

The Environmental Bi-Weekly



# High Country News

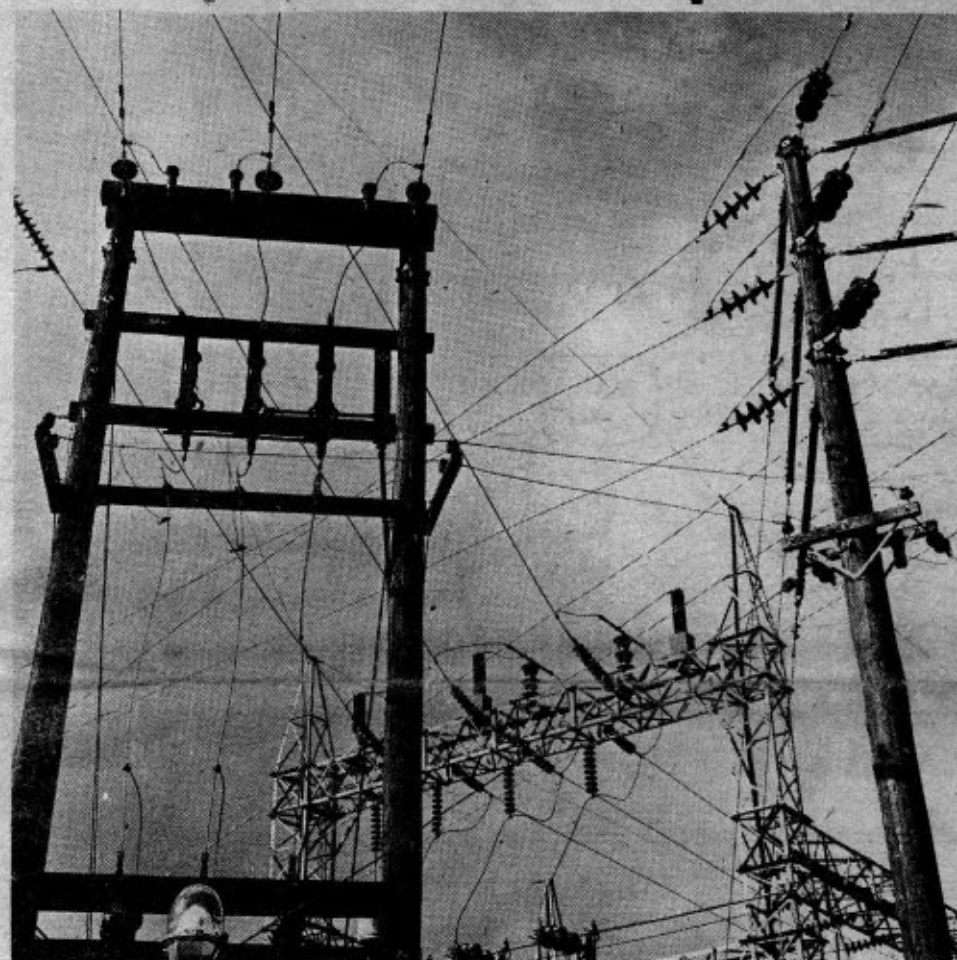
Vol. 7 No. 24

Lander, Wyoming

Friday, December 5, 1975



## People want power over transmission



**BEAUTILITY.** Utility companies refer to the "beautility" and the "transthetics" of the high voltage transmission lines crisscrossing the country, but some people find it hard to see the beauty. Big as these towers and conductors may be, they usually are not big enough, according to Louise B. Young, author of **POWER OVER PEOPLE**. The larger the diameter and the wider the spacing of conductors, the higher the voltage that can be carried without corona discharge — the loss of electrons. However, Young says that companies can afford to lose quite a lot of electricity and still come out ahead by scrimping on the size of conductors and towers that would theoretically be required. This corona discharge can be a hazard and a nuisance to people who live or work near the lines.

Photo by Lynne Bama

by Marjane Ambler

As the country strives toward the elusive goal of Project Independence, the cities of the Midwest and the West Coast are becoming more and more dependent upon the web of wires gradually growing across the face of the Great Plains and the Rockies. Thousands of miles of new transmission lines are being hung between steel towers, which march like robots across the prairies and over the mountains.

Once rural landowners rejoiced to see each new pole bringing the electricity they had waited so long to get. A few were wary but figured the new power lines were inevitable because of the almost unlimited power given to utilities — the power of eminent domain.

Now more and more rural people are beginning to resent these metal intruders which mar their landscape, hinder their farm operation, and produce ozone, which may be unhealthy for their crops and,

perhaps, for themselves, after prolonged contact. It's the rural people who are affected the most since as the lines get more and more high-powered, there is more and more pressure to keep them away from the population centers.

Some of these rural landowners now realize that until states pass legislation encouraging exporting fuel rather than power, the landowners themselves must find ways to control transmission lines.

North Dakota and Montana each have many existing 230 kilovolt (kv) lines, but there are bigger things on the drawing board. North Dakota is getting 345 kv lines and a 400 kv by 1978, according to the utilities coordinating council report. Montana will get two parallel 500 kv lines stretching three fourths of the way across the state if Colstrip generating units 3 and 4 are finally approved. This line would also cross the Idaho panhandle.

Little is known about the possible effects of two parallel 500 kv lines, such as those

that might be crossing Montana and Idaho. Louise Young has documented some of the reports from 765 kv lines. (See separate story.) She says that the electric utilities are considering lines with voltages as high as 1500 kv.

Elsewhere in the region, Arizona is the only state with existing 500 kv lines, and it is slated for at least five more if Kaiparowits gets final approval. Utah will also get its share of 500 kv lines if Kaiparowits is built. Existing 345 kv lines are in Wyoming (from the Jim Bridger plant near Rock Springs), Utah (Utah Power and Light), Arizona, South Dakota, and New Mexico. Wyoming will be getting more 345 kv lines from the Jim Bridger plant, the Naughton plant near Kemmerer, and the proposed Laramie River Station near Wheatland. The other states in the region are also slated for additional 345 kv lines in the near future.

North Dakota and Montana are now the centers in the region for action controlling transmission lines on three fronts:

—**landowner groups.** Two groups in eastern North Dakota are bargaining for landowner easement payments as high as

\$10,000 per mile. In Montana, the landowners are fortified with their own easement contracts (provided by the Northern Plains Resource Council).

—**legislative.** Proposed regulations for the new North Dakota siting act may, in some ways, be the strictest of any in the region for transmission line siting — if they become law in January.

—**judicial.** A recent North Dakota district court decision on eminent domain for transmission lines may have far-reaching implications for energy export policies.

### PRIME AGRICULTURAL LAND

Robert Larson, who owns a large feeding operation near Minot, N.D., explained to HCN why he and several of his friends have hired a lawyer and are objecting to Basin Electric's plans for a 115 kv power line across their property. He says guy wires and tower bases will interfere with day to day farm operations such as irrigation and use of farm implements and because it will endanger the birds which use his and other

(Continued on page 4)

### Pot shots at Pioneer?

## Citizens help write Idaho energy policy

Through a series of "energy workshops," the citizens of Idaho are helping to write an energy policy for their state.

The workshops are sponsored by the Idaho Conservation League (ICL) — a

statewide environmental organization which has openly opposed the new coal-fired power plant proposed by Idaho Power Company (IPC). IPC is worried that the environmentalists may end up writing the energy policy — and leave Pioneer out of Idaho's energy future.

Certain parts of the workshops "took shots at the plant," says Logan Lanham, IPC vice president for public affairs. When asked what specific parts of the program, Lanham singled out the displays on alternate sources of energy — solar, wind, and geothermal power. Lanham told *High Country News* that IPC has been given an opportunity to present pro-Pioneer information at the workshops and has done so.

The workshops are being held in eight major Idaho cities, funded by a \$10,000 grant from the U.S. Office of Education. ICL has been urging citizens on both sides of the Pioneer issue to attend the sessions. Research for the workshops has been conducted by a group composed of environmentalists, state officials, and energy industry representatives — including a representative of IPC. ICL thinks this setup keeps the workshops objective.

"The basic purposes of the workshops are to help educate the public about the facts

(Continued on page 7)



Belle Heffner, energy workshop director.

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HCN

Letters

## BOOK DEBATE CONTINUES

Dear Editors:

Peter Wild is right. Abbey's "Monkey" book is an obscene, reckless, and irresponsible piece of trash which will set the conservation movement back about 50 years. And sexist besides. Ban it!

D. R. Schoenfeld  
Los Angeles, Calif.

## ORV SOUNDING BOARD

Governor Cecil D. Andrus  
Statehouse  
Boise, Idaho 83720

Dear Governor Andrus:

I am disturbed with the direction the Governor's Off Road Vehicle Advisory Committee has been taking. I believe that the original purpose of the ORVAC has deteriorated to the point where the committee is now more interested in promoting ORV use than it is in regulating it.

The federal Executive Order of February, 1972, which required planning for ORV regulation by federal land-administering agencies, and which gave impetus to state involvement, such as the formation of ORVAC's, stated that the regulations which the federal agencies were to develop "... will designate areas of use and non-use, specify operating conditions that will be necessary to minimize damage to the natural resources of the Federal lands, and ensure compatibility with other recreational uses."

It is not true that the Forest Service and the BLM have to accommodate every demanded use of our public lands when a given use is basically destructive to resources and/or conflicts with other uses. Unfortunately, however, most of the ORV plans so far considered by these two agencies, at least in Idaho, have been rather weak in proposing to protect other values and users of public lands.

Yet, as an indication of how the ORVAC appears to see its present function, at the last meeting of the committee (Sept. 5th), members complained that the Forest Service ORV plans proposed were too oppressive to ORV users! They felt that motorcyclists were not being accommodated enough, and took action to notify the Forest Service to that effect.

The ORVAC is becoming primarily a sounding board for ORV users, and we would like to try and amend the situation a bit. We hope that you can also do something along this line.

Sincerely,  
Gerald A. Jayne  
Board of Directors  
Idaho Environmental Council

## MORATORIUM HELPS COMPETITORS

Dear Editors:

Re: Your "Dear Friends" of Nov. 21.

What a letdown to find you applauding a gasification water permit moratorium that solidifies the competitive positions of pending applicants!

Best wishes,  
Ed Dobson  
Sarpy Creek, Mont.

(Editors' note: In the column referred to, HCN said the water commission's decision was a "significant victory for planning in North Dakota," while pointing out that it did not affect pending water applications including four gasification plants. Since that time, we have learned that the water commission will continue to process new applications and hold public hearings. The moratorium means only that no final decisions will be made on any new



application until after July 1, 1977. This obviously lessens the effect of the moratorium since many water applications have taken longer than 20 months to be processed — without a moratorium. We're not sure we could argue against the moratorium because it "solidifies the competitive position," however. More than 20 gasification plants are now being discussed for North Dakota. Would we prefer to have them all developed now to create a more competitive atmosphere?

MIGHT IS RIGHT  
OR VICE VERSA?

Dear HCN,

Your reporting is excellent. It occurs to me that you may be interested in what is going on here.

In October of 1969 AMAX, Inc. purchased Ayrshire Collieries and its subsidiary, Meadow Lark Farms (MLF). In August of 1969 the village of Catlin extended its municipal zoning authority over the radial contiguous land lying within 1½ miles of the corporate boundaries, establishing the right to "regulate the use of the land." This is a statutory power granted municipalities.

In the spring of 1972 AMAX alias MLF sent their land acquisition into the countryside to capture enough more land to be able to develop a takeover by strip mining in the near future. A core of citizen resistance, as well as land-owner withholding of the land sought, countered their thrust. An organization was formed — the Association for the Preservation of Catlin Township, Inc.

This is a quickie backdrop for the stage set on which the play is now being enacted. AMAX Coal Co., AMAX Inc., and MLF, Inc. filed for a state permit to mine Jan. 26, 1975 (never having sought a variance from village and township zoning boards of appeals).

The state issued a permit to AMAX on June 27. AMAX has filed suit to "void the zoning ordinances," and

sets forth that the State Surface Mining Act preempts the authority of the zoning ordinances. This is an abbreviated version of the encounter between civil rights (from being wronged, and robbed) with the long established jungle law where might is right, and the rights of any others be damned.

AMAX has been quoted as saying that "it might be easier for AMAX to continue farming Catlin and go somewhere else to mine. But the strong opposition, ironically, has made it hard for AMAX to chalk up Catlin as a bad experience."

With the company facing prospects of increasing opposition in other mining areas, one AMAX official says the company might be forced to make Catlin an example for those who think they can beat the company.

"We'll have to decide whether Catlin is worth it," he says, "We'll have to decide whether it is worth the bad publicity we will get if we fight a town of 2,000."

This statement was published last May before the issuance of the permit, and the legal encounters, but it gives you people some idea of the line of thinking. You may also know that this battle that is being fought with private money to establish "right as might," against the vast wealth which will be used to smash the outcry of the serfs to sustain the jungle law of "might is right," is a battle cry for the freedom of the people of the areas of your concern. Financial power and muscle power are interchangeable in their concept.

I own 160 acres of land within the coal block. There is no price at which this will be sold. I will do my best to sustain this unavailability for a period of time after I die. I also come from a family of top mining engineers (as well as various other pursuits). I have named the Catlin fight: Holey (that the strip mining would seek to make), Wholly (undisturbed), and Holy (before the mind of the great intelligence that has so richly provided).

Virginia Jewell  
Danville, Ill.

# HCN Guest Editorial

Dec. 5, 1975 — High Country News-3

## Subtle way to amend law

by Mike Weber

Tactics, strategy and manipulation have always been words I've regarded with suspicion and concern. As a young athletic competitor I felt that the only strategy necessary was to just do your absolute best. But naivete collapsed with the surge of experience. I learned to be suspicious of my competition, look for hidden motives in their friendship, and wonder about their strategy. Could the tactic be to manipulate me?

However, I found that harboring those lowly suspicions was a poor way to operate. As an alternative I advocate taking a hard, critical look at the nature of the game. Know the rules, know the players, and know what's at stake.

Applying this to our federal agencies, the Forest Service or the Bureau of Land Management for example, is a bit complex. A vast number of players express a vast array of interests. Witness the demands for grazing lands, mineral leases, more commercial use of the national forests, expanded recreational facilities, and more wilderness, to name a few. The rules of the game take the form of definitions in our laws and in agency regulations. Whichever players make their demands felt most have

the greatest say in establishing those definitions. That is the nature of the game.

But even if you don't make the definitions yourself, you're still not out of the game. Definitions are tools and the smart player manipulates every available tool. This point was made clear by three recent federal actions, all stemming from court cases.

In *W. Va. Division of the Izaak Walton League v. Butz*, the court looked at the definitions in the Organic Act of 1897, compared them with the definition of "clear-cutting" and found the latter incompatible with the former. But taking this "tool" the forest industry encouraged the Forest Service to apply the Organic Act in a manner that froze further timber harvests in four eastern states. This created what looked like an emergency situation and a great clamor to revise the act resulted.

Similarly, the suit of *Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc. et al. v. Rogers C.B. Morton et al.* concerned the definition of which activities on Bureau of Land Management range lands "may have a significant impact on the human environment." It was settled by a consent agreement, but BLM then made the result appear absurd by interpreting the agreement to require an environmental impact statement for even simple range improvements.

The third instance of manipulating these definitions

came as a result of a March 26, 1975 decision in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Pursuant to the court order the Army Corps of Engineers was instructed to develop regulations that would extend their jurisdiction over navigable waters to all developments in "waters of the U.S." The Corps, and subsequently the U.S. Department of Agriculture, took this definition and hypothesized that if a farmer plowed his fields next to an irrigation ditch it would constitute a dredge and fill operation requiring a permit from the Corps. This was part of their attempt to scare people into opposing the regulations which the lawsuit was forcing the Corps to enact.

These are all tactics. They are part of a strategy to obtain new, more favorable definitions, new more favorable laws. In simple terms they constitute a concentrated effort to rewrite landmark legislation like the National Environmental Policy Act and the Organic Act under falsely created states of emergency. Still, the important thing to remember is that these laws are only words. They attempt to express the intent of our legislators and thus of our electorate. Compliance with the laws means a good faith effort at compliance with the intent of the laws.

Tactics, strategy, manipulation. What is their intent? I watch these legal games being played and still end up viewing the competition with suspicion and concern. And I wonder, is that the nature of the game?



### REFINERY HAZE

Dear HCN,

A letter from Gail O'Haver of Sundance complains about the blue-gray film in the air. We, too, noticed it going along the southern Montana border and I was much distressed, and puzzled.

Old timers who noticed it thought it was "all that traffic on the Interstate." I thought it had to be something more.

I think I found it. The oil refineries — one's in Billings and there are others we passed. What kind of pollution controls must we have to keep the land of the Big Sky from looking as blue and hazy as the East? Do these refineries conform to federal air pollution standards? Who does the regulation?

What can we do to save the clarity of the atmosphere?

Barbara Heilman  
Lititz, Pa.

Reply from Montana Department of Health and Environmental Sciences:

1. Do these refineries conform to federal air pollution standards?

The answer to this question is difficult to answer. The federal standards are ambient air quality standards. In the case of particulate levels in the ambient air, probably the greatest source of particulate matter is vehicles moving on unpaved roads. Home heating systems, automobiles, slash burning, and other industries also contribute to total particulate levels in the atmosphere. This same situation exists with sulfur compounds, hydrocarbons, carbon monoxide, oxidants and nitrogen oxides, although our knowledge of the concentrations of some of these compounds in the ambient air and their sources is still limited.

The first question can best be answered by discussing the compliance of these companies with the state's standards, which are emission standards established to achieve compliance with the federal standards. The state also has some ambient air quality standards.

**Conoco in compliance.** The Conoco refinery is in compliance with all state emission standards. We are now investigating ambient air concentrations of hydrogen sulfide and carbon monoxide in the vicinity of the refinery to see if Conoco's contributions are causing violations of applicable standards.

**Exxon exceeds standards.** Exxon refinery is not in compliance with the state emission standard for particulate matter and a standard limiting the sulfur content of

fuels burned. They have been working on both problems for some time and we expect to have a definite commitment from Exxon for solutions in the next few months. The sulfur-in-fuel problem is complicated by the fuel shortage, Federal Energy Administration regulations on sale and use of fuels, and the high cost of desulfurization equipment.

**Watching Cenex.** Cenex refinery at Laurel may have a particulate emission problem with their fluid catalytic-cracking unit. Preliminary data shows it to be in compliance with the state emission standards but further tests are going to be made. Cenex, as well as all the other refineries in Montana, have the sulfur-in-fuel problem. We discussed this problem with Cenex representatives yesterday and they proposed a two-phase program costing many millions of dollars to solve the problem. We feel that their approach was very reasonable but hope they can shorten the schedule.

#### 2. Who does the regulating?

The answer to the second question is much easier. The states administer the regulations. However, the Environmental Protection Agency has the authority under the Clean Air Act to enforce both the federal and state regulations if the states do not do an adequate job.

Fred O. Gray  
Environmental Engineer  
Air Quality Bureau  
Helena, Mont.

Pass along some Christmas hope. Contribute to the conservation group that looks after your land, your health, and happiness. Give a gift in the name of a friend. A few deserving examples:



Colorado Open Space Council. 1325 Delaware, Denver, Colo. 80204  
Environmental Action. 2239 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, Colo. 80206  
Environmental Information Center. P.O. Box 12, Helena, Mont. 59601  
Idaho Conservation League. P.O. Box 844, Boise, Idaho 83701  
Idaho Environmental Council. P.O. Box 3371, University Station, Moscow, Idaho 83843  
Northern Plains Resource Council. 437 Stapleton Building, Billings, Mont. 59101  
Utah Environment Center. 1275 Wellington St., Salt Lake City, Utah 84106  
South Dakota Environmental Coalition. P.O. Drawer G, University Station, Brookings, S.D. 57006  
Powder River Basin Resource Council. 150 W. Brundage St., Sheridan, Wyo. 82801  
Wyoming Outdoor Council. Route 2, 944 Shoshone, Powell, Wyo. 82435

### CAN'T DO WITHOUT IT

Dear HCN,

I must admit some evenings on the day HCN arrives I can only skim the headlines and lead paragraphs. But we finally read it all no matter how distressing and depressing your major stories may be. But we cannot do without HCN. We need you to document, record, and educate.

The book reviews are appreciated. They solve many gift-giving quandaries, and I mention the HCN review with the order.

Finally I would like to suggest you consider a major article on the "Socio-" side of the picture. Impacts on towns and small cities in our developing region. I don't know that we understand the stresses that unplanned growth can have in this area; not to mention the sacrifice of a life-style.

Many Thanks,  
Edward R. Harris  
Lakewood, Colo.



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Box K, Lander, Wyoming 82520

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## Landowners: here's some free advice

A North Dakota attorney and a Montana ranchers group offer suggestions for the landowner who has just been approached about an easement for his property.

Joe Vogel is the attorney who won the eminent domain case before Judge Benny Graff that said companies which sell no power to North Dakota users cannot exercise eminent domain in that state. Vogel, who is on the board of directors for the United Plainsmen, also works with other landowner groups in the state, informally advising them of their rights in easement negotiations.

Vogel offers four suggestions for other landowners in the country who are concerned about transmission lines crossing their land:

- 1) Contact your neighbors to see what they think.
- 2) If others are also concerned, form an association and work together.
- 3) Find an attorney without vested interest in the utilities. A utility will often agree to negotiate rather than condemn your land since, in many states, it must pay legal fees for both sides in condemnation proceedings.
- 4) Ask your attorney specifically if he is on a retainer for a coal company or an energy company. Vogel reiterates the importance of this point because he has heard of too many cases when landowners were advised by their attorneys not to pursue legal action because of the attorneys' vested interest.

The Northern Plains Resource Council offers specific suggestions for landowners who are considering signing easement contracts.

In Montana, they prepared a sample contract. In it they suggest including provisions to assure the utility company will revegetate damaged land, control noxious weeds, assume liability for livestock injuries, consult with the landowner about access roads and gates, ground all



Joe Vogel, attorney

buildings near the lines, post a surety bond to cover projected costs of the contract's requirements, assume liability for costs of correcting radio or television interference, and pay for damage to crops, grass, or forage, plus other provisions. The contract was written by Ellen Withers of the NPRC staff.

It also asked for annual rental fees instead of one-time easement payments since the easement payments are forever. "A lump sum is not adequate compensation for restrictions a power line puts on use and resale of land and the nuisances it creates." Montana Power Co. has, in one case, agreed to discuss this possibility. Jeanne Charter of the NPRC says they have been advised by a lawyer that this system would be better for ratepayers, too, since Montana Power couldn't pass through the annual charges to consumers. She says the company has rejected most of the provisions of the NPRC sample contract.

(The four page sample contracts are available from NPRC at 418 Stapleton Bldg., Billings, MT 59101 for the cost of copying.)

tions were not answered by Basin.

In other areas, there often are no public meetings, and landowners respond to the threat of condemnation by signing contracts immediately. To attack this problem head-on, the Northern Plains Resource Council (NPRC) contacted landowners in Montana and offered them sample easement contracts and help with organizing. The sample contracts suggested what the landowners should look for in their agreements with utilities. (See separate story.) NPRC is an environmentalist-rancher coalition based in Billings, Mont. NPRC distributed a brochure with questions and answers about the lines.

The United Plainsmen, a landowner-environmentalist coalition in North Dakota, has used the NPRC contract to a limited extent.

### MONTANA POWER BROCHURE

The NPRC brochure was apparently inspired by a brochure printed by Montana Power Co. with a similar format which offered answers to questions of affected landowners regarding the company's 500 kv line between Colstrip and Hot Springs. That brochure said that only the land taken up by transmission tower bases would be withdrawn from use, not mentioning guy wires. Montana Power said wild game and domestic stock graze, feed, and breed, without regard for the line.

Landowners in other parts of the country, however, have reported that with 765 kv lines, it is difficult to herd cattle under the line and that both riders and horses will get severe shocks when they pass under the lines, according to Louise B. Young, author of *Power Over People*. Young discussed this problem when she spoke to the Citizen Advisory Committee to the North Dakota Public Service Commission.

There is also some evidence that ozone given off by transmission wires damages green plants in the immediate vicinity of the line.

Montana Power Co.'s brochure says of crop effects, "there is no scientific or practical reason" to believe the power lines would have any effect on crops. Its brochure similarly discounts any effects on humans or animals, comparing the shock received from objects near the power line to a static electricity shock.

In North Dakota, farmer Casmir Paluck asked the power company seeking an easement from him what would happen if cows were killed by downed wires. He points out that cows are naturally inquisitive and if one were killed, the others would sniff the dead cow and possibly get lethal shocks themselves. When he asked about damages in such a case, he was told, "You'll have to go to Senator Young (U.S. Sen.

Milton Young)." Although Paluck and his neighbors near Dickinson were not satisfied with their contracts with the utilities, their lawyers talked all of them but Paluck out of fighting the easements.

### \$10,000 A MILE

Landowners in McLean and Burleigh counties in North Dakota are using collective bargaining to try to get annual payments instead of one-time payments for the easement and to convince the utilities involved to reroute the power lines along section lines. Utilities generally oppose this tactic, presumably because it is more expensive than following a straight line across a map. This routing would ease many of the inconveniences power lines pose for farming since county roads normally follow section lines. The North Dakota Farmers Union has endorsed the concept.

These landowner groups are asking for easements payments that are several thousand dollars per acre higher than those being discussed in most other cases. They are seeking payments equal to \$2,500 per tower or \$10,000 per mile.

According to a *Bismarck Tribune* story, the utility, UPA-CPA (United Power Association and Central Power Association), is apparently considering paying it. UPA-CPA considers it a sign of progress in bargaining that a figure has been offered. They add that it is a "pretty high number." As an example of going rates, Montana Power Company was recently offering about \$3,900 per mile of dry cropland. Critics of high easement payments point out that these costs will ultimately be passed on to consumers.

The bargaining power of landowner groups, however, depends entirely upon their cohesiveness and upon their foresight and that of their legal consultants. They can consider, in a limited way, where the lines should go and how much they will be compensated for them, and sometimes the utilities will make some concessions.

Yet the landowners cannot consider by themselves the broader issues such as whether or not the transmission lines are needed at all and whether they should be allowed to encroach on areas to the detriment of the general public.

### STATE EXCLUSION AREAS

This is where the legislative and judicial interests must enter the controversy. The United Plainsmen lobbied for the Energy Conversion Plant Siting and Transmission Line Siting bill of 1975. They proposed that all high voltage transmission lines should be routed through common corridors across the state. They also said these corridors should avoid crossing irrigable land and suggested that the legislature develop a schedule for burying all high voltage lines.

The siting act passed, without calling for common corridors or setting schedules for burying lines. Paula Ward, who is a member of the Citizen Advisory Committee to the North Dakota Public Service Commission, says there has not been enough research done on burying lines for it to be feasible for anything but short distances.

Siting regulations now being considered at Public Service Commission public hearings do provide for avoiding irrigable land. If passed, the regulations appear to be among the most stringent controls over transmission line siting in the region.

The regulations provide for five categories of lands, plus buffer zones, from which transmission lines will be excluded. These "exclusion" categories include national parks, wildernesses, monuments, and historical sites; state, county, and municipal parks; private and semi-private recreational areas; state historic sites; and

## Transmission lines. . .

(Continued from page 1)

nearby farm ponds as resting places.

"When you bring up the lake, Basin just looks the other way. They don't want to talk about it. . . . They know there'd be lots of support from sportsmen groups. North Dakota is proud of its waterfowl. We produce more waterfowl than any other state," Larson says. Since the ducks and geese take off and land in the dark usually, Larson is "afraid they'll break their necks" hitting wires.

He's also afraid for the lives of the pilots who fly spraying planes, pointing out that many of them lose their lives each year as it is without the additional lines. "Have you ever watched them?" he asks. "They fly right under the wires. They shouldn't do it, but they do," he says. Aerial spraying is used by farmers for insect and weed control.

Larson says his farm is on prime agricultural land. He can't understand why the power line couldn't be moved two miles further south where the land is hilly and less valuable for agriculture. Basin Electric has told him the route was chosen because it is close to Minot without being in the suburban population concentration. Larson says that Basin reminds him irrigation uses lots of electricity.

Larson interprets this as a threat since he says he is now very dependent upon electricity for wells, heating, machinery shops, etc. He remembers the days when he was fighting the utility companies' disinterest

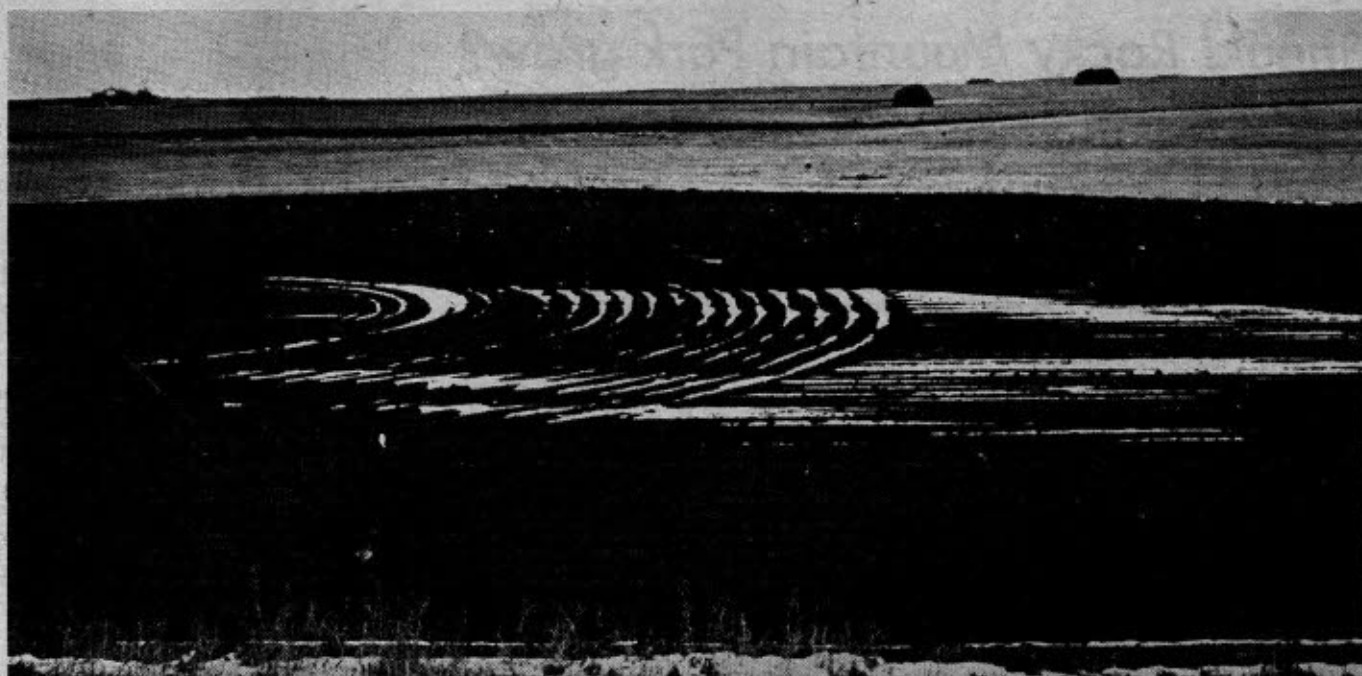
in getting electricity to rural areas.

With transmission lines running diagonally across his land, however, he cannot have wells under them nor can he use pivot sprinkler irrigation equipment in those areas.

Many of these issues were brought up at a public hearing with Basin Electric in Minot in October 1975 which about 70 farmers attended. All but one of the farmers speaking were worried about the power line, according to Larson, and their ques-



Two of the three 345 kv lines from the Jim Bridger coal-fired generating plant near Rock Springs, Wyo. Photo by Gowen Green.



**PROTECTING AGRICULTURE.** Proposed regulations for transmission lines in North Dakota say that line siting will be avoided over irrigated or irrigable land; within 500 feet of farmsteads, rural residences, or places of business; and

over water sources for organized rural water districts. At recent Public Service Commission hearings, utility spokesmen have objected to these criteria, according to **THE ONLOOKER.** North Dakota photo by Mike Jacobs

areas critical to threatened animals and unique plant life.

The proposed regulations say these "exclusion" areas shall not be considered in routing of transmission facilities unless it can be clearly shown that "there is no reasonable and acceptable alternatives. Economic considerations alone shall not justify consideration of these areas."

Eleven "avoidance" areas are also listed, including national and state wildlife areas, wild and scenic rivers, wetlands, woodlands, and other areas of historic, scenic, recreational, archeological, or paleontological significance.

In Montana, a bill was passed by the last legislature which provides for a siting inventory. This inventory would presumably determine exclusion areas, according to Jeanne Charter of the NPRC.

To protect landowners, the North Dakota proposed siting regulations say that transmission lines will be kept at least

500 feet from farmsteads. Basin Electric has told the citizen committee in North Dakota that its policy is now to provide 500 feet. As an example of more common current practices, however, American Electric Power tries to maintain 200 feet average distances between its 765 kv lines and homes.

#### DETERMINING NEED

North Dakota's siting act deals only superficially with the question of "need," according to Paula Ward. It asks the applicant to submit a statement "explaining" the need for the facility.

Montana's laws, on the other hand, make "need" a key issue. The fate of the 500 kv Colstrip power lines, in fact, now hinges on the question of need, which will be determined by the Montana Board of Natural Resources. (See related story, page 11.) Central to this question is whether power generated will be for use within the state or outside the state.

When the United Plainsmen were lobbying last session, they wanted North Dakota's eminent domain laws changed to prohibit out-of-state utilities from exercising eminent domain if they do not serve North Dakotans' need.

The Plainsmen did not get their way. However, a Bismarck, North Dakota, district court decision this summer might make it a moot point. Judge Benny Graff ruled that a utility company that was sending power to Minnesota consumers without supplying energy for North Dakota users could not exercise eminent domain.

Joe Vogel, the attorney representing the plaintiffs, proved that the utility company, Minnkota, set up a dummy North Dakota corporation to build the 450 kv line. Control over the line would have reverted back to Minnkota after seven years, and Minnkota's board is predominantly Minnesota. The power would have been used primarily to serve the taconite industry in

Minnesota. The defendants argued that North Dakota did not have the right to deny Minnesota residents the right to energy. Vogel responded, "We're not denying the export of power. We're just denying a particular means of exporting it. They can build the generating plant there (in Minnesota)."

The case is being appealed to the North Dakota Supreme Court. It may be somewhat limited in its application since it may not apply to companies that supply even a small percentage of their power to North Dakota customers. Graff also took the legislature to task, saying it should reexamine the power of eminent domain it had granted to some private enterprises.

This throws the issue back into the laps of the legislators in each state. Transmission lines are inseparably intertwined with the question of "export policies" — state regulations which encourage shipping coal out and converting it to energy closer to the energy consumers.

Once the question of where a rural power line might cross a field was settled at the kitchen table between the farmer and the utility representative. Today the issue is more complex. Research is needed on the effects of high voltage lines, on the monetary cost of providing easements across farm land, on the feasibility of underground lines.

In addition, consideration must be given to the broader issue of cheap power v. human values. That must be dealt with not only at kitchen tables, but also in the legislative halls and the judicial chambers.

#### SLIDE SHOW AVAILABLE

Paula Ward, Friends of the Earth representative for North Dakota, has prepared a slide show on transmission lines. Anyone interested in arousing public concern about transmission lines in their area may contact Ward to get a copy of the show for a small fee. Her address is 800 Northwest 15th St., Minot, N.D. 58701 or call (701) 839-2638.

## Louise B. Young describes dangers of high voltage power lines

Louise B. Young, a nationally recognized expert on high voltage transmission lines, spoke to the Citizen Advisory Committee to the North Dakota Public Service Commission when the group was considering regulations last August. Young began her intensive study of transmission lines after she saw how a power company abused its power of eminent domain building a line across the farm she grew up on near Laurel, Ohio. She was invited to speak to the North Dakota committee by one of the committee members, Paula Ward. Some of the dangers described in her book, **Power Over People**, and in her speech are excerpted below. Her studies concentrated on 765 kv lines.

#### OZONE DAMAGE

"The air around the conductors becomes a veritable seething cauldron of chemical activity, and some of the chemicals formed are considered to be particularly damaging to living things: ozone, singlet oxygen, oxides of nitrogen, and hydroxyl radicals. Very minute concentrations of these chemicals cause lung tissue damage and genetic mutations in plants and animals. Some of them are believed to be associated with cancer and accelerated aging in human beings. . . .

"The Russians have conducted a . . . field study on several hundred people over the past decade and concluded that

. . . long time work at 500 kv substations without protective measures results in shattering the dynamic state of the central nervous system, heart and blood vessel system, and in changing blood structures. . . . A farmer on a tractor under a 765 kv line can be exposed to fields so strong that the Russians would not allow their workers to be exposed to it for more than five minutes. . . .

#### ELECTRICAL SHOCK

"If a large metal thing (near a high voltage line) such as an automobile or a tractor is insulated from the ground by rubber tires, for instance, a charge collects in it. Then when it is suddenly grounded — by a person touching it — a current flows through the person to ground. If the current is large enough, the person is not able to release his hold on the conducting surface and the current continues to flow through his body. . . .

Articles published by electrical engineers in professional journals show that it is theoretically possible for a person coming into contact with a large vehicle or a long metal object such as a pipe, a fence, or a gutter under a 765 kv line to experience currents exceeding an adult's safe let-go threshold. . . .

#### NOISE

"The discharge of electricity into the air . . . is both audible and visible. At

night, particularly in bad weather, there are sparks and flickering lights along the lines. Even in good weather there is a continuous hissing, crackling sound which in rain or snow becomes a loud roar. Noise levels up to 70 decibels have been recorded. At this level it is necessary to shout to be understood in a normal conversation. Eighty-five decibels is the legal limit for noise levels that may be regularly imposed upon people during working hours.

#### RADIO AND TV INTERFERENCE

"Because most rural areas are far from the radio and TV stations, the signal strengths are relatively low. For good reception in these areas, interference levels must also be kept low. Rural residents depend upon television and radio to keep them in touch with the rest of the world, provide recreation in bad weather, and alleviate the loneliness of long winter nights. But the design standards used by power company engineers are not adequate to assure that rural residents will be able to enjoy acceptable radio and television, especially in bad weather. . . . I have driven under these lines (345 kv). . . . At a distance of several hundred feet, the music on the car radio was drowned out by noise like a million angry bees. . . . Television reception is also affected by the electromagnetic fields occurring

around high-tension lines. Interference takes the form of bright streaks or bands that drift slowly across the screen. . . .

#### VISUAL POLLUTION

"The towers (across Young's Ohio farm) are giant steel skeletons standing 130 feet high like twelve-story buildings. 'You'll get used to them,' say the power company executives. 'Pretty soon you won't notice them any more.' And the really frightening thing is that this is true. . . . Ugliness is in the eye of the beholder also and the person who experiences ugliness every day of his life grows that way. Unfortunately there are no laws in this country to protect us from the spreading blight of ugliness. . . .

"I do want to emphasize, however, that it is not the high voltage in itself that is responsible for many of the 'side-effects' created by these lines. . . . It is possible to design lines that would carry those enormous voltages with much less pollution. Corona discharge could be reduced by using larger and more numerous conductors. Danger of electric shock and exposure to electric fields could be reduced by increasing the height of the lines. Both of these solutions require more expensive equipment, and this requirement runs counter to the overriding objective of the electric companies — to produce and transmit power at the cheapest possible price."

6-High Country News — Dec. 5, 1975

## Should Rocky Mountain Park grow?

## Conservationists feud over expansion

by Tim Mahoney

A bill recently introduced before Congress which would add 130,000 acres in six parcels to Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado has aroused the beginnings of a possible controversy between sportsman's groups and other conservation organizations and may ultimately put federal and state agencies in opposite corners. The additions, specified in H.R. 8360 introduced by Rep. Tim Wirth (D-Colo.), involve the transfer of lands from three national forests, which are administered by the Forest Service within the Department of Agriculture. The land would be transferred



Rep. Tim Wirth (D-Colo.)

to the present 262,000 acre park which is administered by the National Park Service (NPS) under the Department of the Interior.

Proponents, organized into the Rocky Mountain Park Expansion Society (RMPES), cite recreational overuse of the popular Indian Peaks area south of the park and the inability of the Forest Service to manage the heavy use as reasons for the expansion. The Indian Peaks area is probably the heart of the bill. The other units are cited as an attempt to make the park a more complete geographical and ecological unit by adding parts of the Mumay and Never Summer Ranges as well as the Copeland Lake area, which serves as an entrance to the Wild Basin, already within the park. The original park boundaries, established in 1915, largely ignore physiographic units, which proponents of expansion say has created certain management difficulties.

At the first public meeting held over the issue in Boulder on October 6, 1975, opposition began to surface. Fishermen complained that NPS management would mean an end to "put and take" fishing in Copeland Lake and the popular lakes of the Indian Peaks and would mean the depletion of stock in the higher subalpine lakes. Earlier in the evening, at a presentation before the United Sportsman's Council in Denver, Bob Hoover of the Colorado Division of Wildlife expressed concern that if fishing were to be reduced in the area, the state wouldn't have any place left along the heavily-used Front Range to put the displaced fishermen.

Jerry Mallett, representing the RMPES, countered that newly acquired park lands

are not subject to the same restrictions on stocking. Under a new law, states retain proprietary rights over the waters on land recently added to the National Park System. Roger Contor, supervisor of Rocky Mountain National Park, was involved in a similar situation involving North Cascades National Park and the state of Washington. However, Contor warned the Boulder meeting that while the Park Service can allow stocking by the state on the expansion lands, there may yet be conflicts. Park Service philosophy would probably still mean an end to stocking of the small subalpine lakes, and there may be some changes in procedures for the heavily-used lakes at low elevation.

While hunting is not very good in the Indian Peaks and was not subject to very much discussion at the Boulder meeting, a statement signed by Division of Wildlife Director Jack Grieb outlined potential hunting losses in the units on the north and west sides of the park under NPS management. Supporters of the expansion argue that in preparing the proposal for Rep. Wirth, 50,000 acres which many people felt were deserving of park status were omitted because they offered good hunting.

Nevertheless, sportsmen and the wildlife division maintain that there are large elk herds within the proposed additions that could not be hunted if the land were included in the national park. Since the park has suffered with elk overpopulation problems in recent years anyway, it is unlikely that they would wish to acquire more elk. Hoover and Contor plan to meet during November to see if there is an acceptable compromise which might include more summer rangelands for the park and leave fall and winter range on Forest Service land.

Bighorn sheep hunting is not likely to be compromised, however. The wildlife division is not in favor of an expansion into the Never Summer Range to the west of the park because it is one of the last bighorn hunting areas in the northern Front Range. Proponents of expansion argue that sheep hunting is not a major activity, that in the last three years, only 18 permits have been issued and only one sheep has been taken. Since the division does not appear to want to give up the area as long as one sheep can be taken and the RMPES views non-consumptive uses to be far more important, no compromise appears to be near.

Although their parent departments will ultimately have to make recommendations to the congressional committee studying the issue, neither the Forest Service nor the NPS can take an official position at this time. Nevertheless, at the Boulder meeting, L. A. Amicarella, supervisor for the Arapaho and Roosevelt National Forests, took pains to defend the Forest Service record in the Indian Peaks and the new study that the agency has undertaken along the Front Range. But the RMPES argues that the study will not change things, that "Forest Service funding for non-consumptive recreational uses on a dollar per acre basis is far below that of the NPS," and that in general, the Forest Service gives "top priority" to consumptive uses such as timber and mining.

Actually, in the three previous proposals for inclusion of the Indian Peaks in the park, 1914, 1925, and 1931, it has been concern over valuable but undiscovered mineral deposits which has stopped each effort. In this latest study, the U.S. Geological Survey has released a report which

cites no commercial deposits in the area.

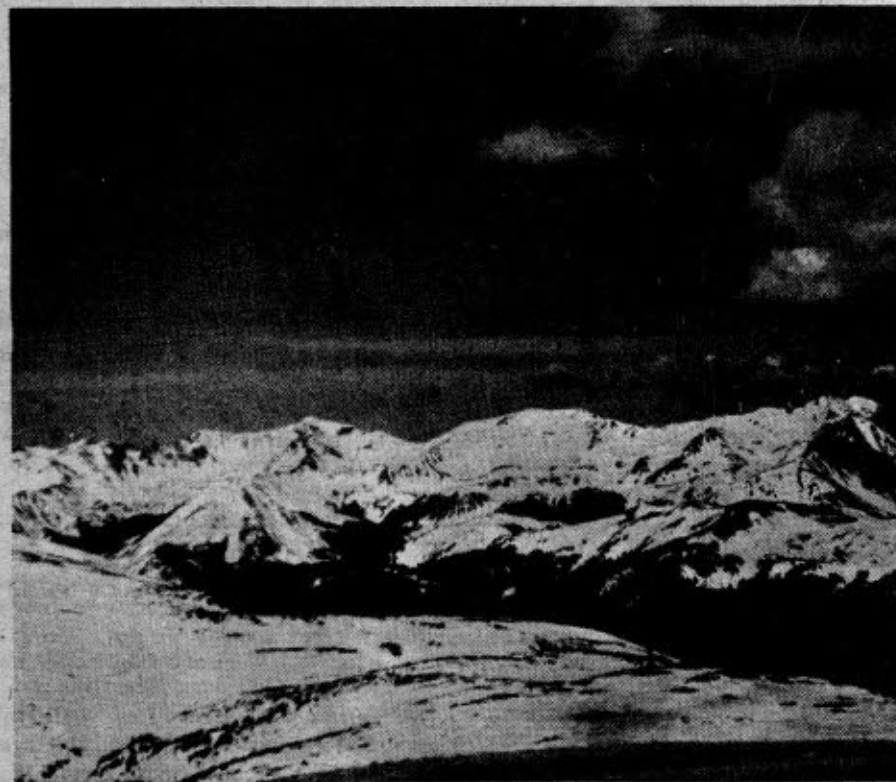
At this time, a "gut reaction" remains among many of those living near the affected area. They are against a change in status, particularly to the more restrictive management controls which the Park Service would employ in a heavily-used area. Rep. Wirth's district includes Boulder and the heavily-used east slope of the Indian Peaks so there is probably overall support for his park expansion effort there at this time. But the key to ultimate passage of the bill rests with Rep. James Johnson, whose district includes about three-fourths of the possible expansion lands. Johnson, non-committal at this time, appears to be trying to determine which way the wind is blowing in his district. An Oct. 23, 1975, meeting in Winter Park indicates that the small towns on the west side of the park are wary of Park Service administration and the restrictions it may place on local use and land development.

RMPES spokesman Mallett and representatives from Wirth's office insist that HR 8360 is at present only a "talking vehi-

cle" designed to present a suitable study to the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs. They add that the bill is not "anti-hunter" or against the Forest Service and that they are quite willing to talk about boundary modifications to reduce possible conflicts. Supporters will be working throughout the winter in hopes that a new bill with revised boundaries and broader support can be introduced in the next session of Congress. If Rep. Johnson will join in supporting the bill, then it stands a good chance of passage.



Tim Mahoney, a resident of Denver, has done volunteer work for the Wilderness Society and is now working part-time for the Wilderness Resources Institute. He has an M.S. from Michigan in plant ecology and an A.B. from Tufts University in Massachusetts in biology and English.



**FUTURE PARK?** The Never Summer Range, pictured above, is being considered for inclusion in a Rocky Mountain National Park expansion bill. This picture was taken from Trail Ridge Road in the park looking west.

Photo by Del Owens

## Apodaca creates commission

New Mexico Gov. Jerry Apodaca has established a 16-member State Wilderness Commission "to formulate plans and policy to protect wilderness areas in New Mexico." The commission is probably the only one of its kind in the United States, says Cliff Merritt of the Wilderness Society.

In September, signing the executive order creating the commission, Apodaca said, "The citizens interested in wildlife and wilderness areas have been donating time and services to the state in projects to expand and protect the wilderness system in New Mexico, often at great expense to themselves. This commission will serve as a focus for their activities in the future."

Apodaca indicated that he felt preservation, extension, and management of the areas of wilderness character in New Mexico are essential to the promotion of a quality life for the New Mexican people. The establishment of a special commission to

assist him and the state in preserving wilderness areas is necessary to the fulfillment of these goals, he said.

The commission members include Brant Calkin (chairman), Dave Foreman, LaDonna Kutz, Doug Murphy, Jay Sorenson, Phil Tollefsrud, Hank Archuleta, Betsy Barnett, Don Campbell, Dean Harkleroad, Dorothea Martinez, Belva Christensen, Toby Encinias, William Siegenthler, Jim Stephenson, and James Stowe.

The list "reads like a roster of who is who in New Mexico wilderness," says the Wilderness Society.

Don Campbell recently made a trip to Washington, D.C., representing Governor Apodaca and the New Mexico Wilderness Commission. He appeared before Congress to support the bills which are now pending before the House and the Senate proposing Bandelier National Monument be included in the National Wilderness System.

Three full-time field men aboard

# Wilderness Society focuses on roadless West

Protecting vanishing roadless areas in the West takes hard work from people who know the territory. Only a small percentage of these lands are protected by wilderness classification.

In recognition of this, the Wilderness Society has recently beefed up its Western field staff. The society has hired two full-time regional representatives, in the northern and southwestern Rockies, and a wilderness consultant in Idaho.

All three men hope to help citizens identify public roadless areas and show how to preserve those that qualify under the Wilderness Act of 1964.

The northern representative, Bart Koehler, is working out of Jackson, Wyo. He serves Wyoming, eastern Montana, and northeastern Utah.

The southwestern representative, Dave Foreman, is in Glenwood, N.M. He serves New Mexico, Arizona, and western Texas.

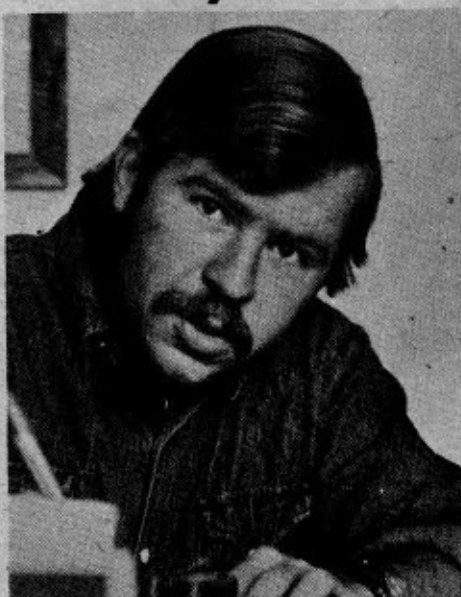
The Idaho consultant, Dan Lechefskey, is based in Boise, Idaho.

Koehler claims that his northern region contains some of the finest wild country in the U.S. — the wild Missouri and Beartooth-Absaroka in Montana; the Yellowstone-Teton area in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho; and the Uintas in Utah.

"I hope, that by working with citizens, together we can protect these areas in the magnificently wild condition that they are in today," Koehler says.

Koehler has been a part-time consultant for the Wilderness Society for the past two years. During the same time, he was director of the Wyoming Outdoor Council. He has a B.A. in geography from State University of New York and an M.S. in outdoor recreation, resource management, and planning from the University of Wyoming. His master's thesis was based on a one-year study of wilderness in the Medicine Bow National Forest in Wyoming.

Foreman, a member of the New Mexico State Wilderness Commission, has been a part-time consultant for the society for the past three years. He has organized wilderness workshops and set up citizen teams to investigate certain areas and report on their wilderness qualifications. Foreman



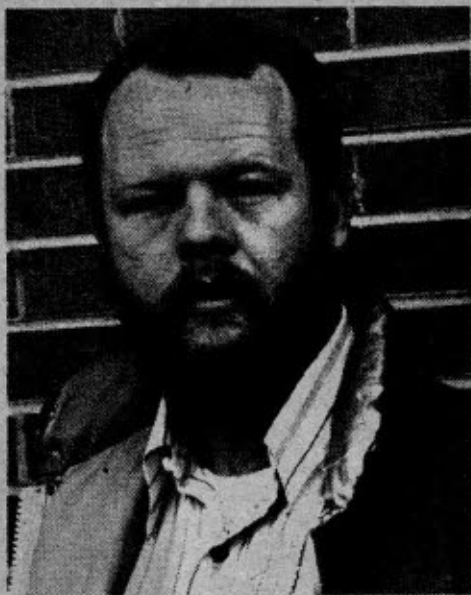
**Bart Koehler, northern representative, Wilderness Society**

claims that there are about 1½ million public acres in his region which still need to be examined before they are committed to development.

Lechefskey's territory includes 9½ million acres of Forest Service and two million acres of Bureau of Land Management roadless areas. He is currently putting most of

his time into the River of No Return area. Conservation groups in the state, backed up by the governor, are asking Congress for a 2.3 million acre River of No Return Wilderness.

Lechefskey has worked in the society's western regional office in Denver. He has a B.S. in Forest Engineering and Forest



**Dave Foreman, southwestern representative, Wilderness Society**



**Dan Lechefskey, Idaho consultant, Wilderness Society.**

Botany from State University of New York. He has an M.S. in Renewable Natural Resources from the University of Nevada.

Koehler can be reached at Box 2661, Jackson, Wyo. 83001, (307) 733-6930. Foreman is at Box 38, Glenwood, N.M. 88039. Lechefskey is at Box 1166, Boise, Idaho 83701.

## Energy policy...

(Continued from page 1)

and problems concerning energy, and to provide the public with a genuine opportunity to express their own views about what Idaho's energy policy should be," says ICL.

Margie Boylan, project manager for the workshops, explains IPC's apprehension this way: "Like the nation, Idaho has no energy policy. Right now it's a de facto utility-dictated energy policy."

### INSTANT EXPERTS

IPC evidently doesn't want to change the status quo. IPC's Lanham, speaking before the Idaho Falls Rotary Club, criticized ICL members as "instant experts who have popped up" all over Idaho to detour the utility's development plans, according to a report in *The Post Register*.

"I would venture to say that there isn't one of them who has ever built a power plant," said Lanham. "... But they have all the answers, and when their workshops are all over, they are going to write an 'energy policy' for you in Idaho."

Describing the workshops, Lanham said, "There will be posters showing you how to develop solar energy, geothermal energy, wind energy, and many other exotics, which they call alternatives to our Pioneer power plant in Idaho. They represent what Don Hodel, who is Bonneville Power administrator, calls the 'prophets of shortage' ... who are dragging our energy system to the brink of disaster."

The workshops are designed to be public forums, says project director Belle Heffner. Heffner, who holds a master's degree in environmental education from the University of Michigan, goes into the cities where a workshop will be held and tries to "drum up interest." She says there is a local steering committee in each location, and a determined effort is made to "get out a real cross section of citizens."

The workshops are set up to expose par-

ticipants to a wide range of views about energy in the state, says Heffner. Afternoon workshops focus on local energy issues. As the day-long program progresses, the focus narrows to a final question: How should energy policy in Idaho be made?

Following completion of the workshops, the project staff will prepare an energy booklet, summarizing and synthesizing the workshop results.

One heartening result, according to Heffner, is a renewed interest in geothermal energy in Boise. After his participation in the Boise energy workshop, Ralph McAdams (the president of the city council) called for a city-wide study on energy, focusing on use of Boise's geothermal springs. Parts of Boise used to be heated by hot springs, but the system was abandoned with the advent of cheap utility-provided power.

### BROWN-BAGGING IT

Having Idaho citizens discuss and research energy in their state is evidently a threatening proposition to IPC — even when IPC is invited and encouraged to participate in the workshops.

In an apparent attempt to discredit the ICL effort, Lanham offered the following profile to Idaho Falls Rotarians as quoted in *The Post Register*:

"... There are across Idaho, including our city of Boise, meeting in the basement of the YWCA, small groups who meet daily and three to five times a day, rain or shine, holidays and weekends, who brown-bag it and plead for funds and who also have the sympathy of many members of the press, who are working diligently for little or nothing using your tax dollars, obtaining grants from the federal government to study energy and energy policies and who are willing to put you out of business."

"These are not just a bunch of ragged dissidents. They are doctors, lawyers, educators, and businessmen from all walks of life. ... And they will use any method

available to stop the production of electrical energy by coal or nuclear. ..."

When ICL members were contacted about their response to this characterization by Lanham, most said they were flattered. One member said Lanham's remarks will probably encourage more Idahoans to participate in the workshops and he welcomed the free publicity. He was considering sending Lanham a "thank you" note — on a brown paper bag.

ICL energy workshops have already been held in Boise, McCall, Lewiston, Coeur d'Alene, Pocatello, Idaho Falls, and Caldwell. A final workshop is scheduled for December 10 in Twin Falls at the YM-YWCA. The program runs from 1-5 p.m. and from 7-9:30 p.m.



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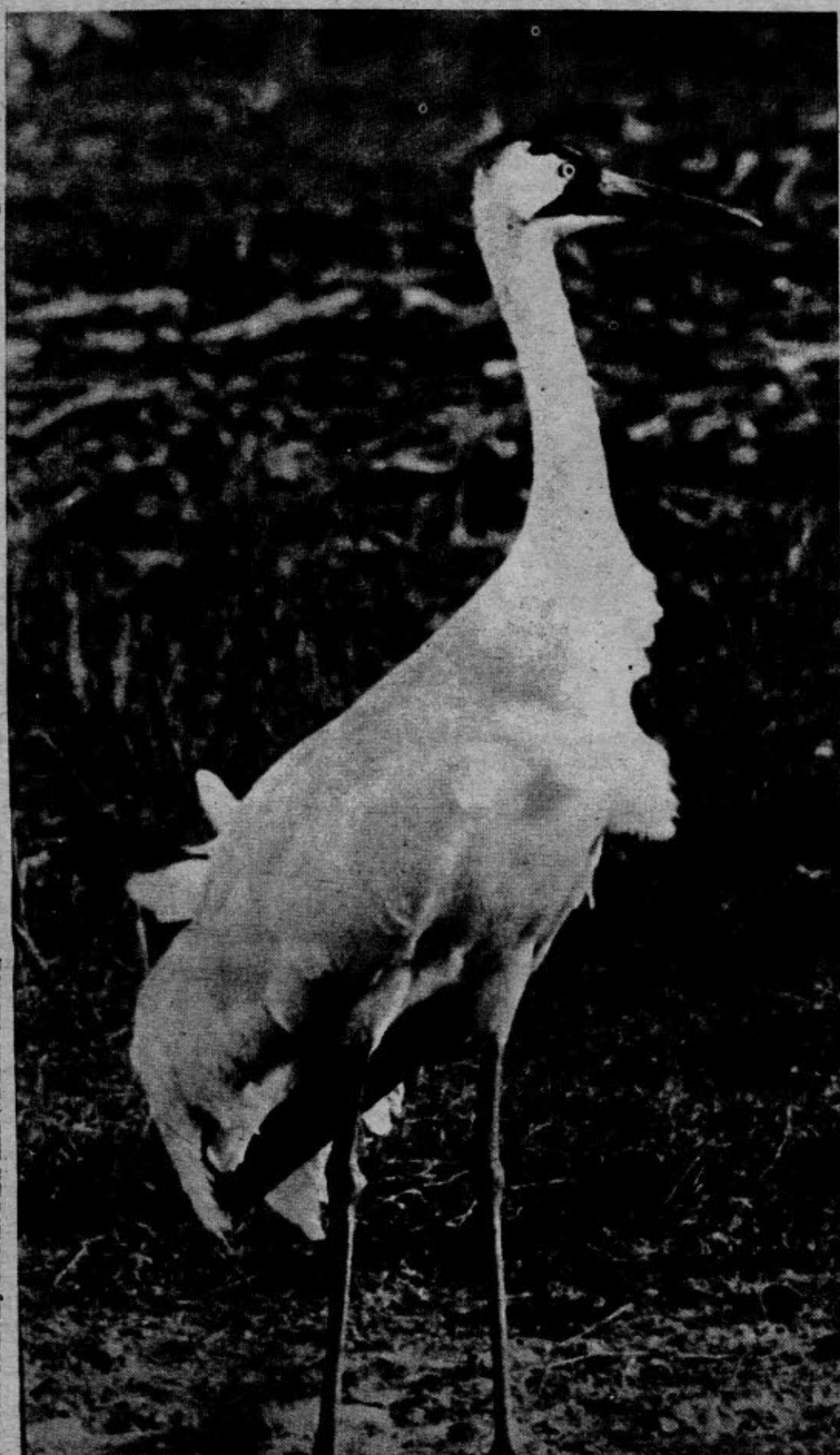
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The whooping crane is North America's tallest bird.



Photo by Karl Holte.

Whooping crane eggs were flown from Canada to Idaho.



Photo by Karl Holte.

At Grays Lake the eggs were placed in the nests of sandhill cranes.

## Fostering whoopers —

by Sarah Doll

Since population counts on whooping cranes were started in 1938, this stately North American bird has become, to many, symbolic of endangered species. In recent times, most of these species have become endangered because of human activities, and so it seems right that efforts to save them should be made.

In the case of the whooper, man caused its demise simply by settling North America and turning habitat to farmland. They were never plentiful, probably never numbering over 2,500, but by 1938 there were only 18 remaining. Steps were taken to protect the species, and a winter refuge established at Aransas on the Texas Gulf Coast. The population has remained low. In 1971, 59 birds made the largest population in the wild since the count started. The wild population was 49 this spring, all members of one flock.

After mating and raising their chicks at Wood Buffalo Park in Northwest Territories, Canada, the flock migrates 2,500 miles to Aransas. Such a long migration exposes them to many hazards, such as bad weather or accidental shooting, and arrival at the refuge doesn't necessarily guarantee safety. Tom Smylie of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) points out that the Gulf Coast area is heavily developed, and an oil or chemical spill could mean disaster for the whole population.

Because of these problems, a plan was formulated to attempt to establish a second flock, one that would have a shorter migration and more secure wintering grounds. Under the auspices of the USFWS and the Canadian Wildlife Service, biologists picked 14 eggs from the nests of the whoopers at Wood Buffalo, one from each nest of two eggs, and deposited them in foster parent sandhill crane nests at Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Idaho. It was felt that this would not endanger the Wood Buffalo Park population further as, of the two chicks normally hatched by a pair of whoopers, usually just one survives. Dr. Rod Drewein, University of Idaho biologist under contract to the USFWS, picked the sandhills for the experiment on the basis of nesting success and their migratory habits: some cranes migrate to Mexico, where they

may be hunted, but the ones chosen have in the past stopped at Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge in New Mexico.

The experiment seems to be going reasonably well, but it's far too early to know whether a new breeding colony will actually be established. The sandhills are doing well in their role of foster parents. Of the 14 eggs, three were not fertile and two were lost from the nests. Of the nine birds that hatched, three disappeared from unknown causes, possibly weather, predators, or the cattle that are allowed to graze at Grays Lake. Of the six survivors, Dr. Drewein banded five, and started tracking their migration through their first stopover at Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge in southwest Colorado, and on to Bosque del Apache. The sixth migrated early with its foster parents and is unaccounted for.

High hopes center around this program. There are about 20 birds in captivity at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center in Maryland, all hatched from eggs taken from wild birds. These birds, however, are not wild, and don't behave as such, making re-introduction to the wild unlikely. Only one second-generation chick has been hatched there (through artificial insemination). It had a deformed leg and did not survive.

One problem facing the migrating birds is at the Monte Vista Refuge. The people of the San Luis Valley, where it is located, are generous and protective towards the cranes as they stop over in their area, but increasing development and irrigation are lowering the water table, and the marshy areas the birds depend on for food are drying up. When the birds return in the spring, lack of food may force the birds north before the snow is gone from Grays Lake.

Other problems are pointed out by David Zimmerman, author of *To Save a Bird in Peril*. Whoopers, he says, have a 10-15% yearly mortality, so by the time this group of chicks reaches breeding age, four or five years, there will probably be only three surviving. If there is a breeding pair (they may be all females or all males) they must then find each other in this group of several thousand sandhills. He feels the removal of half the eggs from the wild whooping cranes was too risky, that possibly eggs from Patuxent should have been used, and

also feels the chick survival

Zimmerman have an 80% the egg and like to see mortality. cubating at the critical the wild pe



The sandhill crane

# — risky business?

Dec. 5, 1975 — High Country News-9

Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



The whooping crane is 50 inches tall with a wingspread of seven and a half feet, white with black wingtips, and a naked red area on the head.

also feels the theory that only one whooper chick survives per nest is unproven.

Zimmerman also notes that whoopers have an 80% average mortality between the egg and six months of age. He would like to see studies on the causes of this high mortality. One suggestion he makes is incubating and raising chicks to ten days old, the critical period, then returning them to the wild parent birds. He'd also like to see

the breeding program at Patuxent improved.

"Cross-fostering," according to Zimmerman, "may be the most important technique we've got to bring endangered species back, but we've got to do some basic studies first." Usually such an experiment would be done first with a substitute species that is not endangered, but since there are only two species of American

cranes — whoopers and sandhills — this would involve introducing an exotic species. Zimmerman feels it would be well worth it, as the exotics could be monitored and kept under control.

Eugene Knoder, a crane expert with the National Audubon Society Research staff, defends the program. Fourteen whoopers fledged and migrated this year, eight from Wood Buffalo Park and six from Grays

Lake, which is the largest increase in population for years. Repetition of the egg removals to Grays Lake in years to come will build up the breeding population, so the whoopers won't have such severe problems in finding mates.

For better or worse, the experiment has been launched. How it will figure in the whooping crane's future must remain to be seen.



Photo courtesy of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The sandhill crane is smaller than the whooper, 40-48 inches tall with a seven foot wingspread. Its color is gray, with a red forehead.

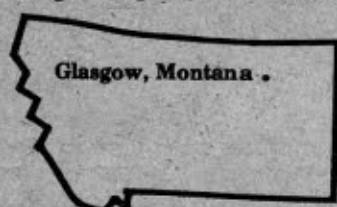
10-High Country News — Dec. 5, 1975



energy news of the Rockies and Great Plains

**GIANT-SIZED ENERGY PLANS FOR GLASGOW.**

Glasgow Air Force Base in northeastern Montana would make an excellent site for a huge energy production center based on coal, according to a Federal Energy Administration study. Montana Lt. Gov. Bill Christiansen says he sees "frightening implications" in the report. The



proposed "energy park" would produce synthetic crude oil, synthetic natural gas, methyl fuel, and nitrogen fertilizers from coal. Its gas production alone would amount to four times more than the state now uses. It would consume three times the coal expected to be strip mined in Montana this year — a total of 76.2 million tons. The complex would employ 7,359 people by the year 2000 and represent a capital investment of \$2.6 billion, with annual operating costs of \$1.1 billion. A summary of FEA's three volume report is currently available. Copies of the full report should be available in mid-January. Public hearings are slated for late January.

**"SAFE POWER" HALFWAY TO BALLOT.** A Colorado group has half the signatures it needs to put the issue of nuclear safeguards on the November 1976 ballot. The proposal would prevent the construction of nuclear facilities until the following conditions are met: 1) both houses of the Colorado General Assembly vote by two-thirds majorities that nuclear power plants are safe and that waste disposal facilities are available and safe. 2) utilities privately insure nuclear power plants, and 3) the state publishes nuclear accident evacuation plans. Coloradans for Safe Power, which began the petition drive six weeks ago, has collected 35,000 of the 63,500 signatures estimated necessary to qualify for the ballot.

**LAMM LURING URANIUM PLANT.** Colorado officials are "courting" two firms who are seeking to build an experimental uranium enrichment plant, according to a Rocky Mountain News story. The officials, including Gov. Dick Lamm, hope to lure the proposed plant to Pueblo, Colo., to ease unemployment problems there. The plant would produce fuel for nuclear power plant by a new gas centrifuge process. The project has yet to be authorized by Congress and approved by the Energy Research and Development Administration. The Pueblo site is one of 30 being considered by the two companies, Atlantic Richfield and Electro-Nucleonics, who call their joint venture CENTAR Associates.

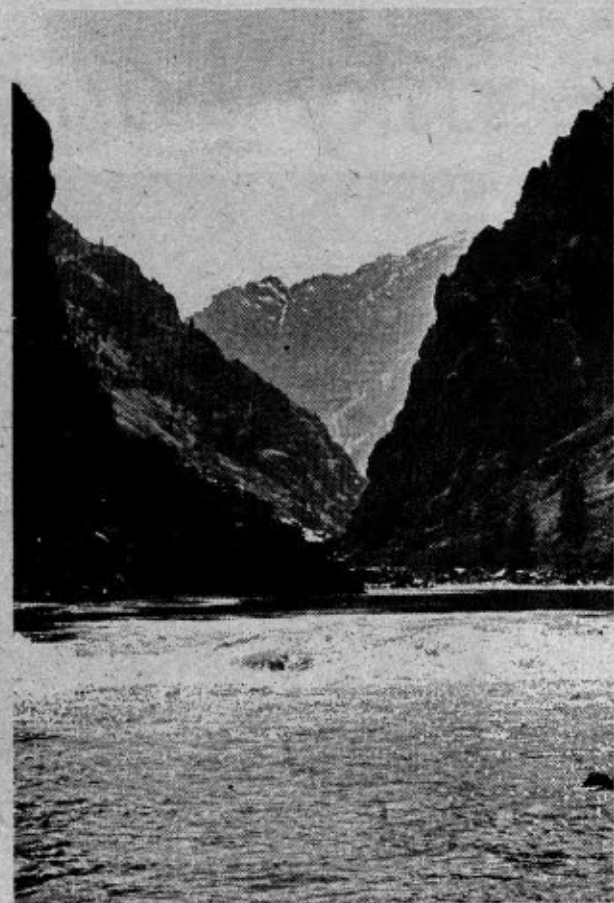
**EPA REJECTS KAIPAROWITS EIS.** The Environmental Protection Agency has seriously questioned the adequacy of the environmental impact statement for the largest power plant ever to be built in the U.S. — the Kaiparowits coal-fired plant in southern Utah. In a review of the statement EPA Denver regional administrator John A. Green said the document did not balance the goal of meeting energy needs with the goal of "maintaining the quality of our precious environmental resources of clean air and water." EPA questioned the project on points ranging from suspended solids in rainfall runoff to the population growth which would be stimulated in areas using the power. The Deseret News reported that Utah's four members of Congress were "disappointed, even bitter" about the EPA comments. In an editorial, the Salt Lake-based newspaper said, "There is such a thing as studying the matter to death — and that appears to be EPA's objective." EPA estimates that their objections will delay the project by at least three months.

**NEW SLURRY LINE PROPOSED.** A coal slurry pipeline from the Powder River Basin of Wyoming to Portland, Ore., is now in the planning stages, according to the Casper Star-Tribune. This pipeline is the second proposed to carry coal from the Powder River Basin and the sixth now being considered in the United States and Canada. The line to Oregon is being planned by Gulf Interstate Engineering Co. of Houston and Northwest Pipeline Co. of Salt Lake City. It would be 1,100 miles long and 24 to 30 inches in diameter. The other Wyoming slurry line between Wyoming and Arkansas is 1,036 miles long. The longest proposed pipeline is between Alberta and Ontario, a distance of 2,100 miles. The only existing coal slurry pipeline is the Black Mesa pipeline from Arizona to Nevada, a distance of 273 miles.

**PRECIPITATION COULD DECREASE.** Large numbers of energy plants could change the weather in the Northern Great Plains, says Richard Schleusner, acting president of the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology. The burning of coal affects clouds, he told a gathering at the Fort Union coal conference in Bismarck, N.D. He said that research at his school indicates "the probable effect of large-scale burning of fossil fuels in the Northern Plains would be to produce a decrease in precipitation."

**SEVERANCE TAXES RISING.** Both Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm and an interim Colorado legislative committee are endorsing a severance tax for the state, although the committee members disagree on the size of the tax or whether it would be applied to gross proceeds or net income. In Wyoming, Gov. Ed Herschler's Committee on Capital Improvements is considering raising Wyoming's four per cent tax by one half per cent for higher education. Montana Sen. Tom Towe told HCN he is afraid that unless neighboring states raise their taxes, the Montana Legislature might lower its tax.

**IDAHO POWER ARGUES NEED.** Idaho Power has insisted on the need for its proposed Pioneer coal-fired power plant near Boise, Idaho, while at the same time asking the Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC) for permission to write off expenses of quitting an agreement to buy power from a coal-fired plant in Wyoming. The IPUC agreed to let the company amortize up to \$4.1 million over a 10-year period for severing an agreement with Utah Power and Light Co. for the Naughton plant in Wyoming.

**CONGRESS SAYS NO DAMS HERE**

The House passed a bill in November to create a Hells Canyon Recreation Area. The Senate has already passed a similar bill. Both bills would prevent construction of dams in the wild, rugged canyon on the Idaho-Oregon border. Conservationists have been battling against power developers interested in damming the canyon since 1964.

**TONGUE MOVES AROUND REPAIRS.** A trickle of water is still flowing down the Tongue River in Montana and Wyoming, thanks to a major pumping project which carries water past repair work at Tongue River Reservoir near the Montana-Wyoming border. The pumps are maintaining a flow of 30 cubic feet of water per second downstream. Energy companies, Montana state agencies, and some agricultural users are footing the pumping bill.

## Reckoning from Washington

by Lee Catterall

A puzzling, sometimes contradictory and other times misleading series of recent statements by top Interior Department officials has thrown confusion on the department's views of coal strip mining legislation, the Sierra Club's court challenge, and the environmental law that allowed that challenge.

Assistant Interior Secretary Jack Carlson has been vociferous in his words against the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and against the basic principal of the federal strip mining bill — the setting of minimum federal standards for reclamation of all land.

Carlson complained to coal industry people two weeks ago that NEPA had brought about "a veto process, where in fact one person can find one judge in the country, can delay significant development even if the country in a democratic process came down and said they thought this was a wise direction to go."

He said he worries about the government having to ask Congress to step in to override court delays "every time we have a major project, and the Congress will have to say the environmental impact statement that is done is sufficient, and thereby cut off the challenges, just like we did in the trans-Alaska pipeline case."

That will result in "the intrusion of government into the private sector to a much greater extent than we've ever seen it," he said.

In a press conference last week, Carlson's boss, Interior Secretary Thomas Kleppe, said NEPA had brought "a new era, and I'm not saying that's bad."

He said he would "make no references to repeal or amendment or what-have-you of the NEPA regulations."

Much of what caused this talk, of course, was the Sierra Club's case against government plans for allowing development of the Northern Great Plains without first

preparing a comprehensive environmental statement about those plans.

Both Carlson and Kleppe applauded a recent court decision allowing a slight thaw of the earlier court order freezing federal actions. The decision allows expansion of an Amax strip mine near Gillette.

Kleppe pronounced it a "breakthrough." Both Kleppe and Carlson indicated the judge had rejected the Sierra Club's contention that the earlier court order pertained to the Amax mine.

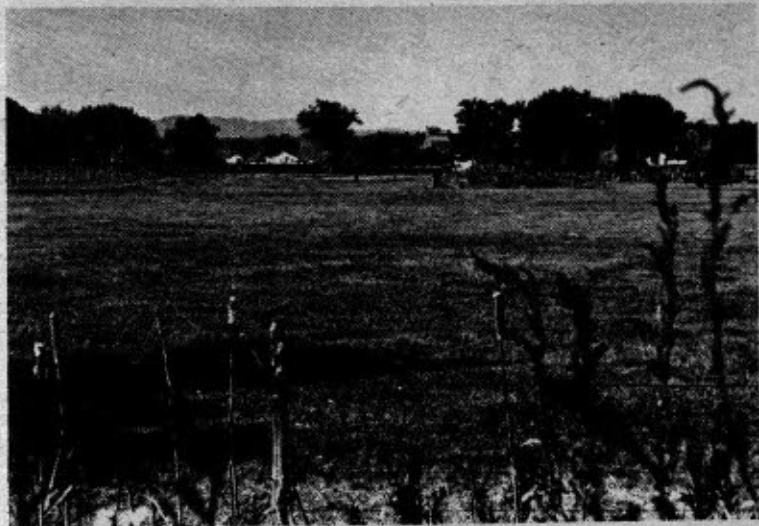
"The Sierra Club asked for it to be included in that case," Carlson told the coal industry people. "The judge disagreed with it (the Sierra Club) and it was not included, and we went ahead and approved the mining plan."

Carlson called this "rather significant. A 15-million ton mining plan does indicate a new direction" in coal production.

Actually, the Sierra Club suggested a two-year mining permit rather than a 22-year permit the department wanted for Amax, and the judge agreed with the Sierra Club despite government objections.

Sierra Club lawyers said a two-year permit would allow the present mine to keep operating, while the longer permit could gut the court order. The judge agreed and allowed not a 15-million ton mine but one a tenth that size.

Carlson, who is expected to run for a U.S. Senate seat from Utah this year, also called the strip mining bill "federal override legislation," because it would set minimum standards for states to adopt. Carlson made the astonishing assertion that western governors oppose the bill because they feel "the states can handle this problem." Actually, the governors unanimously endorse the bill and said so in a telegram to the congressional committee considering it.



WHO NEEDS WHEATLAND PLANT?

The Laramie River Conservation Council (LRCC) has recently challenged the need for the power to be provided by a large coal-fired power plant proposed for the Wheatland, Wyo., area. In 1974 Wyoming's Rural Electric Associations consumed 224 megawatts of electrical power, according to state records. This figure makes the LRCC skeptical of Missouri Basin Systems Group's claim that almost 750 megawatts of the proposed 1,500 megawatt plant will go to Wyoming, mainly to meet rural users' demands. Need for the plant will be debated before the Wyoming Public Service Commission Dec. 8.

## Montana

# Health board nods to units 3 & 4

Montana is currently resting between rounds of a landmark debate on coal-fired power generation in the state. What the state decides about Colstrip units 3 and 4 may set future policies for energy production in the state.

With considerable difficulty, the two additional units proposed by Montana Power Company and four West Coast utilities have won conditional approval from the state Board of Health. That's round one in the fight to begin construction.

Round two will be before the Board of Natural Resources, who must decide whether or not there is a public need for the plants and whether they will be "environmentally compatible." The Department of Natural Resources has already recommended against approval, on the basis of need. Round two is expected to begin in January.

After listening to 53 days of testimony which filled 7,000 pages, the state Board of Health decided Nov. 21 that the two generating units wouldn't violate state and federal air and water quality standards — if certain conditions were met.

Among the conditions are requirements that the utilities use only coal from a particular low sulfur coal seam; closely monitor the Colstrip unit which is now producing electricity and modify units 3 and 4 if it becomes necessary to avoid violating air standards; and refrain from taking water from the Yellowstone River when it is at low flow.

Rep. John Melcher (D-Mont.) said the decision seemed like the "right approach." But he said the board's "real test" will come if air-quality standards are not met. "They've got to have the backbone" to "bring about the shutdown if that occurs," he said.

Opponents of the plant have said they may take legal action against the board decision. The conditions imposed by the board are "admissions of what we have been saying all along, namely, that the applicant companies have failed to prove the proposed air and water pollution control equipment for Colstrip's units 3 and 4 will meet all applicable air and water quality standards," says the agriculturally-based Northern Plains Resource Council.

The council said that they felt the conditions imposed by the Board of Health are "in certain regards, very stringent" and that they may prove to be an "albatross" around the necks of the state officials and the utility companies.

Gary Wicks, director of the Department of Natural Resources called the decision "a tragedy." He said evidence presented at the hearings did not support even a qualified approval of the generating units.

Mike Meloy, a lawyer representing the Northern Cheyenne Indians, has questioned the board's right to issue a conditional certification. He maintains that the law requires the board to say "yes" or "no" on a project — not "yes, but."

Whether or not the proposed units will violate air standards apparently cannot be proven by either side, since the only nearly comparable unit, Colstrip 1, has been in commercial operation only since November. Montana Power President J.A. McElwain told the **Billings Gazette** that unit 1 "appears to meet all state and federal environmental standards and in many cases has considerable margins to spare."

Wally McRae, a Colstrip area rancher who opposes the

plant, disputes McElwain's statement because state and federal officials haven't had a chance to monitor the unit's emissions. Since the Board of Health was still deliberating when the statement was made to the press, McRae called it "one more example of the Montana Power Company's disrespect for the laws of this state and proper administrative procedures."

Saying they did not wish to influence the board's decision on Colstrip, state health department officials withheld air pollution test results on a Montana Power Co. coal-fired plant in Billings, Mont. The report was presented to the health board several hours after conditional approval had been granted. The report showed that the Billings facility is violating state air pollution control regulations.

## Interior's coal regs 'an all-out retreat'

The Interior Department's recently published coal mining regulations are an "all-out retreat from stringent regulation of the serious adverse environmental effects of coal mining," say the Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) and the Sierra Club.

"The best course would seem to be to scrap all these efforts and start over," the two environmental groups concluded in their joint statement on the regulations.

The two groups criticized the regulations for their lack of definite requirements.

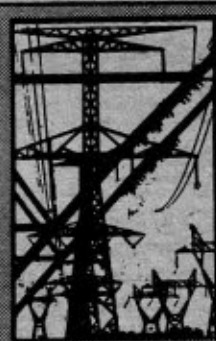
"For example, defining reclamation requirements by a loosely defined notion of 'maximum extent practicable' could allow such abuses as high walls and open pits rather than restoration of the original contour, inadequate waste disposal, inadequate control of polluting discharges, and seriously insufficient reclamation," they said.

"It is ironic that the Administration — which objected to the Congressional proposal (the vetoed strip mining bill) as being too general, subject to conflicting interpretations, and susceptible to litigation-inspired delays — now proposes guidelines phrased so loosely."

According to NRDC and the Sierra Club, Senators Floyd Haskell (D-Colo.), Henry Jackson (D-Wash.), and Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.) sent comments to the Interior Department which listed seven major shortcomings of the regulations. Among the Senators' objections were:

- failure to place the burden of proof of reclamation capability upon the operator,
- inadequacy of provisions for public participation in and review of key decisions,
- absence of environmental performance standards,
- far too much discretion allowed to the Mining Supervisor,
- and ambiguities relating to reclamation of jointly-affected private lands.

The joint NRDC-Sierra Club comments were prepared Nov. 21, 1975, by John D. Leshy of NRDC. The groups commented on "Proposed Revisions in the Regulations Governing Coal Mining Operations" (30 C.F.R., Part 211), "Surface Management of Federal Coal Resources" (Proposed 43 C.F.R. Part 3041), and the draft environmental impact statement accompanying these proposals (DES 75-53).



## The HCN Hot Line

### energy news from across the country

**LOW-COST COLLECTOR.** A new low-cost flat-plate solar collector is now available from Reynolds Aluminum. The 29 square foot aluminum collectors range in price from \$192 to \$160 each, depending upon the quantity ordered, says **Solar Energy Digest**. Anyone interested should contact a Reynolds office or write to Torex 14 Solar Collector, Reynolds Metal Company, 6601 West Broad St., Richmond, Va. 23261.

**BURN TRASH WITH COAL.** Studies by Battelle Columbus Laboratories indicate coal power producers should consider burning trash with their coal. Dale Vaughan, a Battelle scientist, says that the alkali and heavy-metal chlorides in trash react with sulfur-oxides in high sulfur coal in two beneficial ways. Normally, the chlorides in the trash corrode boilers much faster than coal. However, the sulfur oxides from the coal seem to slow the corrosion rate, and the chloride content of the trash reduces the sulfur emissions. He has found this to be true in mixtures containing up to 28% trash, according to a report in **Coal Week**.

**ONE STEP NUCLEAR APPROVAL.** An association of power companies has called on Congress to establish one agency to apply all local, state, and federal laws relating to the location and construction of nuclear power plants. A spokesman for the Edison Electric Institute told the Joint Atomic Energy Committee that a one-stop approval agency at either the state or the federal level would speed the growth of nuclear power generation. The authority he proposed would apply all laws such as water and air quality standards, land use plans, and river basin or coastal zone plans. He said this would eliminate the possibility of one single-interest agency blocking a new plant since the new authority would apply a national public interest cost-benefit analysis, according to the Associated Press.

**WESTINGHOUSE GETS REPRIEVE.** Fifteen power companies have agreed to refrain temporarily from further legal action against Westinghouse Electric Corp., which says it can't supply the uranium promised in its contracts. Westinghouse announced Sept. 8 that it would not be able to deliver 80 million pounds of uranium to nuclear fuel generators because it only had 15 million pounds on hand. A U.S. district court judge in Pittsburgh, Pa., however, said Westinghouse has enough uranium to supply its customers "well into 1977." One of the power companies which isn't getting the uranium it contracted for, Tennessee Valley Authority, claims Westinghouse was defaulting on its fixed price contract because the price of uranium has jumped from \$8 a pound to \$28.50 a pound.

**CONSERVATION PAYOFF.** Money invested in energy conservation will produce a quicker payoff than money invested in energy production, reports by the American Institute of Architects indicate. Conservation investments would pay for themselves in 10-15 years, while investments in energy production would take 30-40 years to pay. The number of jobs created by the conservation effort would be greater and productivity per dollar of capital could also increase, says the institute. The reports are: "Energy and the Built Environment: A Gap in Current Strategies" and "A Nation of Energy Efficient Buildings by 1990."

**KLEPPE PUSHES COAL.** Interior Secretary Thomas S. Kleppe has taken the first step toward opening up new coal mining on federal lands. As he did so, he promised states that their mining laws, if more stringent than federal laws, would take precedence. Kleppe recently approved an expansion of coal strip mining at AMAX's Belle Ayr mine in northeastern Wyoming. "I feel it is incumbent on the United States to get that resource," he told a news conference in November. "We can't continue with a moratorium as a national policy."

12-High Country News — Dec. 5, 1975

# East, West leaders ignore Eastern coal

by Norman Kilpatrick

The way in which political figures, east and west, view the rise of a massive coal industry in the Northern Great Plains clearly varies. For Western politicians it seems to range from an attitude of rape to one of nymphomania.

In the East, opinions also vary. Some believe "if coal prospers, it can not help but help our states." Others, such as Pennsylvania Gov. Milton Shapp, indicate that they feel federal policy on railroads, coal leasing, strip mining, etc. are all designed to promote Western coal at the expense of the Eastern coal industry.

Leaders in both the East and West **do not know** that billions of tons of low sulfur coal exist in central Appalachia. They don't know that this coal can be transported as far as Minneapolis, Tulsa, and Houston from Appalachia by inexpensive water transportation, if need be. West Virginia low sulfur coal, for example, already is delivered to Houston, Tex., and could reach Pensacola, Fla. (from Huntington, W. Va.) for a transport cost of around \$6 per ton. Low sulfur coal also exists in Oklahoma and Arkansas.

This knowledge might well help these men and other Western representatives in their camp fight a more effective battle against the claimed "need" for Great Plains water for slurry coal lines to Oklahoma and Arkansas electric plants. It also might influence their attitude toward new strip mine developments intended to serve power plants in areas like Wisconsin, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, and the Tennessee Valley.

Many eastern political leaders are far from convinced that massive development of coal in the Great Plains will hurt the future coal industry development of Appalachia. There are notable exceptions. Pennsylvania Gov. Shapp has been outspoken against federally backed efforts to bring Western coal east of the Mississippi. It also is true that Kentucky Gov. Carroll's representative on the Appalachian Regional Commission has expressed concern with the impact of Western coal in traditional Appalachian market areas.

Some of the strongest objections to unlimited movement of Great Plains coal east have come from West Virginia legislative leaders. For example, the co-chairmen of the West Virginia legislative coal study, House Speaker Lewis McManus and State Senator Alan Susman, bitterly attacked the 1974 federal coal leasing environmental impact statement draft as being "full of mis-statements or misleading statements in developing the strongest possible case for the use of low-sulfur Western coal . . . and virtually ignoring the abundant reserves of low-sulfur coal found in West Virginia and other eastern and Appalachian states."

More recently, West Virginia State Senate President William Brotherton and House Speaker McManus released the results of a tentative study of radioactivity in low sulfur coals that found most Western coal was far "hotter" than low sulfur West Virginia coal. (It is interesting to note that Atlantic-Richfield did not even mention

radioactivity in coals when their recent defense of the Black Thunder Mine plans came out.)

Brotherton and McManus told the Federal Energy Administration (FEA) in March that, "The major problems in making available large new sources of this well located fuel (Eastern low sulfur coal) to fulfill the utility needs of urban America, are the need for long term contracts and for financial help in opening new mines or expanding old ones." The West Virginia leadership is, therefore, supporting part of an energy bill in Congress that would provide insurance for loans up to \$30 million per mine for small sized coal companies that plan to open new low sulfur deep mines. West Virginia's legislature has been the only Eastern state legislature to testify before federal committees in opposition to much federal energy policy concerning coal development.

Meanwhile, probably the bulk of the Eastern coal states' leaders seem unconcerned about the FEA plans to bring Western coal into their market areas. This is, at least in part, due to a lack of understanding of the size and quality of their own coal reserves, and partly to what one West Virginia legislative consultant has called the "divided loyalties" of the major coal operators in Appalachia.

Nigel Chattey pointed out that many Appalachian and Midwestern coal firms have Western coal holdings and even oil company connections. Thus, they can not be expected to urge the politicians from the Eastern states to fight for public policies that would have the effect of harming Western coal development, even if the policies would benefit Eastern coal. By the same token, they are often not anxious for a strong attack to be made on East Coast utilities that continue to buy oil.

Thus, any reaction against moving Northern Great Plains coal east is muted from the Eastern coal states. Of

course, a "natural" market for Northern Great Plains coal does exist in Western areas such as the Pacific States and the Central Great Plains, where Appalachian coal has no economic business being utilized. Western coal promoters sometimes tell our Eastern coal people that their plans are limited to such areas. This confuses the issue still further, of course.

Norman Kilpatrick is director of the Surface Mining Research Library (Box 5024, Charleston, W. Va. 25311). He is also the coal consultant to the West Virginia legislature. His next column: "How automatic fuel adjustment clauses for electric companies may decide the fate of the Northern Great Plains."



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## Solar tour hits shopping malls, museums

Solar power is practical, but the public in general has not had the opportunity to learn about it in practical ways, the Solar Energy Exhibition staff believes. To spread this glow of hope, the exhibition plans to tour the country beginning next spring.

The exhibit, which is directed at a general audience, is sponsored by the University of Colorado at Denver. It is funded by a \$73,000 grant from the National Science Foundation as well as pledges from the Colorado Energy Research Institute and the Public Service Co. of Colorado.

Jean Weber, a staff member of the project, says it is extremely important for the people in the Dakotas, Wyoming, Colorado, and Montana to see and take part in the exhibit so they can see solar energy as a realistic alternative. It provides a practical orientation for consumers and for weekend inventors.

Anyone interested in having the exhibit visit their town should contact them by Jan. 1, 1976, she says. The staff is interested in coordinating the exhibit with local high school science fairs or symposiums, as well as taking it to the major science and technology centers in the country, during the two years the tour will last.

There are two different exhibits designed to suit the needs of the varied audiences they will be aiming at. The larger exhibit will require 2,000-3,000 square feet and will stay for two or three months at each location. The smaller exhibit would be suitable for shopping malls, schools, museums, or conventions. Information can be

geared to a particular site, she said, since the format is flexible.

As opposed to being a traditional museum-passive, look-at experience, the designers have made the exhibit participatory. Each panel includes a working model — a solar cell, a flat plate collector, or a windmill, for example. There will also be an orientation theatre, where a three to four minute slide presentation will introduce people to solar energy.

The exhibit will feature not only different types of solar energy such as wind, ocean thermal conversion, and bioconversion. It will also go into architectural applications, legal considerations, economics, and use in developing countries.

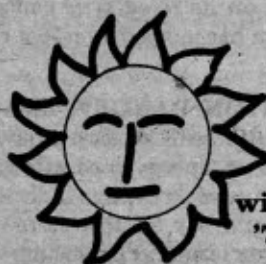
Weber says they are still looking for more exhibits. They want donations from large companies, but also encourage individuals with their own solar projects to contact them. They are now contacting federal agencies and energy companies for further funding but hope to have that finalized by January.

Among the advisors for the project are several scientists who are familiar to HCN readers including Dr. George Lof, Dr. Jerry Plunkett, and Dick Crowther. It was designed by Joseph Wetzel and Associates.

Elizabeth Kingman is director of the program. She can be reached at the University of Colorado at Denver, 1100 14th St., Denver, Colo. 80202, phone (303) 892-1117, ext. 471.

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# Western Roundup

HCN

Dec. 5, 1975 — High Country News-13

## Idaho rapidly becoming urbanized

Idaho Gov. Cecil D. Andrus says his state is "rapidly becoming urbanized." Andrus told the Bingham County Farm Bureau Federation, "We know now there is no new land to be despoiled. We must make better use of the land we have." Unless Idaho protects agricultural land and quality of life, "Growth will destroy the very factors that now make Idaho a prosperous state," he said.

## Kennecott not restricted by air regs

In reaction to Kennecott Copper Corp. defying committee orders, the Utah Air Conservation Committee has proposed new sulfur emission limitations which allow the company to emit more sulfur into the air than it has in the last five years. Committee member Dr. Noel H. de Nevers objects to the proposed figures, saying they represent "no restriction at all," according to a *Deseret News* report. The new limitation, to be in effect until July 1977, limits Kennecott's emissions of sulfur to no more than 440 tons per day. In 1974, 335 tons per day was the highest average in any month during the last five years. The committee staff prepared the emission limit figures after being given instructions by the committee to propose limitations that would not lead to a "confrontation" with the company, but which at the same time would be as strict as Kennecott could achieve. A Kennecott attorney said the proposed 440 ton limitation is what the company would need to go back to full production if economic conditions improve. Several committee members were quoted in the *Deseret News* story as saying they were becoming "disillusioned" with the company and didn't feel they could depend upon Kennecott's good faith.

## Monongahela inspires revision of act

In response to the Monongahela court decision opposing clearcutting, Sen. Jennings Randolph (D-W. Va.) has organized a committee to repair the Organic Act of 1897. The court's interpretation of the act was handed down in August 1975 in the case involving the West Virginia Division of the Izaak Walton League v. Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz, regarding clearcutting in the Monongahela National Forest. (See HCN, 10-10-75, page 12 and this issue's guest editorial). The court found the practice of clearcutting in the Monongahela to be incompatible with the provisions of the 1897 act. The question now is whether or not to amend the act to allow the practice of clearcutting and other new developments in forest management. Dr. Arnold Bolle from the University of Montana, a member of the committee advising Sen. Randolph, said the emphasis of any revised Organic Act would be to encourage good forest management. He personally favors giving the Forest Service broader discretion in management along with individualized guidelines for different forest regions.

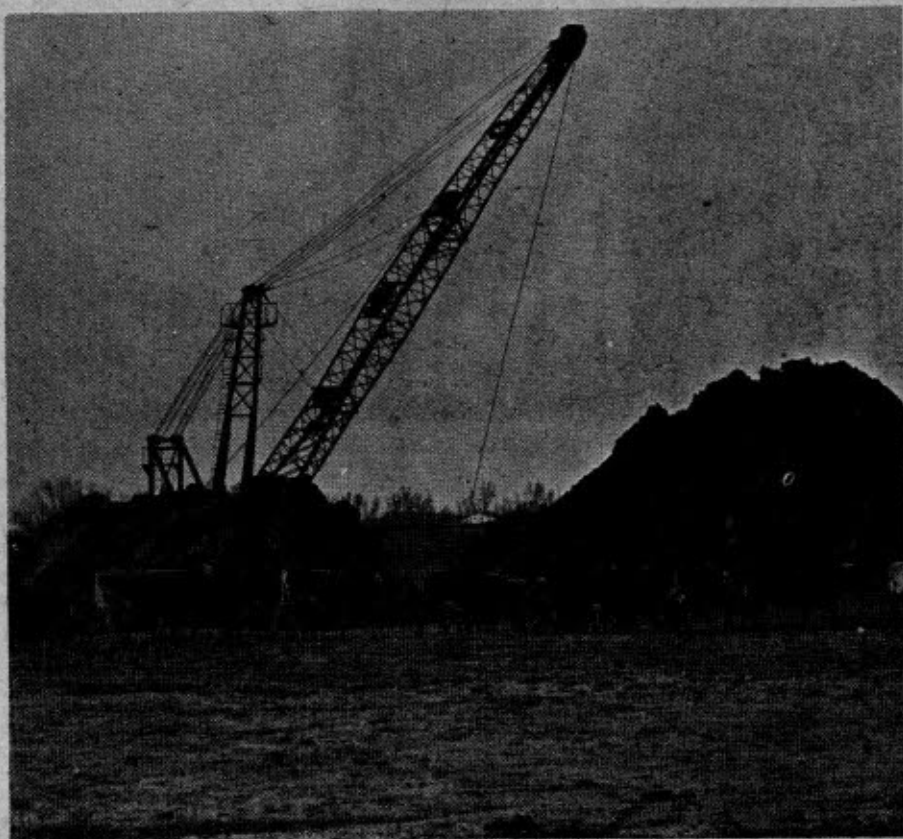
## Rocky Mountain area ski report



A Colorado ski area is working with the Colorado Division of Wildlife to promote sales of endangered species stamps. Keystone Ski Area offers reduced rates on season tickets or midweek tickets to skiers who have purchased the stamps, according to a *Rocky Mountain News* story. Proceeds from sale of the stamps are used for endangered species programs.

Sen. Floyd Haskell (D-Colo.) is sponsoring a bill that would provide controls for the Forest Service in issuing special use permits for ski areas. The senator said he was tired of what he called the Forest Service's "seat of the pants" approach to administering public lands containing ski areas, according to the *Deseret News*. He calls for control of permits to ski areas, a new format for issuing the permits, control of fees set by ski areas, public disclosure of all records of ski areas, and allowing private ski instructors to work on the slopes, according to the *Deseret News*.

The Forest Service has terminated a special use permit for a ski area in Idaho partially because the development of the area would stimulate growth in Ketchum, Idaho, and the surrounding area. The agency says the communities cannot accommodate the growth at this time. Sawtooth Forest Supervisor Ed Fournier said comments made on a draft environmental statement played a major role in deciding that the development should not continue. He said other reasons for withdrawing the permit are that county and city master plans in the area have not been completed, there is not a clearly demonstrated need for the ski area, and the economic viability of the project is questionable at this time, according to an *Idaho Statesman* story. The special use permit that was terminated was to Sprenger Land Investment Corp. for its proposed Big Wood Ski Area.



## BUREC CHARGED WITH MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR FLIM-FLAM

Bureau of Reclamation cost ceilings on three of its water projects have been attacked by the General Accounting Office in a report released last week. According to a copyrighted story in the *DENVER POST*, the GAO, which is the investigative arm of Congress, found that BuRec artificially inflated cost ceilings by tens of millions of dollars, thereby hiding overruns. The three projects investigated are the Garrison Diversion in North Dakota, the Frypan-Arkansas project in Colorado, and the Bonneville Unit of the Central Utah Project. The report found that BuRec applied an inflation index to items not affected by inflation, such as funds already expended, in order to get by the cost ceilings imposed by Congress. On the three projects considered, GAO found that the cost ceilings had been inflated by a total of \$66.9 million. Rep. William S. Moorhead (D-Pa.) whose committee requested the study said "I believe that the abuses identified are not isolated instances, but represent a consistent pattern. . . . It is a multimillion dollar flim-flam perpetrated on the Congress and the public," according to the *DENVER POST* report. Meanwhile, in Colorado, Pitkin County Commissioners have filed two lawsuits to try to halt work on the Frypan-Arkansas water project, alleging deficiencies in the environmental impact statement. The Fry-Ark project would divert water from Colorado's Western Slope to the Eastern Slope.

Photo shows construction equipment along the McClusky Canal for the Garrison Diversion.  
Photo by Richard Madson

## Aluminum project slated for N. Idaho

An energy intensive aluminum project is planned 15 miles east of Kooskia in northern Idaho. Ethyl Corporation is proposing a kyanite mine on Woodrat Mountain that would require 400 megawatts to power the operation. An open pit mine covering one square mile, plus crushing and milling facilities are expected, according to the Idaho Environmental Council. Kyanite is an aluminum silicate used in ceramics, some mortars, and missile nose cones.

## U.S. — Canada concerned about water

Waters flowing across the longest unguarded border in the world are being watched carefully by both the Canadian and the U.S. governments, which fear that pollutants might also be getting free entry into their countries. At the North Dakota-Manitoba border, there has been a five-year dispute centering on pollutants that may enter Canada in the Red and the Souris River from the Garrison Diversion project if it is completed. The International Joint Commission is now studying the project to see if it would violate the Boundary Waters Treaty. Montanans are worried about pollutants from proposed Canadian coal development that may enter the U.S. in the Poplar River from Saskatchewan and in the north fork of the Flathead River from British Columbia. Rep. John Melcher (D-Mont.) suggests that an international pollution control agreement between the two countries offers the best way for both to avoid air and water quality disputes, according to *The Missoulian*. Rep. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) says Montanans should encourage everybody in government to pressure Canadians into making sure the Flathead River project does little or no damage to Montana. He admits that the U.S. "has not been a very good neighbor" with respect to cleaning up the Great Lakes and being concerned about other environmental issues that affect Canada.

14-High Country News — Dec. 5, 1975

## HCN Books



### Should Trees Have Standing?

TOWARD LEGAL RIGHTS  
FOR NATURAL OBJECTS

by Christopher D. Stone, William Kaufmann, Inc.,  
Los Altos, California, 1974. \$2.95, paperback, 103  
pages.

Review by Peter Wild

There is something new under the sun: society should recognize the legal rights, or standing, of natural objects. At first it sounds absurd.

Law professor Christopher D. Stone comments, "Throughout legal history, each successive extension of rights to some new entity has been... a bit unthinkable." As illustration he mentions the absurd woman who in 1875 thought she had the right to practice law. Reflecting the prejudices of the time, a Wisconsin court informed her that the ambition was treasonous to world order. Further, she was admonished to turn her attentions instead to the prescribed and sacred duties of her sex.

Now, a hundred years later, women lawyers are widely accepted. However, the rights of forests and mountains are not, though without blinking an eyelash the law commonly treats a host of nonhuman entities, ships, corporations, and trusts, to mention a few, as if they were persons with their own sets of rights.

If incorporated into law, Stone's concept would not mean that gold would lie unused in the ground or that timber could not be cut. It would mean that the courts

would recognize the beneficial role our natural heritage plays as a basis for a healthy society. Concerned individuals and citizen groups would be in a much stronger legal position to speak on nature's behalf, just as a lawyer can be the spokesman for a corporation.

The reason for the present disparity involves our posture toward the natural world, a concept of exploitation that has sanctioned man as a plunderer of the land he inhabits. It is responsible for the current environmental mess.

Yet, as science increasingly documents man's delicate position in a finite world, we are slowly realizing the necessity for rethinking our treatment of nature. If it can come in time, the profound shift in the relationship will be a big step toward solving the material problems of the planet. Stone feels the change also will make us better human beings, people who realize that if they are to survive they must live in harmony with nature rather than treat it as an enemy to be conquered.

All this may sound somewhat abstract. In fact, it was with a very practical goal in mind that Professor Stone first elaborated the idea in a 1972 issue of the prestigious

**Southern California Law Review.** His aim was to influence the Supreme Court in its decision concerning the Sierra Club's efforts to protect the wilderness of California's Mineral King Valley from commercial development by Walt Disney Enterprises.

On a technicality, the Sierra Club lost that round in its long struggle to save this unique part of the nation's heritage. However, Justice Douglas's dissenting opinion caused a stir in the legal world. The Justice made reference to Stone's article and pointed out that instead of the government assisting exploitation as a matter of course, "... the problem is to make certain that the inanimate objects, which are the very core of America's beauty, have spokesmen..."

In other words, the concept is entering our legal thinking. In a few years, this little book, which contains Stone's original essay along with the opinions of the Supreme Court, may well be recognized as a giant in environmental thought. One can only hope that the ideas developed by **Should Trees Have Standing?** will be accepted as common wisdom by our children.

## BULLETIN BOARD

### 99% FACTUAL

**Rocky Mountain Fish Stories**, a paperback book filled with "99% factual" fish stories, has been written by Charles Page of Gunnison, Colo. It can be ordered from Page Books, Box 368, Gunnison, Colo. 81230.

### EPA GRIPE DAY

The Environmental Protection Agency will listen to public criticism of its programs at the Denver Hilton Dec. 11, starting at 9:30 a.m. The session, called an Environmental Town Meeting, is part of an EPA review of itself as it begins its sixth year of operation.

### GET THE ENERGY PICTURE

A report listing all energy projects proposed, planned, or under construction in Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, and Utah is now available. The 60-page report lists coal mines, oil shale development, coal conversion plants, coal slurry pipelines, tar sands projects, other synthetic fuel conversion plants, power generating plants, and railroads. Copies may be obtained from Joseph B. Smith, U.S. Bureau of Mines, Denver Federal Center, Denver, Colo. 80225.

### COMMENT ON PLANT

Comments are due Dec. 20 on a 500 megawatt coal fired power plant proposed in Colorado between the towns of Brush and Fort Morgan. The Colorado Health Department's Air Pollution Control Division is deciding whether to grant or deny a permit for the station. All comments must be in writing. Send them to A. C. Bishard, Health Department, 4210 E. 11th Ave., Denver, Colo. 80220.

### LOBBY FOR COSC

The Colorado Open Space Council is looking for a lobbyist for the 1976 Colorado legislative session. They want "an individual who has knowledge of environmental issues, is self-assured, is a hard worker for moderate wages, and has an ability to organize volunteers." The job is full-time during the session, which will last about six months and, hopefully, half time during the rest of the year. Apply to COSC, 1325 Delaware, Denver, Colo. 80204.

### HORIZON HOUSE, MISSOULA

An "urban ecology center" called Horizon House has just opened in Missoula, Mont. They hope to serve as a clearinghouse for environmental information in their area. If you can help them make contacts, write or call Carleen Jaspers, Horizon House, 323 West Alder, Missoula, Mont. 59801, (406) 721-2625. The project is funded by the Montana Bicentennial Commission.

### AG-COAL OVERLAP

What will the effect of the coal industry be on Montana's number one industry, agriculture? What will its effect be on eastern Montana's agrarian lifestyle? A new publication put out by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation presents information that may help answer these questions. The report, **Confictive Land Use: Coal Strip Mining and Agriculture**, is available from the department at 32 S. Ewing, Natural Resources Building, Helena, Mont. 59801. The report includes a map which shows the overlap of coal reserves and agriculture in the Yellowstone Basin.



During each of the past nine or ten years, there were more than three million babies born in the United States. (An interesting side note: from 1954 through 1964 the birth rate was over four million each year.)

Statistics such as this can be pretty dull reading unless one has some personal reason to be interested. I looked up the records because I have just recently become a grandmother for the third time. This is the first time, however, that I have been on hand to await the arrival of a new granddaughter, and I must confess that I hadn't realized how much things have changed in the last 30-odd years!

In today's modern hospital each patient is equipped with his (or her) own plastic throw-away wash basin, complete with throw-away soap dish, tooth-brush, comb, and lotion in a throw-away plastic bottle. (The patient is allowed to take all this home, to throw away later.) Shots are given with a throw-away syringe, and the baby is diapered in throw-away pants. About the only thing they don't throw away is the baby!

I'm not a bit sure whether the reason for all this is for sanitation purposes, or just to save time and labor. Were those metal wash-basins of yore really unsanitary, or did it just take too much time to keep them sterilized from patient to patient? Ditto, the syringes. (And we wonder why hospital costs keep soaring!)

As for the throw-away diapers, I'll willingly confess that they are a time and labor saver for a new mother. Even a new grandmother can appreciate not having to soak and wash and dry and fold bunches of diapers every day — at least until the baby graduates into old-fashioned cloth diapers. Except even the cloth diapers are different now. They're preshaped, and are bought in different sizes — when the baby outgrows one size, those are put aside or given away, and a larger size is purchased or borrowed. Thirty years ago, you bought a batch of diapers and learned how to fold them to fit a newborn; then, as the baby grew, you folded them in a different manner, and hopefully, you'd have the baby toilet-trained before they all wore out. It did take more time, though. Just like scrubbing and boiling the glass bottles for the formula took time. They don't do that any more, either. There are plastic throw-away bottle lines, presterilized.

As I re-read this, I realize that I sound like some old fogey, critically comparing modern ways against the "good old days." This is not entirely true, though. I'm all in favor of mothers having fewer drudging chores, and more time to spend with their families. In today's world, most of them hold down jobs in order to help pay the high cost of living, including hospital bills. And I'm in favor of well-run, efficient, sanitary hospitals. So you see, it's all just one big vicious circle. A choice between time-consuming, sometimes inefficient old methods, or the quick, efficient, throw-away methods of today.

What really boggles my mind is the thought of all that nonbiodegradable throw-away plastic connected with the birth of just one tiny baby. Which brings us right back to that statistic — more than three million babies a year!

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## LOONEY LIMERICKS

by Zane E. Cology

Ms. Young says lines that are hot,  
Will ruin radios and crops.  
When volts run loose,  
Folks get fried by the juice,  
And it's all for more mega-whats?

**CLEAN AIR AMENDMENTS MARKUP.** The Senate Public Works Committee and the House Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee are now considering amendments prepared by subcommittees on the Clean Air Act. The draft bills are tougher than the regulations issued by Russell E. Train as a result of a court order in 1972, according to the N.Y. Times News Service. Train is the administrator for the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Senate subcommittee draft includes provisions to eliminate the Class III designation for air to

# Eavesdropper

environmental news from around the world

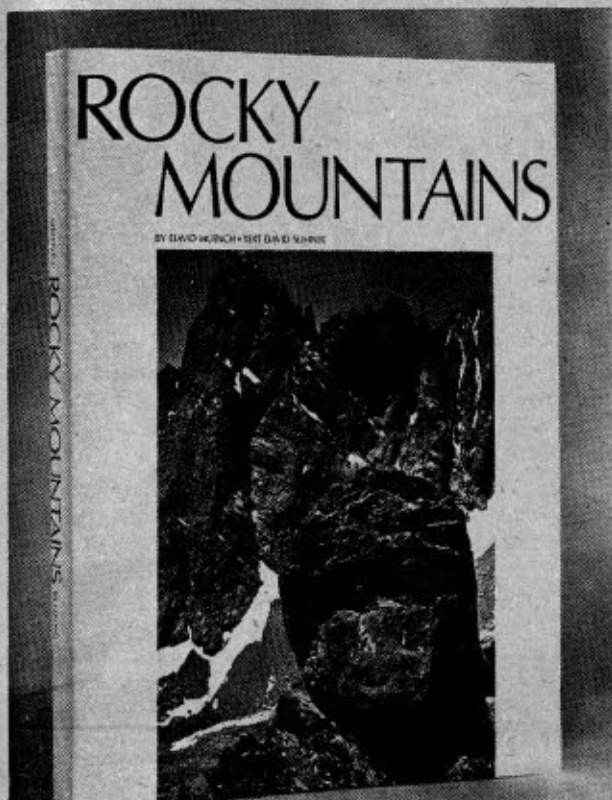
avoid clustering of polluting plants. It makes mandatory the inclusion in Class I all national parks, wilderness areas, and wildlife refuges more than 1,000 acres in size. Class I allows almost no change in air quality.

**SUSPEND NEPA?** Sen. James McClure (R-Idaho) says the Interior Department has informed him that suspension of the National Environmental Policy Act "might be appropriate" during international resource crises. NEPA requires the preparation of impact statements which might hamper the country's ability to deal with certain crises, he says.

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**HAWAII PLANTS ENDANGERED.** More than one third of the nation's endangered or threatened U.S. plants are in Hawaii. Dr. F. R. Fosberg, curator of botany at the Smithsonian Institute, says man's introduction of plant-eating animals and non-native plants is blamed since the native plants had not developed prickles, unpleasant tastes, or poisonous properties to protect themselves.

**DEMAND FOR OLD NEWSPAPERS.** Supplies of old newspapers have fallen behind demands of recycling mills, according to the chairman of the American Paper Institute's Paper Stock Conservation Committee. He says the renewed demand is due to increased activity at paper and paperboard mills, reflecting the general improvement in business conditions, according to **Solid Waste Report**. Demand has exceeded supply since July, and he urged reactivating newspaper collection drives.



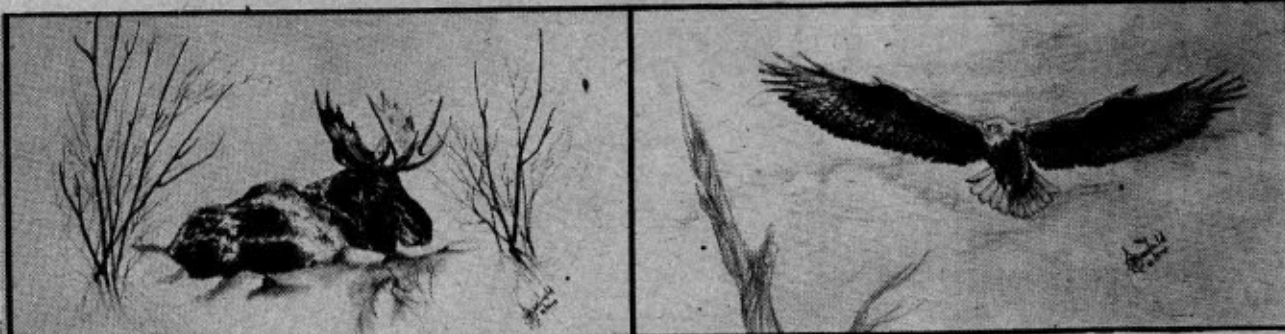
It is not an easy task putting a mountain range into a book; this is a brilliant attempt.

**Rocky Mountains**—Actual size, 10 1/8" by 13 1/2", 14,000 words of text, 162 illustrations in full color.

This book has scope large enough to match the mountains. Contrasts are forever present in the high country; massive ranges to singular peaks, masses of wildflowers to the single blossom.

The publisher of **Rocky Mountains**, Mr. Charles H. Belding, has graciously agreed to share the proceeds from the sale of this book with **High Country News**.

Give a fine gift and help the cause at the same time. To order, please use the combined order form located on the bottom of this page.



## 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 Gold envelopes, ivory cards, designs in wheatfield gold, this is a handsome complement to your message.

\$2. Ten cards and envelopes per set.

## Paul M. Breeden Prints



### Great Horned Owl

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



### 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.)

### Combined Order Form

Be sure to mark your selections.

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Juel Rodack, Arizona activist

# Grand Canyon hike changed his life

by Peter Wild

In 1965 Juel and Madeline Rodack fulfilled a lifetime dream and walked across the Grand Canyon. Although they were experienced hikers, nothing compared with this journey through what seemed to be the bowels of the earth. When they returned to the rim, however, their sense of awe soured; they heard that the federal government planned to build Marble and Bridge Canyon Dams, which would flood parts of the wonders they had just seen.

Back home in Tucson, the Rodacks invited a few friends over and asked what they thought could be done to save the spectacular natural treasure. Each contributed five dollars, and Arizonans for Water Without Waste (AWWW) was born. Armed with enthusiasm and \$70, AWWW's immediate purpose was to stop the dams. Ten years after the humble, if not naive, beginning, AWWW is one of the most influential environmental groups in the Southwest.

At the time of its founding, Arizona's newspapers were dam boosters, supporting most government projects, regardless of their long-term consequences. They made brief note of the new organization as a curiosity.

"Remember," Rodack says with a grin, "the word 'environmentalist' was hardly known in 1965. Despite our determination to save the Grand Canyon, things did look bleak."

However, bad odds didn't defeat AWWW. In the next two years growing numbers of supporters wrote to Washington. They wanted their Congressmen to know that the dam projects did not represent the wishes of all Arizonans. Once

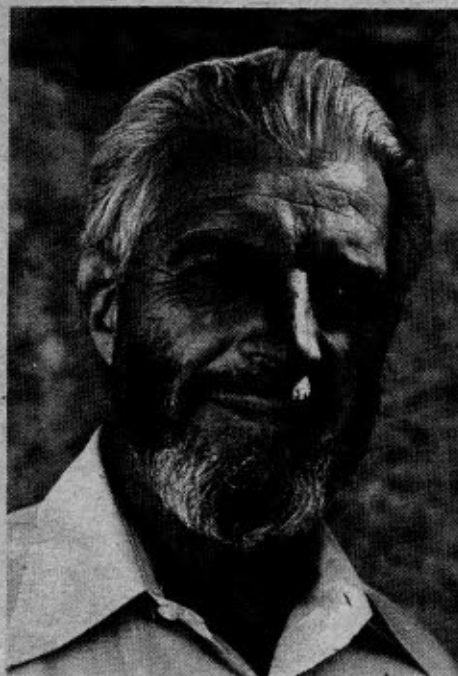
**"When we first opposed the Grand Canyon dams, people said we were wasting our time."**

Rodack made a hasty trip to the nation's capitol to testify before a Congressional committee.

"I didn't know where the money would come from to pay for the trip," Rodack laughs, "but someone had to represent the conservationists of the state. I used my credit card."

Soon after, AWWW launched a campaign to show the public that the dams would not solve water problems. To the contrary, they would waste both vast amounts of water and taxpayers' money. Because of an informed and aroused public, in 1967 Congress voted to cancel the dams.

If there is a single quality that Rodack conveys, it is energy. A rapid-fire but precise speaker, he is widely sought by TV and newspaper reporters for information on the Southwest's environmental issues. Though born in New York City, he spent his youth in South Africa, where he became a semiprofessional actor. During World War II he led fellow GI thespians around the South Pacific entertaining troops. After the War,



**JUEL RODACK**  
Photo by Dana Slaymaker

he formed his own company and produced off-Broadway plays. His experience on the stage comes in handy when he travels to Washington to testify before committees, whose members may not be sympathetic to the environment. His ability to organize is evident in AWWW's success.

As to structure, AWWW is somewhat unique. It has no members. Instead, all who ask are placed on the mailing list for the AWWW Newsletter (P.O. Box 49022, Tucson, Arizona 85717), which goes into over 3,500 homes. Dedicated individuals serve as heads of standing committees; anyone who shows interest is welcome to pitch in. No one is paid. AWWW deals with complex environmental problems through the donated help of lawyers, hydrologists, nuclear scientists, and wildlife specialists, most of whom teach at the local university.

Of course, money is needed to pay for stamps and stationery, for covering rising costs of the Newsletter. Reflecting AWWW's grass-roots support, most contributions are in the \$5-\$10 range. Though funds are closely watched and gladly received, Rodack feels that money is secondary.

"Regardless of our financial standing at any one moment, our primary concern is to get the job at hand done," he says.

Soon after the 1967 victory for the Grand Canyon, the organization changed its name to Arizonans for Quality Environment, reflecting broadened concern for wilderness, energy, and pollution. However, it is still popularly known as AWWW. One of its top priorities is to defeat the Kaiparowits power plant, which Rodack calls "a 3,000 megawatt monster." As to habitat protection, the group is urging the U.S. Forest Service to preserve Escudilla Mountain, Arizona's third highest peak, as a natural area. Threatened by logging, the mountain is a choice refuge for the state's diminishing eagle and bear population.

Rodack's view is that, "The more man tampers with nature, the more problems he

creates." He describes water problems of the Southwest as consisting of "waste rather than shortage."

Hence, AWWW has joined other citizen groups, such as the Grand Canyon Chapter of the Sierra Club and the Maricopa Audubon Society, in alerting the public to the Central Arizona Project (CAP), the state's imminent multimillion-dollar water boondoggle. The elaborate network of dams and canals would give an immense windfall to special interests, while the public would be paying for the white elephant for generations to come. Going to the heart of the matter, AWWW has charged 13 of the 15 board members of the Central Arizona Water Conservancy District, empowered to allocate and tax CAP water, with conflict of interest.

Though in the early days of the environmental movement many groups shied away from politics, AWWW always has been active at election time. Rodack says, "Conservation work is 90% political. If we can elect the correct people, we will have less difficulty in implementing environmental progress." Therefore, AWWW teams interview state and local candidates. A special elections edition of the Newsletter discusses their past performance and summarizes their positions on current issues, such as land-use planning and mass transportation. The organization

endorses favorable candidates and recommends defeat for others.

Six years ago, when AWWW first published an elections issue, some politicians scoffed, not even deigning to be interviewed. Now, however, because of its wide and enthusiastic readership, politicians pay attention; the Newsletter has become a major political force in the state.

When questioned about the multiplicity of environmental organizations, Rodack responds that their number is healthy: "Strong nationwide groups, such as the Sierra Club and Friends of the Earth, are indispensable. However, local organizations give people on the grass-roots level a chance to be heard. At public hearings, the organizations can speak with many independent voices. Their numbers help combat the special interests, who will be sure to be there, often represented by paid speakers." Further, he feels that their variety helps convince the government and press of widespread environmental support.

Rodack is hopeful about the future. "When we first opposed the Grand Canyon dams," he points out, "people said we were wasting our time. Now, just 10 years later, environmentalists can count on the growing awareness of a public that is concerned about the future. People in Washington, in city hall, are beginning to realize that if they don't get the message they'll be turned out of office. That's encouraging."

## Dear Friends,

Why worry about transmission lines when the other effects of massive coal development in the region — power plants and strip mines — are so much more destructive?

Thousands of miles of high voltage — or ultra high voltage — lines are going to touch people's lives. It's tough to look far into the future and see the changes in our way of life and in the economic base of the region. It's even harder to understand that invisible particles in the air are going to reduce crop productivity and our lifespans. But transmission lines hit home.

The United Plainsmen say it was the threat of transmission lines in their backyards that motivated them to push for the North Dakota siting act, as much as any other factor.

So transmission lines are awakening the public. And they may drive them to take a stand on other energy development issues.

One of these issues that they might take a stand on is a regional export policy to encourage exporting the fuel rather than the electricity. Exporting electricity is more expensive than either trains or slurry lines for getting energy out of the region, according to the Northern Great Plains Resource Program. It should be even more expensive — if the utilities were forced to use the proper sized poles and lines to avoid loss of electricity, if they had to pay more

attention to landowners' suggestions for routing lines along section lines and away from homes, and if they had to make equitable easement payments.

Transmission lines illustrate how "cheap power" has been cheap for so many years in dollars only. Its costs in human and environmental values keep mounting up, and they deserve our attention.

—the editors



**In The News**

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