

The Environmental Bi-Weekly



High Country News

Vol. 7 No. 23

Lander, Wyoming

Friday, November 21, 1975



Turning the forest upside down

Phosphate-hungry world after Idaho

by Bruce Hamilton

Events half way around the world in the Spanish Sahara and across the country in Florida could drastically affect the future of southeastern Idaho.

In both the Spain-Morocco territorial dispute and the debate over strip mining in Florida's Osceola National Forest, rich, prized, phosphate deposits are at stake. Whether or not these deposits are developed soon will determine the pressures for phosphate development in our own region.

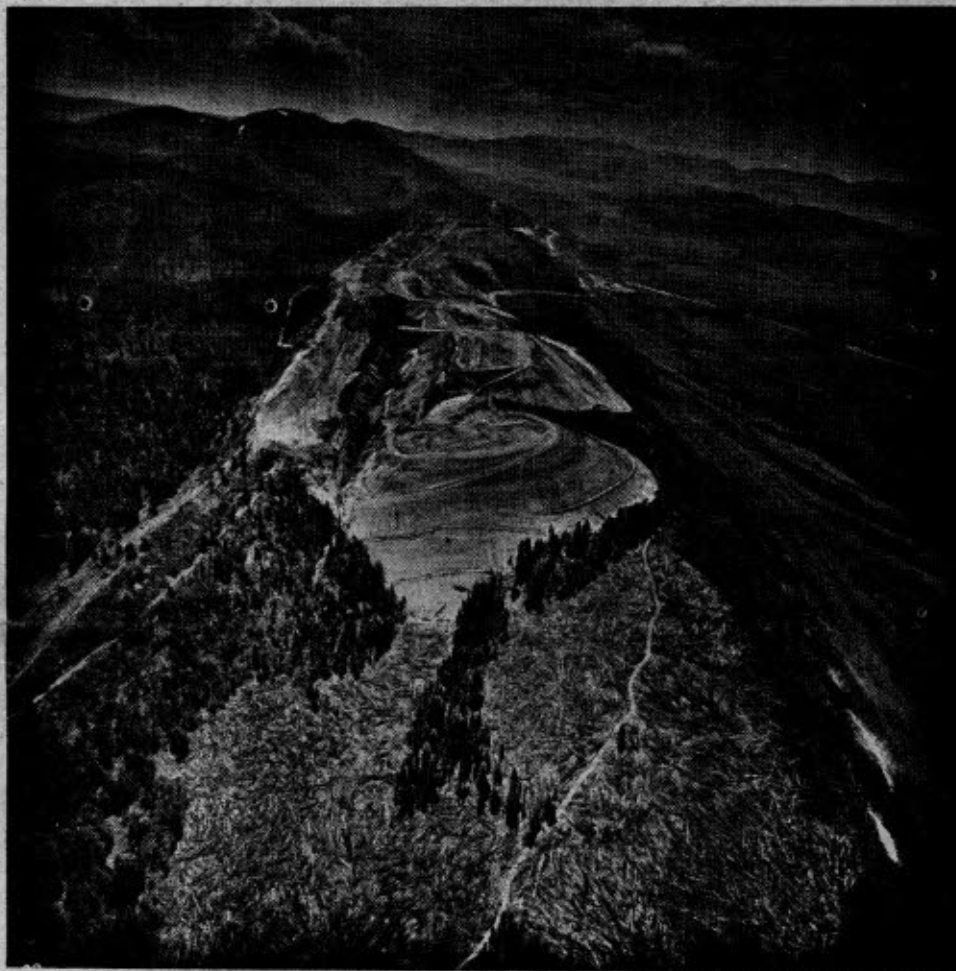
Phosphate is only found in a few areas, and increased demand for it may soon exhaust the supply. Processed ore is used in the manufacture of fertilizer and in the chemical industry. About 35% of the U.S. phosphate reserves are found in southeastern Idaho.

Locating, digging, transporting, and processing phosphate is an environmentally disruptive process. That's one reason continued Florida production is presently in doubt. In Idaho, the costs of a new surge in development are just starting to be assessed. A phosphate boom in the state could mean over 22,000 new residents, a substantial loss of wildlife habitat, increased industrial air pollution problems, miles of unreclaimed strip mines in and around the Caribou National Forest, and an uncertain future for at least two resident endangered species — the peregrine falcon and some transplanted whooping cranes.

There are presently 80 leases for phosphate on more than 43,000 acres in the area around Soda Springs, Idaho. Eight major companies have submitted plans for 16 new mines in the area — half of them in the Caribou National Forest. In addition, 97 new prospecting permit applications, covering over 121,000 acres, have been filed with the Bureau of Land Management. New lease applications account for another 8,000 acres.

These proposals could mean that the region's annual phosphate output of five to six million tons could double by the early 1980s and quadruple by the 1990s, according to government estimates.

The community leaders of this predominantly rural area are understandably worried about impacts associated with the anticipated boom in mining development. The Southeast Idaho Council of Governments, a voluntary association of local elected officials, has prepared a slide show depicting the problems Rock Springs and Green River, Wyo., experienced with coal, power plant, and trona development. The show draws parallels between these two Wyoming boom towns and Pocatello and Soda Springs, Idaho, showing increased crime rates, loss of wildlife, lack of housing,



THE FACE OF SOUTHEASTERN IDAHO. Each bag of phosphate fertilizer or box of detergent with phosphate can be traced back to a mine like this one. At the North Mabie Canyon Mine near Soda Springs, Idaho, timber is harvested in the path of the mine (foreground). At left, draglines and shovels are removing overburden. Rounded piles on the right are mine wastes. Along the darker seam in the middle of the mine is the "V" cut where the phosphates are removed.

Photo courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service, USDA

declining health services, and other problems.

50 YEARS TOO LATE

By mid-summer of 1974, the magnitude of the projected boom prompted the Secretary of Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture to call a moratorium on future development pending completion of a regional environmental impact statement (EIS). The EIS is required under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

In the fall of 1974, an interagency task force was set up to prepare the EIS. The task force includes the U.S. Geological Survey, the U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. A draft EIS is due next month.

Glenn Bradley, the phosphate group leader for the Caribou National Forest on the interagency task force, believes some phosphate mining is desirable and inevitable. We need to get phosphate from somewhere, he says, since it's an element essential to growth in green plants.

Bradley says the EIS study will help to decide the question: "Are we going to let them turn the whole Caribou Forest upside down?" He thinks the new development won't be as bad as some critics fear. "We will never have more than eight mines at one time," says Bradley. "We have five operating today."

Bradley says it's no longer a question of whether to mine the area or not — but rather how much to mine. "People come to us and ask us why we don't shut it off. Well, we're 50 years too late," he says.

Bradley points out that even if production from the region climbed to 15 to 20 (Continued on page 4)

Vehicle rules anger riders, walkers

by Ann L. Schimpf

"In this corner, ladies and gentlemen, we have Foot User. At 5 ft. 11 in., and 165 pounds, he's young and healthy. He backpacks, he skis, he snowshoes; he believes in rigorous exercise and lofty solitude."

"And in the other corner, we have ORV User. At 5 ft. 7 in., and 204 pounds, he's middle-aged and overweight; his backside is contoured to fit his jeep, his trail bike, and his snowmobile. He's an environmental Archie Bunker who rides roughshod over the terrain in his noisy, exhaust-belching machines."

And there, according to an October 19 editorial in the Logan, Utah, *Herald Journal*, are the two opposing stereotypes that have emerged over the Wasatch National Forest proposed Off Road Vehicle Travel Plan. The Wasatch National Forest



serves metropolitan Salt Lake City and, consequently, experiences intensive use. Its ORV plan has been labeled one of the "most restrictive" in the Intermountain West.

To comply with a 1972 executive order, all federal agencies must develop specific regulations for ORV use by December, 1976. These plans will critically affect all jeeps, trail bikers, snowmobilers, hikers, skiers, and snowshoers. The interest that has been generated on various proposed ORV plans varies from non-awareness to heated argument.

The latter is the case on the Wasatch National Forest's proposed ORV regulations. According to the Wasatch's Logan District Ranger M. J. Roberts, "The greatest interest we've ever had on any

(Continued on page 6)

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HIGH COUNTRY

By Tom Bell

There are times when a once-valued idea, laid aside because of circumstances, should be revived. This is one of those times.

In the bleak and desperate days of 1933, the Civilian Conservation Corps was born out of the needs of those times. Today, we have an equally urgent need. The time is ripe for a reinstitution of a program similar to the old pre-World War II CCC.

Now, it is heartening to learn that Congress is giving fresh thought to the idea. Some months ago Oregon's Rep. Bob Duncan began looking into it. Others became interested and as a result a host of Congressmen have co-sponsored bills to bring out a modernized version of the Depression Days CCC.

The idea has been kicked around Washington for years but never seemed to get anywhere. The ill fated Job Corps was given a test run but it in no way resembled the philosophy and concepts of the CCC.

That indomitable old conservation warrior, Hubert Humphrey, eloquently pleaded the case for a revival of the idea as far back as 1958. He has been plugging it ever since.

It makes sense. Only this morning the FBI statistics on crime show it is at the highest levels ever and still climbing. Other statistics show that those most involved are the young men, a high proportion of which are of the minorities and from the cities.

Some of the toughest kids of the old CCC's were recommended by precinct police captains. Many of those kids are today respected citizens who were given a sense of purpose and a sense of direction at a critical point in their lives.

In the nine years the CCC program existed, some three million young men were involved. World War II brought it to an end. But over 30 years later the monuments to the work of those young men endure, especially in the national forests and national parks.

There was no make-work involved in the original CCC's and there would be none now. The hungry, unemployed youths of the '30s went into the forests and built trails, planted trees, fought fires and did hundreds of other useful needed jobs.

At a time when thousands of young men are unemployed, embittered, and estranged from our affluent American society, a CCC program could mold them into useful productive citizens.

Minnesota Congressman John Blatnik was in the CCC's. Of his experience he has said, "We liked the work, we liked the life; and especially, we liked the opportunity to be a recognized part of American life. . . . (The CCC) was a great movement to renew a spirit of adventure in youth, and to dramatize the protection and restoration of our natural resources."

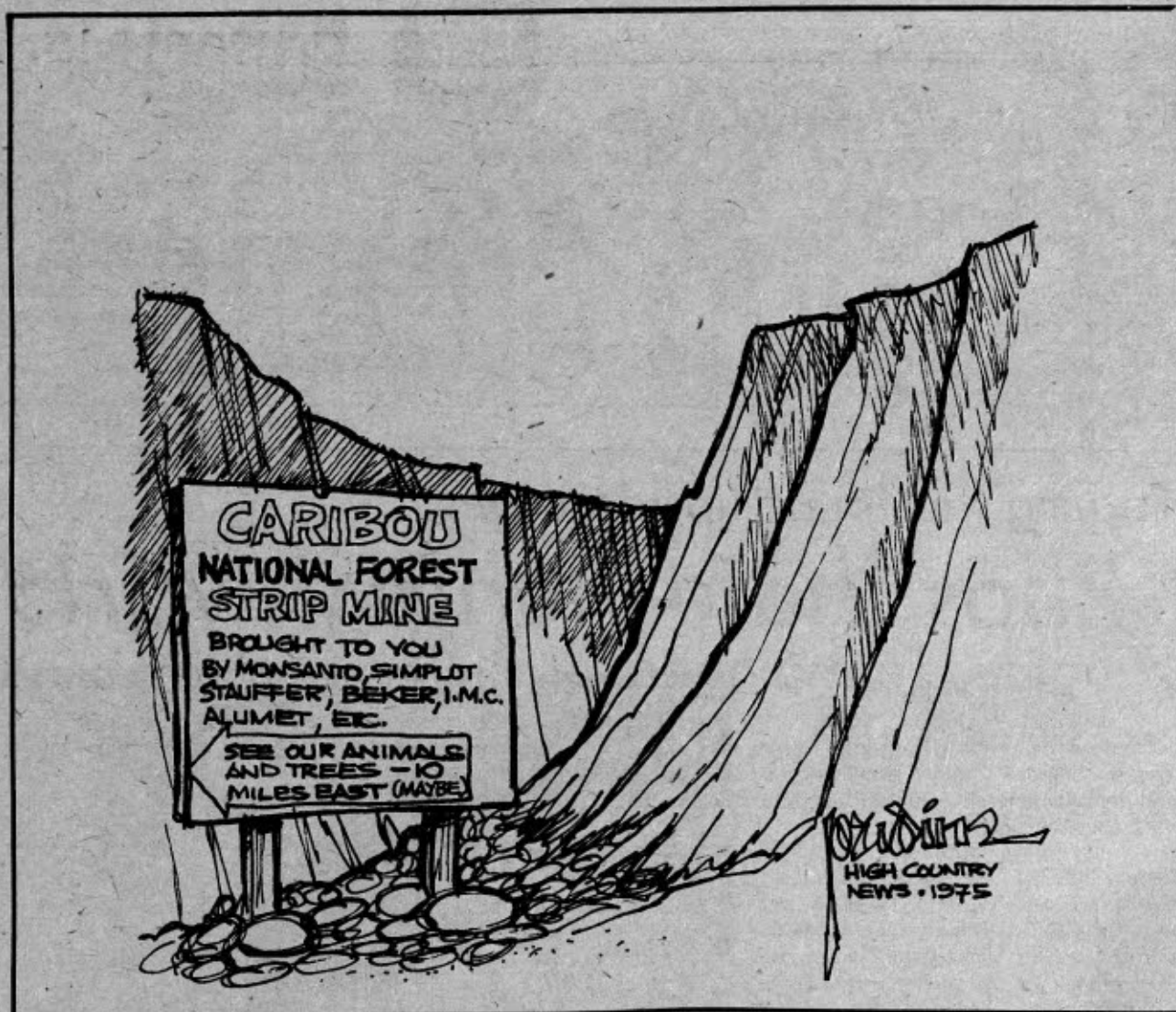
Today's urban youth have lost touch with the natural world which sustains and feeds us all. They need to gain a new awareness of what that world is all about and how important it is.

Out on the land the needs are everywhere apparent. Writing in 1959, Sen. Hubert Humphrey said, "Professional foresters estimate we have 275 million understocked forest acres in need of timber-stand improvement, thinning, eliminating diseased trees, and reducing fire hazard. Another 52 million acres of open, unproductive land should be replanted in trees." Since then hundreds of thousands of acres of national forests have been clearcut and are now standing idle.

It is a most propitious time to wed the needs of the land to the unharnessed energies of millions of young men. The nation could benefit in uncounted ways.



The law locks up both man and woman
Who steals the goose from off the common,
But lets the greater felon loose
Who steals the common from the goose.
—A medieval English quatrain



HCN

Letters

WORRIED ABOUT ASH

Dear High Country News,

In all the articles published in High Country News and other environmental papers and magazines, I have failed to read where anybody has mentioned the large amounts of burned ashes that will be produced by the super power plants, and the gasification plants proposed to be constructed in the Western states.

Disposal of these ashes can become a major problem depending on the type of coal burned and the efficiency of the furnaces or fireboxes and the related equipment.

I have had some experience with smaller plants like the old plant at Wyodak formerly owned by Homestake Mining Co., but now under Black Hills Power and Light Co. operation. The ashes from the furnaces were sluiced back into the coal pit where the coal had been removed, and used as a reclamation material after being mixed with the overburden also returned to the coal pit.

Possibly I have missed seeing this mentioned, but it can pose a major problem.

I look forward to receiving the High Country News and enjoy reading every article.

Sincerely,
LeRoy Seyhers
Lead, So. Dakota 57754

BRAVO FOR TOM

High Country News,

Did we discern a note of apology in the preface to Tom Bell's article concerning his faith? Bravo for Tom! What this old world needs is more witness to the Love of God and the Brotherhood of Man.

Sincerely,
Howard and Maxine Smith
Pinedale, Wyo.

ODE TO TETON JETS

Dear HCN,

Regarding the battle over a jetport in Teton National Park; I'm on your side, of course; and I thought you might get a laugh out of this little poem I wrote which expresses my view of the conflict.

Sing Loud and Long of Leafy Trees

I think that I shall never see
An airplane leafy as a tree
A tree whose place it is to stay
And proffer shade along the way
To weary traveler, sore of foot
Fresh from factory smoke and soot
Who walked a wicked mile to see
A sure-as-shootin' God-grown tree.

Weary Traveler settles down
Beneath the tree's green leafy gown
Inhaling air all fresh and pure
While silence works its wonder cure
On city-stricken string-tight nerves
To take the break he well deserves.
He opens up a can of tea
And drinks a toast to Lady Tree.

When jets come roaring overhead
Snorting smoke all laced with lead
And noise enough to wake the dead
Snapping Traveler's string-tight nerves
All robbed of rest he well deserves.

The sound waves crash against his brain
And crash and crash and crash again!
He shakes his fist against the sky
So shaken that he starts to cry.
All robbed of rest deserved so well
He damns those goddamned planes to hell.

City slickers such as these
Sing loud and long of leafy trees;
While planes are flown by fools like me
Who never learned to love a tree.

Laverne Rison
Basin, Wyo.

OAHE REFERENDUM NEWS

Dear High Country News:

HCN deserves congratulations for the informative article "S.D. Farmers Fight Oahe Diversion" Oct. 10, 1975.

HCN Editorials

Coal power on plains

Ever wonder how much your country would do for you, in a pinch? If you are a cowboy or a coal company, the Interior Department's behavior in two recent environmental lawsuits gives you a clue.

One of the suits, Natural Resources Defense Council v. Morton, affects people who use public lands for grazing. The other, Sierra Club v. Morton, affects those companies who wish to mine public coal in the Northern Plains.

The suits are surprisingly similar. In both cases the government was accused of lax land management, of letting commercial users get as much as they could out of the public trust — to the detriment of the resource.

Both plaintiffs were major environmental groups. Both sued to enforce Section 102 of the National Environmental Policy Act — those infamous paragraphs which require environmental impact statements for federal actions which may have a significant impact on the human

environment. Both suits moved from federal district court, where both environmental groups had lost, to a federal appeals court, where the plaintiffs received a favorable ruling.

At that point, in both cases there was talk of a negotiated settlement. Such an agreement represented the speediest route — a way to take the focus away from lawyers and hand it to land planners. The alternative was more litigation, in the U.S. Supreme Court.

Here the similarities end. In the case of the grazing suit, the Interior Department sat down and bargained, even though stockmen's groups who had joined them in the suit felt strongly enough to appeal the case to the Supreme Court. In the case of the coal suit, Interior decided not to negotiate.

At first glance it seems that the Interior Department may merely have been playing the odds. A somewhat vague court ruling in the coal case may have piqued their interest in a higher court decision. They may have felt the

grazing suit had them whipped, while the coal suit was still worth fighting.

But why it was still worth fighting may go deeper than that. It may have something to do with the nature of the users of the public land who will be affected by these suits.

Concessions made in an out-of-court settlement of the grazing suit will affect Western ranchers. But a negotiated settlement on the coal suit? Choices which would direct the pace and scope of development of public minerals in the Northern Plains? That would mean direct confrontations with the energy conglomerates.

We imagine that when the department contemplated how the energy companies would feel about settling, not winning, the department marched dutifully to the U.S. Supreme Court bench. They had to give it just one more try — for the powerful coal companies.

We do not contend that the Interior Department should have also taken the grazing suit to the Supreme Court. But we are concerned to see, once again, the powerful and the rich getting more than their share of backing from government. That kind of politics has never been good for the land.

—JN

Douglas championed environmental cause

Justice William O. Douglas, a brilliant champion of the natural environment and individual liberty, has resigned from the Supreme Court. Crippled by a stroke, Douglas said he was no longer capable of managing the demanding work load.

His resignation ends a 36-year career on the Supreme Court, longer than any other justice. During his tenure, Douglas delivered many of the most important opinions on conservation issues in the country. "I would hope to be remembered as someone who made the earth a little more beautiful," Douglas said. That is how we will always remember him.

Douglas was an avid outdoorsman. Speaking of his

home in Goose Prairie, Wash., he said, "My roots are deep in this prairie. I am a part of the rhythm of the place." He helped bring peace to an embattled natural environment throughout his career. We hope in his retirement he will find peace and strength from the natural world he helped to preserve.

President Gerald R. Ford, who tried to impeach Douglas in 1970 while still a Congressman, must now nominate someone to replace him. We would hope that Ford carries on Douglas' tradition by appointing another conservationist to the post. The highest court needs another justice who can speak for the land as eloquently as Douglas did.

—BH

Rest assured that the story is being widely disseminated among both friend and foe of the infamous Oahe Irrigation Unit.

I would like to make just one correction. HCN readers may get the idea that opposition to Oahe rests entirely with those "family farmers in the path of bulldozers and draglines." This is not correct. Ironically, the Bureau of Reclamation has found considerable resistance to their irrigation plan among those farmers who potentially stand to gain from Oahe, farmers with land in the irrigation districts. After generations of farming soils underlain by a hard claypan, these farmers have concluded that irrigation may very well render their soils unproductive. These family farmers are not willing to play Russian roulette with productive land, even though the Bureau of Reclamation is.

Since the Oahe article was published, Sen. James Abourezk (D-S.D.) and Rep. Larry Pressler (R-S.D.) have joined Oahe opponents in their call for a referendum on the project. To the discouragement and dismay of many S.D. family farmers, however, Sen. George McGovern (D-S.D.) has expressed opposition to any vote, and in fact has encouraged all Oahe supporters to put political pressure on those members of South Dakota's congressional delegation who fail to give their wholehearted support to Oahe. One wonders upon what basis Sen. McGovern, who has long heralded himself a farm senator, would refuse the family farmers he supposedly represents a vote on a project which would so drastically affect their land, and their lives.

A new movie, "Oahe: A Question of Values," is very good and being widely shown across South Dakota. The movie tells both sides of the issue and was prepared under a grant from the S.D. Committee on the Humanities. For more information on the film write: John Whalen, Box 35 University Station, Brookings, S.D. 57006.

John McDermott
Brookings, S.D.

HUNTING IN TETON PARK

Mr. Thomas S. Kleppe, Secretary
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Kleppe,

As you may or may not know, each winter Jackson Hole harbors the largest elk herd in the U.S. These majestic animals migrate to the valley and through Grand Teton National Park each fall on their way from higher eleva-

tions in Yellowstone National Park and the neighboring Gros Ventre Range to the National Elk Refuge, where they are artificially fed hay for the winter. Hunting season begins about the time this migration commences.

Over the years, predators have been reduced to near or virtual extinction through hunting and ill-conceived government policies (the grizzly bear and timber wolf are cases in point) and man's living space has been greatly expanded, leaving the elk in numbers far too large for the land to support. Hence, artificial feeding and the necessary "management" policy.

I am not writing at this time to denounce the elk "management" program, although I strongly disagree with it. What is foremost in my mind is the policy of Grand Teton National Park of permitting hunting east of the Snake River within the national park and along the corridor of this great migration.

While driving through the park the past several days, I have come upon an endless stream of hunters returning from the woods with their dead elk. A special "hunting camp" was set up by the park along Pacific Creek where I counted at least a dozen carcasses. I also witnessed hunters stalking the herds from their cars along the main park highway and at one point, I saw them jump from their cars and run into a field to kill a bull which had wandered from the herd.

Yesterday, I encountered some men from Casper, Wyo., who were showing off their two large bulls in the back of their pickup truck at Moose, the park headquarters. They were laughing, saying such things as "you don't even have to get up early around here to go hunting" and "we shot it right by the side of the road."

A friend, who happened to be passing after one of the two animals had been shot, said he couldn't believe the numbers of cars stopped by the side of the road to see what was going on. To their amazement, a park ranger was assisting in the removal of the animal with the use of a winch. All of this, inside Grand Teton National Park!

I am outraged and believe the American people will be so as well. The public has a right to know what is going on in their park and I'm going to see to it that they're informed.

Just recently, Grand Teton National Park released a master plan which called for the termination of the hunting policy within the park. I demand that recommendation be implemented immediately as the present policy is blatantly contrary to the principles upon which our national parks were founded.

Sincerely,
J. Michael Cottingham
Moose, Wyoming



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Published biweekly at 140 N. Seventh St., Lander, Wyo. 82520. Telephone 307-332-4877. Second class postage paid at Lander.

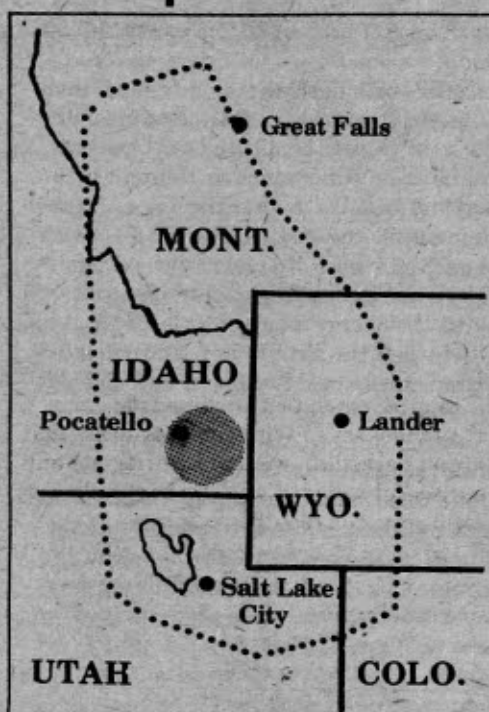
Publisher	Thomas A. Bell
Managing Editor	Joan Nice
News Editor	Bruce Hamilton
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Advertising Manager	August Dailer
Circulation Manager	Georgia Nations
Design Consultant	Jeffrey Clack

Subscription rate \$10.00
Single copy rate 35¢

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Phosphates. . .



BOOM AHEAD? Map showing approximate boundaries of the western phosphate field. Shaded area in southeastern Idaho is where 80% of the field's deposits are.

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million tons per day, there would still be "enough rock under valid current leases to carry this industry for 75 years."

The real question the people should be asking now, according to Bradley, is: "Is it really necessary to lock up (commit to mining) a 300 year supply of phosphate?"

Idaho Gov. Cecil D. Andrus has already criticized an advanced copy of the draft EIS because it "assumes 'all' or 'nothing' as the alternative levels of development." He would prefer consideration of four or more alternative levels of development.

TRADE IDAHO FOR FLORIDA?

The United States, U.S.S.R., Morocco, Spanish Sahara, and Australia hold 90% of the world's known phosphate deposits. Morocco now controls 56% of the world's known reserves and is vying for control of the Spanish Sahara which would give it even greater world dominance of this vital mineral.

Morocco has become "the second most successful cartel in the world (after the Arab oil cartel)," says an executive of a big European fertilizer company which is forced to import phosphate. "Almost alone, it dictates the price of phosphates throughout the world."

Since January, 1974, Morocco has dictated a four-fold increase in phosphate prices. Already decreed is another eight percent increase effective January 1, 1976, according to the National Wildlife Federation's *Conservation News*.

"Alternatives for oil may be found eventually," a chemical engineer told *Conservation News*, "but there isn't any alternative for phosphates."

The U.S. holds about 14% of the world reserves. It leads the world in total phosphate output — 40 million tons — and exports one-third of that total production.

Florida and North Carolina now supply about 81% of U.S. production. Southeast Idaho provides 14% and Tennessee about 5%. A small untapped reserve is on the Los Padres National Forest north of Los Angeles — also the last known refuge for the rare and endangered California condor.

Florida production is expected to peak in the next five years, and likely decline thereafter. This will put more pressure for development on the Idaho reserves. Environmental concerns over Florida phos-

phate development may force an earlier shift to Idaho. An impact statement on phosphate mining in Florida predicts that one-fifth of the Osceola National Forest — nearly 30,000 acres — would be turned into "an industrialized area for at least 30 years" and warns that "the visual resources normally associated with this section of the national forest would be completely negated."

Because of growing concern over the impacts of the Florida development, Sen. Richard Stone (D-Fla.) secured a promise from Secretary of Interior Thomas Kleppe during his Senate confirmation hearing that he would favor a delay of phosphate mining in Florida's forests. That commitment puts even greater pressure on Idaho.

Already, one major Florida phosphate developer, International Mineral and Chemical (IMC), is seeking phosphate lands in Idaho. Bradley says IMC was previously looking into trading some environmentally controversial Florida leases for leases in Idaho.

"Every area has something unique about it. In Florida it's alligators, in Idaho, it's moose," says Bradley. "We weren't thrilled about the idea of trading off Idaho to save Florida."

Southcentral Idaho sits in the middle of a five-state phosphate deposit known as "the western field." Stretching from Great Falls, Mont., to the Great Salt Lake and from central Idaho to central Wyoming, the western field holds one half of the nation's reserves.

Soda Springs, Idaho, could become the phosphate capital of the U.S. North, south, and east of the city are approximately 80% of the western field reserves. These reserves are on private and public lands and are "reasonably accessible for mining by surface methods," according to the U.S. Geological Survey. Using current economics and mining technology, slightly

PRODUCT	PLANT	MINE
fertilizer	Simplot (Pocatello, Idaho)	Gay Mine (Fort Hall Indian Reservation)
elemental	FMC (Pocatello, Idaho)	Conda Mine (private land)
elemental	Monsanto (Soda Springs, Idaho)	Henry Mine (private land)
fertilizer	Baker Industries (Soda Springs, Idaho)	North Mabie Canyon Mine (USFS land)
elemental	Stauffer Chemical (Silver Bow, Mont., and Lefee, Wyo.)	Wooley Valley Mine (USFS land)

Existing phosphate operations in Idaho.

over one billion tons of phosphate is recoverable in the Soda Springs area.

NOTHING NEW, JUST BIGGER

The first phosphate mine opened in southeastern Idaho around 1906. "It was always just part of life in this part of Idaho," explains task force member Bradley. At first there were small mines — all room-and-pillar underground operations.

After World War II, operations started to expand. Newly-developed huge mining machinery made open pit surface mining more economical. Also the post-war "baby boom" brought a demand for increased food production — and hence increased fertilizer production. Scientists and statesmen talked of the "Green Revolution" and America's responsibility to feed the hungry Third World, and again an increase in phosphate output was demanded. New post-war products — including "miracle-white" laundry detergents — called for even more phosphate mining.

Today government experts expect phosphate demand to continue to increase at

about three per cent per year over the next 20 years. Dr. David Laing of the University of Arizona predicts the U.S. will run out of phosphate proven reserves by the year 2011, and exhaust all hypothetical reserves by 2026.

The Anaconda Company was the first major operator in the Idaho phosphate field, starting development in 1906 — before passage of the 1920 Mineral Leasing Act. Consequently the company just staked a claim and later patented the land — thus taking private control over previously federal land. Since 1920, phosphate has been classified as a leasable mineral, which allows some control over mining and reclamation, and brings in some revenue to the state and federal governments.

Today there are five major phosphate mines in the Idaho field. The mines feed plants in three states which produce either fertilizer or elemental phosphorus (see chart for specifics).

The EIS will focus on 16 new mines and auxiliary processing plants proposed by eight companies. Five companies with existing Idaho operations — J.R. Simplot, Monsanto, Food Machinery and Chemical Corp. (FMC), Stauffer Chemical, and Baker Industries — are all seeking to open new mines. In addition Alumet, International Mineral and Chemical (IMC), and Earth Sciences are proposing new mines.

Alumet is a consortium of Earth Sciences, Inc., of Golden, Colo.; the Southwire Co., of Carrollton, Ga.; and National Steel Corp., of Pittsburgh, Pa. The mine proposed by Earth Sciences without its Alumet partners would be an underground mine in Bloomington Canyon, south of Montpelier, Idaho. All other new mines would be open pit surface mines.

Another underground mine is being considered by Western Cooperative Fertilizers, Limited, of Canada on Pritchard Creek in the Caribou National Forest northwest of Palisades Reservoir. No formal mine proposal has been submitted, so this development is not being focused on in the EIS.

Some of the new mines will require new beneficiation plants, which wash and upgrade the ore. The number of new fertilizer and elemental plants to be built in the region is not known.

TREMENDOUS SOCIAL IMPACT

Together, the existing mine and processing operations have a tremendous influence on the lives of residents in southeastern Idaho. Today, the phosphate industry directly employs about 2,500 people with an annual payroll of about \$31 million. "In addition, some 2,700 people are employed in phosphate-related activities with an annual payroll of about \$28 million," according to the interagency task force. The phosphate industry employs 15% of the total labor force in the region. In Caribou County where Soda Springs is the county seat, one-half of the labor force works for the phosphate companies.



SOCIAL IMPACT. Increased phosphate activity in Idaho could swell the population by 22,000 new residents. The Southeast Idaho Council of Governments is worried that existing communities and social services won't be able to handle the increased growth. Pictured above is the company town of Conda, near Soda Springs, named for the Anaconda Company. The Conda mine is on the lower slopes in the background.

In 1970, the eight county region of southeastern Idaho had a population of 160,000. Dr. John Eyre of the Idaho State University Government Research Institute predicts the creation of 8,140 new phosphate-related jobs by the year 2000. These new workers will cause the population to increase by 22,300 in the region.

The impact of this population influx will be compounded, according to Eyre, by the siting of a new Bucyrus-Erie heavy machinery factory in Pocatello last year. Bucyrus-Erie is the country's largest manufacturer of strip mine draglines — and siting the factory in the middle of the coal-oil shale-phosphate mining region is no coincidence. Eyre predicts B-E alone will increase the region's year 2000 population by 37,000.

Even without B-E or phosphate development, Eyre predicts the region's population will swell to 280,000 by the year 2000. Housing is already short in the area, and SICO leaders are worried. They are anxiously awaiting the government's EIS release next month that will attempt to detail how the face of southeastern Idaho may change.

GOOD NEIGHBORS?

The region's residents are apprehensive about the expected boom, and many have good reason to be reluctant about rolling out the welcome wagon. In the past the industry has not always been an ideal neighbor.

One of the main problems has been fluoride emissions from the phosphate processing plants. In the past, downwind from the plants in Pocatello and Soda Springs, cattle developed deformed brown teeth and swollen leg bones. The disease — fluorosis — caused crippling, an inability to feed, and eventual death.

The fluoride came from the phosphate rock as it was processed. Fluoride entered the air and water in excessive amounts, was taken up by grass plants on the range, and subsequently consumed by cattle. The history of the industry in Idaho is pocked with suits by landowners seeking damages for livestock loss. The way the companies "solved" the problem was to buy up most of the ranches around the plants.

Fluoride emissions can cause serious damage in green plants as well as livestock. In the early 1960s a processing plant owned by Central Farmers Fertilizer Co. killed most of the trees on the national forest lands around the processing plant. In this case, the Forest Service was forced to file a trespass complaint to seek monetary damages for the loss.

The fluoride problem isn't a thing of the past. Last year was an exceptionally dry year, which accentuated the problem. That year an area of up to three miles from the Conda operation was above state air quality standards. Some readings ran as high as 258 parts per million (ppm) with a 1974 average of 78 ppm around the plants. A concentration of 40-45 ppm causes dental damage in cattle.

"We're making progress," says Charles Freshman, an environmental engineering specialist with the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. "The plants are now installing more sophisticated air pollution control equipment."

Freshman admits that the existing plants often exceed state standards, but he says he has them on a compliance schedule and expects better control at the new plants. "The new plants can be strictly controlled by requiring the best available control technology," says Freshman. "The old plants are 'grandfathered' (exceptions are made for existing operations) and pose a greater problem."

Summing up, Freshman says, "I think



HEALTH HAZARD. Emissions from phosphate plants in Idaho have increased respiratory ailments among local residents. Fluoride emissions have caused bone disease in livestock. The operations are starting to clean up, but still exceed state and federal air quality standards. Pictured above is the J. R. Simplot fertilizer plant outside Pocatello.

we can whip the fluoride problem. It shouldn't be as bad in the future."

Other problems have cropped up with the processing. One is radioactivity of the wastes — a problem only starting to be studied by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

One way phosphate ore bodies are located is by their high radioactivity. Once the phosphate formation was an ancient sea bed accumulating all the material that eroded off the land or sank to the bottom of the sea. Today, the formation contains 83 elements out of the 103 elements on the periodic table — including a high concentration of radioactive polonium 210.

This polonium, contained in gypsum waste heaps around the plants, makes Pocatello a city with one of the highest relative levels of alpha radiation in the country. The biological effects of living with this radiation are still being studied. The radiation also limits possible use of the waste products. Gypsum makes good wallboard, but who wants to buy radioactive wallboard?

In Florida, the EPA studied housing on reclaimed phosphate mine lands and discovered "substantially elevated levels of radioactive radon and its decay products." EPA scientists predict that living on these tailings for 10 years or longer "could double the normal risk of lung cancer. . . ."

People living and working in the vicinity of the phosphate plants are subject to a number of industry-related illnesses, according to Dr. Thomas J. McDevitt, an ear, nose, and throat specialist practicing medicine in Pocatello.

Workers in the Pocatello plants receive free dental care to combat "phos jaw" — a fluoride induced bone disease. A similar condition is found in the livestock around the plants, he says.

McDevitt and his associates have noticed an unusual number of respiratory ailments in Pocatello residents, which they attribute to the emissions from the phosphate plants. "People in fine health before they move here are stricken with respiratory problems we must attribute to the (phosphate) plants," he says. Illnesses include bronchitis, emphysema, and chronic sinus ailments.

McDevitt says these problems aren't just ones of the past — they're still going on today. He said it's not just plant workers and people who live downwind from the plant that are affected, but citizens from all around the city.

MAN-MADE TOPOGRAPHY

The mine area around Soda Springs is rugged country, characterized by long, narrow valleys separating forested ridgetops and mountains that range from 7,000 to 9,000 feet in elevation.

Throughout the region, the sloping beds of phosphate rock outcrop along the ridges where faulting and erosion have exposed the formation. Most of the mines involve mining the outcroppings along the ridges to whatever depth is economically feasible.

The open pit mines typical of the region leave a near vertical highwall of rock exposed after removing the overburden (earth above the phosphate) and the phosphate ore. Since the present economic situation determines the depth to which the miners will follow the phosphate seam, the companies are reluctant to re-contour the land by returning the overburden into the pit. This practice is expensive and would limit future re-opening of a mine if the price of phosphate rose sufficiently. Consequently, the practice in the past — and considered for many future mining operations — is to leave a man-made topography

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of open scars running the length of the ridges.

The cliffs that are being left may be 300 or 400 feet high. The existing walls are under one mile in length. Future mining in Mabie Canyon, however, could create a wall several miles long.

Glenn Bradley with the interagency task force says that under the 1920 Mineral Leasing Act "reasonable reclamation" must be carried out — but it may be "unreasonable" to ask the mine companies to cover over a valuable ore body. He says the mining permits will contain reclamation requirements, but they may not require complete restoration of the land.

Bradley says, "With the pits today that aren't backfilled, we don't anticipate any successful reclamation. The highwalls are solid rock and can't be reclaimed."

"But the companies are more environmentally conscious today," says Bradley. For instance, Monsanto mined out the Ballard Mine north of Conda in 1968, but went back in on their own and tried to improve some of it, he says.

"This year 130 acres of new phosphate mine dumps will be created in the area, so we need to come up with something," says Bradley.

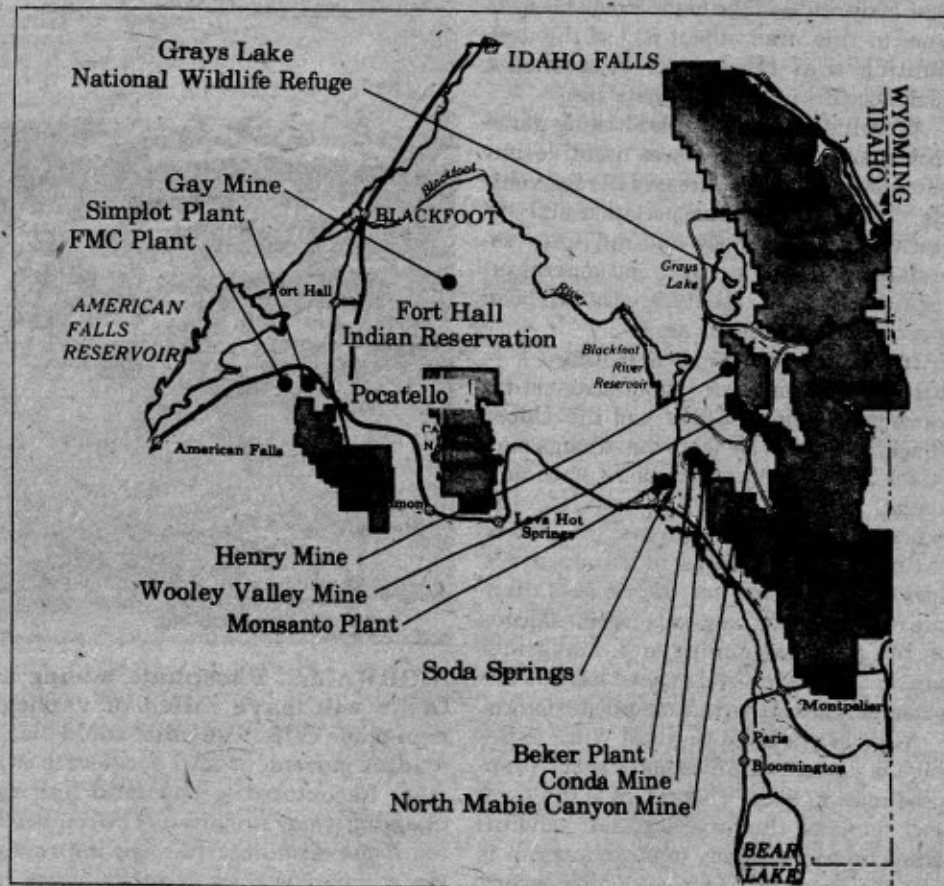
He points out that reclamation work is still in the experimental stage. There has been some research since the 1960s with "pretty promising results," he says. "We're hopeful, and it's proving out."

25% WILDLIFE LOSS?

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is also hopeful that some reclamation will be accomplished, because the area to be mined is one of the best wildlife areas in the state. The Southeast Idaho Council of Governments predicts, "Twenty-five percent of the wildlife in the impacted area will be lost due to phosphate development."

As well as being an eyesore, the unreclaimed highwalls can block big game migration routes, and cause erosion and siltation problems in the fishing streams.

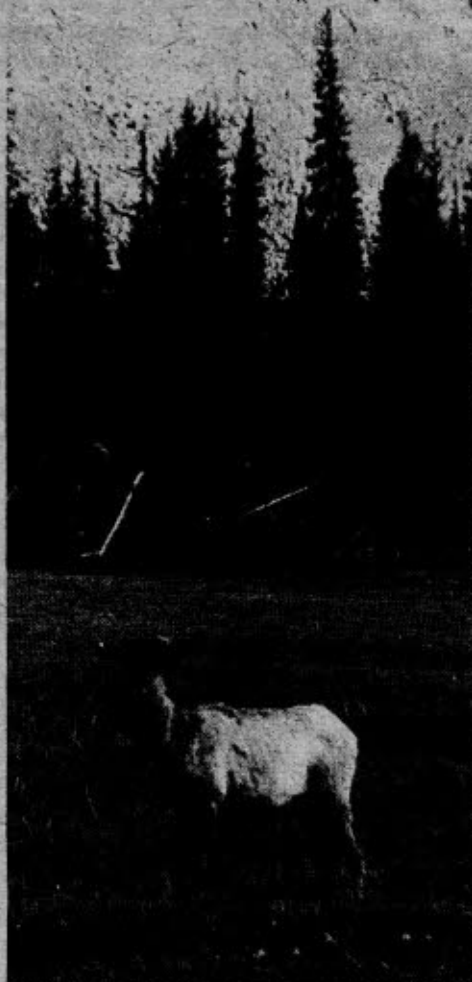
Kenneth Norrie, the regional staff conservationist with Fish and Game in Pocatello, says it's hard for him to comment on the projects until he knows where they are, how many there are going to be, and when he can expect them — and he won't know that until the EIS is released next (Continued on page 6)



IMPACT AREA. A close-up of the Idaho phosphate area where 35% of the U.S. reserves are located.

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Phosphates. . .



WILDLIFE WILL SUFFER. Surface mining destroys wildlife habitat. The Southeast Idaho Council of Governments predicts a 25% reduction of wildlife. In some areas 50% of the elk habitat will be lost, according to the state Fish and Game Department. The endangered peregrine falcon and whooping crane are also threatened by Idaho phosphate development.

(Continued from page 5)

month. But even without the EIS he ventured the opinion: "It's going to be a negative impact, no two ways about it."

"You're talking about pretty good game country," says Norrie. "Pretty good," may be an understatement. In 1975, 43% of the elk permits granted in Idaho were in the phosphate impact area of southeast Idaho. Similarly, 32% of the Idaho moose permits were in this area. About 60% of the deer hunting that takes place in southeast Idaho occurs in the phosphate area.

As well as the highwalls blocking game movement, Norrie foresees negative impacts on game from increased off road vehicle use, increased transportation activity (including haul roads and rail lines associated with the mining), and general increase in human activity in what has been a remote unpopulated area.

The area contains several "Class I — blue ribbon" cutthroat trout streams including Diamond Creek and the Upper Blackfoot River. He fears the streams may suffer from increased erosion due to new roads, railroads, mining activity, and waste storage in the canyons.

Endangered species in the area are another prime concern. Norrie says there are four breeding pairs of peregrine falcons in the proposed mining area. Peregrines are on the federal endangered list and are extremely sensitive to human disturbance.

Also, Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge is just a few miles north of the proposed mining area. This refuge is the summer home of the largest greater sandhill crane breeding colony in the country. It is also the scene of a delicate wildlife experiment where eggs from the endangered whooping crane were brought from Canada

to Grays Lake. Researchers wanted to see if sandhill cranes would serve as foster parents to baby whoopers and thus start a new breeding colony of the imperiled birds.

There are only about 50 whoopers left in existence.

This past summer, sandhill cranes raised six whooper chicks, at least four of which are now migrating with their foster parents — hopefully to Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico for the winter. If the experiment succeeds and the whoopers return to the Grays Lake area to breed, they may find the phosphate development in the area intolerable.

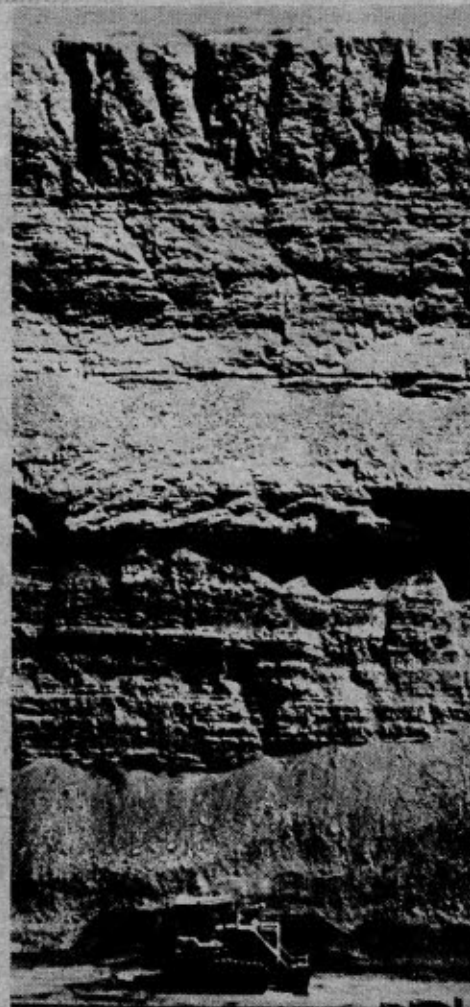
POWER PLANTS TOO?

A great deal of electrical energy is required to run the furnaces in an elemental phosphorus plant. The FMC elemental plant in Pocatello uses 30% of Idaho Power Company's (IPC's) total electrical output, according to Glen Bradley of the interagency task force. This is equivalent to the consumption of Idaho's 12 largest cities, according to Bradley — a staggering 1.65 billion kilowatt hours per year.

Similarly, Bradley says the Monsanto elemental plant, serviced by Utah Power and Light (UP&L) uses as much electricity as the city of Ogden, Utah.

Expanded phosphate development would of necessity mean expanded generating capacity for both IPC and UP&L. Gov. Andrus reports that phosphate industry expansion would require that 50% more electricity be generated in Idaho.

IPC is now a joint partner in the building of the Jim Bridger Power Plant near Rock Springs, Wyo., and will use some of its share to help fuel the phosphate industry. In addition IPC is planning the Pioneer Plant south of Boise, and there is rumor of a nuclear or coal plant to be constructed at American Falls west of Pocatello on the Snake River.



HIGHWALLS. Phosphate mining in Idaho will leave miles of vertical man-made cliffs. The cliffs could block wildlife movement and accelerate erosion. Recontouring the land and reclaiming it may not always be required, for if the economic picture improves, the companies may want to come in and re-open old mines.

Photo by Karl Holte.

UP&L has been expanding its capacity at the Naughton Power Plant near Kemmerer, Wyo. In addition, UP&L has announced its intention to put either a nuclear or a coal-fired power plant near Soda Springs in the heart of phosphate country. This plant wouldn't be built until 1986 at the earliest, according to an *Idaho State Journal* report.

Also tied in with phosphate development in Idaho is a proposed coal-fired power plant and an alunite mine in southwest Utah. This is in addition to Kaiparowits and other power plants planned for southern Utah.

Alumet is considering shipping its phosphates to a plant near Milford, Utah, where it will be combined with sulfuric acid to make super-phosphate fertilizer. The acid will be a by-product of a plant which will extract alumina — the feedstock for aluminum — from alunite ore. Coal for the power plant will be shipped from mines in Emery County, Utah.

WHERE DO WE GO?

The mood in southeastern Idaho is one of tense anticipation. Firm facts are few, and

speculation is high. It is the calm before the storm.

"The time to start supplying inputs to the federal agencies involved is now," says the Idaho Environmental Council. "The amount of serious attention given to environmental impacts . . . will be somewhat related to the amount of public interest shown."

"Anticipated local revenues will not anywhere approximate what is needed to adequately solve the problems of the projected impact," says the Southeast Idaho Council of Governments. "Where do we go from here? The answers are up to you."

* * *

Inquiries and requests for copies of the draft environmental impact statement to be released next month should be addressed to: Interagency Task Force, Development of Phosphate Resources in Southeastern Idaho, P.O. Box 230, Pocatello, Idaho 83201.

Hearings will be held on the draft, and then a final EIS will be released. Following the final EIS, the Secretary of Interior will decide how to proceed with development.

Rules for vehicles. . .

(Continued from page 1)

single issue is being generated on our ORV plan."

As ORV enthusiasts see the Logan Ranger District plan, it's too restrictive. They claim that the proposed snowmobile closures to critical game winter range are unreasonable. "Only a few snowmobilers are chasing deer. Most of us only want to use the road in the canyon bottom. We've snowmobiled those canyons for years."

At an October 15 meeting of the Bridgerland Wildlife Federation, composed largely of hunter-ORV users, Utah State Fish and Game Officer Paul Woodbury answered those objections. "We don't know exactly what effects snowmobile noise and presence have on deer, but studies show deer are driven out of high usage areas. These proposed closures represent canyons where numbers of grazing animals are high enough that we don't want to chance driving them into small areas inadequate for winter range."

The group at that meeting wanted both abundant game and the right to snowmobile wherever they pleased. As an alternative to the Forest Service plan, they suggested a groomed canyon bottom trail with strict enforcement against off trail travel.

The group could reach no agreement on the Forest Service's plan to close two jeep roads due to severe safety and erosion problems. One of the people present summed up the group's sentiments, "That's my favorite road to Logan Peak and it just isn't in as bad a shape as you people say it is."

"MORE CLOSURES"

If ORV users are incensed at the proposed closures, "5 ft. 11 in. Foot User" is equally adamant in his position that not enough closures have been imposed. A local group of Sierra Club members have focused on the words of the 1972 executive order, "that the use of off-road vehicles on public lands will be controlled and directed so as to . . . minimize conflicts among the various uses of those lands."

To the cross-country skier or snowshoer seeking the solitude of a winter landscape, the roar of a snowmobile is intolerable. Although skiers often use snowmobile trails as pathways in deep snow, a maze of crisscrossing trails can be hazardous to the skier who gets his ski in the wrong rut when the snow is wet or crusty. The quiet enjoyment of deciphering the drama painted by a set of animal tracks in the

snow is gone from heavily snowmobiled areas. In short, skiers feel that some areas need to be restricted to snowmobiles in order for them to experience the things they most enjoy about their sport.

"They haven't given the cross-country skier any prime areas," says one disgusted Sierra Club member. "They haven't even begun to meet the requirements of the executive order."

The group has an official position statement calling for the inclusion of more areas in the proposed snowmobile closure.

500 COMMENT

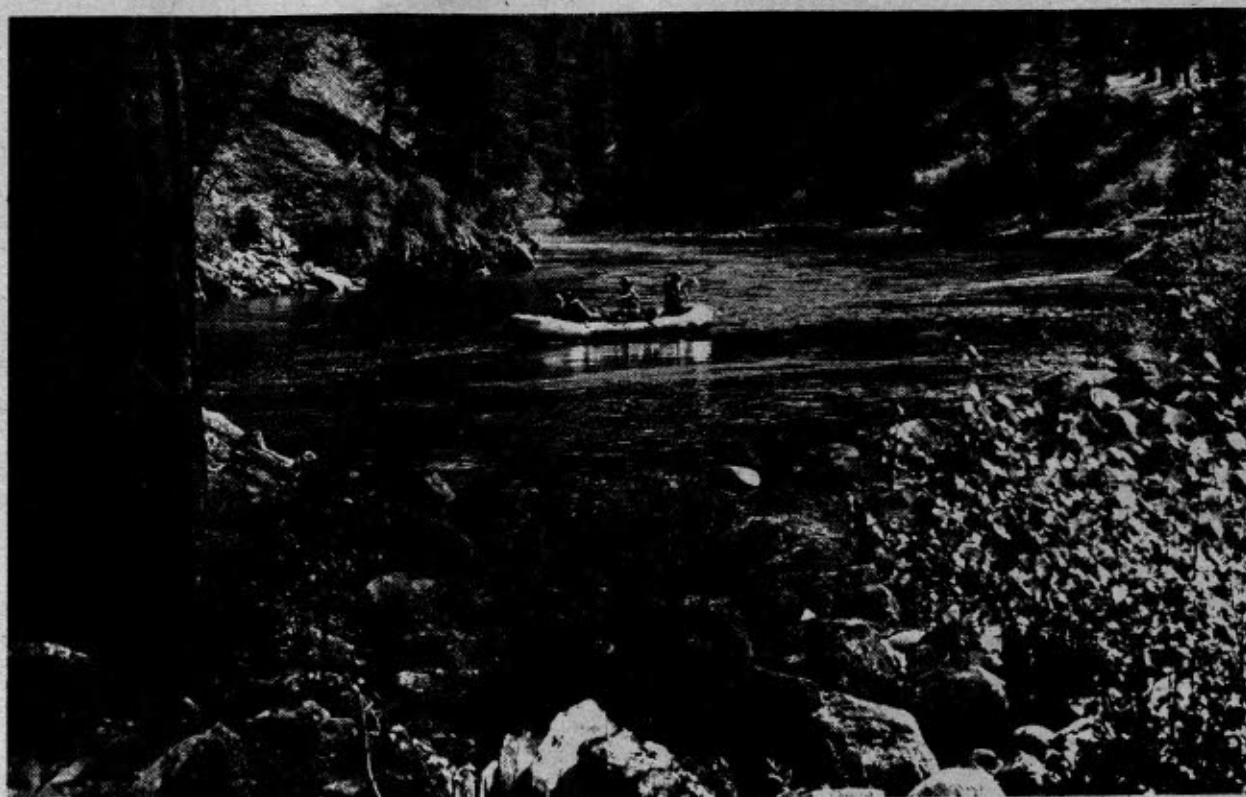
Somewhere between the two extremes lies the ultimate plan. Boyd Carpenter, Wasatch National Forest recreation forester, says, "I've received over 500 written comments to date. Many individuals have expressed general support, but have given thoughtful attention to a particular area of concern. It will be interesting to see the final outcome on this ORV thing."

The deadline for written comments on the Wasatch National Forest ORV proposed plan is December 31, 1975. (Comments should be mailed to: Chandler St. John, Supervisor, Wasatch National Forest, 4311 Federal Building, 125 S. State, Salt Lake City, Utah 84138.) At that time each of the six ranger districts on the Wasatch will study the written comments, will revise their plans as necessary, and will submit them to the Salt Lake headquarters for consolidation into a final plan in mid-1976.

The Forest Service Multiple Use concept is being put to a test on the ORV issue. Conflict is inevitable when considering the needs of the diverse interest groups involved.

Both the Intermountain Region and the Northern Region of the Forest Service are in the process of formulating ORV use plans now. Citizens interested in ORV regulation on forests in Utah, Idaho, western Wyoming, Nevada, and Montana should check with local ranger district offices, or with the regional offices: Intermountain Region USFS, Federal Office Building, 25th St., Ogden, Utah 84401; or Northern Region USFS, Federal Building, Missoula, Mont. 59801.

The Rocky Mountain Region, which includes Colorado, South Dakota, Nebraska, and part of Wyoming, completed its ORV plans in 1973.



RAFTING. A quiet stretch of the Middle Fork of the Salmon.

Photo by Verne Huser



River Running

by Verne Huser, Henry Regnery Company, Chicago, 1975. \$10.00 hardcover, \$4.95 paperback, 294 pages. Photographs and charts.

Review by Peter Wild

Each year more and more people look forward to spring, itching to join those who point the noses of their boats into whitewater. During the winter months beginners can get a taste of the dangers and joys that lie in store for them by reading *River Running*, written by a professional guide with many seasons of experience shooting roiled waters.

Blurbs on book jackets often hold out more than the inside delivers. This book contains almost everything that the cover promises "a complete and fully illustrated guide to running rivers — with or without a guide." Verne Huser's discussions will be of most interest to users of inflatable craft, though canoe and kayak owners also will find them helpful. In fact, the writer gives far more than the expected fare of how to select and equip a boat, what to put in it, and what to look for when approaching a boiling stretch of water.

This is a learner's handbook, but one that explains more than the differences between a chute and a haystack. The author stays at our elbows, reminding us of important details that the beginner might overlook. As is true of backpacking, the particulars of river running can make or break a trip. There's nothing like losing an oar, for instance, and then having to labor most of a day whittling a new one from a log because you forgot the spare. And then realizing that you also forgot the salve for blisters. Pages 266-270 contain a thorough check list of essential gear.

Or what could be worse than driving hundreds of miles with a heart set on plunging into the splendid gorge of Idaho's Selway River, only to discover on arrival that by necessity the Forest Service requires reservations? Answer: far worse would be the novice actually launching his boat into the wild Selway, definitely a stream for the experienced.

Regulations and conditions differ widely. *River Running* furnishes the information, or at least points to the sources where it can be found, that will help avoid heartache, perhaps disaster. Huser's overall approach is cautionary because he believes that the beginner will increase his pleasure and avoid crises by taking it easy and enjoying himself, gaining confidence in his skills and the capabilities of his boat.

He maintains that people who enjoy rivers have the obligation to protect them. The latter chapters present a sound environmental ethic for river runners and make a strong case for strict regulation of river use. In 1869, John Wesley Powell was the first to shoot through the wonders of the Grand Canyon. A mere 44 boaters had followed him

by 1940. Now, however, well over 15,000 people per year make the trip through this delicate national treasure. Urban problems of overcrowding, vandalism, pollution, and contagious diseases come along with them.

Mushrooming statistics apply to almost all navigable rivers. In 1965, over 14,000 people floated the Snake. By 1973, the number ballooned to an incredible 75,408. Within the next few years our rivers and their shores will be permanently ruined by overuse, unless agencies and river runners take positive action.

The government has begun to regulate users in a number of areas and to insist that they follow sound procedures, including use of chemical toilets and carrying out of trash. Yet, as is the case with other public resources, often the Forest Service and Park Service are assaulted by those who would exploit America's waters for their own gains. Some commercial outfitters in the Grand Canyon, for example, have sued the Park Service in order to increase their use of an already overburdened resource. In addition, they, and their lobbyists in Washington, insist that their continued use of motorized boats can be justified in the interests of safety. Huser wryly comments that this is, "... an argument not many knowledgeable river runners accept, unless it is in their own financial interest."

Government agencies need the vocal support of those who understand that to undergo self-discipline and to treat rivers with care will mean the preservation of priceless legacies for our children.

Whitewater Rafting

by William McGinnis. Quadrangle, the New York Times Book Company, \$12.50 hard cover. Photographs and diagrams.

Review by Ann Zwinger

William McGinnis has written a definitive book about whitewater rafting, well-organized, articulate, and thorough. Covered are rafting equipment and technique, coping with emergencies, food selection and preparation, camping on the river (down to good lists of kitchen and personal gear), and a comprehensive section on the runnable rivers of the U.S. with excellent lists of appropriate references. Appendices include more checklists, notes on photography, lists of suppliers, knots, maintaining our last free river, whitewater schools, outfitters, and conservation organizations. Even better, the text is handsomely illustrated with both photographs and excellent diagrams. The drawings are professional and detailed (the caption printing is not always of the same quality).

Whitewater Rafting is so detailed that it might dampen for some readers one of the great pleasures of rafting: experimentation and learning. Fiddling around with different rigs and endless discussions over innumerable cans of beer about what works best and why is one of the joys of any river runner's day. With McGinnis' book, you

Nov. 21, 1975 — High Country News-7 start at the top. Its infinite completeness could be to river running what a book on beaver trapping would have been to a mountain man.

The ambitious comprehensiveness of such a book reduces any critic to nit-picking. For instance, oars. McGinnis' listing of oar lengths according to boat size does not take into account the particular river conditions being run, and these "standard" sizes may not necessarily be the optimum. There is no mention of fiberglassing oar tips and shaft at points of wear before use, something many boatmen on the Green and Colorado do as a matter of course. McGinnis suggests a copper tip on the oar, but does not say how such a shield might be attached; nails would certainly weaken the blade and no other method is suggested.

I personally take exception to his denial of wool for river wear — that could be a California boatman speaking. When it's as bloody cold as it is on the Green River in the Canyon of Lodore in October, wool, even when wet, retains more warmth than any other fabric. Even on summer trips, a wool shirt can come in very handy.

In the camera appendix (which McGinnis did not write — he has included segments from authorities in other fields) there is no mention of my husband's favorite wet-work camera, the Nikonis, nor that waterproof housings can be bought for most movie and still cameras. Although frightfully expensive (but so are good rafts!) they might be essential for a devoted rafter-photographer. There is no suggestion that all good camera equipment should be insured. Last week a gorgeous 17 mm Bolex went to the bottom of the Green River when a raft wrapped around a rock in Lodore and then flipped. Fortunately, it was insured.

This particular end-of-the-season trip down Lodore was a rigorous one, with miserably low water (Lodore and below depend upon the amount of water being let out of Flaming Gorge Dam, and it was only 800 cubic feet per second (cfs), as compared to a summer flow of 10,000-12,000 cfs), high winds of 40-50 knots, driving rain, and freak raft flip with a couple potential cases of hypothermia. That night, long after the raft had been unwrapped from the rock and the cold bodies warmed, we looked up the "textbook solution" in McGinnis' book. McGinnis' "Egyptian method" (lots of slaves pulling on a rope) had been used to get the raft off the rock, and instead of McGinnis' winches, there were lots of winches. But the philosophy in book and practice was the same: get with it, do the right thing, and do it NOW.

Competent handling of such emergencies is not something that you can get by reading about it in a book, and herein lies a potential problem with such a thorough how-to book: a false sense of security. Although McGinnis emphasizes take a first aid course, go boating with an experienced friend, sign up for a whitewater course first, these are the cautious sensible rules that always apply to someone else, and illustrations of pontoons in trouble only engender in the disrespectful beer-can-tossing Deliverance types a greater desire to go out and beat the river. I rode with one of these yahoos once and it scares the hell out of you.

The river, like the air and the sea, is very unforgiving of error. River runners are like good pilots: there are no old bold ones. You REALLY have to read this book to become aware of the quality of skill needed to run rivers and to appreciate that there is no such thing as instant boatmanship, before you, as McGinnis beautifully puts it, go "wide-eyed and careful out onto that dazzling flow."

I admire McGinnis' encyclopedic approach and his attention to detail. McGinnis' peers, the experienced boatmen on the Lodore trip, found the book likewise. If I have any reservations, they are largely philosophical. As with my own writing, I feel an ambivalence: the more you tell people about the "wilderness experience," the more people are attracted to invade the wilderness, and then, whence wilderness for any of us? Or you accept that people are going to do so anyway, and any wedge of awareness that you can create to make them see the fragility of that world is all to the good.

Although this trade-book format \$12.50 hardback is not the ideal book to carry on the river, I did so, and spent most of my time borrowing it back from some boatman who was diligently reading through it, or saying "WOW!" at the picture of Rainie Falls. If this book brings a little more safety and awareness to one of the great experiences of the wilderness, it is well worth the price, even for armchair rafters. McGinnis speaks for those of us who love the river, who "must be able to taste, to have access to those waves, to those deep pools; they are special to us, they live in our minds, and we must see for ourselves, again and again, that they are real."



In wintertime, the feet of ptarmigan are like snowshoes, with heavy white feathers and fringed scales to help them walk in soft snow.

Timid timberline mountaineer

by Sarah Doll

Occasionally a mountain walker in the Rockies will be startled to discover that he's not the only living thing in the barren, windswept land above timberline. The white-tailed ptarmigan is quite at home in these surroundings, and stays there all year. It only makes brief vertical migrations down the slopes to find food when there is deep snow cover, or, possibly, just for a change of scene or a chance to go sliding down snowfields. During severe storms, it burrows into the snow for protection. The name "ptarmigan" probably stems from the Gaelic word "tarmachan," which means "mountaineer."

These bantam-sized birds, which are species of grouse, are continuously adapting to their environment. Their principal defense against predators is their ability to blend into the background, and so they are almost always molting. The summer plumage is mottled brown, grey, and white, to blend with the rocks, dirt, and dirty snow patches of the mountain slopes. The male is sometimes discernible in mating season by his wattle, a bright red patch over the eye. Its winter dress is totally white, with feathers even covering its feet. Only the black eye and bill contrast with the snow cover. Studies have shown that changes in the length of day, not temperature changes, trigger molting. Captive birds subjected to long periods of light will take on summer plumage in December.

Some of the ptarmigan's natural enemies have this same adaptive ability,

however. The ermine also becomes white in the winter, a great advantage in its hunting. Other predators of the ptarmigan are the fox, bear, mountain lion, and falcon.

Except in Alaska, where the rock and willow ptarmigan species sometimes live close to Eskimo villages, these birds are not an important food source for humans. Members of early timberline mining camps, however, reported that the ptarmigan was quite edible and easy to catch.

The white-tailed species, the only one found in the lower 48 states, lives such an isolated life on the mountaintops that contact with man has been minimal. The population in Wyoming is small, centered mostly in the Snowy Range. There is no hunting season on them, although they are considered a game bird in the state. The largest population is in Colorado, and they are commonly seen along Trail Ridge Road in Rocky Mountain National Park.

An enjoyable bird to observe, the ptarmigan seems to harbor no fear towards man. Like all grouse, it uses "confiding behavior" as a protective mechanism. Instead of flying when it sees danger, it remains still as long as possible. Enos Mills, a long-time birdwatcher of the Colorado Rockies, tells of watching two ptarmigan at close range, turning momentarily to watch a mountain sheep, then turning back to the ptarmigan, to discover that they'd disappeared. He writes, "I advanced to the spot where I had last seen one of them and stood looking all around. Then I made a series of concentric circles, examining the ground

closely. Not locating either of the birds, I returned to the spot where one had been. I had about decided to give up the search, when one of them commenced to peck my shoe. I was standing so close that I was actually touching her with my toe." He also tells of lying quietly in the midst of a flock of these friendly creatures, who seemed to take him for a rock, using his head and shoulders for observation points.

Not a fussy homemaker, the ptarmigan forms its nest mostly by sitting on the ground and gradually making a depression. The female lays from four to fifteen eggs, which the male helps incubate and defend. They hatch in late June or early July. They do learn to fly, but seem to prefer foot travel, unless frightened. The Alaskan species migrate to avoid the season of continuous night, but the white-tailed ptarmigan of the Rockies stays close to its birthplace all its life. The principal food source is the willow, supplemented by insects, leaves, berries, and grasses.

Seeing ptarmigan, either a flock or a single bird, is a noteworthy occasion for several reasons. Their population is fairly stable, but they are not common, especially outside Colorado, and many life-time mountaineers have never seen one. Even if one is in the vicinity, a casual observer may very well take it for a rock or small snow-drift, and miss it entirely. The bird has a warm personality that makes an encounter with one memorable. It is a rewarding addition to the "quiet experience" we seek in the mountains.

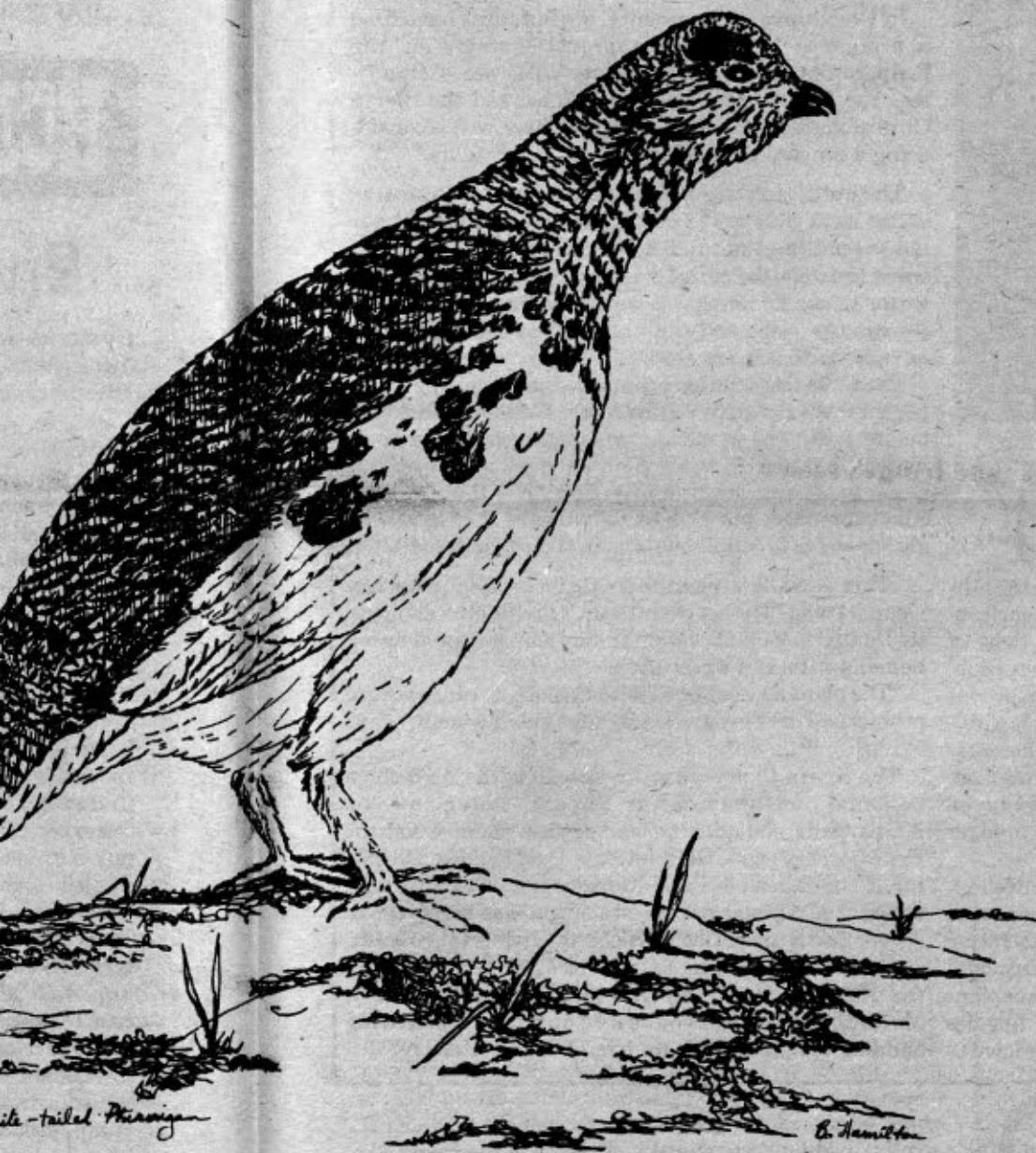
The ptarmigan
found it an
tundras. In
its bold life
give me a



The quiet move
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Enos M

The ptarmigan has won my heart wherever I have found it among the crags or on the small willow-dotted tundras. Its deliberateness, its self-containedness, and its bold life among the wild, lonely scenes combined to give me a strong attachment for it.

Enos Mills, **Bird Memories of the Rockies**



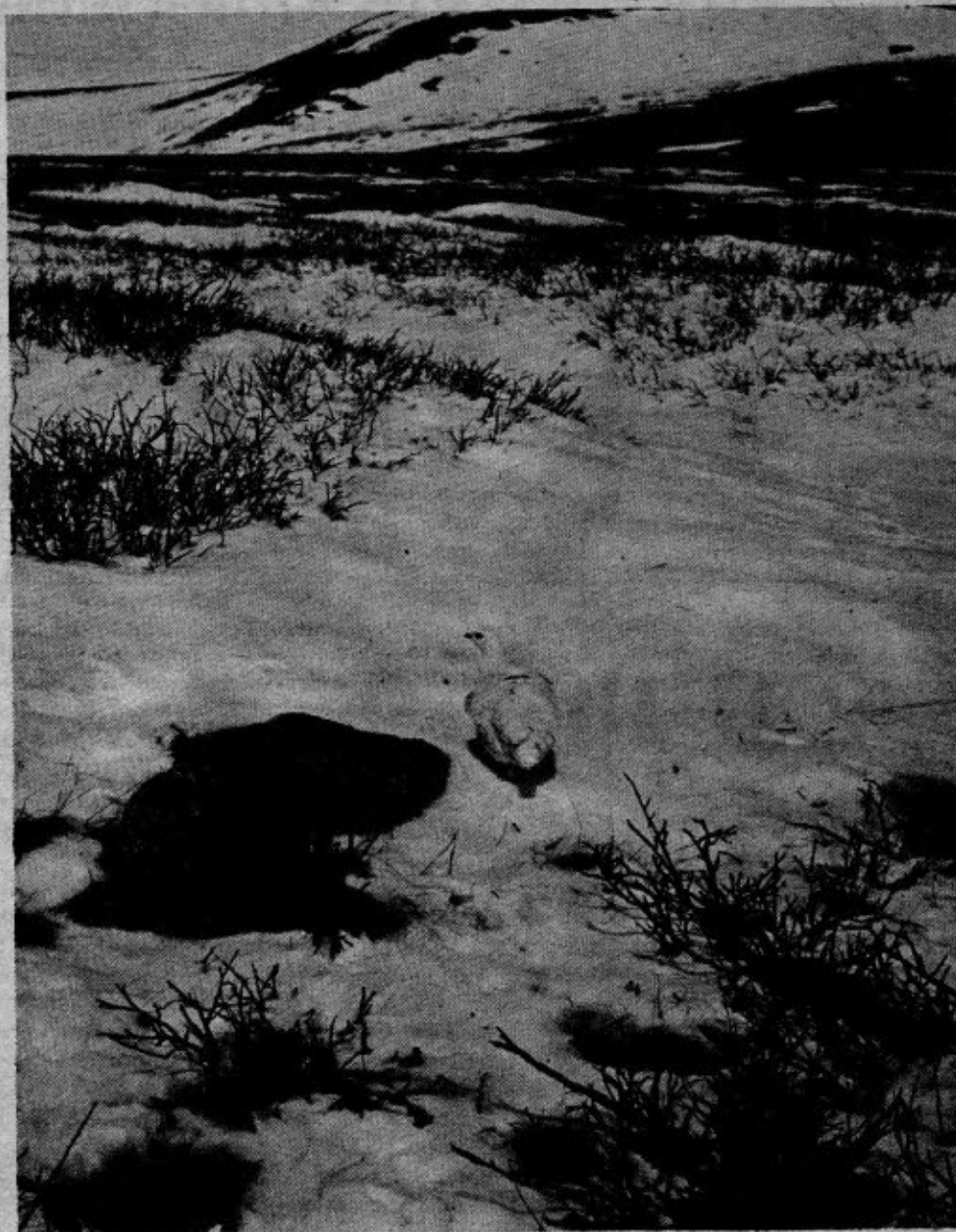
Drawing by Bruce Hamilton.

The quiet movements and silence of this alpine bird make its presence very impressive to the lonely visitor. I have never met beast or bird that is so expressive in the language of silence. They dearly want to be intimate, but they never say so.

Enos Mills, **Bird Memories of the Rockies**



The female sitting motionless on her nest is employing her best protective behavior.



The white-tailed ptarmigan usually stays close to the high mountain tundra during all seasons.

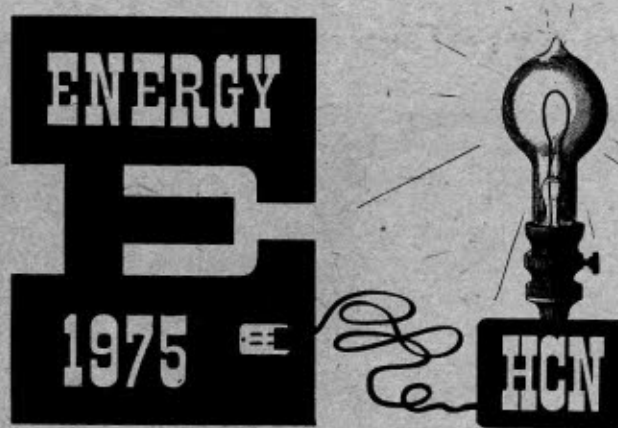
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Photos by Don Dominick and courtesy of the Colorado Division of Wildlife.

10-High Country News — Nov. 21, 1975

GEO THERMAL — NO STEAM. Once estimated to be worth \$25 billion, the Marysville, Mont., geothermal test field "is being returned to the ghosts and the ranchers who live in the area." "We came to the conclusion that there's probably not much water down there, and the temperature is too low," says William R. McSpadden, who headed the two-year Marysville geothermal project. In Idaho, Sen. Frank Church (D) blames Energy Research and Development Administration indecisiveness for the slow development of geothermal energy in the Raft River Valley. Church held hearings in Idaho Falls on the project. An ERDA spokesman said that because more testing was needed, the slow progress was just prudent management. "I am not saying that pilot or demonstration facilities have to be economic, but clearly the potential for economics should be there," the ERDA spokesman said.

TVA PLANS MINE. Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) and United Nuclear Teton plan a new uranium mine in Converse County, Wyo., which will employ about 280 people.



energy news of the Rockies and Great Plains

CENTRAL WYO. MINES. Companies from New York, Colorado, and Idaho have applied for leases to mine coal in south central Wyoming. The area has traditionally been the site of considerable coal mining. Arch Minerals, Rosebud Coal Co., and Medicine Bow Coal Co. are mining there today. Lease applications on 130,000 additional acres are pending.

FIRST COLSTRIP DECISION SOON. The Montana Board of Health is expected to decide this month whether or not Colstrip 3 and 4 would meet state and federal air and water quality standards. Attorneys for the Montana Power Co. and four other utilities seeking state permission to build the two 700-megawatt power plants suggested that the board could grant approval — with conditions, rather than deciding yes or no.

'VARIANCE WOULD HURT AGRICULTURE.' A rural Wyoming conservation group is opposing Basin Electric's request for a variance from state air quality standards for the proposed Laramie River Station power plant near Wheatland, Wyo. (See HCN, Aug. 1, 1975). Tyler Dodge, chairman of the Laramie River Conservation Council, said, "We believe the sulfur dioxide regulations were adopted for good reasons. This pollutant has caused serious health and agriculture problems in other parts of the country. . . . If Basin Electric doesn't meet these standards, my farm and the farms of our area could be in serious trouble." The State Environmental Quality Council will hold a hearing on the request on Jan. 20, 1976.



POTENTIAL POWER SITE. Looking across Lake Powell from the Navajo power plant site to the proposed Kaiparowits plant site. Photo by Jack McLellan.

Kaiparowits assault unleashed

A legion of legal assaults has been unleashed by conservationists against the proposed Kaiparowits coal-fired power plant. Conservation organizations across the country fear that if Kaiparowits is built, its pollution could ruin the unique canyon country of southern Utah.

The legal challenges include questioning the need for the power plant, protesting granting water to Kaiparowits in the absence of a state water plan, and seeking a regional environmental impact statement on power development in the Southwest.

In California, the Center for Law in the Public Interest filed a petition on behalf of the Sierra Club to compel the California Public Utilities Commission to supervise out-of-state construction of the Kaiparowits plant. The California PUC should be involved, according to the petition, because two California utilities are in on building the plant and purchasing its power output. "No California

agency has reviewed whether such an expensive (\$2 billion cost to California utilities) and potentially environmentally destructive project is necessary in light of California's future energy needs," says the Sierra Club.

The need for California to assess whether or not Kaiparowits is necessary becomes crucial in light of differing energy demand forecasts in the state. Recently Ronald Doctor of the California Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission predicted energy conservation measures could reduce the need for new power plant construction by 50% to 70%.

In related action, California Attorney General Evelle J. Younger has ruled that the California Environmental Quality Act applies beyond state borders. The ruling came in response to a question concerning the Intermountain Power Project — another southern Utah power plant with 85% of its power output going to the Los Angeles area. Younger said state impact statements may have to

be filed by California cities receiving power from the Intermountain Power Project.

In Utah, three environmental organizations have filed a protest to block state approval of water for the Kaiparowits plant. The Escalante Wilderness Committee, the Environmental Defense Fund, and the Sierra Club protested to the Utah State Engineer, who is considering a renewal of the Kaiparowits water rights.

The utilities planning Kaiparowits have an escalating water right of up to 102,000 acre-feet of water, but have not yet put the water to a beneficial use. The companies want to extend the period within which they can put the water to use for another nine years. They also want to change the place and time of use and scale down the amount to 86,000 acre-feet.

The three conservation groups want to postpone a hearing on the water right continuance. The groups feel that before a decision is made, two studies should be completed: 1) statewide water plan to determine how Utah plans to allot its few remaining rights in the Colorado River drainage, and 2) determination by the state that giving water to Kaiparowits is in the public benefit.

"This is really a planning case," says EDF attorney George Pring. "It is not clear that Utah should be using up its limited remaining water for dubious power production benefits without a water plan."

"The plant may not be necessary and may cause severe problems. That's two strikes against public benefit," says Pring.

The Sierra Club is also investigating the need for a regional environmental impact statement on Kaiparowits and other power projects planned for the Four Corners region. In a letter to Curt Berkland, director of the Bureau of Land Management, club attorneys asked if a regional impact statement was being considered. The letter states that the situation in the Southwest is analogous to that found on the Northern Plains. In the Northern Plains the club filed suit (*Sierra Club v. Morton*), and the courts have held up further coal leasing pending completion of a regional impact statement.

Reckoning from Washington

by Lee Catterall

Strategy differences among backers of a federal strip mining bill have produced a chaotic legislative quagmire that also threatens to swallow proposed coal leasing reforms.

The House Interior Committee last week rejected, by a 20 to 21 vote, a proposal to tie the twice-vetoed strip mining bill to another bill that would revise the nation's 55-year-old mineral leasing law. Several strong proponents of strip mining legislation, notably Reps. Patsy Mink (D-Hawaii) and Philip Ruppe (R-Mich.), fought the attachment.

"All we're simply going to do," Ruppe said in opposition to the attachment, "is decrease the chances of passing these amendments to the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920."

However, the decision not to combine the two bills may bring the same result. The environmental lobby has

begun to fight enactment of the leasing bill without strip mining safeguards. The argument: it would be unwise to get the leasing laws ready for action without rigid strip mining reclamation standards on the lawbooks.

Mrs. Mink says she agrees with that reasoning, and questions only the timing. She aggressively fought the attempt by Rep. John Melcher (D-Mont.) to combine the two bills in committee.

That would result in "hundreds of amendments and days and days of debate" in the Interior Committee and on the House floor, stalling a large backlog of legislation awaiting action by the committee, she said.

Mrs. Mink said it "makes the most sense" to instead combine the two bills in the joint conference that will work out differences in the House and Senate coal leasing bills.

Her opponents say such timing would be unlikely, if not impossible. The Senate version includes reclamation standards for strip mined federal, but not private, coal. Senate Interior Committee Chairman Henry Jackson has told House members he would oppose including private coal unless the House had first agreed to do so.

Even if Jackson were overruled by other conferees, the

bill would face procedural challenges in the House that could prevent its final consideration.

Those strategy squabbles are leaving the entire strip mining debate in disarray. Rep. Morris Udall (D-Ariz.) noted Congress has overridden only three per cent of the bills vetoed by Presidents in U.S. history. Overrides have occurred only when Congress was of one mind.

The Interior Department, meanwhile, has acted to thwart the strongest argument in favor of adopting a strip mining bill before or, at least, along with a coal leasing bill. It has adopted strip mining reclamation standards of its own for federal coal, and, like the strip mining bill, has allowed stronger state laws to supersede federal standards.

The department noted its policy prominently when announcing last week that it was granting a mining permit to Amax Coal Co. in the Powder River Basin.

Melcher warns about a "two-tiered" reclamation standard — federal and state standards applying separately in the same state — but Rep. Sam Steiger (R-Ariz.) argued the Interior Department policy prevents that.

"The two-tiered problem is a very real thing, despite what Mr. Steiger says," Melcher insisted.

Colorado sounds off on synthetic fuel bill

Sen. Henry Jackson (D-Wash.) expressed reservations last week about allowing states veto power over specific loan guarantee projects for synthetic fuel production. However, he later backed off.

Jackson later wrote Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm what the *Denver Post* calls "a carefully written letter, obviously written with future presidential votes in mind," saying he would consider Western governors' demands regarding the bill.

Jackson had added an amendment to the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) bill calling for \$6 billion in federal funds to guarantee loans for synthetic fuel production. (See HCN, Oct. 24, 1975, page 12) The governors, all Democrats, asked for a conditional state veto power, agreeing to allow the ERDA director to override them if a project is in the national interest.

Colorado Sen. Floyd Haskell, also a Democrat, is demanding that the governors' demands be included. He says, "The way the bill is drawn, the industry is guaranteed... the lenders are guaranteed... —everybody has a guarantee except the people who will have to live with those projects."

Colorado Sen. Gary Hart (D) has asked that the synthetic fuels loan program be completely removed from the ERDA appropriations bill and considered separately. Reps. Tim Wirth, Pat Schroeder, William Armstrong, and James Johnson, all of Colorado, have also voiced opposition to the synthetic fuels subsidy. Rep. Teno Roncalio (D-Wyo.) was not allowed to express his vote on the bill. He angrily resigned from the House-Senate conference committee considering the ERDA appropriations when he was told he could only vote on nuclear energy programs.

Rep. Ken Hechler (D-W.Va.) has been another key opponent of the synthetic fuel loans. He along with Wirth, insisted on hearings. He believes the administration has overlooked the social and economic impacts of commercial coal conversion plants on Appalachia.

Federal Energy Administrator Frank Zarb has opposed the governors' request for limited veto power. He has

suggested the possibility that "irresponsible state governments would hamper resource development," according to a report in the *Denver Post*.

White House aides have suggested pushing the requested funding even higher than the \$6 billion proposed by Jackson. It was suggested that the program also include \$4.5 billion in price guarantees for the firms producing the synthetic fuels and another \$600 million be added to pay for utility construction in the resource developing areas.

Interior says No coal compromise

The Interior Department has rejected the idea of an out-of-court settlement to *Sierra Club v. Morton*, a lawsuit blocking coal development in the Northern Plains. Terms for a negotiated settlement had been drafted by Wyoming Gov. Ed Herschler and approved by the Western Governors' Regional Energy Policy Office.

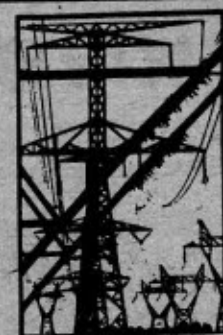
At the governors' meeting in Albuquerque, N.M., "Interior Sec. Thomas Kleppe initially was amenable to the suggestion," reports *Coal Week*. "However, he's been advised by his aides that settlement would leave Interior bound by the precedent on regional EIS's (environmental impact statements) set by the appeals court. That's unacceptable, they say."

The Herschler compromise would have allowed for limited development of coal while a regional impact statement for the Northern Plains was being drafted. (see HCN, 11-7-75). In its suit, the *Sierra Club* claimed that the law requires a regional impact statement before leasing more coal on federal lands in the Northern Plains. The issue has been in the courts since 1973. Now a Supreme Court battle seems likely.

"Some of the Department of Interior attorneys want to inflate their egos by winning this lawsuit, and I'm not so sure they would win," Herschler told UPI. The Wyoming governor wants some coal development to begin now to prevent a sudden boom later. A court injunction prevents any development until the suit is settled.

Sierra Club Northern Plains representative Laney Hicks said that she was angry, frustrated, and disappointed by the Interior Department's failure to negotiate.

Another conservation leader in Wyoming expressed similar feelings. "We felt Gov. Herschler's efforts to encourage an out-of-court settlement were quite reasonable and would have helped insure orderly development of this region's coal," said Lynn Dickey, coordinator for the Powder River Basin Resource Council.



The HCN Hot Line

energy news from across the country

TVA DEBT BILL TO FLOOR. The Senate Public Works Committee voted last week to send the bill to the Senate floor which would raise Tennessee Valley Authority's debt ceiling from \$5 billion to \$15 billion. The bill, which has had no public hearings, would provide funds primarily for nuclear power plants. Meanwhile, according to *Coal Week*, TVA's Brown's Ferry nuclear plant is costing TVA more than \$3 million for repairs and \$90 million in lost power generation as a result of the accident there on March 22. Cost overruns at other nuclear TVA plants now under construction are running into millions of dollars.

NUCLEAR INSURANCE ACTION NEARS. The Joint Committee on Atomic Energy reported out the Price-Anderson Nuclear Insurance Act Extension recently and floor action is expected soon. The act, as presently written, requires nuclear power plant owners and operators to carry only \$560 million in insurance coverage. Rep. Jonathan B. Bingham (D-N.Y.) will offer an amendment on the House floor to abolish the limit on liability.

WESTERN COAL TOO HOT? West Virginia U.S. Senators Robert Byrd and Jennings Randolph have called for a study by the Federal Energy Administration and Energy Research and Development Administration on the radioactivity of Western coals. The request results from a study by Marshall University which indicates that lower-grade coals may have high concentrations of uranium. Two West Virginia legislative leaders asked the senators to make the study, saying that the administration's emphasis on Western coal would be "intolerable" if it encouraged "the most deadly sort of air pollution known to man."

DUNG FUEL PLENTIFUL, POWERFUL. The government of India is using a plentiful supply of cow dung to give power to its rural people. The conversion takes place in the thousands of cow dung gas plants now being installed throughout India. In the plants, cow dung and other farm refuse are fed into an enclosed pit and mixed with sewage water. The fermenting mixture produces a combustible gas which is stored in the tank. The gas is used mainly for cooking purposes. The sediment left over makes an excellent fertilizer. Five head of cattle supply enough fuel to run a water pump for five hours a day, reports one Indian farmer. State officials are also experimenting with use of the gas plants to run large electrical generating facilities.

CHINA GOES SOLAR. Peking is now popularizing the use of solar energy in the city and countryside, according to China News Service. Peking is now setting up solar water heaters in hotels, barber shops, and bath houses for experimental use. Sample solar stoves are being experimented with on communes across the country, the news service says.

RAIL V. PIPELINE DEBATE RAGES. Abandoning railroads for shipping coal in favor of slurry pipelines would be a wasteful policy error, says a University of Illinois study funded by the National Science Foundation. The study, performed by the university's Center for Advanced Computation, concluded that upgrading existing and abandoned rail lines may be 50% cheaper than building slurry lines. These conclusions contradict Bechtel Corp.'s preliminary findings in a study contracted by the Interior Department. Bechtel says that slurry lines are more economical than rail lines. Sen. Cliff Hansen (R-Wyo.) has asked the General Accounting Office to investigate awarding the contract to Bechtel, since the company owns 40% of a firm planning to construct a coal slurry pipeline. In the meantime, a law firm representing Bechtel has persuaded the National Science Foundation to place a disclaimer on the University of Illinois report.

BULLETIN BOARD

LOONEY LIMERICKS

by Zane E. Cology

McPhetters, a very sad fellow
Bought cattle around Pocatello
Their bones were all crunched
From the fluorides they'd munched
And their legs wobbled 'neath them like jello.

CONSERVATION LIBRARY

The only conservation library in the region will be closing December 31 unless enough money can be raised in tax deductible donations. The Conservation Library of the Denver Public Library is a treasury of earth resources knowledge for business, industry, government, environmental, and academic researchers. It has been used extensively for research for environmental impact statements, legislative research, as well as detailed development plans. The committee's immediate goal is enough money to keep the collection together, keep the material available to the public, and to attain enough time to make permanent funding arrangements. Checks can be made payable to the Denver Public Library Foundation, Inc., Conservation Library Account, and sent to the Rocky Mountain Center on Environment, 1115 Grant St., Denver, Colo. 80203.

BEAVERHEAD FOREST HEARINGS

The supervisor for the Beaverhead National Forest in Montana is holding public workshops on land use alternatives for the Beaverhead National Forest.

Workshops started Nov. 17. For information on the remaining workshops, contact the Supervisor, Beaverhead National Forest, Box 1258, Dillon, Mont. 59725. Written comments may be submitted to the same address until Dec. 31.

WHEATLAND PLANT HEARING

The Wyoming Public Service Commission will consider authorizing the construction of the proposed Missouri Basin Power Project's Laramie River Station near Wheatland in a public hearing on Monday, Dec. 8, at the auditorium of the State Office Building West in Cheyenne, Wyo. The proposal is for three 500-megawatt coal-fired generating units and a 100,000 acre-foot reservoir.

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12-High Country News — Nov. 21, 1975

Powder River council rides herd on coal

With 460 members, the Powder River Basin Resource Council claims to be the largest and most active conservation group in Wyoming.

The group began in June of 1973, when 50 ranchers and farmers met in Buffalo, Wyo., to talk about defending agriculture in the coal-rich Powder River Basin.

"Your way of life is threatened," Tom Bell, then-editor of *High Country News*, had told Bill Barlow over the telephone in 1972. Barlow, a Gillette rancher, says that he was amused by that warning all winter. "I really didn't know what he was talking about," Barlow says.

A year later Barlow was among the founders of the resource council. He began to understand Bell's phone call when he counted the mines and coal conversion facilities slated for northeast Wyoming. He, and the others who helped shape the group, came to believe that the industrialization forecasted for the basin could ruin agriculture. Although they only had vague ideas of what to do about it, they knew they could not sit and watch development taking land and water out of production, expanding cities, bringing people in, and raising prices and wages.

DISCOURAGING MONTHS

The group modeled itself after the energetic Northern Plains Resource Council in Montana. Since its first meeting, however, PRBRC has spent many a discouraging month absorbed by financial problems and doubts about its direction. Much of the time, they were trying to operate out of members' ranch kitchens. Their physical isolation made it hard for members to get together and move forward.

But about a year ago, the group's momentum started to build. They hired Lynn Dickey as coordinator. She began by setting up linkages among the council members through a newsletter and news releases. Dickey and a volunteer, Lucie Bourdon, also worked on research, maintaining an office, and finding more money and members. In January, Dickey lobbied at the state legislature in Cheyenne for the council.

This summer, the council took a bold organizational step. They set up a research arm, the Powder River Energy Project. With money drummed up from members, the Wyoming Environmental Institute, and two foundations in New York, they hired four new staff members to keep careful tabs on water and coal, and the companies who have rights to them in the basin. The Northern Rockies Action Group based in Montana showed them how to

There are no people in the world more dependent on a quality environment than the people that are raising food.



Drawing by Dixie Reece

enter the foundation world, Dickey says.

She says that they've started to look outside the basin for money, "because that's where the money is."

LOW-KEY ORGANIZERS

Part of the staff's job is organizing people, a task which — in Wyoming — takes less fast talking and muscle than one might think. Bringing ranchers together requires "a low-key sort of person," Dickey says.

"You have to avoid going in and telling people what you think they ought to be doing," Dickey says. "Most farmers and ranchers in this area have not historically gotten fired up and organized around issues other than their water. You have to ask them what they want to be doing and how you can help them."

"All we can provide is information. Factual information. If the people you are organizing come up with something that you haven't thought of at all you better listen to them," she says.

Barlow, who has served as president of the council for the past year, says that most of the membership began with only vague feelings of concern. They joined a group to find the strength to change legislation and public opinion.

Today the group is "many things," Barlow says. "Maybe too many." They are after protection in some places — Sheridan and Johnson Counties. They want planning in others — Campbell County, where large-scale development has already begun, for instance.

About half of PRBRC's members live in rural areas and half live in towns. "People that live in the towns here love the way of life in the country. But there are no people in the world more dependent on a quality environment than

the people that are raising food," Dickey says.

TOWN AND COUNTRY PEOPLE

This town-and-country diversity makes it unwise to bring up certain subjects at board meetings, Dickey says. Predator control is one that's taboo. On that subject — and on others — "the majority of our agricultural members diverge from the views of the majority of the people of the environmental movement in the state," she says.

Dickey admits that the council doesn't represent all of the ranchers in the Powder River Basin. "There is a split in the ranching community between those who favor development and those who don't," she says. The tension remains quiet in the northern counties, but is voiced around Gillette, she says.

PRBRC seems less predictable than more established conservation organizations. Its birth surprised people who were skeptical about ranchers mingling with environmentalists. The group's occasional maverick stands reflect the newness of the coalition.

"Since we don't have any set policies, we can decide an issue on its merits, rather than be locked in by rigid positions," Barlow says. "Americans generalize too much and depend on glib slogans. We don't want to do that. There aren't any easy answers in black and white." —JN

Joan of Arc on a steel stallion

Coal development and a group of ranchers fighting it have brought Lynn Dickey home.

Like many young Wyomingites, Dickey sought city life as soon as she finished high school. She chose the University of Illinois, where the freshman class was as large as her home town — Buffalo, population 3,000. She liked the new life.

"You don't have to be so concerned about what you say, what you do, how you act," Dickey recalls with pleasure. After city life, Buffalo made her yawn.

Home on vacation in 1974, she noticed that an agriculturally based conservation group called the Powder River Basin Resource Council needed help. Despite her restless nature, she volunteered.

That was the beginning of "an awakening inside me for this land which is my home," Dickey says. She soon became coordinator of the council.

Dickey, who gets an urge to move every spring, admits that this spring, "I felt like sticking around. It was really amazing."

Her devotion to home is apparently flourishing despite low pay, hard work, and the nation's calls for Powder River Basin coal.

"I am stretching the capability of my mind to absorb information and express it to other people. It feels good. It feels like doing calisthenics," she says.

A past president of the council calls Dickey "Joan of Arc on a steel stallion." Dickey, confined to a wheelchair, has helped lead the council through a year of doubling membership, tripling staff, and launching new programs.

"In all of the frustrations that go on in a job like this, I never have a moment's doubt that this job has to be done," Dickey says. "And that I might as well be doing it."

Preservation funds available

If you want to protect some part of your environment, but don't know if you can foot the bill, the America the Beautiful Fund is here to help. The Fund is offering financial aid to anyone who has a workable plan to preserve a piece of American history.

"If you value some special part of your past, or your community's past — mountain top, covered bridge, homestead, mill, town square, hay barn, Indian trail — write a brief, factual letter describing your proposal to preserve it. Aid up to \$1,000 is available, now," says the Fund.

The America the Beautiful Fund is a non-profit organization directing its efforts to innovative community projects to enrich the quality of the natural, historic, and man-made environment. Since 1965, the Fund has assisted over 1,500 projects. For more information contact: America the Beautiful Fund, 219 Shoreham Building, Washington, D.C. 20005.



MAVERICKS. In the heart of Wyoming's richest coal deposits, the Powder River Basin Resource Council is riding herd on coal development. The organization is young, diverse, and inclined toward maverick stands. Lynn Dickey, at left, is staff coordinator. Bill Barlow, at right, has been president of the organization for the past year. The group's newly elected president, Ed Swartz, is a rancher from Campbell County.

Photo by John Soisson



Western Roundup

HCN

Voters defeat Mid-State Project

"The conservation victory of the year was won November 4 by voters in three Nebraska counties," according to the National Audubon Society. The victory was a referendum vote rejecting continuation of the Mid-State Project — a Bureau of Reclamation irrigation project for the Platte River. Mid-State was opposed by local area farmers and conservationists across the country because of its detrimental effects on wildlife habitat, local communities, and productive farmland. It would have substantially de-watered 150 miles of the Platte used by two-thirds of the sandhill cranes in North America and the endangered whooping crane. Land to be irrigated was already 95% under irrigation. Mid-State was authorized by Congress in 1967, but construction was never begun. The vote was on continuation of the Mid-State Reclamation District, the local entity sponsoring the project. Residents voted 8,826 to 6,935 to kill the district and thereby end the project.

House bars BLM from game ranges

The House has passed a bill (H.R. 5512) giving exclusive management of National Wildlife Refuges to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and denying a role for the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The bill was aimed at blocking plans by the Interior Department to hand over three wildlife ranges to the BLM. The three — the Kofa Game Range in Arizona, the Russell Wildlife Range in Montana, and the Sheldon Antelope Range in Nevada and Oregon — were under joint FWS and BLM jurisdiction. In House debate, Rep. Teno Roncalio (D-Wyo.) said that the transfer to BLM, "if allowed to stand, would be the equivalent of ousting the National Park Service from Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks and turning 'management' over to another agency." Roncalio noted the fact that 59% of the BLM budget is devoted to energy development, while only one per cent is devoted to wildlife programs. He says "there is a question as to how 'multiple use' the BLM really is." Conservationists have feared that mining and grazing would dominate wildlife concerns if BLM were given control of the game ranges. The House vote was 341 to 10. A similar bill (S. 1293) is pending in the Senate.

New land class proposed for Alaska

An Alaska land use commission has recommended joint federal-state control over millions of acres of wild lands. The plan calls for placing 46 million acres of Alaska in a new system called National Land Reserves. The Joint Federal-State Land Use Planning Commission was created by the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 to oversee distribution of undeveloped Alaskan lands among natives, the state, and the federal government. Natives were to choose 40 million acres, and the state 104 million acres. Under the act, Congress was to consider 80 million acres for new national parks, wildlife refuges, wild and scenic rivers, and national forests. The commission is recommending only 39 million acres for new federal preserves. The balance of the lands would become National Land Reserves. At least nine million acres of the land reserves would be reserved for wilderness study, according to **Land Use Planning Reports**. Meanwhile, in Congress, Sen. Floyd Haskell (D-Colo.) held hearings November 18 and 20 on how much acreage to set aside in federal preserves (the so-called "d-2" land legislation). Conservation groups are supporting S. 1688 (sponsored by Sen. Henry Jackson, D-Wash.) and H.R. 2063 (sponsored by Rep. Morris Udall, D-Ariz.) which are identical bills. "The acreage protected under these bills is the largest of any of the proposals — over 106 million acres," reports Jeffrey Knight of Friends of the Earth.

Denver's garbage worth \$5.6 million

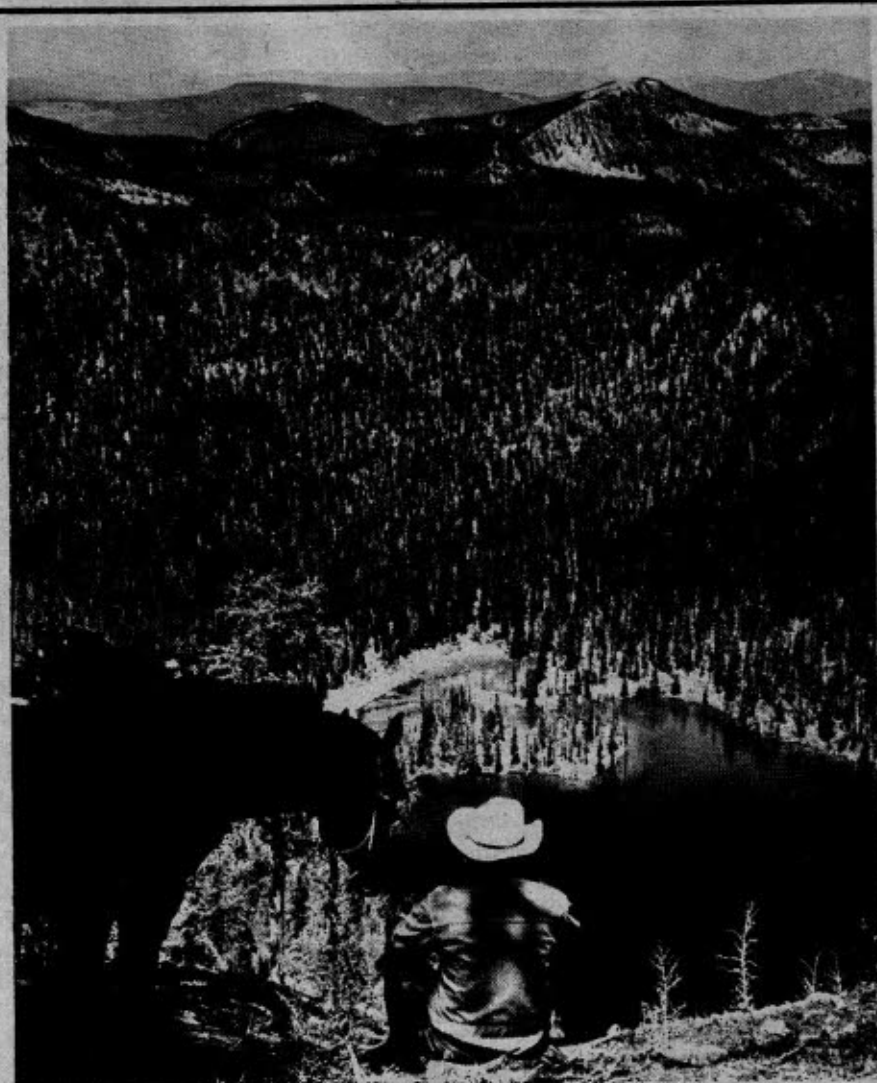
Denver's garbage could be making the city \$5.6 million dollars per year, according to a consultant hired to investigate the feasibility of a proposed Metropolitan Denver Resources Recovery District. The proposed district would include Denver and the urban portions of Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, and Jefferson counties. Under the plan, first steel, aluminum, and glass would be recovered from the 3,000 tons of daily waste. Then the remaining waste could be used in a variety of ways: 1) as a supplementary fuel mixed with coal and burned in power plants, 2) as a source of low quality synthetic gas, or 3) as a source of ammonia for fertilizer. Converting the organic waste to high quality methane gas is not economically feasible, according to a **Rocky Mountain News** summary of the findings. Ammonia production appears to be the most profitable alternative, states the **News**. Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm will include a proposal creating the special district in his 1976 call of legislative priorities.

Park elk saved from peeping Toms

Elk in Rocky Mountain National Park were given a privacy act this fall. From Sept. 1 to Oct. 19, during the elk breeding season, the Park Service closed off the Horseshoe Park area. "In the past, movement of elk from their timbered, daytime resting areas to the meadows they graze in at night has been interrupted by visitors trying to stalk them for pictures and closer views. This only tended to drive the elk back into hiding," reports the Park Service.

Baucus proposes Flathead wild river

A bill putting portions of the Flathead River in Montana into the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers System has been introduced by Rep. Max Baucus (D-Mont.). Recreation and tourism are the Flathead Basin's major industry, Baucus noted, and his bill would benefit that industry. More than 80% of the land affected by the bill is already federal, says Baucus. Most of the North Fork would be designated as "scenic" while the Middle Fork and South Fork would be part "wild" and part "recreational" status, according to an Associated Press report.



NEW BACK COUNTRY STATUS PROPOSED

An omnibus wilderness study bill in Montana has stimulated debate over a new roadless "back country" management classification. Jean Warren of the Sierra Club in Missoula says a separate back country category could jeopardize future wilderness designations across the country.

The idea arises out of a report on nine proposed wilderness study areas prepared by Dr. Robert F. Wambach, dean of forestry at the University of Montana. Sen. Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.), who introduced the legislation to study the areas (S. 393), asked Wambach to assess the timber in the nine areas. Wambach concluded that in general the areas were not significant timber producers. He also went beyond his charge, according to Warren, and subjectively reported that the areas were not unique enough to be designated wilderness. Wambach went on to recommend a management category with more flexibility for the Forest Service. Since Wambach's report, Sen. Floyd Haskell (D-Colo.) has asked the Library of Congress to research the back country designation proposal, according to the **MIS-SOULIAN**. Warren and other conservationists worry that setting up a new, less-protective wild lands designation might diminish chances for formal wilderness classification of many pending candidate areas.

Pictured above is Hidden Lake in Montana's Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness. Photo courtesy of Montana Travel Commission.

Gov. Andrus takes on 'power brokers'

"To some this may seem like throwing down the gauntlet," said Idaho Gov. Cecil D. Andrus, "but I am determined to resist attempts by the Ford Administration and the 'power brokers' of timber and mining interests to whack nearly 400,000 acres out of our previously untouched Idaho Primitive Area." Andrus told the Seattle Rotary Club that the Chamberlain Basin was taken out of the wilderness proposal "after Assistant (agriculture) Secretary Robert Long was visited by lobbyists from timber and mining companies. . . ." "The reduction was influenced by selfish interests, not common sense and biological data," he said. Andrus pointed out that he is in the unusual position of being a state executive fighting to preserve federal lands, but "I feel nonetheless that this stance will contribute to a better quality of life for future generations."

Court strikes down Denver sign code

The Colorado Supreme Court struck down the part of Denver's sign code that prohibited new billboards and ordered old ones removed within five years. The court ruled in early November that the city doesn't have the authority to prohibit billboards, nor to inhibit one industry throughout the city, according to a **Denver Post** report.

Challis grazing statement delayed

The first of 212 court ordered impact statements on grazing management by the Bureau of Land Management will be late. Under a court agreement with the Natural Resources Defense Council the draft report on the Challis Planning Unit in Idaho was to be ready by December 1975. BLM now says the draft EIS won't be out until April, 1976.

14-High Country News — Nov. 21, 1975

NPRC opposes leasing without regs

The Northern Plains Resource Council (NPRC) passed a resolution at its annual meeting Nov. 12 in Billings, Mont., calling for the defeat of coal leasing legislation which does not contain strip mining regulations. The resolution was prompted by the Senate Interior Committee's decision the day before to not add the strip mining bill to the federal coal leasing bill.

Pat Sweeney, staff coordinator for NPRC, explained that they feel passing the leasing bill would do nothing but hasten leasing of coal. "We would be giving the go ahead to leasing without the necessary strip mining regulations," he said. He said, "The only handle we have at this point is through the courts." Sweeney was referring to both the pending Sierra Club suit as well as a suit by the Natural Resources Defense Council challenging the Interior Department's programmatic environmental impact statement. The Sierra Club suit referred to is demanding a regional impact statement on coal develop-

ment in the Northern Plains. NPRC is a plaintiff in both suits.

In another resolution on the leasing bill, the NPRC emphasized its opposition to an amendment allowing railroads to lease federal coal. The House Interior Committee defeated (by virtue of a tie vote) the amendment, but the Senate approved it so it will be an issue in the conference session. The NPRC said that such legislation would increase the land grant railroads' already excessive control of land and energy resources.

The NPRC and an affiliated landowners group, the McCone Agricultural Protection Organization (MAPO), are now struggling with Burlington Northern's control over land in McCone County where BN plans a fertilizer plant. (See HCN, Nov. 7, 1975) Two of the new officers of the NPRC are from McCone County, Vice Chairman Charles Yarger and Assistant Treasurer Tom Breitbach.

Newly elected NPRC Chairman Anne Charter said the

first goal for the coming year is to continue to fight with no compromising. "There is no co-existence for agriculture and massive coal based industrial development," she said. Charter and her husband, Boyd, were among the eight people who formed the NPRC three and a half years ago. Asked by HCN whether she thought that resisting compromise had always been the goal of the NPRC from the time of that first meeting, Charter said it had.

She added, however, "If we had done what we should have at the beginning, we would have said, 'Ban strip mining.'" She says the public didn't know at that time anything about strip mining and consequently would have thought the fledgling organization was so extreme that they would count it off as a radical group. Consequently, the NPRC has instead taken a strong stance for regulation of strip mining, which has included full-time lobbyists in both Washington, D.C., and in Helena at the state capitol. There are now eight full-time staff members.

Stopping mobile home energy waste

(Last in a series
on home insulation)

Mobile homes can be tremendously energy inefficient from a thermal insulation standpoint. While brick or wood homes retain some heat in winter even without added insulation, aluminum trailers offer almost no resistance to heat flow. In fact, aluminum is such a good conductor it is used in cooking utensils. This makes uninsulated mobile homes expensive to heat in the winter, and expensive to cool in the summer.

Proper insulation in mobile homes would pay for itself in very little time. But since most buyers turn to trailers because of their low initial cost, optimum insulation is often absent. Most buyers look at the price, not the thickness of insulation or the number of panes of glass in the windows.

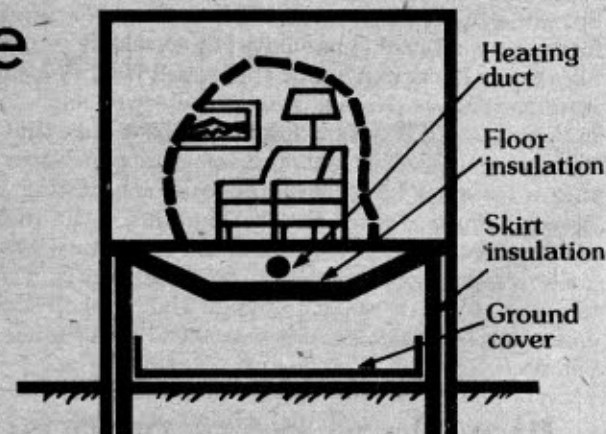
More than 65% of the mobile homes being produced today are built to insulation standards set by the American National Standards Institute. Unfortunately, the ANSI standards do not require optimum insulation, ac-

cording to a study done by Stanford Research Institute for Pacific Power and Light Company.

The 1973 ANSI requirements for minimum insulation are: ceilings R-16, walls R-8, floors R-10, and optional storm windows. The R value is the heat-stopping ability of building materials. The greater the R value, the greater the insulating value.

The purpose of the SRI study for PP&L was "to determine the optimum amount of insulation that should be used . . . as opposed to the minimum amounts required to meet ANSI standards." The study showed that the following levels of insulation will pay for themselves in saved fuel costs: ceilings R-19, walls R-11, floors R-19 without insulated skirting and R-10 with insulated skirts, and required storm doors and windows.

PP&L points out, "Some manufacturers install what they call an 'Alaska Pack' or 'double' insulation, but ANSI does not specifically interpret these terms. As a result, the amount of additional insulation used to improve on the ANSI requirements differs from manufacturer to man-



Insulating the crawl space below a mobile home keeps the floor warmer and reduces heat loss. From PP&L's "Mobile Home Insulation from A to Z."

ufacturer. When purchasing a new mobile home with double insulation, the R value should be the guide in determining the true value of the insulation."

If you aren't buying a new mobile home, it is possible to retrofit your existing trailer with additional insulation to bring it up to standards. Since mobile homes don't have attics and basements and are pretty well "buttoned up," retrofitting can present some unique problems.

To insulate the roof of an existing mobile home you can have a contractor spray polyurethane foam on the roof. To protect the foam from weather, cover with a layer of plastic, says PP&L.

Another way is to use board-like foam insulation panels and glue them with mastic to the inside of the ceiling. Some foam will burn in a fire and give off noxious fumes. Make sure to get the "self-extinguishing" type.

Since many mobile homes are set off the ground by wheels, high heat loss can occur through the floor. Skirting reduces the loss, and insulating your skirting reduces the loss still further. Insulating the floor is also important because of the air space under a mobile home.

"A ground cover significantly helps keep relative humidity of the crawl space at a low level," says PP&L. "A ground cover should definitely be used when insulation is added to the skirts. Four mil or thicker polyethylene sheeting is satisfactory ground cover material."

A copy of Pacific Power and Light Company's **Mobile Home Insulation from A to Z** is available for one dollar from any PP&L office.

Clean air, grizzlies, BLM headline convention

The Montana Wilderness Association's program for its two and a half day convention proves that wilderness enthusiasts can no longer afford a single focus. Top national authorities will discuss topics including the Clean Air Act, managing grizzlies, the Garrison Diversion, in-



Sally Ranney

ternational water problems, Bureau of Land Management grazing policies, and utility rate structures, as well as more traditional wilderness issues.

The convention will be held at the Northern Hotel in Billings, Mont., Dec. 5, 6, 7, beginning at 10 a.m. on Dec. 5. Katie Lee, river protector and songstress, and Sally Ranney, of Canyon Concert fame, will both perform at the convention, which is billed as the biggest meeting of environmentalists in the region each year.

David Brower, founder and president of Friends of the Earth, is expected to attend.

Rafe Pomerance, head of the Clean Air lobbying effort in Washington, D.C., will discuss Montana's air, along with Dr. Clancy Gordon of the University of Montana and a representative of the Environmental Protection Agency.

A former solicitor of the Interior Department, Frank J.

Barry, will go into legal ramifications of "the underground public domain" — federal coal deposits.

Richard Madson, the National Audubon Society's North Dakota representative, will talk about dams and agricultural water and will also participate in a panel discussion on water problems as related to Canada.

Jim Kowalski, who heads the Fairbanks Environmental Center, will present a talk: "Alaska, our last hope."

Also included on the program are: U.S. Reps. John Melcher and Max Baucus; State Rep. Dorothy Bradley; Montana Fish and Game Department Director Wes Woodgerd; and representatives of the Bloody Clunkers Wilderness Association, the Wilderness Resources Institute, the Flathead Coalition, and the Environmental Information Center.

To preregister, write Polly Renne, Rte. 3, Box 1, Bozeman, Mont. 59715 or register when you arrive at 10 a.m. Friday. Registration fee is \$3. Saturday's lunch and banquet cost more, but they're optional. For housing in Billings, call or write Mary Beth Gloege at 626 Howard, Billings, Mont. 59102, (406) 657-2271.



Note Cards

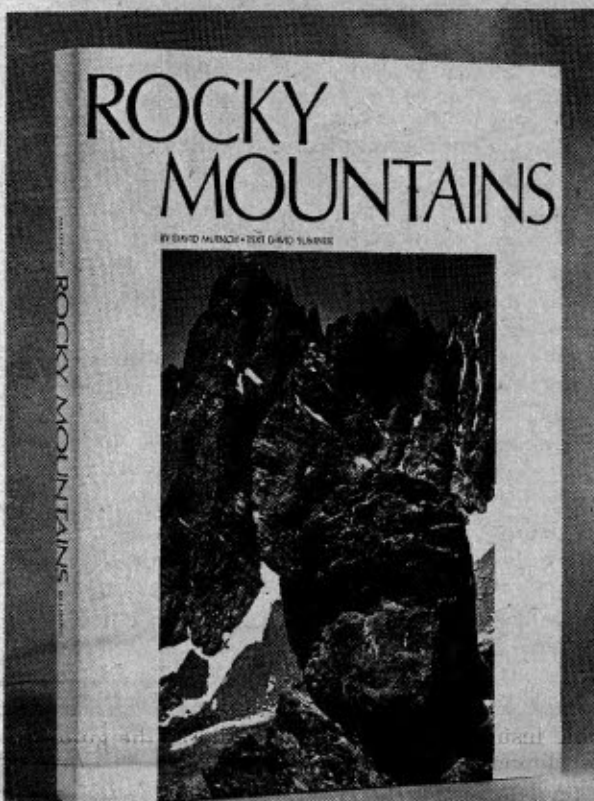
Holly Merrifield, a wildlife artist and friend has designed these note cards for **High Country News**. The cards are ready for your own personal notes. They are 3 1/4 by 7 inches. The cards are ivory, the envelopes gold, the designs in wheatfield gold ink.

\$2. Ten cards and envelopes per set.



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Gov. Ed Herschler urges you to PARTICIPATE!

In the Governor's Land Use Meeting



December 2, 7:30 p.m.
Riverton Career Education Center
College View Drive, Riverton, Wyoming

- ★ DISCUSS Land Use
- ★ HELP write Land Use policies
- ★ VOICE your ideas and concerns
- ★ MEET Land Use Commission and Advisory Committee

Eavesdropper

environmental news from around the world

FAMILY PLANNING ENDANGERED. Ford Administration proposed cuts in health services could undermine family planning programs, according to Rep. Pat Schroeder (D-Colo.). In Colorado alone, the proposed 20% cut in federal support could eliminate family planning services for 7,000, she says.

PESTICIDE CONTROL WEAKENED. The Senate has passed a measure weakening the Environmental Protection Agency's control over pesticides. Under Senate-passed amendments to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), EPA must consult with the Secretary of Agriculture 60 days before publishing any proposed changes in classification of pesticides. The amendments also prohibit EPA from requiring people to pass a test before they are allowed to purchase and apply restricted chemicals, according to the Associated Press. "It was the view of the Senate that EPA has not adequately considered the impact of its decisions on agriculture, and productivity should share the same high priority as environmental protection," said Sen. Cliff Hansen (R-Wyo.).

FEDERAL CAN BAN. The Environmental Protection Agency has published proposed guidelines requiring a five cent deposit on all beer and soft drink containers sold on federal property. Heavy lobbying is expected on both sides of the issue, according to **Solid Waste Report**.

Paul M. Breeden Prints



Great Horned Owl

Great Horned Owl

Black and white — 19 x 24 1/2 inch print.
Limited edition of 500, signed and numbered. \$30.



Young Prairie Falcon

Young Prairie Falcon

Black and white — 14 x 20 inch print.
Limited edition of 500, signed and numbered. \$30.

The artist is Paul M. Breeden, a noted calligrapher and illustrator. His paintings and drawings have appeared in Audubon, Defenders of Wildlife, and National Geographic. Breeden and his agent, the Singing Sparrow gallery, are generously giving any proceeds from the sale of these prints to HCN. (To order, please use the form on page 15.)

16-High Country News — Nov. 21, 1975

Guy defies governors in attempt to support Interior

(Editors' note: The following comments about William Guy and the Western Governors' Regional Energy Policy Office (REPO) are excerpted from an article in *The Straight Creek Journal*, which is published in Denver, Colo. As a side note, there is little question in North Dakotans' minds that Guy will be running for the state's only seat in the U.S. House. A poll was conducted last week by a television station in that state between Guy and the present representative, Mark Andrews.)

As the battle over the Sierra Club v. Morton suit continues in the courts, tremendous political pressures are building. The Sierra Club sued the Interior Department demanding that a regional impact statement be prepared to show the probable effects of coal development in the Northern Great Plains. As a result of the suit, power plant construction and coal mining operations have been delayed, pending the outcome of the legal battle. Those with direct interests — like Atlantic Richfield, Shell Oil, Amex, and Peabody, who have leases, as well as dozens of public and private power companies — are mounting a tough political campaign to discredit the Sierra Club effort and get the organization to moderate its position.

One of those to feel the pressure has been REPO Director William Guy. Guy has made it clear to the governors he feels strongly REPO should support the Interior Department position. He fought hard to engineer the passage of a resolution at the Albuquerque meeting of REPO, calling for REPO to file with the Supreme Court an amicus brief on the Department of Interior's side.

Staff members of Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm charge that Guy's tactics were devious and underhanded. There are dark murmurings that the energy industry boys have gotten to him. The tracks would seem to point in other directions.

In the late summer, Guy wrote a letter to Ken Holum, a Washington lobbyist for a group of Northern Great Plains rural electric cooperatives, expressing concern over the implications of the Sierra v. Morton decision. That decision by the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals indicated that the Interior Department would have to prepare a regional impact statement. Guy's roots with the REAs are deep. As governor of North Dakota for 12 years, he has a long standing relationship with Holum and the REAs. He helped to start the Basin Rural Electric Cooperative and other rural electric cooperatives.

The REA's in the area are up in arms about Sierra v. Morton. Many have already joined together to file an amicus brief with the Supreme Court in support of the Interior Department.

These REA's make up a profound part of rural liberal political support. A democratic governor in any of those states turns his back on them at his peril. The one thing all REPO governors have in common is that they are Democrats.

Guy, during his years as governor of North Dakota, also developed a close relationship with the Department of Interior. During that period, Interior embarked



William Guy, director of the Western Governors Regional Energy Policy Office (REPO). His tactics spell continuing trouble for him.

upon the huge Garrison River diversion project which traverses North Dakota. Ironically it was his support of that project that unhinged Guy's U.S. Senate bid last year. Environmentalists rallied behind a third-party candidate, James Jungroth, in sufficient numbers to allow incumbent Milt Young to squeak by.

In early October, Holum and other REA officials met with Guy to talk about REPO support against the Sierra Club suit. "We thought we had a commitment from him that REPO would undertake to do a study, an exhaustive study, of what the suit was doing to the area," said one REA man.

Curiously Guy hasn't raised the issue of the study with the governors. Instead he

embarked upon his campaign to join the REA's in their support of the Interior Department position. On October 16th, during the meeting of the Federation of Rocky Mountain States, Guy met with a group of so-called governors' alternates. Alternates are governors' staff people appointed to represent the chief executives at REPO functions in their absence. The purpose of the meeting was to hammer out an agenda for the Albuquerque meeting.

Guy raised the question of Sierra v. Morton. Unanimously the alternates said to leave it off. The next day Guy is reported to have told his staff he wanted the item on the agenda. When reminded that the alternates had voted unanimously to leave it off, Guy is reported to have said that the alternates don't speak for the governors.

But when Guy issued an agenda several days before the Albuquerque meeting, the controversial issue was not on it. There was a general discussion topic on the end that was broad enough so that Sierra v. Morton could have been raised, but that was all.

Lamm went to Albuquerque suspicious that the issue would be raised, and prepared to argue for its immediate tabling. When he got there the morning of the meeting, however, he found the whole agenda had been changed. Aides charge Guy had passed out a phony agenda before the meeting to deliberately mislead Lamm and other governors who could be expected to oppose any move to join the Interior Department position.

Not only was Sierra v. Morton on the new agenda, but so were a series of other items that Lamm and other governors knew no-

thing about. Wyoming Governor Ed Herschler happened to be in possession of a resolution which appeared to head off any effort to jump in bed with the Interior Department. His resolution was adopted virtually intact the next day by the surprised governors who seemed only too happy to get off the explosive subject as quickly as possible.

Guy's tactics spell continuing trouble for him. At a breakfast meeting the next morning, the governors hammered out some specific REPO policy guidelines and clarifications. In attendance were all the alternates, as well as Governors Lamm of Colorado, Jerry Apodaca of New Mexico, Tom Judge of Montana, and Arthur Link of North Dakota. The group, among other things, made it clear that alternates speak for their bosses and that Guy will have to accept that. Agendas will be worked out and approved in advance of each meeting by the alternates with no more shenanigans like Guy's Albuquerque maneuver. These and other rules were given to REPO chairman Apodaca to enforce.

Meanwhile, bigger trouble may be brewing for Guy. Link, who was the man who engineered Guy's getting the job, is quoted as saying he is disillusioned with the way Guy is handling himself. Others are more hostile and indicate if the time is right, they will start headhunting.

What it all adds up to is a devious internal situation which threatens to further compromise the limited effectiveness of the all-too-frequently divergent Western governors.

Dear Friends,

During the past two weeks, we met with three coalition groups of ranchers and other environmentalists — the Northern Plains Resource Council of Montana, the Powder River Basin Resource Council of Wyoming, and the United Plainsmen of North Dakota. Each had their success stories to tell at their annual meetings — members appointed to state boards, government coming to them for research data, influence on major decisions of the region.

We'd like to share the United Plainsmen's success story, partially because it's such a "young group," formed only in November 1973. Some of us will admit not thinking much at all about frigid, remote, rural North Dakota, much less about what environmental activism there might be there. But Governor Arthur Link is very aware that the United Plainsmen is alive and kicking; he's been too recently at the wrong end of their kick.

Talking with members, you quickly feel their enthusiasm. It likely stems from their loyalty to North Dakota, previously much ignored. It is expressed in their tireless efforts to protect their state, presently getting far too much attention from the coal developers. You get the distinct impression they'd just as soon be ignored again. (One Plainsmen supporter wears a button that says, "Thirty degrees below

keeps out the riffraff.")

At the meeting, Plainsman Randolph Nodlund told us, hesitantly and evidently with some shame, that he had been one of the many landowners in Dunn County who had signed a coal lease five years ago. Now he believes that 90% of his neighbors would get out of their leases if they could. Many of them are turning to the Plainsmen for support, if they can overcome their shame. They know now that the State Water Commission is considering applications for four gasification plants in their county, and Nodlund told HCN he knows he'll have to leave the land when they're built.

Gary Sprecher, outgoing chairman of the group, tells of driving his camper around North Dakota talking to people like Nodlund and conveying their fears to the legislature in Bismarck.

Governor Link traveled across the state to meet with the Plainsmen for their annual meeting. He was warmly greeted because he had gained a reputation as being one of the "go slow" Western governors.

His words, however, shocked them. He said he thought they had made a mistake by fighting the West River Diversion project, the United Plainsmen's major victory of the legislative session. He also said they couldn't ignore the commitment that Dunn County landowners had made to development.

The reaction from the group could be felt immediately by onlookers. Many Plainsmen see the diversion as the key to massive

exploitation of North Dakota. The United Plainsmen executive director, Rick Maixner, said he was "more angered and disappointed by that speech than by anything any politician in North Dakota has said in the time I've been here."

The flak thrown his way during the following week by both Plainsmen and other Democrats was apparently enough to make him take a second look at the people's wishes for the future of their state. On Nov. 19, the State Water Commission, which he controls, voted to have a moratorium on water permits until July 1, 1977. One political analyst, Mike Jacobs, publisher of *The Onlooker*, sees the decision as a direct result of Link's confrontation with the United Plainsmen and the publicity following it.

Although it doesn't affect water permit applications that are pending (including the four Dunn County gasification plants), it is a significant victory for planning in North Dakota. Water in that state, as in most Western states, is the key to coal development.

It also should be an inspiration for the rest of us. Here's what a small, bold band of landowners can do when they have a governor who is at least open to the philosophy of controls on coal development. Many of the Western states have such governors, and there are also a few Congressmen with that orientation. All we have to remember is too keep their feet to the fire.

—the editors

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