

The Environmental Bi-Weekly

High Country News

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Lander, Wyoming

Friday, July 18, 1975

It's us — not them — guilty this time Wilderness endangered by overuse

"A wilderness in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further defined to mean in this act an area of undeveloped federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation. . ."

From the Wilderness Act of 1964

Photo by Floyd Wilson



by Marjane Ambler

Don't look now, but we're losing our wilderness. No, it's not an overzealous capitalistic plot designed to get the coal or the timber out when no one's looking. It's you and I who are responsible.

"It's time to blow the whistle. Unless we start managing wilderness use, we're losing wilderness just as surely as if we'd turn the bulldozers loose on it," declares Floyd Wilson, a former summer ranger in the Rawah Wilderness in Colorado.

The Rawah is, perhaps, an extreme example, but the use and abuse of the wilderness resource is proceeding much more quickly than efforts to determine any management policies. Although we like to think it has reached crisis proportions only in California near population concentrations, use of wilderness and primitive areas

in the Rocky Mountain region increased by 100% in just a seven year period, from 1967 to 1974. Use in the Rawah also increased by 100%, the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness by more than 200%, the Glacier Primitive Area in Wyoming by more than 300%. And there's no end in sight.

So what's the answer? Creating more wilderness? Presently there are about 12 million acres in the wilderness system. Another 12 million acres are being studied by the National Forest Service, and 26 million more are in Administration proposals now before Congress. That means that if all of these acres were designated as wilderness, the acres would increase the present wilderness system by 300%. But adding acreage is only a short-term solution, at best, especially in light of the fact that the additional acres are already being used.

No, the answer is tougher than that: management — even though the concept of managing wilderness seems to be a contradiction of the principles behind its establishment. Most people believe it was meant to be left alone. Probably that belief is the seed of the present problems. We've looked the other direction as our wilderness disintegrates, not wanting to interfere with the "natural processes."

For many of us, it takes a traumatic experience to recognize there is a problem, such as finding a favorite, remote campsite stripped of its wood supply and covered with litter, the nearby field of columbines gone.

Still, we're tempted to choose an easy solution: "If we only keep THEM out. . ." Wilson says he hears this often

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Letters



CONSUMER ENVIRONMENTALIST

(Editors' note: The following is an open letter to Pacific Power and Light Co. sent to us by one of our readers, Philip White. White is responding to the Spring, 1975, edition of "Pacific Powerland", a publication mailed to PP&L customers along with their electric bills. In the publication, under the headline "A new game in town," the utility describes what it calls the "Energy Game" and "its two principal teams."

"One team is composed of customers, the energy consumers like you," the article states. "On the other team are the environmentalists and members of other advocacy groups which are influencing the planning for the future energy supplies."

"In some ways, the electric companies have been assuming the role of 'referee' in the energy game — the long-range effort to supply customers with an adequate and reliable supply of electricity.)

Dear Mr. Gillespie, editor, Pacific Powerland,

As a Pacific Power and Light customer and an environmentalist, I object seriously to your use of the word "game" with regard to the question of meeting energy needs while providing adequate environmental protection. Furthermore, I object to your use of my electric payments to fund anti-environmentalist propaganda in your magazine, since I have no choice in who provides my electric service.

Your company fails to understand that many of your customers in Wyoming are not mesmerized by the idea of growth as it is typically understood: growth in total wages paid in Wyoming, total population, total tax base, total kilowatts produced, total homes built, total new industrial construction and so forth.

"We want "growth" in quality of life, not quantity of people, industry, or production. Every additional kilowatt

produced in coal generated power plants in Wyoming represents, to me, a decline in the quality of life.

Therefore, I have taken every step available to me personally to reduce my electrical consumption. If your company is serious when it talks about "energy conservation," then I suggest you utilize the magazine solely to develop a conservation ethic among your customers while showing them practical ideas to save electricity consumption. Also, I recommend that methods be designed to reward conservation and punish excess through a progressive rate schedule, a system which would truly show you were giving more than mere lip service to the energy conservation idea.

As a consumer and an environmentalist, I am prepared to pay for even the most extreme environmental controls on your plants. I object to your lawsuit against the SO₂ standards. I am prepared to do without electricity rather than risk the degradation of our air quality.

Very truly yours,
Philip White
Attorney at Law
Laramie, Wyo.

COAL WATER AVAILABILITY CLARIFIED

Dear High Country News:

I would like to clarify some statements that you attributed to me in your July 4th edition of *High Country News*.

If Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota as signatory states to the Yellowstone Compact were to agree to out-of-basin transfers, there would be as much as 400,000 acre-feet of water (which is presently stored in Boysen and Bighorn Reservoirs) that could be used for coal development and still maintain the aquatic and riparian habitats of the Bighorn and Yellowstone Rivers, assuming a carefully planned water delivery system were de-

veloped. If 400,000 acre-feet of water were diverted from the Yellowstone for use by the energy industry, there would be essentially no water available for new irrigated agriculture in the Yellowstone Basin, unless the people who make such decisions were willing to sacrifice the aquatic and riparian habitat associated with the Bighorn and Yellowstone River or develop new storage facilities on the Yellowstone or its tributaries.

The reference to the potential for doubling or tripling irrigated agriculture was a reference to the availability of water from Ft. Peck Reservoir and Lake Sakakawea which because of cost of diversion cannot be considered as a source of water for agricultural use in the Yellowstone River Basin. I would like to make it clear that my predictions about the availability of water are based on its physical availability and not its legal availability. As you know, there is considerable argument in the region over who owns Northern Great Plains water resources.

Sincerely yours,
John G. VanDerwalker
Program Manager
Northern Great Plains Resources Program

ON THE INSIDE TRACK

Dear HCN,

Your editorial "Balance Issue Haunts Clean Air Debate," in the May 23 issue of *High Country News* was fine, except that it missed the real point. Instead of worrying about the connotations of the word "balance," one should look at who has the inside track at the White House and often in Congress.

President Ford proposed a five year freeze on auto emission controls, in return for a voluntary "pledge" by Detroit to increase gas mileage of cars 40%. This is precisely what the auto companies have been asking for.

The Ford Administration has also submitted an amendment to the Clean Air Act to enable industry to use Intermittent Control Systems (ICS), instead of direct control methods, until 1985. There is also another amendment, source unknown, that would allow the use of tall stacks for pollution "control."

Not only does this correspond to what the smelting and utility industries want, they are quite confident of having the amendments pass. A local large smelter near Salt Lake City, owned by Kennecott, went ahead and built a 1250 foot stack and has designed its emission control efforts around a computerized system of production curtailment (ICS). This was done before EPA promulgated and has a public hearing on regulations based on sulfur dioxide capture with acid plants and existing 400 foot stacks. Kennecott even told the EPA that it was too late to go back and start re-designing their smelter at the hearing.

I am sure these are not isolated instances.

Howard Wilkerson
Air Quality Chairman, Sierra Club
Uinta Chapter, Utah

LONELY PRAGMATISM

Dear Editors:

I was moved by your "Dear Friends" section on the back page of the June 6 issue—moved because you so aptly describe the lonely pragmatism of conservationists.

In my work, one of my solid principles of dealing with government entities is "work with them when you can... and fight them when you have to."

The mountains, prairies, and wildlife of this state speak to us in subtle ways. We must speak clearly for the Land because she's the best friend we have.

Our rewards from conservation battles are reflected in a bright sunrise, clear-running waters, expanses of wild country, and a continuing quality of life. It is echoed in an old Indian wise saying: "Holy Mother Earth, the trees and all nature are witnesses of your thoughts and deeds."

With much respect for your work,

Bart Koehler
Executive director, Wyoming Outdoor Council
Field Representative, Wilderness Society
Jackson, Wyo.

HIGH COUNTRY

By Tom Bell

The heat hangs heavy in the valleys of eastern Oregon. Across the miles to the east, the mountains of Idaho are blue and hazy.

The corn and sunflowers are growing so fast you can almost watch the change. Today, the first sweet, tasty peas went into the freezer. The pie cherries are nearly all red, and plump pinkish peaches hang before my eyes as I look into the front yard. Both apricot and apple trees hang low from the weight of filling fruits.

It is a peaceful, pastoral scene along Eagle Creek in the valley below us. Huge cottonwoods hug the floodplain with hay and corn fields stretching out to them. Across the valley, green irrigated pastures reach up the slopes. Above the ditches, gray-brown, sage-covered hills stretch into the distance toward the deep canyons of the Snake River.

The past weeks have been busy ones. We are finally somewhat settled into our new location, perched in a cleft on an east and southeast-facing slope. A graveled county road goes in front of, and below, the house. It separates our land into a three-acre plot above the road and eight acres below. The eight acres once had nearly 100 apricot trees and an assortment of apples, pears, and plums. Now most of them are gone. Our main orchard is above the house.

The backyard is a quiet, secluded, lovely place. The steep wall behind the house has been rocked-up for three or four feet and above this rock wall grass and various trees grow. An apricot tree grows from the very edge, hanging out over the lawn. The pie cherry and a red delicious apple trees are just above the wall.

A robin raised her brood in the apricot tree, a blackbird in the arborvitae, and now a swallow has her nest under the eaves on our front porch. There has been at least one Bullock's oriole nest in our tall lombardy poplar and a pair of western kingbirds are about to fledge their new family from behind the transformer on the high power pole along the road. I have seen at least three mourning

dove nests on the place, and from the cooing I would suspect more. The calling of the cock quail would indicate at least three or four nests.

Until you get back on the land, you can't believe how many demands, situations, and unforeseen developments can absorb your time. This is near-desert country so your land must be irrigated in order to keep plants alive. Planting new orchard trees and planting and caring for a large garden in such a growing climate is a real experience.

Then, too, there have been the ordinary run of problems and misfortunes. One of our two little black heifers got pinkeye. Before I caught it she had lost the sight in one eye and came close to losing the other. Our lone Muscovy duckling and nine baby bantam chicks were killed by our young, untrained collie while we were gone for a few hours one day. Two of our apricot trees had a huge cottonwood fall over on them.

In spite of such little problems, the garden thrives, our two little porkers, Sweetpea and Petunia, wax fat, and we rejoice in the bounty of this land.

Our location is ideal for the development and use of solar energy. We hope to develop a greenhouse on a terrace south of the house. Sunlight and wood should supply most of the heating needs.

There appears to be a real need for a small greenhouse and additional supplies of small fruits — strawberries, raspberries, grapes, and currants. So that is where we will put our efforts not only for our own needs but for a little additional income.

This valley is amazing. It has one of those extraordinary microclimates that allow many things to grow which normally wouldn't. Last week a number of beautiful catalpa trees were in full bloom. At least two tulip trees grace as many yards, and there are a number of English walnuts and black walnuts. At our back door is a rhododendron which seems to be thriving.

Though there is much work to be done on our small homestead, we have already come to enjoy and appreciate it. This land is now our land.

Editorials



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Rules needed and lamented

As we nod to the need for more regulations in our wilderness areas, we do so with a deep sense of regret.

Land use planning, industrial siting regulations, consumer safety laws, and the like are all signs of the growing size and complexity of our country. Wilderness regulations are another. It's wrenching to admit we need controls in places we had dreamed to be the embodiment of freedom, the antithesis of control.

But in a growing number of popular wilderness areas we do need more constraints on human activities. We need constraints because the preservation of wilderness qualities for future generations is more important than present users' freedom from civilization.

We would hope that those in charge of these areas recognize the delicacy of the situation. They have tools such as reservation systems, mandatory wilderness schools, and banishment of fires, pets, and large groups at their disposal. But we ask that they, understanding man's spiritual attachment to wilderness, not be overly zealous. We ask that they oppose regulations proposed to make a walk in the woods safer, more comfortable, or as standardized as a civil service exam. That they regulate only where it is necessary, with a single purpose in mind — to prevent man from damaging the wilderness resource.

The number of users (and the sloppy habits of some) unfortunately make federal wilderness watchdogs as necessary as the regulators of other kinds of pollution. In any area where signs of man's abuses are apparent, we urge managers to limit human activities to ensure the vigor of the natural system. —JN

"Wildness made man, but he cannot make it. He can only spare it."
—David Brower



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Courts opt for careful planning

Two recent court rulings strongly indicate that the National Environmental Protection Act requires something better than piecemeal planning. At the Westmoreland strip mine in Sarpy Creek, Mont., the appeals court ruled that the coal company's impact statement on a portion of their 20-year mining plan was inadequate. In the Northern Plains, an appeals court ruled that a comprehensive impact statement on mining in that region — not just on separate mines — may be necessary.

Both of these suits have been an inconvenience for some. But the one-hole-at-a-time approach to planning could prove worse than inconvenience. It's like leaping off the bank before we've measured how far it is to the other side. Improper planning could harm many more people

than were ever disturbed by initial delays.

We are facing another major federal action in the Southwest — the large scale production of electricity from coal-fired power plants. Here again, federal agencies seem to be issuing impact statements project by project. What we need is a look at the effects of massive power development on the air, water, land, and people of the entire region. Another lawsuit, demanding full disclosure of these projects' cumulative effects, seems imminent.

We recommend more comprehensive planning to the Department of the Interior. The alternative is the court-interrupted action we are seeing in the Northern Plains. And that's an inconvenience to workers, industries, and the public alike. —JN

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Wilderness

(continued from page 1)

at Forest Service workshops where citizens are discussing management. "Them" might refer to horseback riders, outfitters, or large groups from schools or organizations.

However, Wilson says that much of the damage he sees is the result of small groups of backpackers. It's us — even those of us who consider ourselves experienced, but who have not adjusted our camping techniques to keep up with the growing numbers of users. We continue to pull dead limbs off trees to feed our fires which have nice reflector rocks behind them, to camp in alpine meadows, and to take our dogs with us on the trail.

Wince at any of those? Or wonder that they could really do any harm? There was a time when a camper with a certain amount of care and common sense could treat a campsite in a way so that it would recover quickly (meaning only a few days). But times are changing in many of our wildernesses, and it is very possible there won't be a few days leeway before the next campers come and compound our impact.

Encouragingly, 92% of the wilderness users would not harm anything if they knew what to do, according to Wilson, although when he started work as a summer ranger he was convinced that most people were out to deliberately destroy the wilderness. District Ranger H. B. "Doc" Smith of the Lander, Wyo., District, Shoshone National Forest, agrees that with the exception of a few "oldtimers" (not necessarily old in years but experienced) who are set in their ways, most people want to do what is right for the wilderness. "They're most receptive to information about proper use — they're hungry for it," he says.

In fact, when the users of the Mt. Zirkel Wilderness of Colorado were informed in 1970 that it was suffering from overuse, they came up with recommendations for restrictions that were more stringent than the Forest Service's.

GETTING THE WORD OUT

The problem of getting the information to the users has been overwhelming for Floyd Wilson and his wife, Irene. The Wilsons have formed the Wilderness Education Foundation and given slide and movie shows to over 3,000 schools as well as universities, churches, and other groups. Whenever they testify at a wilderness hearing, they call for management of the wilderness. They took former Rep. Donald Brozman (R-Colo.) into the Rawah



Litter has always been an indicator of people impact on the wilderness. Floyd Wilson says that at least in the Rawah Wilderness, it is getting to be less and less of a problem as more and more people seem to pack it out. He takes this as an indication that people want to do what is right to protect the wilderness — when they know. In the photo above, a ranger in the Shoshone National Forest smashes cans in preparation for packing them out on his back. George H. Stankey, who has studied visitors' attitudes toward wilderness use, says that litter appears to represent a more serious source of dissatisfaction for campers than does encountering excessive use. He points out that this fact can help rangers make priority decisions when the budget does not allow for making all the management changes that are desirable.

Photo courtesy of National Forest Service



Floyd and Irene Wilson find children the most open to learning about proper use of the wilderness. They get letters from students after their visits. One from Ashelle Denning of Prospect Valley School in Wheat Ridge, Colo., said, "When I saw your movie, I found out that they really need more help in keeping the wilderness clean. It also showed me that even I can do harm to nature, too. After the movie, me and three other girls got together and talked about the movie and we came to a decision that when we grow up we might be forest rangers. I hope you have good luck with the congress in trying to make the wildlife better."

Photo of Mary Lynne Shickich, Lori Kuthins, and Kelly Masek in the Laramie Peak area, which has been considered as a wilderness area.

Wilderness to show him the conditions and spoke before Congress in September of 1974. "They (Congressmen) were not aware of the problem," Wilson says. Brozman told the Wilsons that they were the only ones to ever write to him about the need for wilderness management.

Wilson is bitterly critical of conservation groups for what he perceives as their lack of concern. "To advocate, lobby, and pressure for more and more areas to be put under the Wilderness System while ignoring and excusing the destruction of those already in the system is a form of hypocrisy that is . . . repugnant to us," he says.

He puts more blame on the Forest Service, which he says is ignoring the problem and is putting out printed material that does more to promote use than to control it.

Wilson is accused of being so evangelistic and egotistical in his crusade that he turns off potential disciples. Wilson admits that he and his wife are, to some extent, bitter. But he insists that we cannot wait until all wilderness areas have been designated until we start worrying about managing them, as some conservationists insist. He says the damage that is being done is long-term — that already some areas, such as the Rawahs, Maroon Bells-Snowmass, and Eagles Cap are lost and cannot be saved.

The Wilsons also put some of the blame on mountain equipment stores and on outdoor schools who make billions of dollars encouraging use of wilderness. Irene points out that most of the equipment catalogs show tents pitched in the tundra, a practice that the Wilsons deplore because of the fragility of that ecosystem. Instead, they would like to see the mountain equipment stores participate in the education of users by, for example, putting a copy of an approved code of conduct in each pair of boots they sell.

ONE RANGER'S USE STUDY

Ranger Doc Smith says the Forest Service is addressing the problem of management although he admits that their efforts are not keeping pace with the growing use. There has been no attempt to standardize management of wilderness across the country, and Smith doesn't think it's necessary. Now each district ranger assumes the responsibility and approaches management in his own way.

When Smith attends wilderness meetings with other rangers, he finds, however, that many end up finding the same solutions. This is because many of the problems are the same: sanitation, horses, use concentration along

trails, water quality, campfires that get out of control, litter.

In his own district in the Wind River Mountains, Smith used volunteers from the National Outdoor Leadership School as part of his study on use of the Popo Agie Primitive Area to try to measure the carrying capacity of the area.

The volunteers spent two 10-day sessions in the area in the summer of 1974 and then prepared a 26-page report, including recommendations on carrying capacity and ways to reduce the abuse of the area. Smith emphasized that the study was only one of many recommendations he is taking into consideration in making management decisions.

The study utilized one innovative measure that might be useful for future studies by others, Smith says. The volunteers assessed the experience level of the campers they encountered, as well as their numbers. They concluded that the carrying capacity of the area for experienced visitors is twice what it is for inexperienced visitors.

Smith explained with an analogy to usage of a home. If you had eight slob in your livingroom who didn't use ashtrays, who spilt drinks on the carpet, and who were loud and obnoxious, the use of the livingroom would have passed its carrying capacity. However, 16 or 20 courteous visitors would have far less impact. He said there would obviously be a limit to the number of courteous users, too, since you're dealing with a finite resource.

The Popo Agie study indicated that as many as 75% of the users were inexperienced. Smith admitted that the figure is a very subjective analysis and could be affected by the volunteers judging the visitors by their deviation from NOLS practices rather than deviation from more broadly accepted standards.

However, he says, the figure still indicates the size of the problem and the need for education. The volunteers recommended several solutions for educating visitors, including some that others have recommended, such as certification and the use of Forest Service printed material and seminars.

Smith says he is very interested in one of their suggestions — development of a slide show and script dealing with proper backcountry conservation techniques which would be required for groups applying for permits.

This summer more NOLS volunteers are working in the Popo Agie Primitive Area as backcountry teachers, another of the recommendations from last summer's

"To advocate, lobby, and pressure for more and more areas to be put under the Wilderness System while ignoring and excusing the destruction of those already in the system is a form of hypocrisy that is . . . repugnant to us."

—Floyd Wilson

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Above timberline, the winds blow long and cold, and the seasons are short. Looking at the landscape — rocks, a little grass, a few flowers or scruffy limber pine — one would think that nothing could harm it. Yet actually this tundra ecosystem is fragile, and it takes years to recover when damaged. Consequently, Floyd Wilson goes so far as to say no one should camp there and care should be taken when walking across it.

Pictured is the Bears Ears Trail in the Popo Agie Primitive Area of Wyoming.

study. One of their duties will be taking pictures that could be used in slide presentations. But principally, they will be offering their services as teachers to campers at their campsites. Smith says he doesn't know how receptive the campers will be to the intruders and their information. He says he realizes it will be a delicate situation, and the four teachers were chosen partially on the basis of their diplomacy. They are all certified NOLS instructors.

Other rangers in other districts have expressed interest in the plan and have asked if other trained volunteers are available, Smith says.

The volunteers also apparently did not approve of camping practices used by Forest Service employees. They advocated educating the employees about the latest, up-to-date conservation practices so the employees could serve as models for other campers.

DOLLARS DICTATE

However, Smith says this program, like all other management suggestions, requires more money and more administration than the Forest Service now has available.

The Lander District now requires permits for groups using the Popo Agie Primitive Area and recently began requiring them for horse users. Even that minor change required signs, bookkeeping, and the time of a wilderness ranger who could keep track of grass conditions and notify the district office, which determines where horses will be allowed.

Volunteers are a big help, Smith says, but if more volunteers would come to him now, he would have to refuse their services because of the lack of administrative manpower. For the NOLS volunteers, NOLS provides the food and equipment, and the Forest Service provides transportation, lodging when they're in town, and ad-

ministration.

"I don't think there's a wilderness area in the country that's funded anywhere near adequately," Smith says.

The Wilderness Act of 1964 offers no help in this regard. It states: "No appropriation shall be available for the payment of expenses or salaries for the administration of the National Wilderness Preservation System as a separate unit nor shall any appropriations be available for additional personnel stated as being required solely for the purpose of managing or administering areas solely because they are included within the National Wilderness Preservation System."

This section perhaps reflects the thinking at the time the act was written: that wilderness areas could be set aside and left alone to assure their protection. However, Floyd Wilson says that the condition of the wildernesses today was not what he nor any of the others who pushed for the act had in mind at that time.

When Wilson testified before Congress last year about the need for management, he said there was no need to change the act nor to make a specific enactment for wilderness funds.

Smith agrees and says the best tactic would be to increase Forest Service funding for all recreation, and the money would be distributed from that for wilderness management.

TAKE THEM TO COURT

"Look at the figures on use. It's so obvious that recreation needs more money than it's getting — more than

timbering. . . . The conservation groups could help by encouraging management and limited use. If they can take the Forest Service to court over timbering, then they could also do it over management," Wilson says.

"If we're going to have wilderness, we've got to pay the price," Wilson says, which includes both federal dollars and personal sacrifices when the use of the wilderness is limited as it must be.

"If we can't do this, then let's just do away with wilderness and get away from being hypocrites," Wilson says.



Right now Wilson thinks that perhaps the most effective way to save the wilderness is to go to the boundary and turn the signs around.

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Tools to manage wilderness: rationing to signs

Education is not sufficient in itself to solve the problem of the overuse of the wilderness. No matter how experienced the users are, the resource is finite. It can only tolerate a certain number of users.

The Forest Service manual gives rangers authority to regulate use by both direct and indirect methods, putting the emphasis on the indirect. "Limitations on visitor numbers should be a last resort management effort preceded by a decision that adequate protection of the wilderness resource is not being obtained by other management measures."

The Forest Service has deemed rationing necessary only in a few instances. Forest Service Chief John R. McGuire testified before the House Public Lands Subcommittee in April, 1975, on the subject of wilderness use during a hearing on the Flattops wilderness proposal for Colorado. He said although California has been using a permit system for many areas, the permits have been rationed in only a few places, such as Mt. Whitney.

"We found that on holiday weekends we were getting so many people on this trail in the wilderness that we had intolerable conditions. It was not just solitude; it was sanitary problems. So, we rationed the number and we allow only what we think the trail can carry at any one time," he said.

Some wilderness users who are aware of the overuse problem would like to see use rationed before it gets to "intolerable conditions."

RATIONING ATTITUDES

George H. Stankey has conducted attitude surveys of wilderness users and published the results in 1973 in a book called, *Visitor Perception of Wilderness Recreation Carrying Capacity*. Stankey is a research social scientist headquartered at the Forestry Services Lab on the University of Montana campus. He sampled visitors to four areas: The Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana, the Bridger Wilderness in Wyoming, the High Uintas Primitive Area in Utah, and the Boundary Waters Canoe Area in Minnesota.

Stankey statistically confirmed for those areas what many people would expect: solitude is a significant factor in whether or not users enjoy their wilderness experience. Overall, 75% said it was most enjoyable to not be near anyone else when camping. In the three western areas, 65% said they would prefer to be out of sight and hearing of other campers.

Visitor reactions to various forms of rationing permits were explored in the study. A mail reservation technique was the most acceptable to the 493 people sampled: 60% were either in favor of it or were neutral. The first come, first served technique ranked second. Charging a fee was the next acceptable method, but there was a direct relationship between the person's acceptance of the fee and his or her income level.

Visitor acceptance of a lottery system was low. Stankey interpreted this as meaning that most people are reluctant to leave to chance the opportunity for a wilderness visit. They were even more reluctant to accept the idea of permits that assign visitors to campsites—81% opposed this method.

Solitude for human users is only one of the motivations for controlling overuse of the wilderness. Wildlife or water quality might be the critical consideration in some places.

All of these factors point to the need for a selective rationing system, which differs from one part of a wilderness to another. For example, Ranger "Doc" Smith, district ranger for the Lander, Wyo., Shoshone Forest, has excluded groups and horses from some areas that bighorn sheep now need. (These are the only users he now rations.)

Through zoning, he can keep users out of an elk calving ground during the critical season. He can keep horses out of certain areas during the spring runoff, when meadows are vulnerable, or out of other areas year around. Presently, he prohibits groups from using Lonesome Lake after a study by volunteers last summer confirmed that the lake was over used. Now only individuals can use the area. If Smith had a permit system for individuals, he could keep the use of the area at carrying capacity, but presently he cannot.

LICENSED USERS ONLY

Rationing still does not solve the problems caused by inexperienced or careless campers. One of the more ex-



Signs are the best ambassadors the Park Service has, according to the Rocky Mountain National Park management plan. Yet signs reassure hikers and thus encourage use, and sometimes overuse, of wilderness areas. Forest Service Ranger "Doc" Smith found that when he did a thorough signing job in some areas of his Lander District in the Shoshone National Forest, Wyo., the signs were apparently resented and were torn down and left floating in the lake or lying in the trail.

treme measures proposed by some is required certification of users. John Hamren, the new director of the National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) in Lander, explains that he believes the answer to protecting the wilderness is not by controlling the numbers—"That only slows the destruction. It takes five years instead of three." He believes that eventually it will be necessary to have legislation requiring every group that goes into the wilderness to have one certified person. That person will have taken a short course—maybe three days. The courses, Hamren believes, should be free.

Presently, NOLS reaches its own students and instructors, but the courses are very expensive (around \$600), and five weeks long. Hamren says they reach a few more people through a relatively low-cost course at Central Wyoming College, through occasional volunteer teaching at area camps, and through working with Scout groups.

Free, short courses would be necessary, Hamren says, to reach people on a broad scale. NOLS volunteers who studied the Popo Agie Primitive Area for the Forest Service recommended requiring certification. They said it should include basic camping techniques, (campsite selection, fire building, wood selection, latrine building, and garbage disposal); basic techniques for health in the back country; map reading; and first aid.

INDIRECT METHODS MORE ACCEPTABLE

Ranger Smith would like to have a permit system in the Lander District—IF he had the staff and the money to implement it. For now, he and most other rangers concerned about the overuse problem depend on indirect methods for controlling use, which are generally cheaper to implement and more popular.

Trails and signing. Opinions differ on whether trails should be improved and well marked with signs or allowed to deteriorate. The Forest Service manual says that improved signing encourages use of lightly used or rela-

tively unknown areas, which helps overused areas by dispersing campers. Floyd Wilson, a retired seasonal ranger who started the Wilderness Education Foundation, advocates well-marked, high standard trails. He shows slides of the damage that occurs when water is not diverted off the trail by culverts or other methods and when bridges are not built across bogs.

Ranger Smith believes in identifying the trails carefully. However, he does not plan to build many, if any, new trails because he believes trails encourage use. "Trails reassure people—they know if they're on a trail, they're going somewhere," he says. As a result, the use is concentrated along the trails. He would like people to leave the trails and believes that if there weren't trails, there would be better dispersal. On the other hand, some people believe that bushwhacking (traveling off the trail) does more damage.

In George Stankey's study of *Visitor Perception of Wilderness Carrying Capacity*, 41% of those surveyed favored reducing the number of signs and trails. An equal number 41%, opposed this method, and 18% were neutral.

Maps and pamphlets. The Forest Service manual suggests literature promoting 1) lesser used areas and/or 2) the character and values to be found outside the peak use period (for example, the advantages of spring, fall, or winter trips). Stankey points out that publications can also be used to share information on the biological and geological nature of the environment. He warns, however, that providing people with more complete information can also lead to increased use. The same is likely true, others point out, with guide books and other publications which introduce people to a wilderness area.

Controlling access. The Forest Service manual suggests improving access and new camps in lightly used areas. Stankey says that the main points of concentration of people are at trail heads. He suggests that one solution would be developing or improving access to areas presently not utilized. He also suggests eliminating the practice of extending road ends up to the wilderness boundary and blocking off the last few miles of existing ones to public use.

Other Forest Service alternatives. Additional suggestions from the Forest Service include obliteration of facilities at overcrowded or undesirable sites and construction of rustic improvements at desirable sites and manipulation of the fishery resource.

Rangers across the country who are concerned about the overuse of the wilderness are evaluating different techniques and determining their own priorities.

Floyd Wilson would prefer to see directives from the Forest Service, probably at the instigation of Congress. "The only prerogative that should be left to the district ranger is the distribution of the people," he insists. "There is a critical and vital need for overall management and guidelines."

Wilson condemns all wilderness lovers for dealing with this problem so late. The first wilderness (the Gila in New Mexico) was formed about 50 years ago. "We're just now getting around to holding workshops on how to preserve wilderness. We should have had workshops 10 years ago—we needed public input then," Wilson says.

"It's like the patient being dead and the doctor still in consultation about what to do about it," he says.

Right now Wilson thinks that perhaps the most effective way to save the wilderness is to go to the boundary and turn the signs around. He refers to the fact that the area surrounding many wildernesses has much less use. "You don't have to be behind the boundaries of the wilderness to have a wilderness experience," he says. "In fact, today you'll see more of what's supposed to be in the wilderness outside of the boundaries."



Times are changing in many of our wildernesses, and it is very possible there won't be a few days leeway before the next campers come and compound our impact.

What to do

WRITE YOUR CONGRESSMEN:

Floyd Wilson advocates that when you witness evidence of overuse of a wilderness, you write to your Congressman and send a carbon copy of the letter to the Forest Service District Ranger in the area you visited. Send pictures if you can. Urge better management and more adequate funding.

HELP WITH THE EDUCATION EFFORT:

Collect your own slides showing good and bad camping practices or contact the Floyd Wilson Wilderness Education Foundation (1407 Jersey St., Denver 80220) about prices on his education services. Share awareness of the management problem with as many groups and individuals as you can.

Work with the Forest Service or another authority on good conservation practices to develop pamphlets to be distributed to users.

Check with the Forest Service to see if they could use your services as a volunteer backcountry teacher.

ENCOURAGE ECOLOGICAL STUDIES:

The Sierra Club Outing Committee in California recently conducted a study of its club's impact on outings and found that very little work has been put into studying the ecological impact of people on backcountry. Such studies are essential for any adequate determination of carrying capacity for certain wilderness zones.

USE THE WILDERNESS PROPERLY YOURSELF

(Editors' note: Discussion of wilderness use will continue in the next edition of the HCN, August 1. That article will include interviews with representatives of NOLS, the Girl Scouts, the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, and a guide book writer. They will discuss the impact of the increased usage brought about by their organizations. The next issue will also include a wilderness conservation code, compiled from several sources, with suggestions for camping practices in the wilderness.)



When horses are tethered to trees for long periods of time, this can be the result. The horses get restless and paw the ground, destroying ground cover. When left for short periods, the horses should not be tied to small green trees since the slightest damage to the bark or roots may severely damage or kill the tree. When tying for overnight, use a pole or rope hitch rail at least 200 feet from any camp or water or use hobbles. (For more complete information send for the "Guide for Using Horses in Mountain Country" from the Montana Wilderness Association, Box 548, Bozeman, Mont. 59715. Send 50 cents plus postage.)

Photo in Rawah Wilderness by Floyd Wilson.

People of the nation to decide:

What kind of place should Yosemite be?

(Editor's note: In the process of writing a master plan for Yosemite National Park, the Park Service is trying out a new way of involving the public. They have scrapped the public-hearing-in-the-region approach. Instead, they are holding small workshops in major cities across the country — Seattle, Dallas, Denver, New York, Chicago, Washington, D.C., and Atlanta.

One reaction to the Park Service session held June 5 in Denver is printed below. The author, Alexis Parks, is a free-lance writer in Boulder, Colo.)

by Alexis Parks

The Denver group was divided but unified: the waves, whitecaps, undercurrents, the moving parts of a huge body of public opinion, rising, swelling, moving tidewise forward on an important issue. The topic wasn't new, but the approach to it was. Question? What kind of place should Yosemite National Park be?

For the first time, the National Park Service had taken the issue of public land management to the public-at-large. Where it lived. Not the local, ring-around-the-park public, but the rest of us, who read the out-of-state newspapers, who wrote letters, but who never spoke out to anyone except friends who knew us anyway, who accepted the frustration as a typical state of mind. Always agitating for something.

But here it was before us. A traveling road show. Yosemite on wheels, courtesy of your National Park Service.

The housewives came to the meeting in seersucker pantsuits. The junior execs shed to shirtsleeves (only the older ones kept their ties). There were sandaled feet and well-soled ones. Cowboy boots and tennis shoes. Most of the people came carrying memories of Yosemite as one might a mental scrapbook. A few had never been there at all, but came to speak for a special interest. "Who speaks for the trees?" They came to talk about horses and back-

packing, the handicapped and the aged. They had come to a uniquely democratic process and tradition hung in the room like smoke.

The room was conference size: large enough to walk an idea around in, but never out of hearing distance. The chairs were arranged into four circles, no one setting of any more distinction than another. The room slowly filled. Then, before the door was closed, the camera crew came in. Now a close-up, now scanning, move to the right and surface again. In that instant we remembered the camera tapes of the late '60s riots. Would our pictures be circled and identified? Was this a revolution of sorts?

The direction sheet was specific. There were to be no prepared statements, no put-downs. Everyone was to list their suggestions on park management. Be specific. Make statements of 10 words or less. One person was selected discussion leader; another, recorder. Rather, they were chosen by fate. The person who sat in a seat with a card marked D would lead the discussion. The one with the R would record the list of items. These were written on a master sheet, listing around and round the circle until all ideas (except overlapping ones) were written down.

Here credit must be inserted and directed toward M.C.A., the Music Corporation of America. Without them, the issues might not have been so well defined. When the Curry Company Concessionaires sold their 100 year old family business in Yosemite in 1970, managing park concessions was looked upon as just another form of investment — with a special distinction: the park setting was unique, the clientele well-established, and the promotion of the area handled by the National Park Service "Know Your National Parks — Parks are for People" people.

The concession at Yosemite was sold several times during the early 1970s. Then M.C.A. stepped in. They had been expanding their operations into leisure-time investments, and increasing the profits at Yosemite seemed merely a question of priorities. Parks are for everyone. Not just an elite few. We'll establish Yosemite as a Con-

vention Center. Run a chairlift up on the rocks to Glacier Point. Refurbish the lodges in 19th century decor and put everyone in costume. There'll be a nightclub, too. (Paperbacks and porno. Scuttle the nature books.) This park is for people. And money. And pleasure. Pleasure? Walt Disney Productions sat up and looked around. Hmmm. Park concessions sound like a good investment. Amfac, Greyhound Corporation, and Transworld Airlines thought so, too.

So, the public list was made. Circling round and round, pulling the edges tighter and tighter, writing the list down, condensing it until the essence of the public mood was distilled. The public process, phase one, was complete. One list was the same as another; only the wording varied, or the style of speech.

At heart:

1. We recommend the development of a concession plan which would exclude private concessions and private capital from the park.
2. We recommend the implementation of a transportation plan which would exclude the use of the private automobile, which would provide perimeter parking and establish mass transit to the central areas, and would offer bicycles and shuttlebus service along existing roads.
3. We seek a management philosophy which maximizes wilderness, provides a quiet natural atmosphere, and minimizes the signs of man.

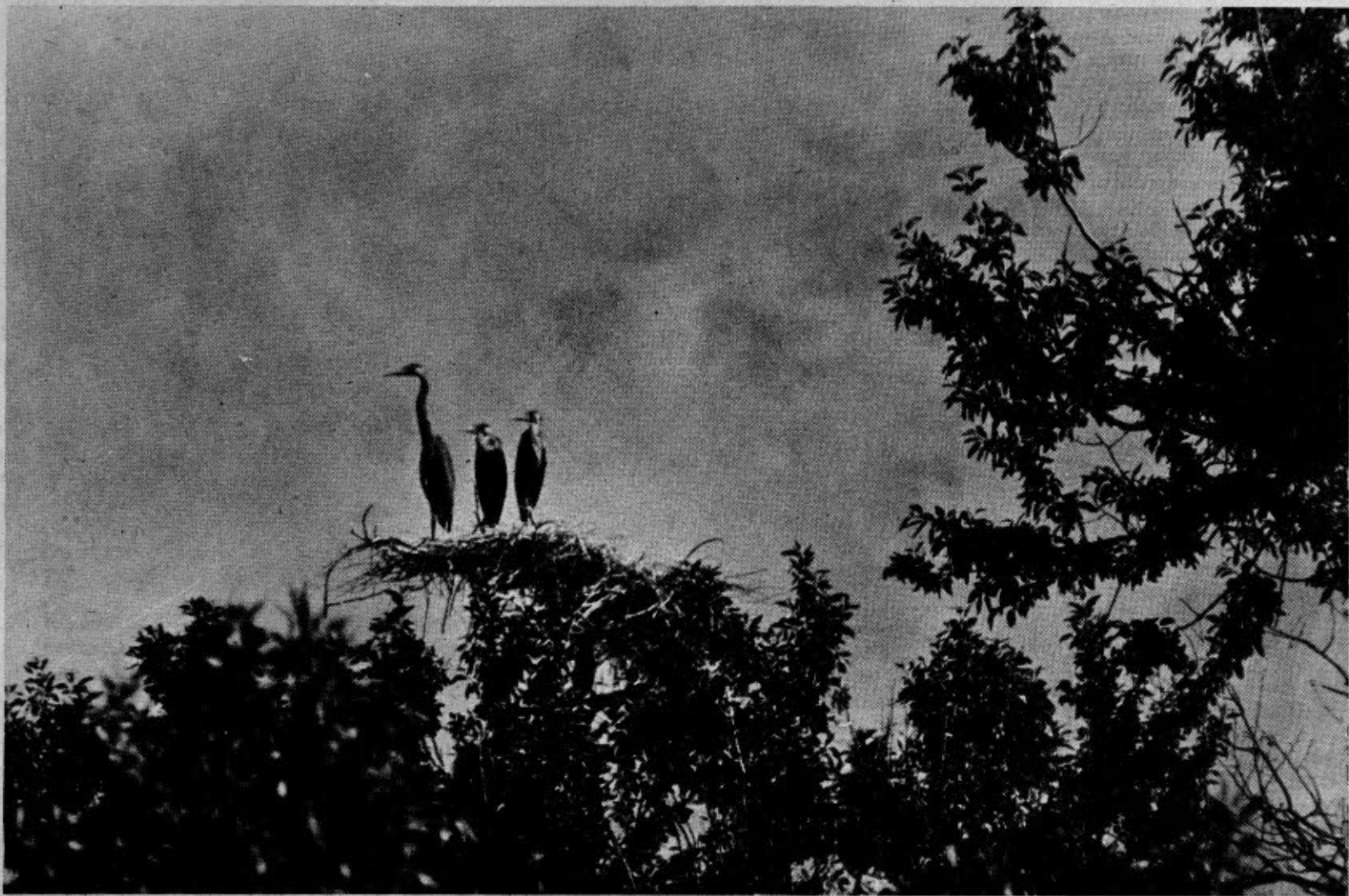
The meeting ended, united. Like some of the others, I had come with memories. In the early '60s, I had gone to Yosemite on my honeymoon. Now I had come to the public meeting to make sure the park would remain the way I remembered it. Spectacular. Serene.



8-High Country News — July 18, 1975

Spear fishing, soaring, squawking

Life in a heron rookery

**Entering a heron rookery is like stepping back into prehistoric times with great, reptilian birds. . . .**

"He has taken a silent step, and with great care he advances; slowly does he raise his head from his shoulders and now, what a sudden start! His formidable bill has transfixed a perch, which he beats to death on the ground. See with what difficulty he gulps it down his capacious throat!" wrote John James Audubon of the great blue heron.

The great blue prefers fish and has been known to plunder fish hatchery pools. Frogs, snakes, crustaceans, birds, small mammals, and insects may also round out this heron's diet.

Ornithologist Alexander Sprunt, Jr., says that when it hunts, "Not only does the great blue heron stalk his prey, lifting each foot stealthily from the shallows without a ripple, but he also waits motionless. He may stand still as a stump for half an hour until a victim comes by. On rare occasions he lands in deep water, and as he floats he strikes again and again into a school of fish."

This five foot tall, eight pound bird was once killed by sportsmen because it was thought to be damaging the trout fishery. Actually, the great blue takes very few trout. Today it is fully protected by law.

Edward Samuels in 1867 wrote that the great blue "by many is considered as a palatable bird." Being a true scientist he shot a few young herons ("squab") and described them as "tasting something like duck but with a strong flavor that was not pleasant."

Peter W. Cox, publisher of *Maine Times*, describes entering a heron rookery as "like stepping back into prehistoric times. Great reptilian birds lumber off the heavy, twig nests. Hoarse croaks reverberate in the lush undergrowth, but the trees themselves are often dead, the victims of the high nitrogen content of the heron droppings."

The great blue -- also called poke, shitepoke, frog stabber, or blue crane -- lays three to six greenish-blue eggs in a nest which may be located in a tree top, in a low shrub, or on the ground. The birds nest in colonies which may contain over 100 birds.

"The nests are great, bulky affairs measuring three feet or more across the top," writes naturalist Russell T. Congdon. "Additional material is built into the nests yearly,

as they are used over a long period. Some of the nests become so bulky that the weight is too much for the supporting willow branches and they fall to the ground."

Sprunt describes one rookery in South Carolina where herons and egrets have been recorded nesting for about 140 years in the same spot.

"Courtship rituals often involve scores, even hundreds of the birds," writes Sprunt. "Males strut about defiantly, pecking at rivals and parrying bill thrusts like master swordsmen. Croaking females urge them on. Sometimes groups of herons dance in circles, their big wings flapping up and down. Pairs nibble each other's feathers."

This time of year, the young great blues in Wyoming are standing up in the nest, testing their flight feathers by flapping around the platform, and squawking for food. The noisy chorus reaches a crescendo as the adults return gorged with food.

Congdon writes, "Sailing in, the handsome bird arched its wings and by a series of backstrokes, put on the brakes, dropped its landing gear and made a smooth landing on a slender willow branch near the nest. Using its wings for balance, it took a few steps down the branch and arrived at the big nest platform where it was greeted by the noisy squawks of the hungry youngsters. Immediately the larger of the two youngsters reached up and grasped the bill of the parent, taking a crosswise hold and pulling the parent down from her upright position. With her bill held in this firm cross grip the food was apparently passed from her bill into the bill of the big youngster. The other youngster kept up a noisy squawking while this was going on, and soon he had his turn, using the same technique of securing a crosswise grip on the provider's big bill."

Great blues range from southeastern Alaska and Nova Scotia south to Mexico and the West Indies, with some birds wintering in northern South America.

The adult has a white head with black crown patches and head plumes. Young have a black crown and lack head plumes. The large bluish-grey body is marked by black shoulder patches and whitish plumes on the lower neck.

—BH

**Photos were taken last week**

July 18, 1975 — High Country News-9



...ek in a rookery near Lander, Wyo.



Scratchboard of great blue herons by Holly Merrifield. Merrifield has a wildlife art studio called Gallery East in Thornton, Colo., which is open to the public.

10-High Country News — July 18, 1975

Reckoning from Washington

by Lee Catterall

During his Senate confirmation hearings before becoming Secretary of the Interior, Stan Hathaway voiced support for the "concept" of a regional environmental impact statement about the massive coal development plans in the Northern Great Plains.

His position at that time is contrary to the one he finds himself in now — on the losing side of a U.S. Court of Appeals decision ordering the eventual preparation of such a statement before coal development is allowed by the government to expand in the area of eastern Wyoming and Montana and the western Dakotas.

It also is contrary to the position taken last year by Bud Brimmer, Wyoming's attorney general when Hathaway was governor.

When the Sierra Club was demanding in Washington's U.S. District Court in January of 1974 that an environmental statement be prepared, Brimmer gave the state's frugal opposition to the Sierra Club suit.

Judge Barrington Parker had asked lawyers on both sides of the case if any state wanted to intervene in court — be represented by a lawyer. Peabody Coal Co. attorney James H. Kreiger said Brimmer had written a letter for the court supporting the government and the coal companies, but the state, Kreiger added, "couldn't afford Washington counsel to be here."

During Hathaway's confirmation hearings before the Senate Interior Committee, the former Wyoming governor said he couldn't recall having opposed the suit.

"I don't think I did," he said.

Under questioning by Sen. Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.), Hathaway seemed to endorse the suit.

"Governor," Metcalf asked, "if you become Secretary of the Interior, do you believe that there should be regional impact statements in areas such as we have in the four states of Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota, and South Dakota?"

"Yes, I do, Senator," Hathaway responded. However, in words that tend to confuse and dampen that flat statement, he added: "I understand there is a national impact study in process. I have not had the opportunity to review that study. I think that it is near completion. Certainly, that has to tie in with regional promises. I would support the concept you are talking about."

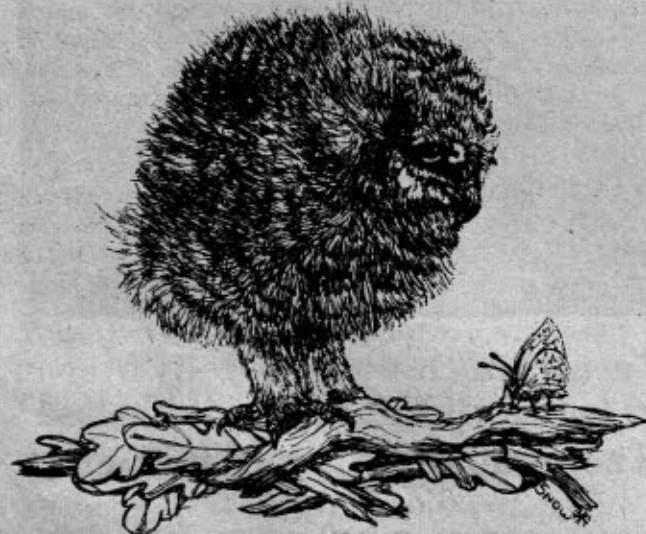
Hathaway was referring to an impact study of a proposed system for leasing federally-owned coal. That study reportedly was placed on Hathaway's desk last week for approval, along with the final version of the Northern Great Plains Resource Program report, a study that falls short of being able to qualify as an environmental impact statement under terms of the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act.

The completion of those two reports means "the massive development of the Northern Great Plains" is ready to begin, the court said.

Will the government comply with the court order to file an impact statement on all planned coal-related activity in the area, or will it appeal the decision to the Supreme Court?

Asst. Attorney Gen. Wallace Johnson told this column no decision had been made by July 4. However, Johnson said the dissenting opinion in the two-to-one appellate court decision formed a "good basis" on which to appeal the decision to the high court.

Meanwhile, Johnson acknowledged there is a "freeze" on any new coal-related permit or lease in the area other than renewals of existing ones.



NRDC wants regulations

Uranium mill tailings hazardous

An environmental law group is calling for government reforms in the regulation of uranium milling in eight western states.

The group, the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), claims that "past lax regulatory policies of the Atomic Energy Commission have resulted in the accumulation of tens of millions of tons of uranium mill tailings in unstabilized and potentially hazardous piles."

NRDC wants regulations which would require companies to post bond to cover the cost of stabilizing, maintaining, and disposing of the tailings. The group made the request in a "petition for rule making" filed with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and published in the Federal Register in May.

NRDC also asked the commission to prepare an environmental impact statement on milling regulations. While the statement is being prepared, no new licenses should be issued, NRDC said.

The environmental group claims that the tailings pose a major health and environmental hazard. In a letter to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, NRDC pointed to problems in Grand Junction and Durango, Colo., and in downtown Salt Lake City, Utah, as historical evidence of the federal government's inadequate efforts to deal with these hazards.

By the year 2000, NRDC warned in the letter, the U.S. may have a tailings problem 30 times larger than it is today. "While the potential dangers associated with the existing 22 largely unstabilized, abandoned tailings piles are grave enough, the problems in the coming two or three decades will be much greater," NRDC said.

HEALTHY?

Testimony before the Joint Atomic Energy Committee in 1971 indicated that uranium miners exposed to concentrations of radon gas comparable to those found in buildings built over tailings show twice the normal rate of occurrence of lung cancer.

Radon gas, a product of the radium in the tailings, can move through both soil and concrete. When it concentrates in a structure built over the tailings the highly toxic decay products of radon gas can be deposited in human lungs.

Tailings piles also threaten surface streams and underground water. On the Animas River, downstream from an AEC-licensed uranium mill at Durango, Colo., a Public

Health Service biologist found that fish and other river animals had been completely wiped out for a few miles downstream. Severe damage from the radiation could be traced as far as 50 miles below the mill.

The health service findings surfaced in 1958. Seventeen years later, in January of this year, Region VIII Environmental Protection Agency administrator John Green indicated that the country's tailings problems are still by no means solved. He called storage and disposal of the mill tailings "the Achilles' heel of the uranium milling industry."

A final environmental impact statement, written on the Shirley Basin, Wyo., mill "lacks information on the storage and disposal of the presently projected volume of tailings to be generated by the mill," Green said in a letter to the Atomic Energy Commission.

HOT SAND

Uranium tailings are sandlike wastes produced in the first step of the nuclear fuel-making process. The ore is crushed, ground, and chemically treated in a mill to extract uranium. Once a few pounds of uranium are removed from a ton of ore, the leftovers — the same weight and a larger volume than the original ore — are discharged with water into a tailings pond. The water seeps into the ground and evaporates, eventually leaving a dry tailings pile.

The pile contains about 85% of the radioactivity in the original mined ore. Although mill wastes are not as poisonous to man as the plutonium in high-level radioactive wastes produced by power plants, they remain a hazard longer. One of the waste's constituents, called Thorium-230, has a half-life of 80,000 years.

"Using the standard rule-of-thumb that radioactive wastes have to be contained for 20 half-lives of the longest lived hazardous constituent, uranium mill tailings will have to be stored safely for over a million years," NRDC says.

To comment on NRDC's proposed rules or to receive more information about the uranium mill tailings problem write: Mr. William A. Anders, Chairman, Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555, or John D. Leshy, Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc., 664 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto, Calif. 94301.



Emphasis ENERGY



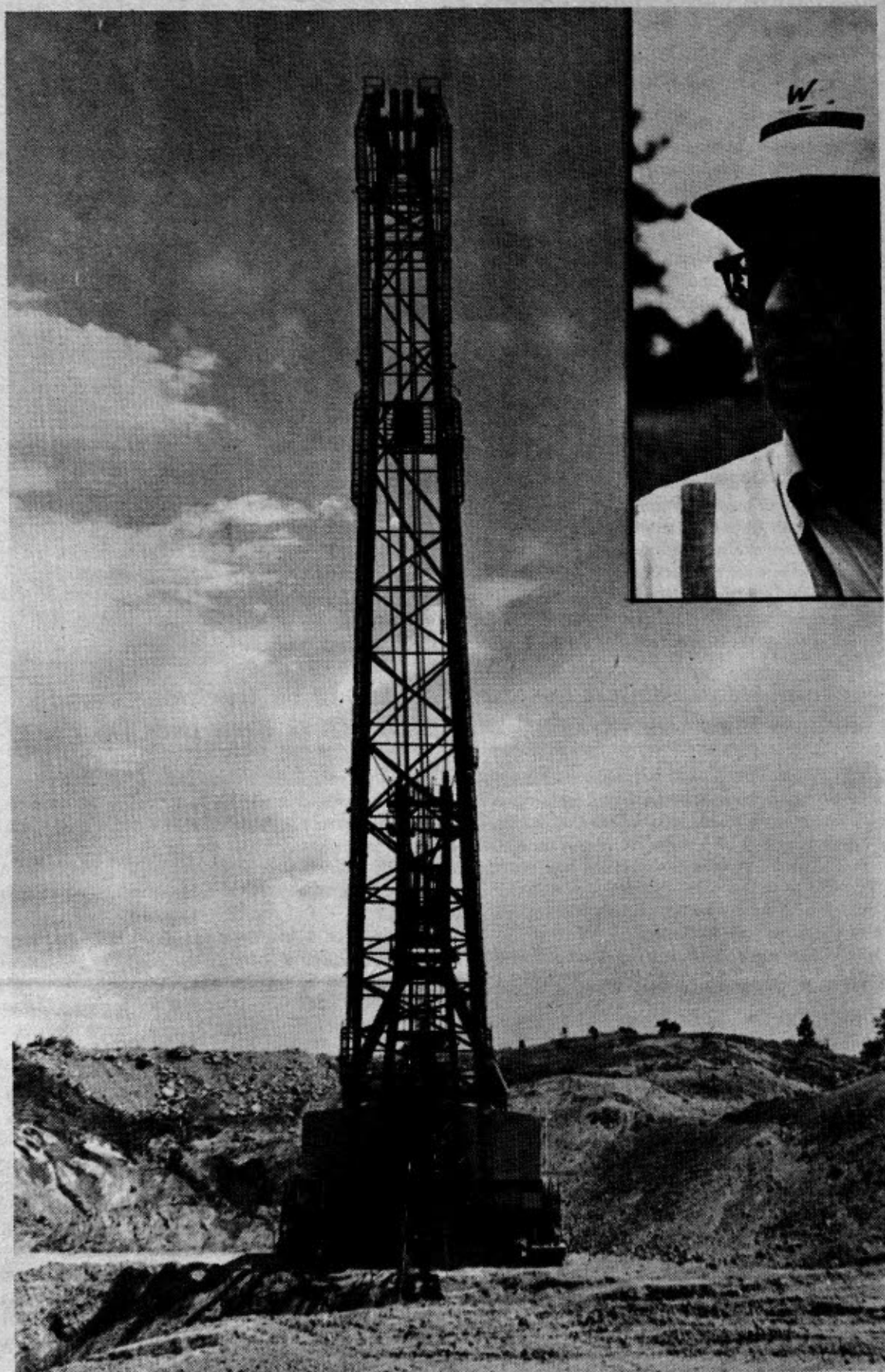
REGION CONSIDERS HARD LINE. Should western states refuse to supply energy to the rest of the nation until there is a national commitment to energy conservation? Such a proposal will be considered by the governors of 10 western states at a meeting in Santa Fe July 28. The proposal was made by Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm's representative, Jim Monaghan, and seconded by Montana Gov. Tom Judge's representative, Gary Wicks. The governors organized a few months ago to strengthen their voice in regional energy development.

SHELL 'INSULTS' TRIBE. Shell Oil Company, frustrated with unsuccessful attempts to arrive at a coal-lease agreement with the Crow Tribe in Montana, sent letters to each member of the tribe promising a \$200 per capita payment in addition to royalties, and implied the money would be to them in time for the Crow Fair. Tribal officers reacted with letters to tribal members saying the Shell letter was an "insult to the intelligence of the Crow People." They also said that Shell was interfering with the sovereignty of the tribe by predetermining that the money would be used for per capita payments rather than for the tribe as a whole. The tribe had previously declared its leases with Gulf, Peabody, and Shell "null and void" and is in the process of preparing its own utility siting act, strip mining regulations, and land use planning. An observer, assessing the tribe's reaction to the Shell tactic, said he thought the letter was "suicidal."

HATHAWAY CHOOSES. Going against the advice of some of his advisors, Interior Secretary Stanley K. Hathaway has decided to publish in final form a document necessary to the resumption of coal leasing on federal land. The document, the coal-leasing programmatic impact statement, received strong criticism when it was first released in May of 1974. It has been revised since then, but a number of Interior Department officials regard it as "still defective," according to a **New York Times** report. Hathaway's choices were either to reissue the revised draft of the statement for another round of public comment — or to expedite leasing by publishing the document in its final form. Although the decision is still unofficial, Assistant Secretary Jack Horton told the **New York Times** that "the tentative decision is to go final." Katherine Fletcher, staff scientist for the Environmental Defense Fund is reported to have said, "We have as much as told them at Interior that we would sue them if they did this, and we will."

CITY WATER FOR GASIFICATION? The Panhandle Eastern Pipeline Co., which may begin building a billion dollar coal gasification plant near Douglas, Wyo., in 1977, is negotiating with the city of Cheyenne for water. The proposed water project would involve either transbasin diversion or a water exchange of city supplies in the Little Snake River drainage in south-central Wyoming, says James H. Barrett, assistant attorney general assigned to the State Engineer's office.

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Westmoreland loses suit; implications far-reaching

Environmentalists recently won a major court victory, the second within a week, which could have far reaching implications for coal leasing requirements. The U.S. 9th Circuit Court of Appeals on June 19 ruled that Westmoreland Resources must have an environmental impact statement to cover its whole mining plan, which may span 20 years. The suit was brought by Friends of the Earth, a national conservation group, and Bruce M. and Dorothy W. Cady, ranchers in the area.

The decision followed closely after a favorable federal court ruling on a Sierra Club suit contending that an environmental impact statement is necessary for coal development throughout the Northern Plains region. (See "Reckoning," page 10)

The ruling reverses the decision of Federal District Judge James F. Battin of Billings, who did not find that Westmoreland's leases covering 30,876 acres constituted "major federal action" within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The coal is all Indian or federally owned, and leases have been issued. An environmental impact statement was filed for only a five year plan to mine 770 acres in the southeastern Montana area around Sarpy Creek.

The appeals court said that an impact statement must be filed for the entire 30,876 acre tract as well as individual statements for each mining operation.

The ruling clarifies the obligations of strip miners under the NEPA. Pemberton Hutchinson, president of Westmoreland, said his company intends to comply with the ruling although, "we'd rather not have had to do anything, but if that's the law of the land then that's what we'll do," according to a *Billings Gazette* story.

The Court of Appeals judge, Martin Donald Van Oosterhout, issued an injunction preventing Westmoreland from proceeding with any action not covered by the original 770 acre impact statement. The court added that the Secretary of Interior must ignore investments on the 770 acre tract when making decisions on whether or not to revoke leases on other Westmoreland tracts as impact statements are filed on them.

Ed Dobson, Northern Plains representative for the Friends of the Earth, and one of the plaintiffs in the suit, said this last part of the decision should be "important across the board" in issues regarding lease decisions.

Photo of Sarpy Creek mine and of Westmoreland President Pemberton Hutchinson by Carol Harlow.

The Hot Line

energy news from across the country

FEDS FIGHT SITING DELAYS. Federal Energy Administration teams last week began visiting the sites of utility construction delays across the country, including Colstrip, Mont., to investigate the delays. According to the Associated Press report, the teams are to report back to President Gerald Ford by July 19 with their recommendations for possible solutions. FEA officials in Washington, D.C., said the teams have no powers other than the powers of persuasion to cut the delays. The Associated Press story said that the two sustained strip mining bill vetoes "appear to be a clear indication that Ford and the energy industry have the power to keep utility companies free of stringent federal controls."

SAVING POWER AND MONEY. Although other utilities are talking about it, Central Vermont Public Service Corp. is the only one actually now trying time-of-day rates. Since last November, volunteer customers have special meters which charge them about one tenth as much per kilowatt hour during non-peak periods than during peak periods. The system allows customers to

save, but it also helps the utility, which is in very bad financial shape, according to the copyrighted story by Allan Sloan of the *New York Times Service*. The utility doesn't know if it would be able to afford to build a new generating plant if the peak demand grows.

NUCLEAR RESISTANCE GROWS IN TENNESSEE. A nuclear power plant, the world's largest, and a nuclear breeder power plant, the nation's first, are both being proposed in Tennessee. And both are meeting opposition. Farmers and city and county officials are opposing the Tennessee Valley Authority's plans to build the largest power plant near John Town, Tenn., because the farmers don't want their land condemned and because the officials fear the socio-economic impact. Some 5,000 workers are expected. The Natural Resources Defense Council is filing suit to oppose the breeder, planned for near Oak Ridge, Tenn., because of the potential for accidents of catastrophic proportion.

SKYSCRAPERS DOUBLE AS POWER PLANTS. High-rise office buildings covered with special panels can not only be heated and cooled by solar energy, but they can export energy, if preliminary studies by a consortium of four companies are right. The companies hope to prove by the 1980s the economic and technical feasibility of the unique design, according to an article in *Machine Design*.

ERDA ANNOUNCES PRIORITIES. The Environmental Research and Development Administration (ERDA) gave hope to solar enthusiasts in its blueprint for development since it put equal emphasis on solar energy, breeder reactors, and nuclear fusion for long-term solutions. However, *Land Use Planning Reports* says this is one of the few new developments in administration policy. The plan urges a shift from oil and natural gas as energy sources to coal and uranium as primary forms. In three stages, ERDA emphasized coal, nuclear, gas, and oil in near term (prior to 1985); synthetic fuels from coal, oil shale, geothermal, and energy from waste in the mid-term (1985-2000); and solar, fusion, and fast breeder reactors for long-term (after 2000).

ANOTHER TRY FOR STRIPPING REGS. Senators Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.), Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), and Floyd K. Haskell (D-Colo.) have introduced an amendment to the Federal Coal Leasing Act (S. 391) that contains the basic mining and reclamation standards of the vetoed strip mining bill. It would apply only to federal lands. The coal leasing bill itself would change current federal coal leasing regulations to require competitive bidding and comprehensive land use plans. It would eliminate prospecting permits and preference right leases. Leases would be limited to 20 years and then continue only so long as coal is produced in paying quantities, according to *Coal News*.

Interview with Gov. Dick Lamm

Colorado can orchestrate state's oil shale growth

Reprinted from SHALE COUNTRY, Mountain Empire Publishing, Inc., June 1975.

by Carol Edmonds

Colorado's first-term Gov. Dick Lamm has said he is not about to fight the Civil War again over the issue of states' rights, but he also asserts, "It's much in Colorado's interests to control their own destiny in oil shale—to control the pace, the rate, and the method of development." And, he thinks the state can "seize control of its destiny" and orchestrate oil-shale growth in Colorado.

But the federal government isn't the only group Lamm must tangle with. He also must face the local communities, regional government and the oil shale industry.

In an exclusive interview with *Shale Country*, Lamm talked about the states' role in energy development, his assessment of the industry and other oil-shale related issues.

Q. What is your general stance toward oil-shale development in Colorado?

A. We are trying to prepare for a good working relationship with industry. (However), there should be creative tension between government and private industry. It's a joint venture. But government has to be the referee and occasionally blow the whistle.

Q. Would you contrast your position with that of Utah's Gov. Calvin Rampton? He made this statement to oil-shale developers recently in Salt Lake City: "We want you to regard us as partners in this effort and not as antagonists. As far as this state is concerned, we're in favor of the development of this resource. We will have the water available for you."

A. Colorado cannot say the water is available, and I would be much more cautious about saying we're in favor of development. We are very much in favor of first-phase development. But, Colorado doesn't begin to know the impacts from oil-shale, the costs of the game, its environmental, economic or social consequences. For these reasons, we are anxious to get a start in oil shale so we can get some of the answers and even some of the questions.

BLM issues new fencing regs to protect wildlife

The Bureau of Land Management has established new standards for fences on public lands to prevent "unduly restricting the movements of wildlife." BLM Associate Director George L. Turcott says, "This policy substantially resolves antelope fence crossing problems and additionally establishes responsible standards for all other big game habitat."

In the past, antelope have had their seasonal migrations blocked by "sheep-tight" woven wire fences in many areas of the West. Antelope, unlike deer and elk, do not jump over fences but rather slide under the lowest strand. If the bottom strand is too close to the ground or if the bottom half of the fence is made of woven wire, the antelope have difficulty crossing the barrier.

In the Red Desert of southcentral Wyoming in 1971-1972 a severe winter coupled with impassable fences led to a loss of 61.8% of one herd of antelope. During the heavy snow and adverse weather, all types of fences were found to be detrimental to antelope, but woven wire fences caused the highest mortality -- 83%.

The BLM's new standards recommend three or four strand barbed wire fences on antelope range with the bottom strand barbless and at least 10 inches off the ground. BLM officials feel these type of fences will minimize wildlife losses and still contain stock for range management purposes fairly well.

The BLM is now reviewing existing fences, trying to locate and change those which cause significant problems to wildlife movement, according to Lander Resource Area Manager Dale Brubaker.

The Red Desert migratory antelope area is one of the BLM's first priorities for fence modification, he said.

The new BLM standards are also designed to protect desert bighorn sheep from problem fences. In bighorn ranges fences will be set back 100 feet from water holes to ensure that bighorn sheep will not feel entrapped. Wires and rails are spaced to prevent blocking the animal's movements.

Reducing the visual impact of fencing is another goal set by the new standards. The BLM recommends using

Q. If you were to write a scenario for ideal development of oil shale in this state, what would it be?

A. First, ideal oil shale development would see local governments develop a working relationship under an umbrella, hopefully COG (Western Colorado Council of Governments), to help us (the state) solve some of the problems. For instance, decisions must be made on how the local governments are going to divide the tax base when the plant is in Rio Blanco County and the impact is in Garfield County.

We really haven't seen evidence that local governments want to make the hard decisions. Garfield County, for instance, hasn't turned down a subdivision in years. "Love might be never having to say your sorry," but as county commissioner, part of your job is having to say you're sorry.

Second the state legislature needs to gain an understanding of the immense impacts occurring in those counties and get the money in to help them.

Third, we have to develop a working partnership with industry. I would like to see a 50,000-barrel-a-day plant established on a selective basis with the federal government's help, perhaps some kind of federal subsidy for that plant—but not across the board. I think that would be

"It's a joint venture, but government has to be the referee and occasionally blow the whistle."

--Colo. Gov. Dick Lamm

disastrous for Colorado. But I do feel we need some kind of method where we could choose a process and go forward with an additional plant at an early date. I would hope our (state) interagency energy task force could evaluate all the proposals (to select a process for early development). We might want to have two plants (using two different processes). But I sure don't want 13 oil-shale plants all starting up at the same time in Colorado. We need, at a minimum, 4 or 5 years to assess the impact. I'm anxious to get going early.

Q. You referred to COG. When COG's former chairman Stan Anderson was in Denver for an appearance before the Joint Budget Committee in March, he said after the

hearing that, in effect, he had some reservations about whether COG was getting its act together. What's your view of the Council?

A. I think Stan Anderson has got some reason for concern. There appears to be some evidence that this Council hasn't got its act together. But we're not willing to give up on COG -- it has got great promise.

Q. A big concern voiced in local communities is whether the state intends to dictate local growth policy. What restraint does the state intend to use with these communities?

A. (I have told the county commissioners), "If we see evidence you're coming to grips with these problems, the last thing in the world I want to do is decide how you divide the tax base or where the new town is going to be." We (the state) really want to be a resource. At the same time, I hold out both a subsidy and a sword. Somebody is going to have to make the decisions. Into a vacuum steps the state.

Q. You speak of a "subsidy": how will oil-shale related growth be funded?

A. One of the big sources is some equitable method of property tax-sharing (between counties). This also relates

to interstate relations; for example, most of the impact from Utah's U-a tract will be in Rangely, Colo. We need federal impact monies from EPA or HUD or... but that's not going to begin to take up the impact. I've said, let's go ahead and spend that 37.5 percent in the oil-shale industry trust fund rapidly. It's a false economy not to spend that.

Also, we need a severance tax at the state level. And we're really expecting through the TAP (Technical Assistance Program) and other things for industry (to help) in indirect ways. They recognize some of this money is going to have to come (through them).

Q. What is your assessment of the oil shale industry?

A. Its problems are, of course, related to the uncertainty of the world oil situation. The industry literally is at a watershed. It could be that there will be no oil shale industry or that there will be a great oil shale industry. We're beginning to see the oil companies themselves not as excited about the oil shale as many people in Colorado thought they were going to be. It's very much up in the air.

Q. What about state-federal relations in oil shale? As you know, former Interior Secretary Rogers Morton asked in Denver in January, "How mature are these western states institutionally? Can they handle this energy development?" What is your answer?

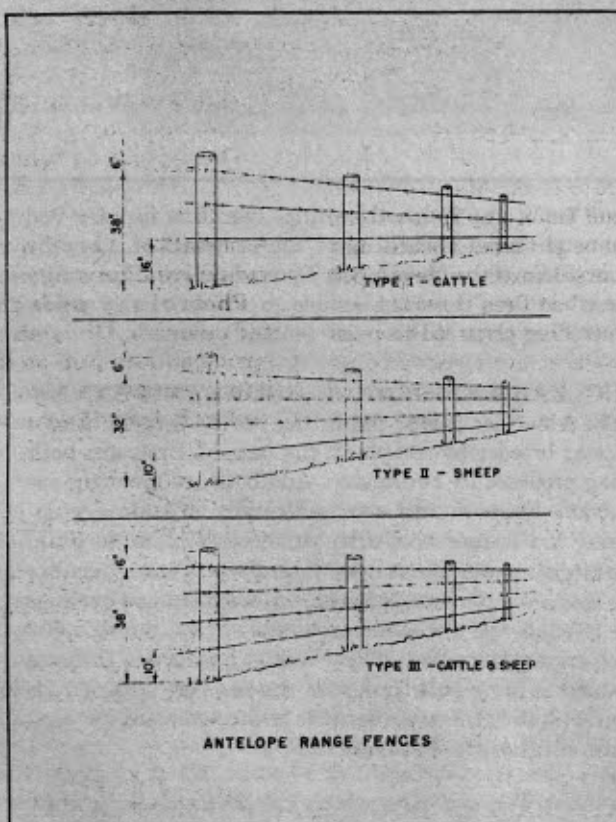
A. The very question sends bristles up my spine. The state of Colorado will control its own destiny, thank you. I'm not at all sure the federal government is mature enough. If you really want an idea about how the federal government runs something, look at the railroads and the Indian reservations.

Q. In emphasizing the state's authority, you have talked of air-pollution regulation as a "very blunt tool" the state of Colorado can use to control oil-shale growth.

A. Yes, that's possible. But (I'd prefer) something like a plant-siting legislation so that the state will have a veto over some of these (oil shale) developments without having to use that kind of blunt instrument.

I want to stress, and I hope the people of western Colorado understand, that we really hope to have a partnership with Colorado West. Federal preemption is immensely threatening to the whole lifestyle of the Western Slope. I want very desperately to work with these local communities on a good partnership basis.

natural barriers to reduce the need of fencing, placing fences along natural changes in vegetation type, following the natural contour of the land, avoiding ridgetops, and setting fences back from roads by "several hundred feet."



Three types of fences recommended by the Bureau of Land Management for antelope range to reduce mortality and allow unrestricted movement of wildlife. The new fences will not contain livestock as well as the old woven wire design, but the "sheep-tight" fences were often death traps to antelope.



Western Roundup

Industry water moratorium in Utah

Utah Gov. Calvin L. Rampton has called for a moratorium on Colorado River water applications for industrial uses, pending an update of the state water plan. In a special session of the legislature, the House killed an administration bill that would have allowed the state engineer to issue water rights based on greatest need, rather than the date of filing. Stanley Green, the state appropriations engineer in the Water Rights Division, told the *Deseret News* that he thinks the state administration is going to scrap the old policy of "first in time, first in right" despite the legislature's refusal to accept it. "I think there are a lot of water experts in the state who think the state engineer already has the power he was seeking," he told the *News*. He said the state has back applications for much more water than the state has left to it under the Colorado River Compact. Many of the applications are for energy-related development.

Stillwater mining a cause for concern

Johns-Manville Corp. is boring a 3,000 foot long hole, called an adit, into the Bear-tooth Mountains of southcentral Montana. The JM adit probes in search of pockets of platinum and palladium. The deposit looks rich — .5 ounce per ton — and Fish and Game and Forest Service officials believe a mine will be developed in an area 30 by 5 miles wide called the Stillwater Complex, according to a story by Flynn J. Ell in the *Billings Gazette*. Fish and Game biologists Phil Stewart and Bill Stoneberg believe the preliminary mining activity is already having an impact on the highly scenic area, according to the *Gazette*. They say the elk herd is moving out of the area and the West Fork of the Stillwater is being polluted. Friends of the Earth, a national conservation organization, has filed suit against the project.

Aspen Ski Corp. going west to Wash.

One of Colorado's first ski resort developers, Aspen Skiing Corp., is moving west, and some of the residents of the proposed new site in Methow Valley, Wash., are protesting. An unlikely combination of ranchers, members of the John Birch Society, and "long-hairs" is opposing the ski development, according to the *Associated Press*. An officer of the Methow Valley Preservation Committee says they fear the secondary housing and commercial developments which could follow more than the ski development itself. The group entered a float in a recent parade saying, "Aspen Go Home." The Aspen project director, Jerry Blann, says the resort, with its plentiful supply of dry powder snow, could absorb up to 6,000 skiers per day. Ski Corp. president D.R.C. Brown told the Denver Rotary Club that his company is looking into a joint venture in Canada as well as the Washington development. Brown said Colorado is now experiencing an anti-ski development period, as reflected by the administration of Gov. Dick Lamm. "I have serious doubts whether another ski area will ever be developed in Colorado," he said. Ski visits were up 20% in Colorado last season as compared with a national average increase of 10-12%.

Coors tests new recyclable bottle

The Adolph Coors Co., brewers of Coors beer in Golden, Colo., say they are on the verge of developing a returnable plastic beer bottle that can be reused many times over. Bob Mornin, president of Coors Container Co., told the *Denver Post* that the new bottles are durable, won't affect the taste of the beverage, can withstand internal pressure from carbonation, and weigh one-tenth as much as a glass bottle. A limited market test of the new petroleum-based plastic bottle could occur as early as mid-1976.

Parks adopt fire burning policies

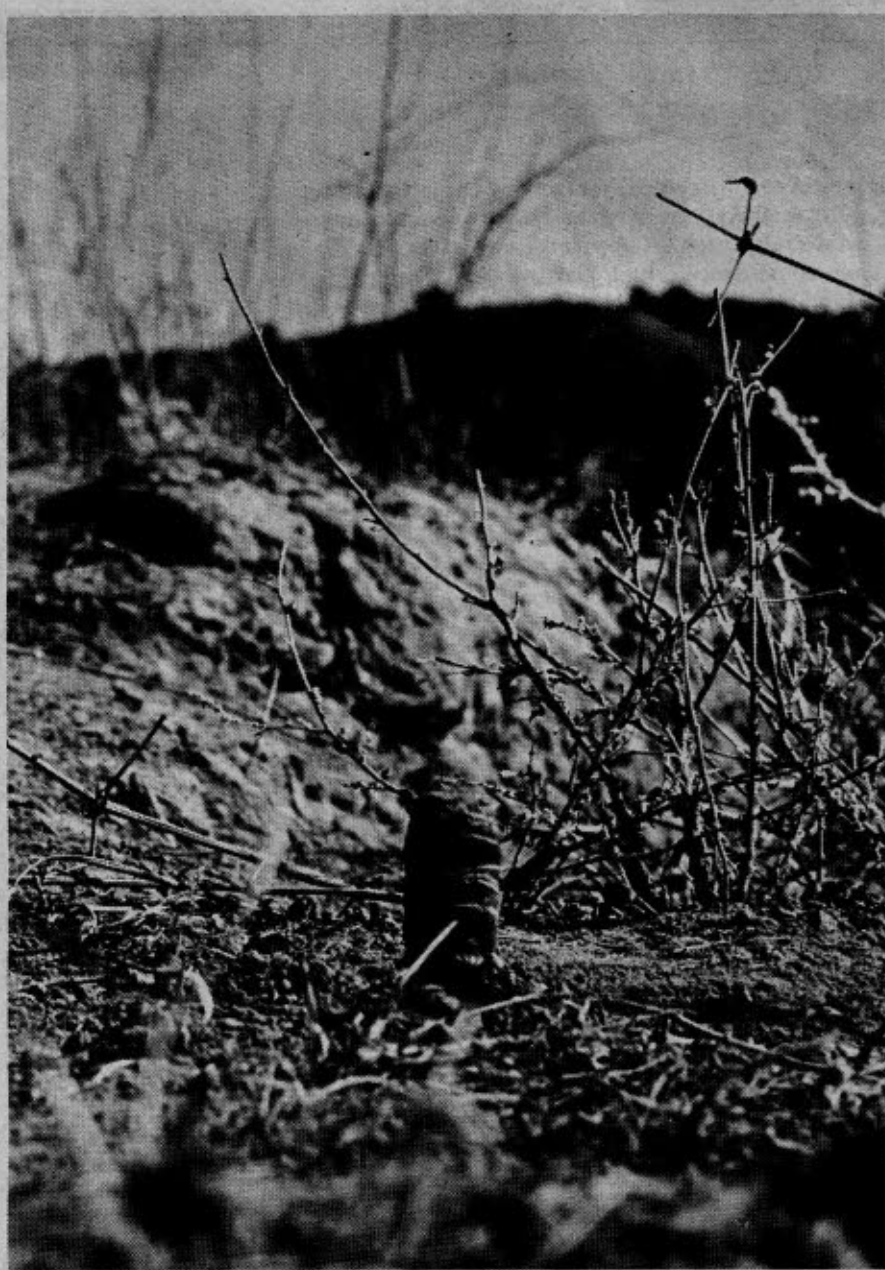
This summer natural fire management plans are in effect in Rocky Mountain National Park, Colo.; Wind Cave National Park, S.D.; and Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks, Wyo. Man-caused fires in these parks will be put out as usual, but natural lightning-caused fires will be allowed to run their course in many undeveloped areas of the parks. When conditions are extremely dry or when fires threaten endangered species or human life, they will be put out. Fires won't be permitted to cross park boundaries. The Park Service says fires caused by nature "are recognized as natural phenomena which must be permitted to continue to influence the ecosystem if truly natural areas are to be perpetuated." The Park Service plans an interpretation program to explain the role of fire to park visitors.

Suit blames cloudseeding for floods

In 1972 more than 200 persons were killed in a flash flood in Rapid City, S.D. In the Black Hills, upstream from the disaster, the Bureau of Reclamation had been cloud seeding to increase precipitation earlier in the year. Now the families of five of the flood victims are suing the government for \$1.7 million in damages. "It is ridiculous to think that a few hundred pounds of finely ground table salt dispersed from a single airplane could cause 12 inches of rain in a few hours," said Gov. Richard Kneip. "The storm that caused the flood was the result of an unusual combination of natural weather events," he said. The government has until August 1 to file an answer to the complaint.

Conservancy buys land for USFS

The Nature Conservancy has purchased 260 acres of land near Deckers, Colo. The land is completely surrounded by Pike National Forest and will be held for eventual sale to the U.S. Forest Service pending necessary appropriation by Congress.



State stockpiles predator poisons

The state of Wyoming is stockpiling enough predator poison — 1080, cyanide, and strychnine — to last for several years, State Agriculture Commissioner Larry Bourret told the *Associated Press*. The state's action follows a ruling by U.S. District Court Judge Ewing Kerr which prohibits the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) from enforcing its 1972 ban on the interstate shipment of predator poisons. Bourret said only state or federal employees will be permitted to administer the poison program. "Those (private parties) who acquire the poisons and administer them do so illegally," he said.

An executive ban on the use of predator poisons on federal lands is still in effect, but Bourret says that restriction is in the process of being amended. The *ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS* has reported that President Gerald Ford's domestic council is expected to recommend use of sodium cyanide on federal lands. Such an action would be a partial lifting of the ban which covers 1080, cyanide, and strychnine.

The EPA is appealing Judge Kerr's ruling and has filed a motion for a stay to prevent shipment and stockpiling while the appeal is being heard. The suit was filed by the State of Wyoming, the Wyoming Wool Growers Association, the Wyoming Stock Growers Association, and several individual ranchers against the EPA and the Department of the Interior.

Photo of a cyanide gun or "coyote getter" by Joe Brunetti and courtesy of the Colorado Division of Wildlife. When a predator tugs on this baited peg, a spring shoots poison into the mouth of the animal. The new M-44 gun, an improvement on the old coyote getter, has a lower power spring mechanism and so is less of a hazard to humans.

Endangered pronghorn receive help

The 100 to 150 surviving Sonoran pronghorn antelope that live in the harsh desert country along the Arizona-Mexico border are the subjects of an intensified effort to insure survival of this endangered species in the wild. Recently, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service established an "endangered species recovery team" to collect information and draw up a recovery plan for the race of pronghorns. "Poaching and excessive livestock grazing have been the principal causes of decline," said a USFWS spokesman.

Grand Canyon visitation up over 40%

Visitation to Grand Canyon National Park is up over 40% from last year. "Park roadways are congested and minor traffic jams are occurring in the South Rim Village area," says a park spokesman. Superintendent Merle Stitt says the increased use is "severely taxing the park facilities" and has asked for visitor patience and cooperation. Many campsites are available on a reservation basis only.

14-High Country News — July 18, 1975



I stopped in at the office the other day to visit with Mary Margaret and Marjane. We got to talking about overuse of the wilderness area — overcrowding, litter, etc. By a strange coincidence I had, just the night before, been searching through some old photograph albums and had come across one page of photos headed "Pack Trip to Three Island Lake, July, 1938."

Three Island Lake is located in what is now the Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area, which spans the continental divide in northern Colorado. From our summer cabin it's not very many miles along the county road to the Seed House road, which leads one up tumultuous Elk River through some beautiful scenery to the Seed House, the "jumping off place" for the Mt. Zirkel Wilderness.

I drove up that road last summer and was surprised at the "population explosion" which has taken place. Years ago the open meadows along the river were green with alfalfa, or were used for grazing sheep or cattle. Now there are summer homes, trailer camps, cabins for rent, horse stables, and even a store and restaurant. I followed the winding road on up to the old Seed House, where I had another surprise.

Flanking the picnic area on the riverbank was a huge parking lot, filled almost to overflowing with a great variety of cars, vans, trucks, pick-ups, motorbikes — even bicycles! I didn't really see a lot of people. Were they all packing back into the wilderness, I wondered? I talked to some of them and learned that that group had hiked in for a one-day fishing trip. One young couple had just returned from a week's backpacking trip. A Boy Scout troop had made an overnight hike into the area.

All those I talked to seemed thrilled with their wilderness experience, but somewhat dismayed at sharing the trails with so many, many other people! An official forest service sign near our picnic table announced that the service was no longer maintaining garbage barrels there, (because it was impossible to keep them adequately cleaned up) and asked that everyone using the area please take their garbage home with them. I concluded that that bit of psychology must be working, because we saw very little litter there that day.

Naturally, I thought about all this when I came to that page in the old photograph album. In 1938 there was no Mt. Zirkel Wilderness Area — just a few unmarked trails known mostly by forest rangers and sheepherders.

Six of us had made the 1938 trip — an aunt and uncle, a sister, my husband and I, and most important of all, our guide, cook, horse-packer and raconteur, Julian. A Spanish-American native of New Mexico, Julian had spent most of his adult life working with sheep; and he knew that part of the Colorado Rockies intimately — he seemed acquainted with each tree, bush, or rock! He handled the pack horses with nonchalant skill, meanwhile pointing out to us a snow-capped peak off to our left, or a waterfall in the canyon far below.

It was a glorious vacation! Daytimes, we hiked or fished or just loafed. There were big fish in the lake, but none of us seemed able to lure them, so Julian showed us a spot not far below the outlet where we caught all the fish we were able to eat. Evenings, we sat around the campfire and listened to (sometimes far-fetched) tales of bears, or some of Julian's early experiences. At night, we unrolled our bedrolls in tipis pitched at the lake's edge.

During the week we spent there, we saw not one other person. It was almost as though Julian had taken us briefly into his own private world — a world he loved and cherished. The morning we were to leave, Julian efficiently stowed cooking and camping gear into the pack saddles while we rolled up our bedrolls and saddled our horses. In almost no time, we were ready to leave. As we started down the trail, I turned and looked back. The scene looked just as serene and unruffled as the day we had arrived. The last remnants of campfire ashes had been buried and smoothed over. No sign of a tin can, nor even a scrap of paper marred the view. It was hard to believe that six people had lived in that spot for a week!



Table manning manners People's Lobby solves problems with signatures

"You have to confront politics," Ed Koupal recently told a group of Wyoming environmentalists. Koupal has become known as a major political force in California, without ever entering into electoral politics.

He and his group, the People's Lobby, have revived old-fashioned democratic tools like initiative, recall, and referendum. And they've made them work.

Koupal says that he used to be such a disappointed idealist that he "just about went over the cliff." Eight years ago, he and his wife, Joyce, decided to take a new approach to the problems that bothered them — to work through politics, to be positive, to become "constructionists." Today they are the veterans of many successful petition campaigns and the founders of the People's Lobby.

Their latest success was gathering the 500,000 signatures necessary to put a "Safe Nuclear Energy Act" on the ballot in California. That effort cost about \$40,000, Koupal says. The group also helped promote the passage of a controversial California campaign reform measure which, although it was opposed by labor and business groups, was voted into law by an overwhelming majority.

The People's Lobby's current ambition is to spread the word about the tools they've revived. Twenty-two states provide for the initiative process, but most of them have not used the process much since the laws were passed by populists at the turn of the century, they say.

The lobby has begun traveling in 13 western states outside of California to inspire and train interested citizens. For now, their focus is on Wyoming, Montana, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, Washington, Oklahoma, Missouri, and Nebraska.

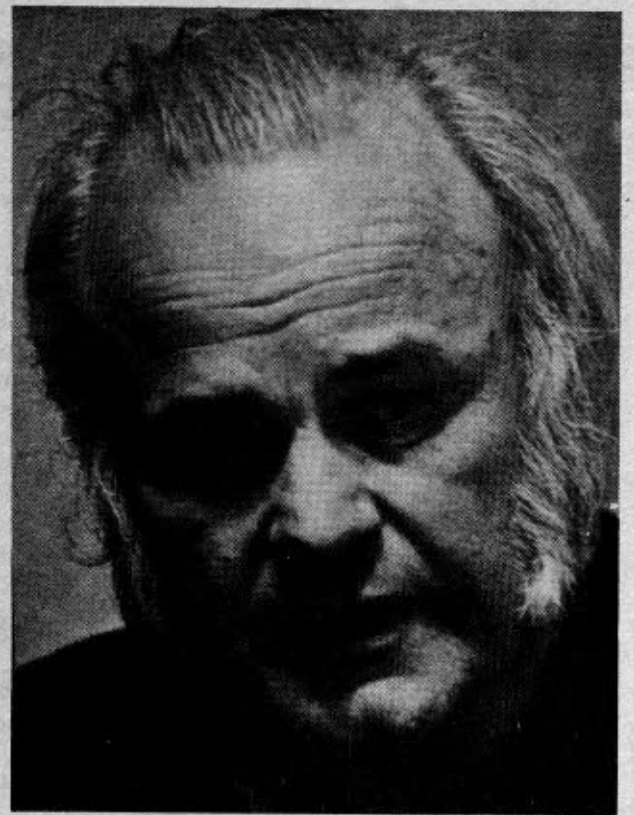
They have made alliances with a number of environmentalists in the Rocky Mountain region.

In Montana, Ed Dobson (Box 882, Billings, Mont. 59103) is looking into the possibility of initiatives concerning strip mining, nuclear power, and public utilities. In Wyoming, state Rep. John Vinich of Hudson (D-Fremont County) is studying an initiative on coal export policy.

At least three initiative efforts are being considered in Colorado: 1) public utilities — Jennie Phillips, 2) nuclear safeguards — Morey Wolfson and Meladee Martin (3 South Cook St., Denver, Colo. 80209), and 3) strip mining — Kevin Markey and Bob Case (1743 Walnut St., Boulder, Colo. 80302).

The People's Lobby is partially funded by consumer advocate, Ralph Nader. It is also supported by a membership of about 20,000. The budget is \$150,000. That pays the expenses of a staff of 18 in Los Angeles and three in Washington, D.C. None of the staff receive a salary.

One of Ed Koupal's special areas of expertise is in signature-gathering. In a manual put out by his group,



Ed Koupal, harvester of signatures.

Tools for Self-Government, Koupal makes signature-gathering sound as simple as following instructions:

- "1. Dress neatly. . . .
- "2. Never take a chair. . . .
- "3. Keep your station neat. . . .
- "4. Never argue. . . .
- "5. Always work the exits. . . ."

The watchword is positivism. Signatures are "harvested," not hustled. If you follow instructions and "are not getting 50 to 60 signatures per hour, you should move on," the manual says.

In a section entitled "Table Methodology," you are urged to be positive, enthusiastic, and refrain from argument. "You are trying to get a rhythm and flow of signers at the table. An interruption of this process will stop the signatures. If you are getting a lot of noes, take a break — it is your negative vibrations that are turning people away."

Koupal says he can activate 10,000 trained volunteers in California almost immediately for a petition drive. Their common belief? "Final responsibility rests with the people. Therefore, final authority never is delegated," Koupal says.



For more information about the People's Lobby, write to them at 3456 West Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles, California 90019.

HIGH COUNTRY NEWSSTANDS

We've added several new newsstands, some of them thanks to readers' efforts. Here's an up-to-date list. Send your friends to patronize them. Let us know if you have more suggestions. It's a good deal for them: they keep 20 cents of every 35 cent issue they sell, and there's a full refund for the issues they don't sell if they return them to us.

Colorado:

Aspen: Unicorn Books, Aspen Mountaineering
Boulder: Brillig Works Bookstore, Ead's News
Denver: Trilogy Bookstore, Together Books, Holubar Mountaineering, The Other Book Store (DU Law School)
Fort Collins: Full Earth Books

Idaho

Boise: Observer Books
Pocatello: University Bookstore

Montana

Billings: P.O. News

Bozeman: White Chapel Book Store, Montana State University

Helena: Book End

Missoula: Freddy's Feed and Read

Utah

Logan: Top Flight

Salt Lake City: The Magazine Shop, Timberline Sports

Wyoming

Esterbrook: Panthercreek Trading Post

Gillette: Hunters Drug

Jackson: Papa Bach

Lander: Back Home Store, Ed's Camera and Books, Corner Drug, McRae's Drug Store, Paul Petzoldt's Wilderness Equipment, Rexall Drug Store, Silver Spur Motel, Taft's Ranch, Teton Drug Store.

Laramie: Deli on the Tracks, High Country Books, Rocky Mountaineering

Sheridan: Post Office News and Pipe Shop

South Pass City: General Store

Worland: The Book Shelf

Eavesdropper

July 18, 1975 — High Country News-15

LOONEY LIMERICKS

by Zane E. Cology

Grizzlies stop at the wilderness sign,
Telling their cubs not to step o'er the line:
"People crowd that zone,
Let's leave it alone,
Less popular wilds are best for our kind!"

CORPS CANCELS PROJECTS. The Army Corps of Engineers has recommended that 350 water resources projects be cancelled because they are no longer economically feasible, no longer necessary to meet present or future needs, or no longer have local support, according to **Land Use Planning Reports**. The corps credited the decisions to the corps' "increasing environmental sensitivity."

PACKER PERMITS REDUCE POLLUTION. Backpackers will need permits in 34 national parks this year. Park Service officials said the program, which included 23 parks last year, has reduced damage and pollution from overuse. The permits are free and are on a first come, first served basis.

SOVIET ELECTRIC CAR. The Russians have reportedly developed an electric car that doesn't need bulky storage batteries. The car can operate at speeds up to 50 miles per hour carrying half a ton of weight, according to Soviet news agency Tass. "The singularity of the design lies in the machine's storage batteries being charged from common 380-volt industrial alternating current source using a tiristor system (a type of converter), a device substantially reducing weight and avoiding the need for bulky charging units," Tass said.

PLASTICS WITHOUT PETROLEUM. With the cost of oil on the rise, scientists are looking for a substitute material to replace petroleum in the manufacture of plastics. **Industry Week** reports that each year three to five per cent of all petroleum used in the U.S. goes into synthetic material production. At Northern State College in Aberdeen, S.D., a researcher is making nylon from oil extracted from crushed crambe seeds, which could be grown in the U.S. At North Carolina State University researchers are making wood oil from scrap wood and using the wood oil to make plastic. Natural rubber is another possible substitute that can be used to make plastic.

NO MORE POP TOPS. The California Assembly has approved legislation outlawing pop top beverage containers by 1979 after a legislative study indicated that about 300,000 Californians suffer litter-caused injuries each year at a cost of about \$3 million.

UNEMPLOYMENT AND POLLUTION. To date, there is no evidence that plant closings due to pollution regulation are important in terms of total unemployment or that pollution control regulations have been a primary cause of a significant number of closings, according to the Council on Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency. The two agencies say that national economic output will actually be stimulated in the next few years by environmental programs, resulting in greater employment and not less.

EPA WON'T PRE-CENSOR PARKING. The Environmental Protection Agency suspended indefinitely those portions of the "indirect source" air quality regulations that require the pre-construction review of parking-related facilities. An indirect source of air pollution is a facility which does not itself emit air pollutants, but which attracts enough automobiles so that the concentrations of auto-related pollutants may exceed standards.

NEW AG POLICY NEEDED. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Russell E. Train recently called for the adoption of a new long-term approach to setting the nation's agricultural policy. He criticized the loss of land and water to urbanization and strip mining as well as the current emphasis on chemical farming. "We cannot prudently pursue, with such single-minded intensity, a policy of squeezing more and more out of an acre of land without being far more certain that we are not squeezing the life out of it and out of the agricultural system itself," he said.

STATE GARDENING BOOST. Pennsylvania's Gov. Milton Shapp is pushing a statewide program of "anti-inflation gardens." The state will help new gardeners by offering educational materials allowing the use of state-owned lands for individual gardens, making seeds available at reduced prices, and by encouraging local gardening groups to form, reports **Environmental Action Bulletin**.

BULLETIN BOARD

KAIPAROWITS EIS

The draft environmental impact statement (EIS) on the proposed Kaiparowits coal-fired power plant in southeastern Utah is scheduled for release in late July. Requests for copies of the EIS should be addressed to: Division of Resources, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 11505, Salt Lake City, Utah 84101.

UNCOMPAHGRE TIMBER PLAN

A final environmental impact statement covering a ten year plan for timber management in Colorado's Grand Mesa-Uncompahgre National Forest is now available from the Forest Service office at 11177 W. 8th Ave., P.O. Box 25127, Lakewood, Colo. 80225. The forest contains 1,290,000 acres of federally administered land.

CITIZENS' TOOL FOR PLANNING

Citizens concerned with land use planning may be interested in a model developed by graduate students from Indian Hills, Colo. The interdisciplinary team from Colorado State University developed a report entitled **Indian Hills Environmental Inventory, A Citizens Tool for Planning**. Included in the report are a model citizen-participation planning process, sources of data needed for land use planning, and decision models for resource data analysis. The report is available for \$15 per copy from the Indian Hills Improvement Association, P.O. Box 431, Indian Hills, Colo. 80454. It consists of 140 pages plus 32 maps.

HORSES IN MOUNTAINS

A 16-page "Guide for Using Horses in Mountain Country" is available from the Montana Wilderness Association. The Horseman's Creed, says the booklet, is "When I ride out of the mountains I'll leave only hoof prints, take only memories." The author, Robert W. Miller, was an associate professor of animal and range science at Montana State University. Copies cost 50 cents each for 1-10, 35 cents each for 10-100, and 20 cents each for 100 and over. Write Montana Wilderness Association, Box 548, Bozeman, Mont. 59715. Proceeds from the booklet go toward other environmental efforts.

classified ads

"WIND RIVER TRAILS" by Finis Mitchell. Backpacking and fishing guide to the Wind River Range of Wyoming. Wilderness area of peaks, glaciers, forests, and lakes. \$2.95 postpaid from Wasatch Publishers, 4647 Idlewild Rd., Salt Lake City, Utah 84117.

"HIGH UINTA TRAILS" backpacking and fishing guide to the many lakes and trails of the Wilderness Area of northeastern Utah. 62 trails described and mapped. \$2.95 postpaid from Wasatch Publishers, 4647 Idlewild, Salt Lake City, Utah 84117.

NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION GUIDE

A new publication has been designed and written to encourage citizens and groups to protect the ecosystems they live in. The **Guide to Neighborhood Ecology** explains what people around the country are doing to protect their neighborhoods from the incursion of intense development, corporate architecture, poorly planned public works projects, or municipal neglect. It includes a bibliography and how-to-do-it section. The cost is \$1 from the Center for the Visual Environment, 1525 New Hampshire Ave., Wash., D.C. 20036. Prices for bulk orders are available.

FLAMING GORGE BROCHURE

A new map brochure for the Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area of eastern Utah and western Wyoming is now available for free. The brochure covers history of the area, roads, campgrounds, and boating facilities. For a copy write: District Ranger, Flaming Gorge Ranger District, P.O. Box 157, Dutch John, Utah 84023.

CRITICAL MASS

Critical Mass, a coalition of citizens concerned about the dangers of nuclear power, is looking for individuals in each state to help in the drive to stop nuclear power plant proliferation. For more information contact Critical Mass, P.O. Box 1538, Washington, D.C. 20013.

SOLAR GREENHOUSES

SOLTEC offers kits for three models of solar greenhouses: mini greenhouse, residential size, or commercial size. Write for a free brochure: SOLTEC, 70 Adams St., Denver, Colo. 80206.

HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

Environmental Biweekly of the Rockies

\$10/year.



High Country News, Box K, Lander, Wy. 82520

Majestic Jade

announces its
Bicentennial
Jewelry Collection



Jewelry commemorating the United States bicentennial. The pendant pictured is the first of the series.

Each of the six jewelry items is essentially handmade in processes requiring several steps. All items will be produced in Sterling Silver and each will bear an official legend of origin. This is a limited edition; if orders received exceed certain numbers, we reserve the right to limit their acceptance.

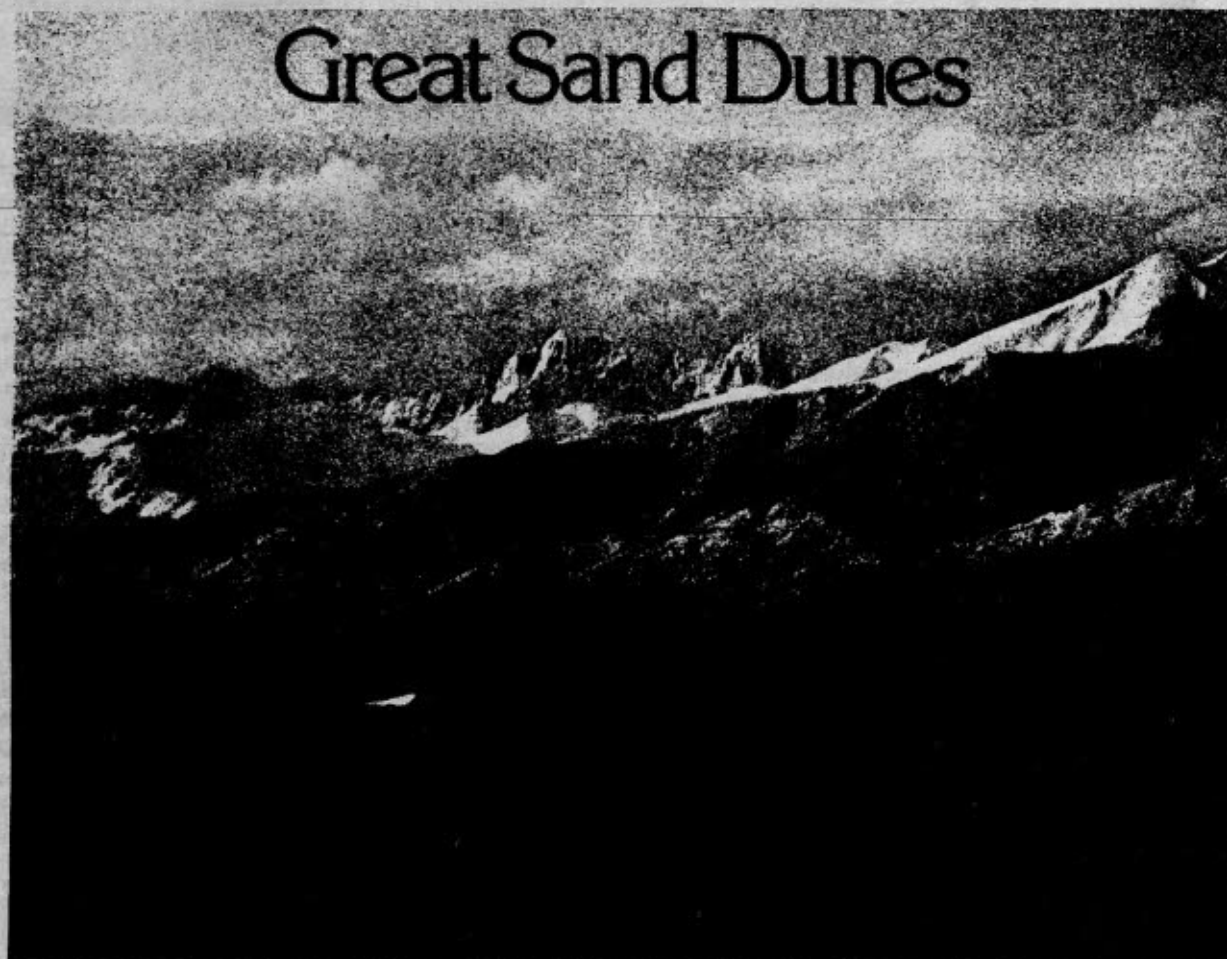
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Great Sand Dunes

the shape of the wind

by Steven A. Trimble, Southwest Museums and Monuments Association, P.O. Box 1562, Globe, Arizona, 85501, 34 pages, \$1.

Review by Gary Nabhan

The Rockies, in most people's minds, "conjure up visions of alpine lakes lying serene in verdant meadows, rugged peaks hovering the clouds above." Yet those who live in the intermountain West recognize what Steve Trimble expresses so well: the region holds within it innumerable contrasts, obscure micro-environments, and more anomalies than any single romantic image of the Rockies can circumscribe. He speaks of "the special feeling of difference that all these contrasts create — a feeling far from the familiar monotones of the everyday urban world."

Through crystal-clear descriptions and eye-enchancing photos, Steve speaks of a mini-region juxtaposed with the Rocky Mountains, the San Luis Valley and its Great Sand Dunes. The rich natural and cultural histories of one little (little? three times the size of Delaware!) valley are presented with a lucidity which makes one wish each place he's known could be approached in such a vivid manner. The children of San Luis dirt-farmers, sand-stormers, and

cow-punchers now have a guide to grow up with. *Great Sand Dunes* tells the story of their home, "an island of hope" within an uncertain sea of the rapidly developing Rockies.

Great Sand Dunes brings the reader up from the birth of the dunes, through the invasion and settlement of the land of shifting sand by plants, wildlife, and humans, on into the future. The book points out that as agriculture ties up the valley from which the dunes receive their material, the future of the dunes becomes more linked with cultural activities. Yet Trimble also maintains that "man's own welfare rests squarely on the welfare of the natural communities he affects." Drawing witness to the hard times valley farmers have had by way of exhausted soil, drouth, black alkali, and water loss, his tenet is a practical one.

Park naturalist Steve Trimble has a way of helping you locate patterns in nature; he has a positive enthusiasm and a real love for the West's islands of hope. Paul Sears has noted that people seldom come to protect anything which they haven't yet come to love. One wishes that our parklands will be blessed with more of such naturalists and guidebooks, and that the message of the islands makes it back to the mainland.

Book review

Power Over People

by Louise B. Young, Oxford University Press, New York. \$7.50, hard cover, 1973; \$2.95, paperback, 1974.

Review by Peter Wild

Americans take pride in their freedoms and rugged individualism. To what extent we have control over the necessities of our daily lives, our air, food, land, and water, is another matter.

Power Over People brings the impact of the contradiction home in a specific way. It recounts the struggle of individuals in rural Ohio to resist the siting of a high-voltage transmission line through their community. Like an army bent on a blitzkrieg of a foreign nation, Ohio Power Company prepared months ahead for its attack and knew in advance what kind of resistance it would encounter. The target area had been photographed from the air; all plans were kept secret to prevent the enemy from organizing opposition. Then agents descended all at once on the countryside in order to buy up the rights-of-way as cheaply as possible and with a minimum of public discussion about what was happening.

The book discusses the efforts of those who resisted and, more broadly, the problems associated with thousands of miles of transmission lines scheduled by the utility industry for the nation. Like the Poles arming themselves with horses and sabers against Hitler's tanks and divebombers, the people who put up a fight were brave, but doomed from the start. They didn't have the \$10,000 to \$20,000 needed for each individual court battle; the power company had a permanent staff of lawyers well acquainted with the details of eminent domain. The people didn't have political influence. When the citizens looked into the laws they discovered that, as is true of many environmental situations, the regulations were written to favor the polluters. Turning to the government they found no state or federal agency willing or able to protect them. Simply put, the people of Laurel, Ohio, had no weapons. In the end they had to stand by and like a conquered people watch the invasion of bulldozers cutting across their yards and farms.

So what's wrong with a few ugly transmission lines that inconvenience a handful of country folk? First of all there are better ways to build them. Alternatives exist, as France, England, New Zealand, and other less "progressive" countries have discovered. Research merely for the public good is expensive, however; in the United States the monopolistic power industry has found that its outmoded, wasteful technology and public-be-damned policies maximize profit for its stockholders.

Secondly, they pollute. The lines carry super loads, in some localities up to 765,000 volts or more. With these charges, electricity tends to leave the wires and react with the air and anything or anybody nearby. The result is a permanent field, often strong enough to light a standard fluorescent bulb held by a person on the ground. Residents are plagued by the constant snap, crackle, and pop from the discharge. In wet weather the lines glow; in lightning storms all hell breaks loose.

That's just the beginning, the nuisances. Farmers think twice about driving tractors or their livestock through the electrical fields. There is mounting evidence of physical damage to those living around them, damage ranging from shortness of breath and heart problems to decreased sexual potency. Children especially had better stay away, and that means a couple hundred feet from either side of the lines. And there is a variety of long-range electrochemical consequences to the whole nation. Twenty-four hours a day the escaping electricity is breaking down the surrounding air, contributing to the complex spectrum of pollutants building up in our atmosphere.

The list of hazards is not the product of fertile imaginations. Since the publication of *Power Over People*, Russia recognized the dangers to its people and imposed safety standards regulating exposure to transmission lines. In the U.S. some states are beginning to question the wisdom of the facilities. Meanwhile, the Federal Power Commission reports that the industry will build 2,500 miles of 765,000-volt lines over the next five years.



Dear Friends,

Through the years, conservationists have been pugnaciously defending wilderness against all threats. We've tromped through the woods and the wetlands and the deserts exploring roadless areas to see if they warrant designation as wilderness. We've tied ourselves to our desks meticulously preparing testimony to prove our convictions to others. Once we've won designation, we've watched with a wary eye, lest ski developers, road makers, or loggers move in too close toward the wilderness boundaries.

But now we discover that apparently all the while, our treasure was being looted behind our backs. And worse yet, the damage was being done by those who love the wilderness most.

Is it as bad as it seems? We'd like to hear from you about the state of the country's wilderness areas. Are the areas you know heavily overused — or just as pristine as the Wilderness Act intended? No speculation, please. We want to know what you've seen for yourself in the back country.

What do you think of the management schemes suggested in the lead story? Have any better ideas?

We welcome your comments and we will print as many of them as space allows in succeeding issues.

— the editors

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