josephy Jr. in the current issue of *Audubon*, the official publication of the National Audubon Society.

The *Audubon* article says that strip-mines, powerplants, coal gasification plants, and other industrial developments underway and planned for the northern plains threaten the land, air, water and quality of life of the area.

Despite all the developments that have already taken place, "not a single meaningful" environmental impact study has been made on any of them, says Josephy. "Nor will an in-depth study be available for the region as a whole, or for any one of the affected states," until the end of 1975, when the final report of a federal-state task force is due.

Meanwhile, Josephy writes, "more than 5.5 million acres of federal and Indian-owned land have already been let out in coal permits and leases. More acreage has been let out by the states, the railroads and private individuals."

Josephy charges that federal agencies are guilty of "numerous violations" of federal laws and regulations in administering public lands, and of not protecting the people and the environment. He singles out the Bureau of Land Management and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, both part of the U.S. Department of Interior. These agencies, he writes, have permitted coal operators to carry on exploration and mining without approved plans. In too many cases, the federal agencies have not required compliance and performance bonds for land reclamation. In other cases, they have set bonds too low to cover reclamation requirements. Also, he says, the federal agencies have not prepared environmental impact statements, as required by law, and have not required operators to file prescribed reports.

Josephy tells how the Bureau of Indian Affairs, "abetting the coal companies," has opened Indian reservations to exploitation marked by unfair terms, lack of protection, and deceit. "Once again," he says, Indians have been "defrauded by their trustee, the BIA."

Until Montana passed a strong reclamation

law earlier this year, the *Audubon* article says, neither federal nor state regulations carried any guarantees that lands strip-mined for coal would be successfully restored. Railroad, private, and Indian leases "were so deficient that they almost guaranteed that there would be no reclamation." One contract, Josephy notes, gave a company the right "to use and/or destroy so much of said lands as may be reasonably necessary in carrying out such exploration and mining."

In Montana, Josephy writes, the best estimates are that it "would take many years and successive replantings with much fertilizer and large amounts of water, and would cost upward of \$500, perhaps as much as \$5,000 per acre, before one could tell if reclamation had truly worked in that dry and fragile land of thin topsoil. Yet the leases carried no bonds, or ridiculously low ones, usually less than would be required to pay for the restoration of a single acre. A company could make a try at reclamation, then walk away, forfeiting the bond and leaving it to the state or someone else to struggle with reclamation problems."

Josephy also describes "the implications for the entire region's future water supply." He points out, for instance, that in Montana, "the state's total existing and potential supply from the rivers of the Yellowstone Basin" is 1,735,000 acre-feet a year. Yet, he adds, energy companies have already received options from the Bureau of Reclamation for 871,000 to 1,004,000 acre-feet per year and have requested or indicated interest in another 945,000 acre-feet per year from those streams.

"Where this would ultimately leave farmers, ranchers, towns, Indian tribes, and others with claims on the water" is not clear, says Josephy.

"The lack of impact statements, the non-observance of regulations, and the many violations of laws that have characterized the first years of the coal rush throughout the region have provided concerned environmentalists with opportunities for numerous lawsuits," he says. Those law suits might halt some of "the worst evils, bring about tighter controls and a modicum of order, and slow the headlong exploitation."

But, says the *Audubon* article, "each week new projects are announced, the hurried

pattern of development grows more chaotic, and the threat to the northern plains increases."

(Note: Full text of Josephy's article in the July issue of *Audubon* magazine is available on request. Write or call Les Line, editor, 950 Third Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10022. 212-832-3200.)

Reckoning from Washington

by Lee Catterall
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WASHINGTON — A study conducted by the National Academy of Sciences has concluded that Wyoming's new law to regulate strip mining is probably inadequate, according to an academy spokesman.

Ralph Llewellyn, principal staff officer for the study, said part of the reason is the enforcing agency in the state "doesn't have any funds." But, he added, "that's only part of it."

He said the Wyoming law does not include some provisions the study regards as essential. The 200-page study, to be released in July, lists "fifty or sixty" provisions the authors think should be included in state laws to regulate strip mining and indicates whether Wyoming and other western states have those provisions in their laws.

The number of "noes" alongside the Wyoming law makes it "obvious," he said, that the new law is "probably not adequate to do the job," particularly in comparison to the newly-enacted Montana law.

While describing the Montana law as "quite strong," compared to other states in the West, but the laws in those states are incredibly weak.

"The seat of the difference" between the two state laws is that Montana's law controls only coal, uranium, phosphates and clay, he said, while Wyoming's applies to all minerals. "The Montana law is more specific about what the mining company should do."

"The funding, of course, is the critical thing," he said.

While both state laws require companies to cover reclaimed areas with topsoil, burying alkalines and other toxic material, Llewellyn said, more money is needed in Wyoming to assure compliance.

Llewellyn said the difference between the two laws is "something to be concerned about," because companies may choose to mine in areas where reclamation is less expensive. "If there is a big difference between the two state laws, it could be a real problem."

The \$50,000 study consisted of research, interviews and observations throughout the Rocky Mountain area. A team of thirteen scientists, educators and government officials conducted the study for the academy, which was commissioned for the job by the Ford Foundation. The team has been providing its findings to Congressional committees considering strip mining legislation.

The academy is an independent organization chartered by Congress in 1863. Consumer advocate Ralph Nader charged recently that its advice has been poor and industry-oriented.

The study contends that strip mining operations could destroy drinkable water resources in their immediate areas unless stringent precautions are taken.

"The coal seams are aquifers (water carriers)," Llewellyn said. "When you dig out the coal you destroy the aquifer. The rights of the people who use it for drinking water have to be considered." Problems related to this "typically... aren't looked into," he said.

If alkaline is left atop reclaimed areas in violation of Wyoming and Montana regulations, he said, not only would vegetation not grow there but the alkaline eventually would seep into streams and pollute that water.

Llewellyn said the study found "there's enough rainfall to do the revegetating, with technology we now have available." But, he added, there would be little if any water left over for other purposes, including coal processing activities.

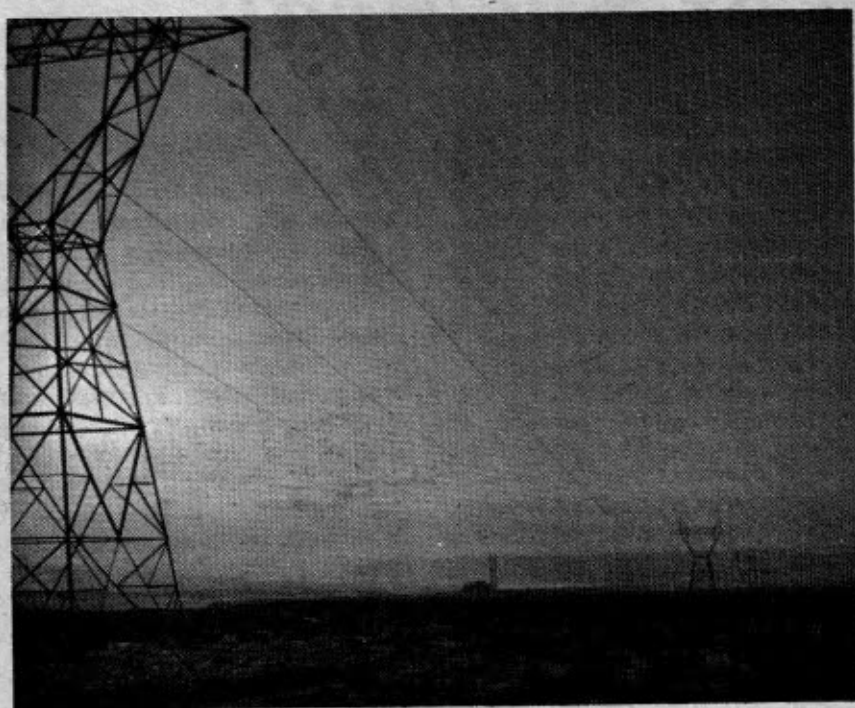
The study concludes that reclamation methods used in range reseeding programs and road cuts "can be translated into strip mined areas," he said.

Llewellyn said the committee did not study coal processing and population aspects of the strip-mining issue, but has devoted a chapter in the study to discuss the conclusions of other studies.

Photo by Terry Moore



Peabody Coal Co's plans to strip mine 640 acres near Colstrip, Montana, have been suddenly halted. In an almost unprecedented action, Secretary of the Interior Rogers Morton personally ordered a hold on an application by Peabody to commence mining on the federal lease. The Big Sky Mine is now located on 100 acres of privately owned land. The halt was ordered to allow time for an environmental impact statement on the effects of the mining. Morton's action may signal a change of policy requiring an impact statement for every new mine involving federal leases in the Powder River Basin.



These power lines lead to the Navaho Power Plant at the edge of Lake Powell in Page, Arizona. The Navaho is a part of the Four Corners power complex.
Photo by Verne Huser

Club Criticizes Kaiparowits

Marga Raskin, a representative of the Sierra Club has commended Secretary of the Interior Rogers C.B. Morton for halting construction of the Kaiparowits powerplant on the grounds that it would significantly degrade southern Utah's air. She also criticized Governor Calvin Rampton for not acting in the best interest of the people of Utah, and for ignoring the directives of the State 1972 Democratic Convention which voted in favor of instituting a moratorium on coal-fired powerplants located in southern Utah.

Using data from the Kaiparowits Project's newly released environmental report issued by a consortium of four California and Arizona utilities, Mrs. Raskin, Energy Conservation Chairman of the Uinta Chapter of the Sierra Club, pointed out that the utilities are only assuming that 90% sulfur dioxide removal and 99.5% particulate removal will be attained. No guarantees can be made since equipment for that level of control does not exist. Even assuming that level of control, the proposed Kaiparowits plant would emit over 104,000 tons of pollutants every year. Nitrogen oxides account for more than 88,000 tons of the total emissions. Even if the federal standards are met, it is estimated that visibility will be reduced from the present 50 to 80 miles down to 13 miles. When the emissions from the Navaho powerplant, which is only 21 miles away, are added to the air shed, the pollutants will total over 200,000 tons a year. Although power will be generated mainly for southern California, the Kaiparowits plant will emit three times as much particulates and approximately the same amount of SO_x as all of the powerplants in the Los Angeles Basin.

Environmentalists are skeptical of the utilities' claim that the Kaiparowits plant will not cause undue damage to the environment and that the federal ambient air quality standards will be met. For the last ten years, the Four Corners powerplant's inability to control its pollutants has been well documented, its plume even being recognized from outer space. Southern California Edison's Mohave powerplant has been the center of controversy throughout its short history. Although it is only half the size of the Kaiparowits plant, it has violated Nevada's Clark County standards for 85% sulfur control, 98.8% particulate control, and nitrogen oxide control. The Grand Canyon has suffered from smog due to the plant's emissions. Southern California Edison, in requesting one variance after another, has disillusioned and even angered state officials and residents alike.

Last year almost four million people visited the ten national parks, monuments, and recreation areas located in southern Utah. Tourism is the main source of income for that area and brings in over \$50 million a year. That economic base will be seriously jeopardized by the pollution from the Kaiparowits plant. Environmentalists point out that the State could receive most of the financial benefits from the Kaiparowits project by mining the coal and shipping it to the load center, thereby preserving the areas' clear skies and magnificent vistas. Utah would also not have to give away its precious Colorado River water, which is being sold by the Bureau of Reclamation for one-third the usual price with Utah deriving no financial benefit from it. Thus, California is succeeding in taking away more of Utah's water which is guaranteed to Utah under the Colorado River Basin Compact. The Department of Interior's Southwest Energy Study found that the economic benefits would be the same whether the power was generated at the mine mouth and transmitted to the load center or whether the coal was shipped out. The Rand Corporation study questions electric demand projections made by California utilities and demonstrates how California's energy consumption can be cut by two-thirds without much difficulty.

Mrs. Raskin feels that efforts should be made to research and develop alternate energy sources such as geothermal and solar. California, which is now consuming 35,000 MW, has a potential 30,000 MW of geothermal energy in the Imperial Valley alone. She agrees with the President's Task Force on Solar Energy which found that with adequate funding, solar energy could in the next 30 years provide "at least 35% of the heating and cooling of future buildings, greater than 30% of the methane and hydrogen needed for gaseous fuels, and eventually greater than 20% of the electrical power needs for the U.S. All of this could be done with a minimal effect on the environment and a substantial savings of nonrenewable fuels." Mrs. Raskin concluded that the least desirable alternative is to destroy our nation's unique scenic canyonlands and the economy and way of life in southern Utah.



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The Hot Line

A recent Harris Survey has determined that a substantial 77 percent of the American people think the energy crisis is a "serious" matter. Furthermore, by a preponderant 43-25 percent, persons polled indicated they felt the federal government would not know "what's going on" and would allow the energy crisis to take place. But a 49-39 percent indicated they felt the public would not respond to the crisis by volunteering to cut back consumption of any energy use.

Nationally syndicated columnist James J. Kilpatrick has joined a growing number of solar energy promoters. In a recent column, Kilpatrick chided President Nixon for the embarrassingly low budget for development of solar energy (\$12 million). Kilpatrick quoted Dr. Lloyd O. Herwig as saying, "there are no technical barriers to building workable systems" for solar cooling and heating of homes. The problem is one of money. Dr. Herwig is research program manager of the National Science Foundation.

Jack Bridges, technical director of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, told a Montana audience that not enough public pressure is being put on political leaders to pass legislation needed to conserve energy. He spoke at the request of Montana Senators Mike Mansfield and Lee Metcalf. Bridges said the electorate must provide the impetus for a national policy on energy and energy uses.

Plans to install a 36-inch, 1,500-mile-long slurry pipeline to transport Wyoming coal to Arkansas were revealed at a meeting with Arkansas Power & Light Co. recently. A company spokesman said for the first few years coal would be delivered by rail but that eventually they hoped to have the slurry line. Such a slurry would require large amounts of water. The company has contracts with Kerr-McGee and Peabody Coal Co. to supply ten million tons of coal per year. All four units of the large 2.8 million kilowatt plant are expected to be in operation by 1981.

Secretary of the Interior Rogers Morton says the government should be in the oil shale and geothermal leasing business "in the fall." No leases have been approved as yet pending approval of the impact statements by the Council on Environmental Quality. Morton also said he was reviewing new proposals for construction of the giant Kaiparowits steam generating station near Lake Powell. Last month he rejected permits to allow construction. The utilities say they have proposed changes to answer environmental problems.

Utah Power & Light's annual report said it spent \$400,000 in exploration for coal reserves.

Some 2,600 construction workers are on schedule in constructing the 1,500-megawatt Jim Bridger Powerplant near Rock Springs, Wyoming. The plant is the subject of an environmental suit because of threats to air quality in the region.

Hearings before the Senate Interior Committee have revealed a "need" for \$47 billion in new investments for energy requirements by 1980. Those needs are: \$17 billion in oil and gas production, processing and distribution, \$26 billion for electric power, \$4 billion for other.

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A Message of Survival

By Ken Robison
Editor, Editorial Page
Reprinted from THE IDAHO STATESMAN

A lot of people are anxious to pin a bum rap on the environmental movement — to make it an all-purpose scapegoat.

The thesis is that we have gone overboard on environmental quality. Environmental advocates are blamed for the gasoline shortage, reduced timber cuts on national forests. A few imaginative critics even see a link to higher beef prices.

Has the environmental movement gone too far? Or has it not gone far enough?

We are seeing today problems in supplying basic resources — notably oil — to a resource-hungry economy. We are advised that we may exhaust supplies of certain minerals within a relatively short time.

This is precisely what environmentalists have been ringing alarm bells about for years.

On an earth with limited resources, with limited supplies of good soil, air and water, it behooves us to take care of what we have, to conserve and reuse resources — not to use them up in a fever of consumption.

Our basic problems are not environmental restraints, a small factor in our present resource and commodity supply situation. Our basic problem is the accelerating rate at which we use and waste certain basic resources.

THE OIL NON-POLICY

Take oil, for example. Because we have pursued a "drain America first" policy while doubling and redoubling our consumption every few years, we have depleted U.S. supplies. Even the Alaska oil fields are not a long-term answer to our ravenous appetite for oil, at the present rate consumption is growing.

A 2,500-pound auto consumes half as much gasoline as a 5,000-pound auto. Pollution control equipment increases gas consumption. But it's a small factor in relation to the size and weight of standard U.S. autos.

Environmentalists have been advocating a shift to mass transit in the cities. This would reduce air pollution problems. It would reduce the consumption of gasoline to take commuters to work.

TIMBER AND WILDERNESS

Consider the timber question. The Forest Service in the last few years reduced "allowable cuts" on national forests.

Why? Basically because Forest Service professionals recognized that we were overcutting the forests. Estimates of annual growth that could be harvested were inflated in the past. Considering both private and public lands, we are still overcutting the forests in the Northwest.

There is profit in exporting billions of board feet to Japan. Yet the exports are depleting the supply of future Northwest timber, stealing from the future. Some of our anti-environmental congressmen stand by and do nothing about the exports.

The short-term profit of overcutting prevails over the long-term wisdom of conserving timber for the future.

Many environmentalists would like to see a little land in the U.S. retained in wilderness, 2 or 3 percent. But there are timber people who want to road and cut even that. There are 500 million acres of commercial timber land in the U.S. We have less than 30 million acres in national parks, game preserves, wilderness areas or under wilderness study.

If we don't learn to take care of the 500 million acres well enough to meet our lumber needs, we won't solve our problem by pushing roads into the last remaining wilderness and logging it. At best, that would buy a little

time. The basic answer must be in wise management of the 500 million acres.

What about our soil? It is a precious resource. Millions of tons of soil are lost to erosion annually. Much of this erosion could be prevented with better land management, soil conservation practices and treatment.

Our wilderness areas, because they are free of roads, are high quality watersheds. Erosion has not been accelerated by road-building and other activity, as it has in roaded areas.

Proper care and management of farm soil can increase yields tremendously.

FARMS SUB-DIVIDED

U.S. farmlands are being subdivided at a rate of more than 400,000 acres a year. Environmentalists generally advocate zoning practices to keep farm land in agricultural production. Proper farm land zoning can also protect the farmer from excessive property taxes.

The loss of farm land to unnecessary "urban sprawl" goes on. We are wasting our land resources as if it were unlimited.

While we drain the supplies of some of our minerals, we pour \$5 billion worth of metal a year into dumps and landfills. Federal policies are not designed to encourage recycling and reuse. They discriminate against it. This is waste of precious resources on a tremendous scale.

Aside from the question of managing our resources for our own use and survival, there is a moral question. Don't we have an obligation to future generations? What do we leave them?

While billions have been spent on a war in Indochina, and more billions on space exploration, we have neglected the more important and basic task of shaping wise

resource policies.

SHORT-TERM PROFITS

Many of our policies are still geared to maximizing short-term profits and maximizing consumption, rather than the long-term conservation of resources.

Are environmentalists "extremists" when they advocate such things as:

— Protection of agricultural land from uncontrolled "urban sprawl."

— Proper care of the soil that gives us our forests and our food.

— Conservation of gasoline with mass transit, bicycle trails and smaller autos.

— Policies to encourage recycling of solid waste.

— Preservation of habitat for wildlife. (Examples include the Teton Canyon, winter home of a deer herd, and the sturgeon spawning area below the existing Swan Falls dam, which would be lost with the Swan Falls-Guffey project.)

— Preservation of a small fraction of the U.S. land area in unroaded wilderness, for the protection of watersheds, for the survival of game species that can't tolerate excess people pressure, and to allow a wilderness experience like that of our frontier ancestors for ourselves and our children.

Perhaps the extremists are people who advocate or support policies that permit destruction of watersheds, waste of farm land, waste of metals, waste of energy, destruction of wildlife habitat and the loss of remaining wilderness areas.

As we move from an age of resource abundance to a time of resource scarcity we should recognize that the basic environmental message — conservation and careful use of resources for this and future generations — is also a message of survival.

Inflation Hits the Forest

The Forest Service must play down recreation work and concentrate on getting trees sold and out, according to the latest White House budget guidelines.

In an 85-page report that was sent to all USFS planning offices, Chief of the Forest Service John McGuire said, "It is unfortunate that the country is facing inflation and thus cannot do more for natural resources." He said that he was "concerned about future shortages of recreation, timber, forage and other products of our forests" because of the lack of money.

The levels set in May for a 10 percent increase in allowable cut must be "met or exceeded," the report says, because of the national economic importance of lumber and plywood products.

"Fiscal 1974 general land use planning will be primarily concentrated on the largest timber producing forests and areas where it must



be done in response to high impact developments (e.g., oil, gas, or coal; transmission lines; etc.)," the report states. "Defer routine planning for less critical areas. . . . Planning for new recreation projects will not be done in FY 1974."

The report continues, "recreation operation and maintenance costs will be reduced by giving consideration to closing up to 80 percent of facilities for which standard level of operation and maintenance is estimated to cost more than \$3 per visitor-day for campground and \$6 per visitor-day for picnic,

boating and swimming sites. Exceptions where justified can be made."

The document also states that campground and recreation facilities will be open a shorter time than usual in the off-season in fiscal 1974.

The cut-back in management and services comes at a time when use of the national forests is increasing at a rate of 5 to 7 percent a year.

River Tapped

The Northern Plains Resource Council reports Intake Water Co. of Houston, Texas, has filed an appropriation for 80,650 acre-feet (111.4 cfs) of water from the Yellowstone River. The water would be taken from the river a few miles downstream from Glendive. NPRC says the company has already received a license from the Bureau of Reclamation to build its pump plant on Lower Yellowstone Irrigation Project land.

Intake, which is a subsidiary of Tenneco, has sued the State of Montana to avoid compliance with the new utility siting act. The company is also asking the courts to void the Yellowstone River Compact. The company wants to pipe the water into Wibaux County and across the state line into North Dakota. The Compact requires the consent of Montana, Wyoming and North Dakota before water is diverted from the Yellowstone Basin.

NPRC reports the appropriation amounts to one-fourth the minimum flow of the Yellowstone River downstream at Sidney. Estimated total cost of the private diversion is \$20 million. Intake has formally claimed right-of-way for an aqueduct and the 'right of location on any lands' of dams, flumes and reservoirs. The company has the right to condemn private lands for these purposes under Montana's eminent domain laws.

Western.....Roundup

Fort St. Vrain Suit Planned

The Ralph Nader-associated Colorado Clean Water Action Project (CCWAP) filed a notice of intent to sue over the Fort St. Vrain nuclear power plant. At issue is the regulation of discharge of radioactive water into the South Platte River by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The EPA has abandoned consideration of radioactive water from Fort St. Vrain as part of its pollution control program. The EPA claims that radioactive water is under the jurisdiction of the Atomic Energy Commission.

The issue isn't specifically the radioactive water, but the principle involved in the EPA's refusal to obey the federal Water Pollution Control Act, said Davis Mastbaum, CCWAP attorney.

"This is a national issue. For if Fort St. Vrain's reactor isn't subject to radioactive water-pollution controls, then all reactors in the country will be in the same situation," Mastbaum said.

It is important that the EPA assume the jurisdiction and regulation according to CCWAP. The AEC has long been accused of being in the duplicitous role of promoting and regulating atomic power. CCWAP claims that "the AEC has taken many calculated risks with nuclear by-products and is unwilling to admit the grave nature of the problem." EPA, as an independent agency, would be in a position to provide better regulation.

The EPA has scheduled hearings in the Denver post office auditorium on Aug. 8 at 1:30 p.m. to discuss the matter.

Businesses Fight Pollution

(From Newsletter of New Mexico Citizens for Clean Air and Water.)

The Newsletter for New Mexico Citizens for Clean Air and Water reports four conflicts between economic interests because of pollution problems. The Newsletter comments, "Contrary to a popular assumption, environmental pollution is not a conflict between business interests and butterfly chasers."

The four conflicts involve: — Oil companies which are dumping waste salt water on ranchland and polluting wells, making them unfit for watering cattle. A stockman, Robert Field, has tried in vain for several years to get the New Mexico Oil Conservation Commission to enforce their regulations against this practice.

— Hydrogen sulfide emitted by gas plants in Lea County which cost General Telephone Company and its customers thousands of dollars in accelerated corrosion damage to electrical relay contacts. The telephone company opposed weakening the H2S standards for ambient air quality.

— Sulfur dioxide in ambient air which causes damage to pecan trees. Recent evidence from the University of Georgia indicates that pecans are nine times more susceptible to SO2 damage than any other plant species. Pecan growers at Las Cruces have asked for stiffer state standards.

— Wood-waste smoke causes bees to stay close to the hives. They will not fly through the smoke to visit apple orchards and cross-pollinate the blossoms according to the county agricultural agent. Bee keepers and apple growers are suing Jackson Sawmill Co. to stop the burning during the pollinating season.

Nobody Wants Nerve Gas

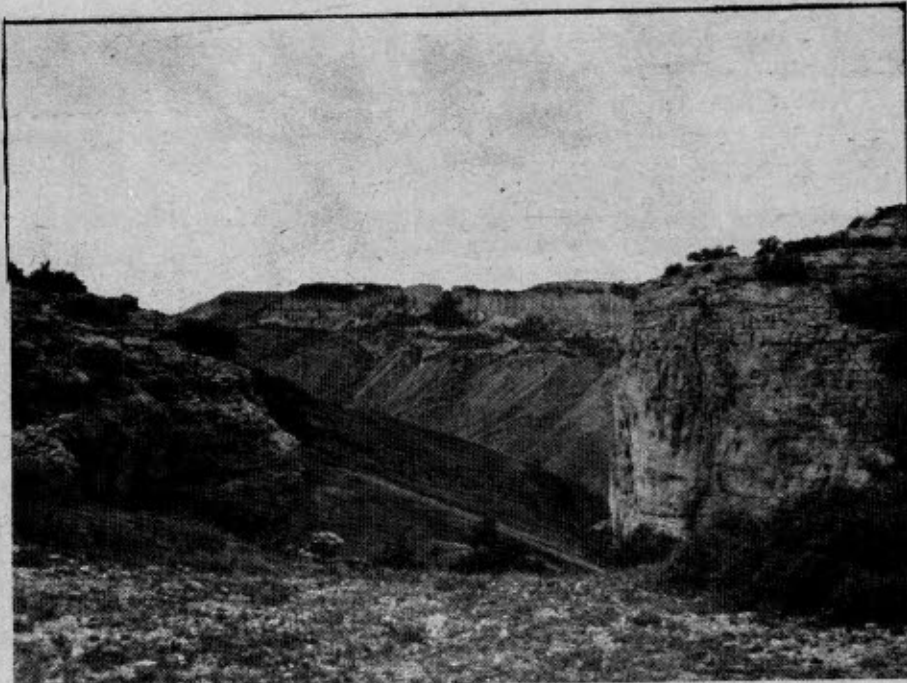
Conflicting reports continue to shroud the future of nerve gas stockpiles at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal near Denver. No one seems to want the gas and so it remains stored in canisters precariously below the approach path to Stapleton International Airport.

Army Secretary Howard Calloway said July 6 that storage of the gas near Denver "is no longer acceptable, no matter how small the risk may be." The Army's "top option" appears to be to move the deadly gas to Tooele, Utah for storage.

The Environmental Protection Agency classifies removal of the gas as "ultrahazardous". Transfer would take four trains — each consisting of 50 to 60 cars.

The Utah congressional delegation is opposed to moving the gas to Utah. "The deaths of 6,400 sheep in Skull Valley following a nerve gas test is still a fresh enough memory to convince Utahns that military procedures for handling dangerous chemicals aren't foolproof," according to the Deseret News. When the Army revealed that there is about 10 times as much nerve gas stored at Tooele as there is outside Denver this brought out even more opposition to the transfer plan.

Detoxification of the deadly gas would appear to be the most sensible solution to the problem. This is already being planned for the "surplus and obsolete" weapons at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal. But the Army seems determined to maintain a "deterrent" stockpile for "retaliatory capability."



Breathtaking scenery, critical big game range and historic interest were factors in the recent Bureau of Land Management decision to protect nearly 11,000 acres of public lands on the Middle Fork of the Powder River in Wyoming. The canyon shown above was once a retreat for outlaws. The Wild Bunch came here to escape the law. Now elk come to find winter forage. The Wyoming Game and Fish Department has purchased the adjacent 5,500 acre Blue Creek Ranch. Those public lands along with some smaller tracts of state school lands constitute a valuable winter range for both elk and deer. The range is such that the Game and Fish Department also intends to re-introduce bighorn sheep.

Briefly Noted...

The long-awaited draft environmental impact statement (EIS) on the Jackson Hole airport expansion is out. The lengthening of runways further into Grand Teton National Park to accommodate jets is proposed. The EIS may be obtained from the Superintendent, Grand Teton National Park, Moose, Wyo. 83012. A public hearing will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Sept. 11, 1973.

* * *

In an effort to restore the mountain to its natural condition, the U.S. Park Service removed the cables from the North Face of Longs Peak in Rocky Mountain National Park in July. Since installation in 1925, the 3/4-inch cables have helped hikers ascend a 55-degree rock slab on the 14,255-foot peak. Now hikers ascend by the Keyhole Route and the North Face is a technical climb. The change came about, the Park Service said, because the Longs Peak area would not qualify for Wilderness classification as long as manmade facilities like the cables remained.

* * *

Hells Canyon and the Middle Snake River may finally be protected from further development. The entire senatorial delegation from Idaho and Oregon has backed a bill which would ban any more dams in the spectacular canyon. The bill introduced last week would also create a new Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, and within that an extensive wilderness. Going even further, the bill would deauthorize the proposed Asotin Dam on the Snake. Other features of the bill would designate the Snake River between Hells Canyon and Asotin, Washington, as a wild and scenic river, and limit the condemnation powers of the U.S. Forest Service in Hells Canyon.

* * *

A drouth in western Montana is so bad that the Fish and Game Department is asking irrigators to share what little stream water there is with fish. Many streams are reported nearly dry. Under Montana law, water can be taken for irrigation until streams are completely dewatered.

* * *

Utah Rep. Wayne Owens hosted a float trip down 18 miles of the Colorado River in eastern Utah. Purpose of the trip was to show Senators Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts and John Tunney of California, and Rep. William J. Green of Pennsylvania a stretch of the Upper Colorado proposed for wild and scenic designation. Legislation has already been proposed by Utah Sen. Frank Moss.

* * *

Based on new telephone installations, Mountain Bell forecasts a 50 percent increase in population for Idaho in the next 20 years. Company records show that a little over 28 percent of new hookups are for people newly arrived from other states.

* * *

Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus has ordered all state agencies to send waste paper to recycling centers rather than the dump. In a communication to all state agency and department heads, Andrus said, "The state must set an example in eliminating unnecessary paperwork, where possible, and directing all used paper to recycling centers." He said such action "... along with other efforts to reduce the waste of resources will help maintain Idaho as a model environmental showcase for the nation."

14-High Country News
Friday, Aug. 3, 1973

Thoughts from the Distaff Corner

by Marge Higley

Two weeks in my favorite mountain setting! In retrospect, a kaleidoscopic time-fragment of brightly colored bits and pieces. . . ever-changing, yet having a comfortable similarity to summers of other years.

Seven adults and five children filled the big cabin to overflowing, so we sort of spilled over into a sister's cabin nearby. During our stay the weather was more rainy than sunny, so I expect that the brightest segments of the kaleidoscope were the faces of the children, as they discovered the magic of the mountains.

When the rain poured down, noses were pressed against the windowpanes as eager eyes watched the constant procession of hummingbirds (one niece has named them "humming-suckles") make their way to the feeders hanging just outside.

When the rain stopped and the sun came out, even briefly, the little girls ran outside to pick wildflowers. They didn't have to go far — the hills and meadows appeared as one big bouquet. The little boys (and the grown ones, too!) grabbed fishing rods and headed for the creek or the pond. Even aunts and "grammas" managed to catch a few fish between showers.

There were other diversions and discoveries, too. The little girls found "a building full of burnt rocks!" Their enthusiasm wasn't even dented when it turned out to be the old coal shed. Even 12-year-old Biff, who has always lived in Arizona, had never seen coal burning. (In the demonstration that followed, he turned out to be a better fire-builder than I!)

There was a minute hummingbird nest back of the house on a low-hanging branch. So low, in fact, that even the 4-year-old could watch day by day as the pulsating bit of grey fluff turned into two tiny birds with beady black eyes and long beaks. And a larger bird's nest was found, built on the ground near a trail in the woods. It contained four speckled eggs, and Biff, who discovered it, took a proprietary interest. He watched the mother bird from a distance, and was able to give such an accurate description that I opened the bird book to show him the picture of a grey-headed junco. He grinned excitedly and exclaimed, "That's the very same bird! The VERY same bird!" Before he returned to Arizona, he was able to report that two of the eggs had hatched, and he expected the other two "any day, now."

Perhaps the most memorable and unordinary experience for the children was getting acquainted with a little spotted fawn — a real, live Bambi. When he was just a few days old, he had been picked up by campers who senselessly presumed that his mother had deserted him. Now, he is being temporarily bottle-fed and cared for by a neighbor. He roams freely into the woods and around the cabins, and comes, hesitantly, when his name is called. The children soon learned that they could pat his head if they waited for him to come to them, but he would bound quickly away if they startled him by a quick movement.

Five solemn pair of eyes were saddened when we explained that Bambi is an orphan because a human being did a foolish, unnecessary thing. Five concerned children (and several concerned adults) are worried about his future. One bleak, unhappy facet in my vacation kaleidoscope.



. . . a real, live Bambi.

Prairie Dogs Poisoned

Once numbering in the billions, the prairie dog population has now been reduced by government poisoning programs to probably less than one percent of its original size, according to a report by Friends of the Earth (FOE) researcher Tom Garrett.

Garrett, who is the FOE Wildlife Conservation Director, warns that if the remaining prairie dogs disappear, their extinction will affect the already critically-endangered black-footed ferret, which lives and feeds in prairie dog towns.

According to Garrett's report, government poisoning of prairie dogs began in 1916 when the Agriculture Department received a mandate to protect the interests of cattle and sheep ranchers. In 1920, a Department of Agriculture pamphlet entitled "Death to Rodents" estimated that there were 100 million acres of prairie dog habitat in the U.S. The poisoning continued through the 1930's and 40's, and last year 69,000 acres were reported poisoned by the Interior Department's Division of Wildlife Services, the Agency which now conducts the poisoning programs.

The poisoning has taken its toll. According to Garrett, in Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota and Texas — the four states which constitute the heartland of the prairie dog range — less land remains for the animals than is now taken up in those states by automobile parking lots.

Garrett contends that the prairie dogs aren't the only victims of the poisoning. After a dogtown has been treated, says Garrett, secondary poisoning often occurs of such valuable predators as hawks, owls, condors and even eagles. One government-sponsored study blames the nearing extinction of the black-footed ferret on the poisoning of prairie dogs.

Prairie dogs — which are foot-long rodents

with short black or white tipped tails — have existed in North America at least as far back as the Pliocene era. The Friends of the Earth suggests that those interested in saving the animals from further government poisoning should write the Department of Interior in Washington. : : EARTH NEWS



Jobs for the Land

Those wishing to work for the cause of conservation may find new jobs opening up with the federal government. Sen. Henry Jackson has introduced a bill that would permanently establish the Youth Conservation Corps (YCC). The YCC has been a pilot program since 1972, but the "high degree of success" with the program has encouraged Jackson to make it permanent. Up to \$150 million would be authorized annually to help the states meet YCC project costs.

Rep. Donald Brotzman has introduced a bill to establish an Environmental Quality Corps. Volunteers between the ages of 18 and 26 would work on reforestation, park and campground construction and maintenance, recreational facilities construction in urban and rural areas and highway beautification. Participants would receive training, room and board and a modest stipend for their one year of service. An option for a one year extension is also provided.



Eavesdropper

LOONEY LIMERICKS

by Zane E. Cology

Said the deer, "One thing I abhor
Is the sound of those cycles that roar!
If they'd just go away
Somewhere else to play,
Then my home could be peaceful once more!"

* * *

The district ranger at Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area, in cooperation with county authorities, is giving tickets to motorcyclists who ride for pleasure through campgrounds. Federal and state regulations forbid hazardous operation of motor vehicles in authorized campgrounds.

* * *

The Greater London Council says sunlight hitting city streets is 50% greater than 10 years ago. Smoke concentrations are down 80 percent, and winter visibility is three times better. Twice as many kinds of birds now live in the city. Cost to each Londoner is estimated to have been 36 cents a year.

* * *

National Wildlife Federation's Conservation News reports walnut tree rustling has become big-time. The News says, "Legends already abound of exceptionally majestic walnut trees bringing more than \$10,000 apiece at auction." The highly-prized black walnut brings up to \$5 per board foot.

* * *

Thanks to a new director of the Dallas, Texas, parks department, the city has a small, 10-acre mid-grass prairie in its Backman Lake Park. The small area has been allowed to grow naturally, without mowing, but needs protection from vehicular traffic.

* * *

The lure of California is tapering off. Los Angeles and San Francisco are losing people and the net increase in state population is only expected to be 55,000 this year. As recently as the late 1960's, people moving into the state averaged over 350,000 annually.

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Timber Cuts Halted

The Wyoming Outdoor Coordinating Council, the Wyoming Wildlife Federation, the Wyoming Division of the Izaak Walton League, and two Wyoming Outfitters have won a signal victory against the U.S. Forest Service. The Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver has ordered a stay of a U.S. District Court finding against the Wyoming conservationists.

The court ordered that, pending appeal, U.S. Plywood-Champion Papers was enjoined from timbering in the Moccasin Basin area. The industry respected this order, but continued to build roads into the area in violation of the spirit of the injunction. On Aug. 1, the court went even further and declared that pending this appeal they were "enjoined and restrained from cutting, clearing or removing timber or building roads in the area which is the subject of this case." In stronger language, the court further enjoined and restrained U.S. Plywood-Champion Papers "from taking any action which would change the wilderness character of this area."

The Court ignored the plea of the Federal Government that the conservationists had failed to make a case. In an assistant attorney general's response to the appeal by the conservationists, it was stated, "To obtain an injunction pending appeal, an applicant has the burden of making a strong showing that he is likely to prevail on the merits." The Tenth Circuit Court evidently felt the conservationists had made a strong showing in issuing an injunction until the appeal was heard. Oral arguments on the appeal will be heard August 14.

The Court also refuted the contention by the government and U.S. Plywood that, "The public interest would not be served by an injunction pending appeal."

The suit was brought by the conservation groups because a full environmental impact statement had not been made on timber sales in the Teton National Forest. The conservationists contend that elk herds and trout streams would be damaged by timbering in the Moccasin Basin area. They say not enough attention was given to the value of the resources other than timber.

U.S. Plywood has clearcut thousands of acres of timber on the Teton and adjacent

Water Report

Washington, D.C. — The National Water Commission summary of its report and recommendations, addressed to the President and the U.S. Congress, has been released under the title "New Directions in U.S. Water Policy." The summary report presents the Commission's philosophy and the basis for its recommendations in abbreviated form for use by those who may not have the time or inclinations to read the full report. Printed along with the summary are the conclusions and recommendations taken verbatim from the Commission's final report. With the release of this document, the official activities of the Commission are concluded.

The full report, entitled "Water Policies for the Future," was transmitted to the President and the Congress on June 14. Obviously, few legislators have had time to read the entire 570 page document.

At the first Congressional hearing on the report, held on June 28 before the Water and Power Resources Subcommittee of the Senate on Interior and Insular Affairs, the Commission promised to make its summary available as soon as possible to assist in further consideration of the recommendations.

Copies of the summary, entitled "New Directions in U.S. Water Policy," are being placed on sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, at a price of \$2.50 postpaid or \$2.25 at the GPO bookstores.

High Country News-15
Friday, Aug. 3, 1973

Shoshone National Forests in the last ten years. Roads and other timbering activity have already critically affected elk herds in the area. No studies have yet been completed to show damages to trout streams and water quality from increased sedimentation.

Spokesmen . . .

(Continued from page 5)

the Idaho-based organization, Outdoors Unlimited. Those who may find the slant of The Outdoor Nation a little too industry oriented will be pleased to hear that Outdoors Unlimited represents a coalition of "farmers, recreationists, stockmen, sportsmen, miners, loggers, mechanics and lawyers who realize that ours is a land based economy." (One wonders why they didn't list the butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker.) Who better could speak for the little guy with no voice in the matter of off-road vehicle use?

How does the general public feel about wilderness? An Outdoors Unlimited officer states, "The general public believes in multiple use management. They don't want to be locked out of the use of their resources. They want the resources available and used. . .

"Our nation is not so rich, since we are rapidly running out of resources, that we can afford to set aside for very limited use, huge acres of land which include billions of board feet in timber, untold hundreds of millions, possibly billions of dollars worth of minerals, forage for livestock and game and other valuable resources."

Joel Frykman of Outdoors Unlimited, the president of the Wyoming-Utah-Nevada Chapter, claims to have a "better understanding of the wilderness concept" than most wilderness advocates. He writes, "For many people, a wilderness experience is a campground and short hike in the woods or on the range, all of which can be obtained in areas grazed by livestock or harvested for timber. . ."

No armchair critic, Frykman decided to walk a mile in the environmentalists' lug-soled boots. He determined, "While there are moments of pleasure and exhilaration experienced in such travel, the hard facts of life are that travel for long distances by foot, horseback, or float-boat is often arduous, just plain hard work, and is sometimes dangerous. The average citizen wants his camper and a good campsite with many of the amenities of his home and will not stray very far from roads or other people."

A look at their publication "News Notes" reveals how these broad platitudes are translated into political action. One issue last year covered the story of some preservationists hiding out within the National Park Service (of all places!). The preservationists were proposing that only a tenth of Yellowstone National Park remain in regular park status. The rest, as incompatible a use as it may seem, was recommended for Wilderness classification.

Quick, urged the newsletter, write your congressman today. This is a threat to our National Forests! (?)

How? "Without expansion of the Yellowstone Park Road System, continued over-use could dictate additional National Parks . . . carved out of our remaining National Forest multiple-use lands."

My search isn't over. Even though I can't go along with The Outdoor Nation or Outdoors Unlimited, I have not given up hope of finding a spokesman. I keep believing that there are other folks that aren't afraid to stand up for solitude and confront this motorman. My search is for people who seek quiet and a place away from man's mechanized, motorized insults on the environment. I just hope that as my search reaches this road's end I won't discover that once again, the off-road vehicles got there first.

16-High Country News
Friday, Aug. 3, 1973

With Improved Access

"The rough terrain in the headwaters of Hunter Creek on the Aspen District provides limited recreation sites. . . . With improved access, elk hunting, hiking and sightseeing will be the attractions and will be easier to reach by motor vehicles."

— From a Federal survey regarding the Bureau of Reclamation diversion project of both Hunter Creek and its two feeder streams into a dam.

i.

First the snowmelt, tunneled east to denser markets, then the land water-impooverished, submissive easy to use.

And still another end to quiet. Elk scarce and brook trout scarcer, the beaver's dam condemned by seers who toy with contexts — refuge made trivial by access, out and dried, wearing the pinched look on played-out landscapes, at every turn leftover junk from unearned leisure, rusting rotten barriers in ambush for longing, our world a little stranger, a little limper to the touch.

ii.

But where will it go.
I'd asked the ancient footpath —
where will the great reign go,
the slow to answer, natural role of ease?
Those dukes and duchesses, the willow leaves,
and those proud lords who govern the runoff?



— Move closer, friend, stand steady in these shafts of light, offered the pause in a run of loose instants; an old fir muttered an older suggestion:

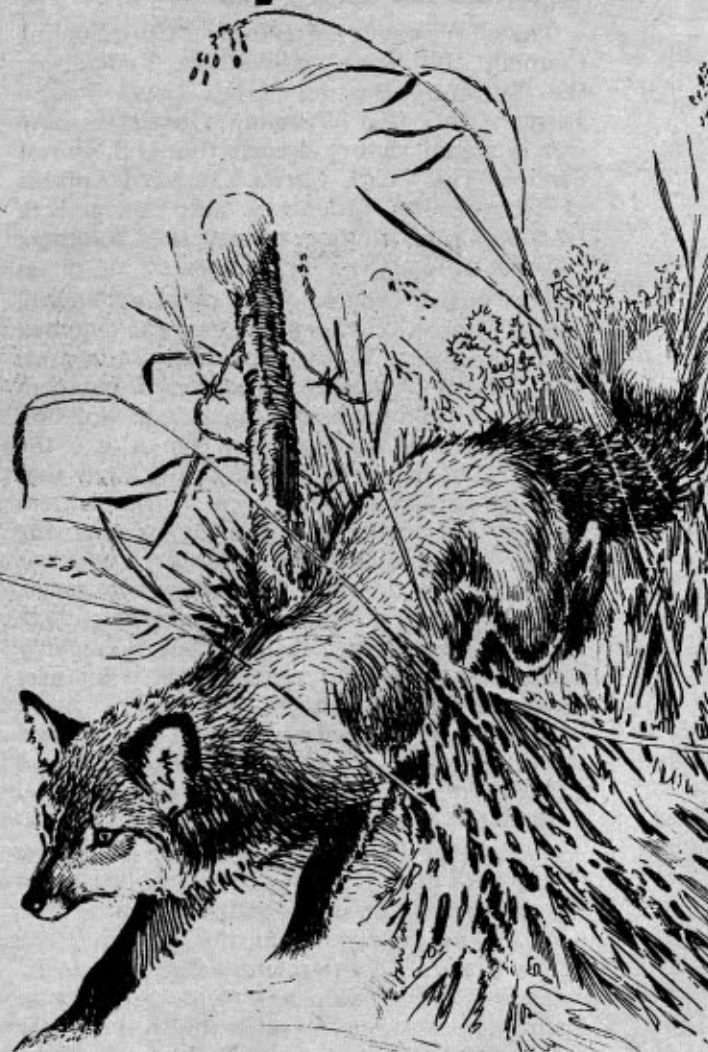
— If that fury spent burning earth, tearing leaves, love, life were lost reaching out, that reach could touch eternity, and feel its roots below illusion's humus. Go easy.

Such were the gifts of removal, bequeathed by a walk.

Once in a damp corner on this sentenced drainage, I saw green shadows brush unconcerned through time, though time had lost direction. They knew, they knew.

iii.

What do we dread? At war against no place though the wolf's gone, the eagle barely a symbol;
we scuttle back and forth like mayfly nymphs at work in deadly ripples, microcosm hexed while inches above the beckoning air is still.



But that deep reminder wisdom longs to break the husk, to wind through the wind and feel the ephemeral dance — what good is substance?
Behind the mileage, cherished places wait to guide home the gathering look, the hesitant touch.

iv.

These doings slated for the little that's left — how immense to the shorn root, staggering to the muskrat; and will the iris weep, the crushed vole wail when the engines range, tearing through softer dominions?
What do they need, those bland captives of progress — binge after structural binge, with solitude for a last supper? or clearouts proclaiming conversion to units of measure? or is it distance, more and more distance towards nothing, with the same end, the same headlight reminders, the same trailers lolling beside the campfire, the same foreknown parceled small perfections —

Where do we go, with wonder overrun?

Muir, Thoreau, Lao Tsu, Whitman: name their uplifts, words worn down into little pebbles. — The more we possess, the emptier the possession; the deeper we enter sanctuary, the less we hurl ourselves, the more



we thank the doe's pause, the quiet blessing, the soft touch of seedlings against the stars, and great branches sheltering us from rage.

Then shrink for now, diminish — the flow moves on, beyond, behind us; we've torn you apart before, yet you deny us; nameless you need no time of ours, nor place — you dwell in the earth earth's water; one step lightstroke or smell hammers back the inroads and self-structuring buildups plunge to an end — the impact ripples, lost. in enormous stillness.

Hunter Creek,
June, 1966
M.W. Borghoff
Aspen, Colo.



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* * *

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A New Breed

Audubon Magazine featured a "new and fiercely independent breed of newspapers" in its July issue.

In an article entitled, "A different kind of paper," Aime Gauvin examined the High Country News and four other members of the environmental press across the country, The North Woods Call (Charlevoix, Mich.), the Bay Guardian (San Francisco, Calif.), The Mountain Eagle (Whitesburg, Ky.), and the Maine Times (Topsham, Maine).

The tie that binds them all is a concern for man and his environment, Gauvin said. Other common characteristics are: "limited circulation (as compared to the establishment press), greater impact than that circulation would indicate, an ardently loyal constituency, precarious financial foundations, and highly individualistic and determined editors," he said.