

The Environmental Bi-Weekly

High Country News

Vol. 8 No. 4

Lander, Wyoming

Friday, February 13, 1976



BLM farm plans hold promise, problems

by Bruce Hamilton

"Agriculture is overwhelmingly the largest user of energy, water, and land" in Idaho, says Dr. Raymond Miller.

Miller, director of research at the University of Idaho's College of Agriculture in Moscow, notes that the state is working on an energy plan, a water plan, and a land use plan — but it still lacks a plan for agriculture. "We've apparently got the cart before the horse," Miller says.

NEW FARMS IN THE DESERT

Lack of clear goals for Idaho agriculture becomes more evident as the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) attempts to wrestle with plans to convert thousands of acres of BLM desert lands into individual private farms. Two federal laws — the Desert Land Act and the Carey Act — allow farmers to apply for public desert lands to be converted to private land, and eventually patent as private land. The process seems simple, but it is leaving BLM with a bureaucratic headache.

The agency must ask which lands should be converted to agriculture and how fast. What is to become of the native vegetation and wildlife living in the desert land that may soon bloom as a field of famous Idaho potatoes? Will this additional irrigation dry up the Snake River and require construction of coal-fired power plants in Idaho? What impact will desert land development have on the world-famous BLM Birds of Prey Natural Area along the Snake River? Should a formal environmental impact statement be prepared?

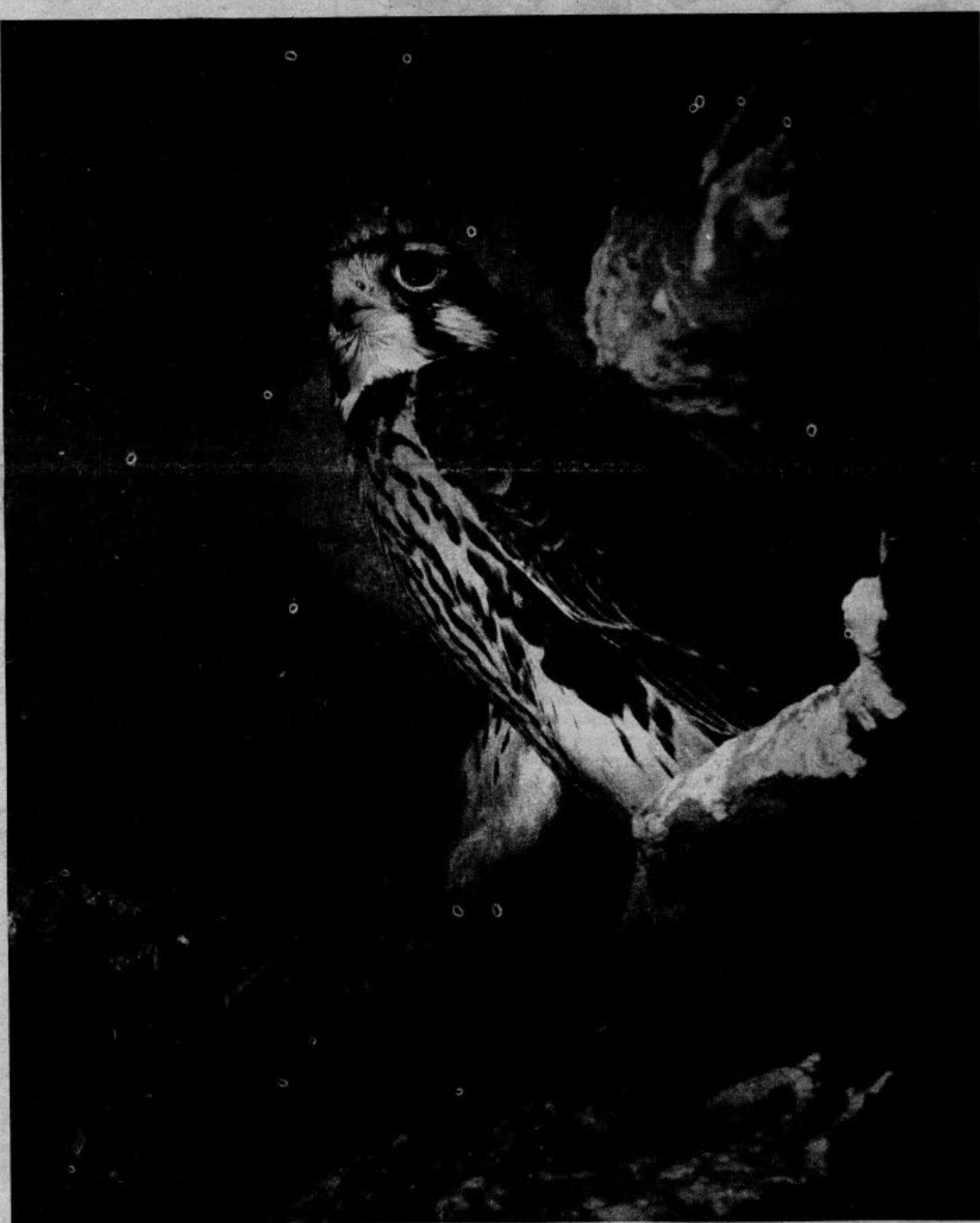
In December, 1975, the Idaho BLM office released an environmental analysis report (EAR) for the agricultural development program in the Lower Snake River Plains of southwestern Idaho. The study area — public lands along the Snake River in the Boise-Mountain Home-Twin Falls region — is the scene of 80% of the proposed desert land conversion activity in the state.

State BLM Director William L. Mathews says the EAR explores several management alternatives ranging from a policy of non-development through continuing the present practice of allowing 20,000 acres of desert land entry every year, to an accelerated program of developing 40,000 acres per year.

The EAR also contemplates eventually allowing agricultural development on about one-third of a million acres of public lands in Idaho.

LOW CONFLICT AREAS

In its EAR, BLM tries to identify important natural resources in the study area. (Continued on page 4)



FALCONS AND FARMS DON'T MIX. Prairie falcons in the Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area south of Boise, Idaho, are threatened by proposed desert land agricultural development. New row crop irrigated farms could destroy the falcons' food source — the Townsend's ground squirrel. The Bureau of Land Management has a

temporary moratorium on development close to the natural area and it is studying the situation. For more details see the story on page one and the center spread on page eight.

Photo by Dick Randall of Defenders of Wildlife.

2-High Country News — Feb. 13, 1976



"YOU KNOW, SON, I DON'T KNOW WHY THEY
CALL IT THE SNAKE RIVER."

HIGH COUNTRY

By Jane Bell

The scene from the window where I write this morning is one of peace and tranquility. The brown hills, etched in white, stretch across the distance to the snowy mountains of Idaho.

Our little homestead here in this gentle land is well situated to let us partake of the beauty and bounty of nature.

Eagles course our valley. As many as a dozen large hawks may be in the air at once — swooping down and around our pocket, riding the thermals over the ridge, or wheeling above the valley before us.

Those immeasurable values, and many more, such as the deer in our orchard and quail in the yard, are on the plus side. There is another side.

Living off the land is a life of work, of sacrifice, and of worldly pleasures foregone. Sylvia Porter, columnist, says of the homesteaders, "They actually are living a hard and frugal existence, radically different from the way most of us live or try to live in the U.S. in this era. They have a minimal concern with financial security...."

She and others have pointed out the significance of this social movement. But it seems to me that they miss several important points. This country was founded and built by men and women who were willing to work hard, to sacrifice, and to live a frugal existence. For most of them the pleasures they had were in where they lived and what they could do with their own hands for themselves. In this era of big cities, big corporations, and big government, the independence of the individual is being lost. Man is trying to find his way back, even if it means giving up the affluence that others still seek.

But more than that, many who turn back to the land do so because they see that way as the only hope of possible survival in the

years ahead. The self-sustaining situation on a small homestead may be deemed a sacrifice now, but these people won't be desperate in the years ahead.

Most Americans will someday be forced to give up their affluence and wasteful, spend-thrift habits. The warning flags are flying on every hand. But the average American is being lulled and gulled.

Politicians and national leaders alike are gulling us with false hopes. We are led to believe that if we only spend more money, build and buy more automobiles, burn more gasoline, produce more goods, we can return to the dizzying hey-day of the 1960s.

We even use the stockmarket as a national barometer of rising expectations.

For us Americans, it is all vanity. We are filled with self-righteous indignation at the suggestion we give up our expensive toys and gadgets. No matter that such affluent gewgaws (snowmobiles, speed boats, dune buggies, astrodomes, ad infinitum) diminish the world's basic resources. These are American as apple pie, made in America by red-blooded Americans. To turn your back on these is a desecration of the flag.

Once we were a humble people — strong, sturdy and self-reliant. Now, we are self-seeking. Those who have already returned to the land to make their own way as much as possible have swallowed pride. It is difficult to do. But it is far easier when you do it of your own free will than when you are forced by circumstance.

It does not demean your American citizenship to renounce a life-style which can only lead to destruction of the very values upon which our country was founded. In the long run, the simpler life styles will prevail.



HCN Letters

RIDICULOUS ATTACK

Dear HCN:

Steve Auslander's attack on *The Monkey Wrench Gang* is the most ridiculous I've seen yet. To mention Squeaky Fromme in a letter supposedly dealing with that wonderful book is the lowest blow I've ever heard of. As Abbey says, "Violence is as American as pizza pie," but his book, full of laughter and adventure, is in itself the best possible answer to the hysterical fears of such nervous readers as Auslander.

Barry Nielsen
Salt Lake City, Utah

NAVEL CONTEMPLATION

Dear High Country News,

Ed Abbey's novel, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, certainly has a number of flaws, but Mark R. Stromberg's letter blasting it in the Jan. 2, 1976, *High Country News* is written by an individual incapable of understanding what it's all about. Stromberg states, "Soon there will be no wide open spaces (we must be realists), and no longer will there be places for those who cannot escape from the sight of man and his works. Perhaps then we will turn inward and begin to see the graceful relationships between man and his environment, hopefully like pre-industrial Japan."

Yechh! If that's the way it's going to be, then *High Country News* and all the rest of us Western eco-freaks may as well hang up our hats and rationally contemplate suicide. In a world without wilderness, I'd rather pull my own plug than be satisfied with sitting around contemplating my navel and the groovy graceful relationships between man and his environment (no doubt abstract power lines striding gracefully across the realistic Utah landscape).

Happy Trails
Dave Foreman
Glenwood, N.M.

LETTERS MORATORIUM

Dear HCN,

Mr. Steve Auslander, who said all those nasty things about *The Monkey Wrench Gang* in a letter to HCN, is the same man who said the same things in a review for the *Arizona Daily Star* (Tucson). Although my books always get a bad time from reviewers, this is the first case I can recall where a reviewer actually pursued me for 1,000 miles in order to attack my book for a second time in a different periodical. That's what I call devotion to duty — or a little beyond.

Anyhow, I ask for a moratorium on comment about *Monkey Wrench* in the letters column of HCN. I'd rather read about something else. The reviewers have got in their licks: now let the readers judge for themselves. I'm not worried about them.

Carry on.

Ed Abbey
Wolf Hole, Ariz.

HISTORICAL VIEW

Dear HCN,

With the worst Administration — as far as environment goes — since the

nineteenth century, it is good to see you are still out there fighting.

Ruth C. Douglas
St. Helena, Calif.

CONSERVATION LIBRARY SAVED

Dear HCN,

Thanks for your help on the Conservation Library of Denver Public Library. After the city announced the library would be closed, we raised nearly \$28,000 to keep it open until July 1. Your articles in *High Country News* helped.

Curiously, it was the clearcutters and the strip miners who came up with the substantial gifts — AMAX, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Bureau of Mines. Individuals did well, with more than \$1,500 coming in small donations.

The Colorado Division of Wildlife, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Denver Coal Club, Exxon USA, Gulf Mineral Resources, and Brinkerhoff Drilling Co. were among the contributors.

Without the Rocky Mountain Center on Environment (ROMCOE) and the work of Margot Fraker, the efforts would have failed. ROMCOE's support was invaluable.

The long term picture is obscure. Permanent funding is still to be arranged. We will keep you posted on that. It is a formidable undertaking. We don't know where the money will come from.

The Conservation Library has received increased use since the fund cut; even though the staff and hours have been reduced. It is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday.

Keep up the good work at HCN.

Dick Prouty
Chairman, Citizens
Advisory Committee for
The Conservation Library

LETHAL SPECKS

Dear Folks,

The (so-called "low-level") nuclear radiation planned by our Vice-President and President is without doubt the greatest material danger facing mankind today. Even though you are near uranium mines, I believe there is a great obligation to broadcast the truths of such studies as those recently made by nuclear scientists Dr. John Gofman, Dr. Ernest Sternglass, and others. The Nov. 17 *Business Week* said about plutonium, "a speck the size of a pinpoint will kill a person. . . ." Which speck of dust is going to get into whose lungs? Which speck of literally millions of specks?

We really want the uranium workers to have higher paying jobs in solar energy work and we don't want them to get premature cancer from uranium radiation. Yet the tycoons who exploit them keep them ignorant of radiation hazards.

J. C. Briggs
Retired Alaskan homesteader
Raton, N.M.

NEGLECT

Last issue in a guest editorial entitled "LRCC defends Platte County air, water from power plant" we reported that contributions to the Laramie River Conservation Council should be sent to the Laramie River Legal Fund, Box 84, Wheatland, Wyo. 82201. We neglected to mention that the checks should be made out to the Northern Rockies Action Group, which is serving as a tax deductible conduit for LRCC.

HCN Guest Editorial

Feb. 13, 1976 — High Country News-3

Who's the purest of them all?

by Bart Koehler

In my frequent discussions with various staff members of the Forest Service, the wilderness "purity" debate often surfaces. It usually centers on primitive areas and surrounding wilderness resource lands that are being reviewed for wilderness status, and eventual inclusion into the National Wilderness Preservation System.

The discussion goes something like this: **Forest Service:** "For a purist outfit, you sure want to protect areas that are not pure."

The Wilderness Society: "We never claimed to be a 'purist' outfit. We are interested in protecting wilderness ecosystems as they exist in their wild condition today. We don't care if an area was tie-hacked 50 years ago, or if there is an old mine in an area, or a jeep trail. As long as an area meets the definition of wilderness as described in the Wilderness Act, then we strive to protect it."

FS: "Then we're the real purists. We read the first part of the definition of wilderness and then we (as purists) cannot go along with the rest of the definition."

TWS: "Yes, that's true. You will certainly disqualify an area because of past use, regardless of its wilderness at this point in time. Unlike you, we read the entire definition of wilderness, and therefore follow the intent of Congress in protecting wilderness lands. (In some cases you have taken your purist's attitudes so far as to burn down old cabins in wilderness areas.)"

Before we go any further with this, we should look at the Wilderness Act's definition of wilderness.

"(c) A wilderness, in contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape, is hereby recognized as an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain. An area of wilderness is further de-

fined to mean in this Act an area of undeveloped Federal land retaining its primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation, which is protected and managed so as to preserve its natural conditions and which (1) generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man's work substantially unnoticeable; (2) has outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation; (3) has at least five thousand acres of land or is of sufficient size as to make practicable its preservation and use in an unimpaired condition; and (4) may also contain ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historical value."

The Forest Service, in its reading of the act, relies heavily on the words "retaining its primeval character and influence."

We should look to Congress (who after all, wrote the act) for the proper interpretation. John Saylor, one of its authors, offered an excellent explanation of the definition when he said that the first part of the definition was the ideal concept. He went on to say that the second part of the definition "describes an area of wilderness as it is to be considered for the purposes of the act — areas where man's works were substantially unnoticeable. . . ."

Works of man that are substantially unnoticeable today, in the context of an entire wilderness ecosystem of thousands of acres, could include old cabins, tie-hacks that have nearly disappeared, and fading jeep tracks. The establishment of numerous wilderness areas in the East reaffirmed Congress's power to include areas that had reverted to natural state to the point that past development activities had become "substantially unnoticeable." The Forest Service is still smarting from this act of Congress, the "Eastern Wilderness Areas Act."

There's another troublesome word in the definition of wilderness. The word is "un-



PURE? "Works of man that are substantially unnoticeable today, in the context of an entire wilderness ecosystem of thousands of acres, could include old cabins, tie-hacks that have nearly disappeared, and fading jeep tracks."

trammelled," which many people falsely interpret as meaning "untrampled," "untouched," or as the Forest Service would say — "pure."

Untrammelled is an archaic word which comes from the word "trammel." Trammel is a verb which means to confine, hinder, or entrap. Basically, a "community of life that is untrammelled" is one that is operating free of man's manipulation — a freely functioning ecosystem.

Lately the Forest Service's debate has taken a new twist.

FS: "So, you want to protect areas that were tie-hacked 50 years ago, right?"

TWS: "Yes. We are fighting to protect the DuNoir Special Management Area in Wyoming right now. If you look real hard, you might find a trace of past timbering — like a rotted stump — or splash dam."

FS: "Aha! If we follow your interpretation of the definition of wilderness, then why can't we timber an area now, and then make it wilderness 50-100 years from now?"

TWS: "Your argument won't work. The trees (at least in the Rockies) won't grow back that quickly and the technology has changed over the years. Instead of using

men and horses to selectively cut a few railroad ties, you're using bulldozers, roads, and clearcuts. Also, I'm afraid that once you dedicate an area to timbering (no matter how marginal the resource is), then you will continue to manage the area for timbering, and such efforts will, over time, remain substantially noticeable."

The debate finally ends with the realization that Congress will ultimately protect what they want as wilderness. This is as it should be. But through its recommendations to Congress, the Forest Service, with its word games, has been cleverly subverting the Wilderness Act for a long time.

Congress needs to continue to follow the entire definition of wilderness in the law. If Congress does follow the letter of the law, then many wilderness resource areas that have had some minor past use, but which are now freely functioning wilderness ecosystems, will eventually be made a part of the National Wilderness Preservation System.

Bart Koehler is Northern Representative of the Wilderness Society. He can be reached at Box 2661, Jackson, Wyo. 83001.

HCN More Letters

CENTERSPREADS HELP

Dear High Country News,

Many thanks for the centerfolds in your paper. As a grade one teacher at Kaslo School, I find them a great source of information and pictures. Two of them, the one on beavers and one on animal adaptations to winter, came at times when we were studying them in the classroom. The information given was interesting and easily adaptable to grade one, bringing up points and answering questions I would have been unable to.

Rebecca Ambler
Kaslo, B.C.

SHARED DREAMS

Dear Editors,

I am sitting by the fire in the woods of Redding, Conn. I have just read the January 16th issue of High Country News and it ended with "Dear Friends" on page 16. For you people it must be sometimes unbearable to see the national gov-

ernment come crashing down on hopes and dreams; especially since I assume you cannot take a break from reality, or you could not get out the next issue.

This is just a brief note to emphasize what you already know, or you would give up. Your dreams are shared by many people you don't know personally but who share your concerns through your outstanding efforts. Please don't give up the fight.

Gerald Walizer
West Redding, Conn.

BE REASONABLE?

Dear HCN,

There may be a "tradition of reasonableness and integrity" in conservation (See HCN 1-16-76, Steve Auslander's letter). If so, that's why we're all messed up. The opposition is very reasonable as long as things go their way. Never in the history of the conservation movement have we faced such enormous odds against us. Who knows how John Muir or Powell or Aldo Leopold would react today. Think about that, Mr. Auslander!
Jake Kittle
Gaviota, Calif.

Resolve to stay informed

Enclosed is \$10 Mail HCN to me.

Name
Address
City
State Zip

Box K, Lander, Wyo.
82520



Your opinion matters.

We want to know what you think about HCN. Please answer the survey that appeared in the January 30th issue.

High Country News

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

Publisher	Thomas A. Bell
Managing Editor	Joan Nice
News Editor	Bruce Hamilton
Associate Editor	Margaret Ambler
Office Manager	Mary Margaret Davis
Advertising Manager	August Dailer
Circulation Manager	Georgia Nations
Design Consultant	Jeffrey Clack

Subscription rate \$10.00.
Single copy rate 35¢

Material published in High Country News may be reprinted without permission unless it is copyrighted. Proper credit should be given to High Country News. Contributions (manuscripts, photos, artwork) will be welcomed with the understanding that the editors cannot be held responsible for loss or damage. Articles and letters will be published and edited at the discretion of the editors. To send a sample copy to a friend, send us his or her address.
Box K, Lander, Wyoming 82520

(Continued from page 1)

Act. He reported that it was folly to allow

squirrels, according to the BLM study.

Kochert reports that in a similar 30-mile stretch of canyon with equally good nesting sites but no ground squirrels nearby, only three pairs of breeding prairie falcons were found.

In 1971, the Secretary of the Interior withdrew 33 miles of river and the adjacent cliffs to form the Birds of Prey Natural Area. This protected the birds' nesting sites, but left the feeding grounds vulnerable. Subsequently, BLM temporarily withdrew a five-mile buffer zone on either side of the river. Also withdrawn was an additional 30 miles of river canyon and a buffer zone just upstream from the natural area. Studies were set up to determine the ecological value of the surrounding land to the birds and the possibility of expanding the natural area.

THREATENED HAVEN

BLM's buffer zone offers only temporary protection for the birds. It could be made into a permanent withdrawal, but it could just as easily be eliminated. Presently, there are 384 applications for desert land entry within the buffer zone and several Carey Act proposals. There is also a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation proposed irrigation project — Crane Falls — and a proposed dam and reservoir — Swan Falls-Guffey — within the natural area study boundaries.

Until the buffer zone and expansion study is completed, BLM views all agricultural conversion proposals within the study area as "high conflict." However, on most good soils directly adjacent to the study area BLM has determined agricultural proposals to be "low conflict."

This arbitrary distinction is disturbing to some raptor protectionists. They note that BLM's own studies reveal prairie falcons feeding up to 13 miles from the natural area — well outside the buffer zone and in supposedly "low conflict" areas.

BLM responds: "Ongoing research is designed to better identify the food needs of the birds of prey and will provide a basis for modifying the present birds of prey study area."

CLEAN FARMING

One way BLM hopes to minimize the impact of development near the natural area is to leave natural desert habitat islands in among new farms. But, while BLM is planning new "leave areas," it's under pressure to relinquish some existing habitat islands in old irrigation projects. Recently, the Boise district office rejected two requests to take over leave areas, but a final decision is pending.

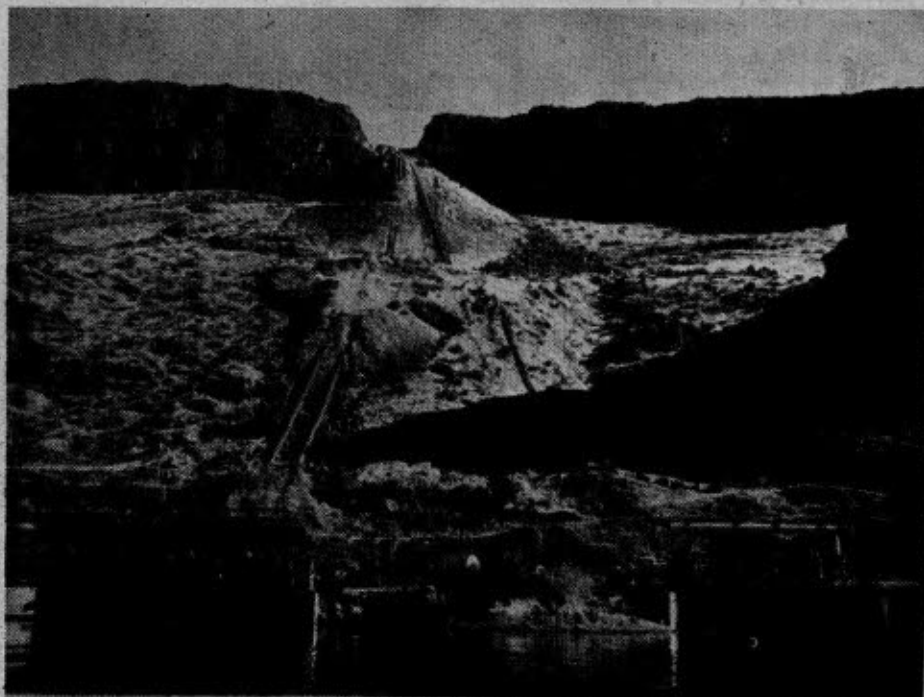
In one case, four individuals sought to buy up leave areas — acting under a federal law allowing for the sale of isolated public land to the highest bidder. If BLM had allowed the sale, any future leave area could be viewed as an isolated tract and subject to sale.

The second rejection involved a former BLM employee, Melvin Hughes, who filed a desert land entry on three leave areas in an existing irrigation project. As a BLM employee, Hughes had recommended that the areas be retained for wildlife, but within a few days after his resignation he filed on the leave areas, according to the Idaho State Journal.

The Boise district's rejection of the applications still has to be approved by state director Mathews. If protests are filed, the case could go to BLM National Director Curt Berklund or to the courts.

TUG-OF-WAR

In 1889 the Idaho State Surveyor General noted inadequacies in the Desert Land Act. He reported that it was folly to allow



IRRIGATION PUMPS. These pumps within the Birds of Prey Natural Area lift water from the Snake River over the canyon wall to an irrigation project on top. Photo by Michael N. Kochert and courtesy of BLM.

private parties to file on land and appropriate water almost indiscriminately.

Eighty-six years later, in 1975, there was an attempt in Congress to end desert land entry. The proposal was in the form of an amendment to the proposed BLM Organic Act legislation. Heavy lobbying by the Idaho delegation reportedly killed this attempt.

With Congressional action unlikely in the immediate future, the push for reform has focused on a tug-of-war between BLM and the state of Idaho.

BLM argues that through its enabling legislation — the Taylor Grazing Act and the Classification and Multiple Use Act — the agency is authorized to review all public lands and determine their "highest and best use." Applying these laws to desert land entry requires BLM to decide which areas are best suited for agricultural development and which areas are off limits.

The state disagrees with this interpretation of the law. The Idaho Department of Water Resources — the state agency responsible for administering the Carey Act in Idaho — says the state is entitled to

select any public land for agricultural development and transfer should be automatic.

The state has asked the U.S. District Court to rule on this matter.

BLM may also be taken to task by those who feel that the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) are not being met. NEPA requires all federal agencies to file an environmental impact statement on any "major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment."

In the five years since the passage of NEPA, BLM has turned over to Idaho farmers an average of 17,000 acres of public land per year — but not a single environmental impact statement has been written.

BLM maintains: "We are complying with the Act (NEPA) by making individual environmental analysis reports on individual desert land entry applications." The latest EAR on the Lower Snake region was prepared to "update and consolidate" the individual reports "on a regional basis" and to "further assess the cumulative impacts."

Report from Alaska

by Gregory Capito

Last December, the Alaska Game Board authorized state biologists to eliminate wolves in three management units. The Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game (ADF&G) was authorized to begin control in unit 20-A in the Tanana Flats near Fairbanks; in unit 13 in the Upper Susitna-Nelchina basin north of Anchorage; and in unit 5 near Yakutat in southeast Alaska.

The purpose of this program is to maintain wolf populations at low levels for three to five years in the management areas and determine how declining moose herds would respond when unmolested by their principle predator. The board, in approving the control program, stipulated that removal of wolves must be done by professional biologists using helicopters.

In Alaska, the wolf is not considered an endangered species. An estimated 12,000 wolves range throughout the state. The control program would remove approximately two per cent of the state-wide population — about 240 animals. In the three study areas, biologists would like to achieve a ratio of one wolf to 100 moose. The current ratio is about one to 15.

In mid-January, news of the aerial wolf hunt spread from Anchorage to Washington, D.C. Conservationists launched a protest with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

The agency promptly suspended payment of a \$10,000 grant pending preparation of an environmental impact statement (EIS). The funds were to finance wolf control programs in Alaska.

In late January, the Dept. of Defense (DOD) asked ADF&G to postpone the wolf hunt on a portion of the Tanana Flats. Some 30% of the unit is military property and DOD wanted to determine if an EIS was required for that portion of the hunt slated for federal land. Meanwhile, environmentalists filed suit in Anchorage federal court asking that the wolf hunt be halted because no EIS had been filed as required by the National Environmental Policy Act. A temporary restraining order was issued to halt the killing of wolves in Management Unit 13.

Prior to this legal action, an estimated 20 wolves were eliminated in Unit 13. Poor visibility in the Tanana Flats halted ADF&G efforts to carry out planned aerial hunts and no wolves were killed. In game management unit 5, hunting is not expected to begin until spring. At this time, aerial wolf hunting has been halted while the state prepares for a major legal battle on the basic issue of who has the authority to manage Alaska's wildlife resources.



Feb. 13, 1976 — High Country News-5

Upon completion of the regional EAR, BLM says it is still not sure if an environmental impact statement (EIS) will be required, but that the EAR will "assist in evaluating the need for an EIS."

Resource consultant Meiners says desert land conversion programs "should definitely come under the purview of NEPA." He cites the case of the Saylor Creek area south of Glens Ferry where group desert land entries covering 50,000 acres were reviewed by BLM. BLM prepared an "area-wide analysis," but not an EIS.

"Evidently BLM feels writing an EIS on plowing up 50,000 acres is not necessary," says Meiners. "I'm beginning to feel that BLM just doesn't write EIS's — unless you get a court order."

That may not be a hollow threat. Meiners was one of the lead plaintiffs in a successful lawsuit which required BLM to write EIS's on its grazing program. Meiners is also behind a lawsuit filed by the Idaho Wildlife Federation and the Golden Eagle Chapter of the Audubon Society against BLM. The suit protests the approval of a desert land entry in long-billed curlew nesting habitat north of Boise without prior preparation of an EIS.

Lawsuits and legal opinions, bird studies and water studies, EAR's and EIS's, power plants and power politics, rising development costs and rising development opposition, moratoriums and more demands for more of everything. These various factors — all interrelated and intricately tied to the future of desert land conversion in Idaho — are coming to a head. Decisions are being made which will determine the future of agriculture in Idaho — as the cart leads the horse to who knows where.

Copies of the EAR may be obtained by writing William Mathews, State Director, Bureau of Land Management, Room 398, Federal Building, 550 W. Fort St., P.O. Box 042, Boise, Idaho 83724. Comments on BLM proposals should be sent to the same address.

Desert Land Entry

This important issue of
The High Country News
is now available in quantity at
the reduced rates below.

Send copies to:
Friends
Members of Congress
Your local newspaper editors
Members of your labor union
Your religious study group
Your minister, priest, or rabbi
Your business associates
Your students — or teachers
State legislators and local officials

Special Rates on Quantity Orders:
1-10 25c each
11-25 19c each
26-100 16c each
101 or more.....13c each

Prices include U.S. postage.

Enclosed is \$_____ for _____
copies of *The High Country News*.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

Box K, Lander, WY 82520

6-High Country News — Feb. 13, 1976

Forest Service timber plans attacked

by Tim Mahoney

Three conservation groups are pushing to prevent piecemeal timber planning in the national forests.

The groups recently filed a detailed statement attacking the approach of timber plans in five national forests in Colorado. Wilderness Resources Institute, the Colorado Open Space Council (COSC), and the University of Colorado Wilderness Study Group began the appeal process last September soon after plans submitted by the Arapaho, Grand Mesa-Uncompahgre, Gunnison, Rio Grande, and Routt National Forests were approved by Regional Forester William J. Lucas.

Desert ecosystem suffers

Burros only part of problem

(Editor's note: HCN invited the American Horse Protection Association, Inc. to react to "America's sacred cow? Donkey dilemma damages public land" printed in last week's paper. Dr. David W. Kitchen, assistant professor in wildlife at Humboldt State University in California, wrote its response, part of which is printed below.)

by Dr. David W. Kitchen

One person's sacred cow is another's plague, but no species (including man) can be allowed to destroy or severely damage an ecosystem. Burros are not the only problem in deserts today, and they are probably not even in the top two or three causes of damage in most areas. In deserts, burros probably have had less overall impact on habitat and wildlife than mining operations, livestock grazing, irrigation projects, and increased human disturbance.

The ecological impact of burros on desert ecosystems is, nevertheless, an important consideration in development of management plans for this species. They influence the abundance and distribution of plants they feed on, other wildlife populations, and they compact soils. These impacts are not unique to burros, but are typical of all large herbivores.

Many biologists call burros an exotic, but this depends on the historical perspective

All of the plans propose increases in timber cutting operations and road building. Four of the plans propose timber sales within roadless areas which were not selected for further wilderness study by the Forest Service in its recent roadless area review. The three original appellants have been joined by two additional organizations, Friends of the Earth and the Wilderness Society.

In Colorado and throughout the Forest Service's Region 2, timber planning has preceded multiple use unit planning at the local level, according to the conservation groups. By planning timber sales within roadless areas, the groups claim that the agency is violating the court order in

Sierra Club v. Butz, which ordered the Forest Service to undertake individual environmental impact statements (EIS's) on actions which might erode the wilderness characteristics of the areas. Since the settlement, the Forest Service has stated that EIS's will be prepared through the unit planning process.

"More importantly," says Ted Tomasi, director of the COSC Wilderness Workshop, "these planners have all included timber within the roadless areas in their total timber inventory. This raises the allowable cut for each forest and insures that some time in the future, timber will have to be harvested in the roadless areas to maintain the sustained yield."

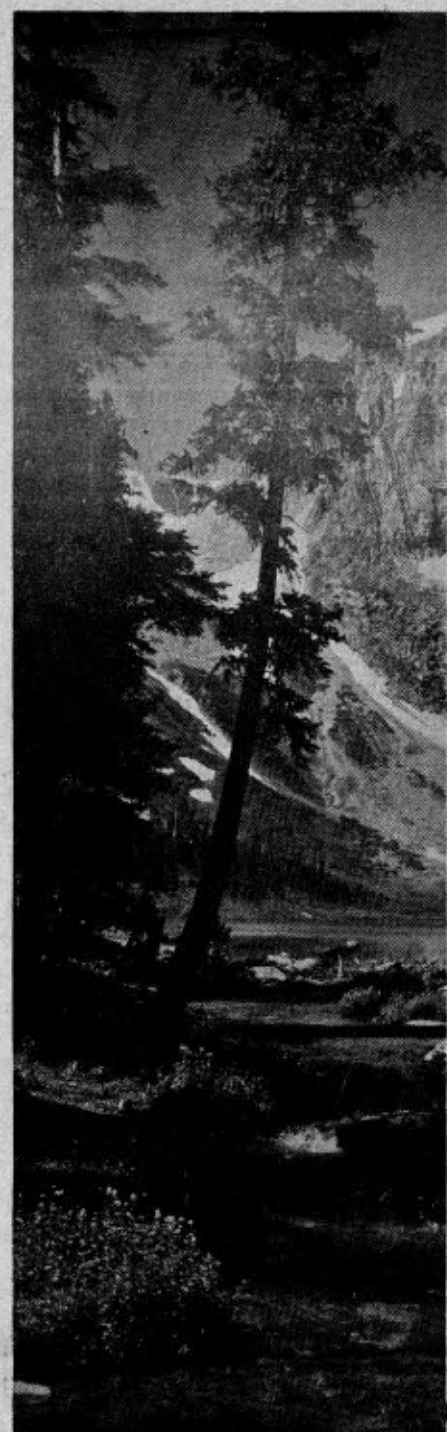
To remove these areas from the timber growing base at a later date will violate the "non-declining yield" policy of the Forest Service. Hence, the conservationists claim, they are in a "catch-22" situation which prejudices all future consideration of wilderness protection for these areas.

The effects of the plans on the roadless areas is not the only issue raised by the appeal, however. Each timber plan is followed by an EIS which the conservationists claim is in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act. According to the complaint, the timber plans "were not drawn up with environmental concerns as an integral part of the planning process. Rather, the plans were devised and EIS's subsequently written to justify the plans and meet a requirement. . . ."

Tomasi stresses that the groups are not against timber harvesting but rather are in favor of adequate multiple use planning which will consider long term resources. "The short term gains for some timber companies involve the harvest of very marginal stands of timber which won't even pay for the road construction. Public subsidies have to pay for that. But we haven't begun to measure the potential long term loss if the remaining wilderness is destroyed," he says.

Tomasi feels that intensive management of a few productive, easily accessible sites would make more sense economically than the practice of building roads and logging the more marginal, less accessible wilderness areas. "But that is an alternative which the EIS's don't even consider," he says.

Three Wyoming forests within Region 2, the Bighorn, Shoshone, and Medicine Bow, have also recently completed timber plans. Like their Colorado counterparts, these



TIMBER FIRST. In forest planning, timber production seems to come first, conservationists complain. Ten groups have filed an appeal on timber management plans in Colorado. Above, a piece of Colorado's forest land.

plans have preceded multiple use unit planning. David W. Griffith, the lawyer representing the conservationists, is investigating the possibility of adding the Wyoming forests to the appeal. In the meantime, he has suggested in a letter accompanying the complaint that the regional forester also reconsider these plans.

one accepts. Fossil evidence shows that an animal similar to the Nubian Wild Ass of Ethiopia evolved in North America and then invaded the Asian Continent. This species of *Equus* was present in North America until about 12,000 years ago. It is, therefore, more correct historically to call the burro a re-introduced genus rather than an exotic.

In desert areas, all species congregate around water holes. Dr. Patty Moehlmann's studies in Death Valley indicated that adverse burro impact on vegetation around springs only extended a mile or two from the water. Her studies revealed that in some areas from which burros were excluded, more damage occurred than in



©Carol Snow

areas where they grazed. This suggests that in some cases damage ascribed to burros may not be due solely to them.

The burro is not a super animal with no known diseases or parasites. Burros have a high reproductive rate under good habitat conditions and when their population is low, but they do not achieve the reproductive rates Dr. Ohmart found in Arizona in all areas. No population of animals can maintain a 25-30% increase every 18 months indefinitely. Foal survival rates will eventually drop as the population reaches the carrying capacity of the area for that species. Damage to habitat at carrying capacity would be severe and could not be tolerated by any responsible land manager.

Burros have had major impacts in some areas of the desert. These have been most clearly documented in Grand Canyon, along the Colorado River, and the Havasu Resource Area in Arizona. However, burros have not caused the near extinction of any wildlife or plant species by themselves. Man's intervention in a variety of ways has been responsible for rare and endangered desert species.

Burros should not be allowed to spread their range and should be removed from areas they have invaded since 1971.

In areas where man has created a problem, as with the desert tortoise, and it can be shown that burros are aggravating the situation, they should be reduced in numbers. But if this is done without controlling human disturbance, it is unlikely that the program will be successful in restoration of desert vegetation or wildlife.

Bill amends burro act

The House Subcommittee on Public Lands is now considering a bill (HR 2935) to amend the 1971 Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act. The bill would authorize the Agriculture and Interior Departments to use aircraft and motorized vehicles to provide for management.

The bill also authorizes the federal government to sell or donate excess burros and horses to individuals or organizations, without restrictions. Presently, the government retains title.

Opponents of the bill say that when the government loses title, it makes it easier for the pet food industry to get the animals and gain windfall profits. They say use of aircraft and other mechanized vehicles is inhumane.

Proponents of the bill say it is needed to properly manage wild horses and burros in harmony with other wildlife and land uses. They say the use of aircraft is necessary to reach horse and burro habitat without using them to chase the animals. (See HCN, 1-30-76, page 1)

Bulletin Board

NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY

A conference on "Environmental Aspects of Non-Conventional Energy Resources" sponsored by the American Nuclear Society will be in Denver Feb. 29-March 3. Resources to be considered are: accelerated photosynthesis, advanced fission and fusion, coal conversion, energy storage, geothermal, oil shale or sands, solar, thermal or pressure gradient, and waste conversion. The meetings will be at the Brown Palace Hotel. For more information contact Douglas C. Hunt, Nuclear Safety Department, Rockwell International, P.O. Box 464, Golden, Colo. 80401.

RAFTERS MEET IN DENVER

Management of white water rafting in Dinosaur National Monument will be discussed at a public meeting in Denver Feb. 17. Since 1972, 17,000 people per year,

with permits divided between public and private groups, have been allowed to float the Green and Yampa Rivers in Dinosaur. At the National Park Service meeting, both the level of use and the permit system will be discussed. A meeting will be at the Foothills Ramada, Inn, West Sixth Ave. and Sims St. at 7:30 p.m.

MONTANA FORESTS ASSESSED

"A Descriptive Analysis of Montana Forest Resources" is available from the Intermountain Forest and Range Experiment Station, U.S. Forest Service, 507 25th St., Ogden, Utah 84401. One-fourth of the state is forested. The report's principal conclusions are that 1) Montana no longer has a large surplus of timber awaiting a market and that 2) there is sharp competition for currently available wood supplies.

Encouraging news: we are not broke

As we look over the past six months at High Country News:

- 1) We have more new readers than ever.
- 2) More readers are renewing than ever.
- 3) We seem to be increasing our income just about as fast as the postal service and the printer are raising our costs.

4) For a change, therefore, we are not completely broke.

More readers than ever means a total of 3,460 subscribers. In addition, 800 other people have a chance to buy HCN on newsstands around the region.

Our renewal rate during the past six months has been 66%. That's up four per cent from our last fiscal year, which was up four per cent from the year before that. In short, a good sign.

You may have wondered why we went into the greeting card, book, and art work business around Christmastime. Since we are newspaper-makers, not entrepreneurs, and there are only five of us who work full time, we weren't sure ourselves. The step seemed risky and bothersome, but offered a chance of bringing in needed money.

Your enthusiasm for the products and generous commissions offered to us by the vendors made it work. We cleared \$800 on the sales. Other advertising brought in \$2,000 over the past six months and our

mainstay, \$10 subscription checks, added up to almost \$15,000 from July through December.

Unfortunately we haven't figured out how to make newsstands pay yet, but we've decided we can afford to take a small loss in that department (only \$20 so far) in order to reach more people. With contributions, our income is pushed up to about \$20,000 over the last six months — an all time high for us.

We spent about \$19,500 over the same period and that, of course, is an all-time high, too. Our biggest additional expense is a new salary to support our able man in the advertising department — August Dailer. We've had him on the payroll since mid-October, and we know we need him. But we must keep him in the agonizing status of temporary help, until we can tell if our recent prosperity is solid. August has also helped us with carpentry, photography, auto repair, ice skating, bread baking, ethics, floor waxing, and a dance called the West Virginia clog, so you can see we're not just getting an ordinary ad man for our \$300 a month.

The success of our research fund is the best news of all. It now holds about \$3,000 to be used to dig into what we feel are the most interesting, important, and badly neglected stories in the Rocky Mountain region. We'll be able to hire a few trusted reporters part-time to investigate problems we've known about but have never been able to reach. We'll be able to amplify our own research with more phone calls and a small amount of travel money. In short, that \$3,000 will be the beginning of an expansion of our investigative capacities.

That's our dream in a nutshell: to build a corps of skilled reporters around the region, so that news that makes a difference to the people and the land of the Rockies won't slip by us — or you. The \$3,000 won't achieve that goal, of course. But for the first time, our finances will allow us to move in that direction.

We're eager to be as frugal as possible in other ways to allow for this increased investigative capacity. Salaries are still \$300 a month. We have paid no expense money for travel yet. We continue to buy gas out of our pockets and to camp or stay with kind friends and readers on reporting journeys.

We are energized by the opportunity to do work which is needed and appreciated. We are inspired about how we may be able to improve the paper in the future.

If you share our excitement, here's how you can help.

1. Donate whatever you can afford to the research fund (Wyoming Environmental Institute, Box 2497, Jackson, Wyo. 83001). In the end it will bring you a better paper. All contributions to the fund are tax deductible. Checks should be made out to "Wyoming Environmental Institute — HCN Research Fund."

2. Let us know about bright writers who understand environmental issues; who have a sense of humor, fairness, and integrity; and who would like to devote part of their time to researching and writing for High Country News. Now we offer a cent and a half per published word. If our income increases, so will the pay.

3. Send us ideas for stories. What's happening to the land in your area that other concerned people in the region could learn from? What would you like to learn about in surrounding states?

4. Find us a newsstand. It may not make us much money, but it might help us reach

new friends. Write to August Dailer for promotional materials.

5. Better yet, find us an advertiser. We'll train you by mail to be our agent, and you can earn 15% of the fees listed on our rate card. Again, write August for details.

6. We still have a generous supply of HCN 48-page special editions (\$1.50) and moose or eagle greeting cards (\$2 for a bundle of 10) available. When you want to give a friend a small gift, consider these

items among the possibilities.

7. If you think a group you belong to would enjoy the paper, arrange to send us their mailing list. We'll send a sample copy to each member and ask them to subscribe. Or ask us to send you enough sample copies to pass out at a meeting.

Enough scheming. We're healthy and happy here and engulfed in sun and a foot of new-fallen snow. We send our best wishes to all of you.

"Friends of High Country News" is our way of saying thanks to people who have given us money over and above their regular subscription fee during the past six months. We have also included the names

of donors to the High Country News Research Fund. All these people have been good to us, and we think they deserve recognition.

—Ed.

Friends of HCN

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| Carolyn Alderson
Birney, Mont. | Charlotte Corkran
Portland, Ore. | Rusty Muller
Berthoud, Colo. |
| Mr & Mrs Emil H. Jebe
Ann Arbor, Mich. | Mr & Mrs H. J. Wunderlich
St. Maries, Ida. | David Stonington
Seattle, Wash. |
| Mr & Mrs Howard Smith
Pinedale, Wyo. | Elmer Winters
Casper, Wyo. | Tony & Sharon Weber
Wheatland, Wyo. |
| Mr & Mrs Robert Wallick
Big Horn, Wyo. | Thomas R. Hoyt
Boulder, Colo. | Laurence R. Eno
New York, N.Y. |
| George N. Butler
Newcastle, Wyo. | Les Pengelly
Missoula, Mont. | Wynn Rainbolt
Hamilton, Mont. |
| Finis Mitchell
Rock Springs, Wyo. | Mr & Mrs Harry Barker
Moose, Wyo. | Joseph L. Tremblay
Cranston, R.I. |
| Thomas Dustin
Huntertown, Ind. | Bill Bullard
Carbondale, Colo. | Henry Caulfield
Ft. Collins, Colo. |
| Russell Boulding
Orleans, Ind. | Bob Flory
Casper, Wyo. | Ron Erskine
Urbana, Ill. |
| AERO
Billings, Mont. | Jennie McDonald
Laramie, Wyo. | John Turkal
Menomonee Falls, Wisc. |
| David T. Torgerson
Marathon, Wisc. | Caroline W. Duell
Charleston, S.C. | Donald Tobkin
Detroit Lakes, Minn. |
| Fred Schneider
Marysville, Ohio | Mary Sexton
Great Falls, Mont. | Stuart G. Gordon
Denver, Colo. |
| J. C. Briggs
Raton, N.M. | Robert K. Landis
Billings, Mont. | Kenneth D. Seyffert
Amarillo, Texas |
| Catherine J. Stapp
Gooding, Ida. | Charles Catlin
Boulder, Colo. | Jake & Nancy Kittle
Gaviota, Calif. |
| Thomas C. Savage
So. St. Paul, Minn. | R. J. Daniel
Colorado Springs, Colo. | Mr & Mrs W. H. Steele
Spangle, Wash. |
| W. O. Nice
Newport Beach, Calif. | Bernard H. Gundlach
Florissant, Colo. | William Driscoll
Wayzata, Minn. |
| Pauline Utter
Casper, Wyo. | Glen Ghore
Rapid City, S.D. | Gerald K. Walizer
West Redding, Conn. |
| Larry D. VanDusen
Princeton, N.J. | Jim Clark
Laramie, Wyo. | Gerald I. Freeman
San Jose, Calif. |
| C. C. Long
Boulder, Colo. | John A. Davidson, Jr.
Gaithersburg, Md. | Kent Gill
Davis, Calif. |
| Mr & Mrs Andrew Fuller
Wayzata, Minn. | Fran Mitchell
Denver, Colo. | Beverly Schultz
Riverton, Wyo. |
| Kenneth J. Morgan
Kemmerer, Wyo. | John F. North
Helena, Mont. | Robert L. Darnell
Alamosa, Colo. |
| Mr & Mrs Ken Richardson
Lander, Wyo. | Steven J. Bissell
Golden, Colo. | Louise Murie
Moose, Wyo. |
| Jessie S. Wilber
Bozeman, Mont. | Pete Wyman
Spokane, Wash. | Richard Ward
Ft. Collins, Colo. |
| Robert Lohse
Cupertino, Calif. | Bob Child
Snowmass, Colo. | David & Mary Ellen Olson
Halfway, Ore. |
| Wayne Marshall Paxton
Whittington, Ill. | Gary Moseman
Missoula, Mont. | Bob Atkins
Champaign, Ill. |
| Harris Heller
Laramie, Wyo. | Uinta Chapter Sierra Club
Salt Lake City, Utah | Jerry Hannifin
Washington, D.C. |
| Luna Leopold
Berkeley, Calif. | Ros Grayson
San Jose, Calif. | Jim & Lynne Bama
Wapiti, Wyo. |
| Peter Houlihan
Riverton, Wyo. | Penn Holsapple
Dover Plains, N.Y. | Charles & Dorothy Vaile
Corona, Calif. |
| Mrs Charles J. Alikonis
Marshall, Ill. | Jack Pugh
Green River, Wyo. | Mary Inman
Wilson, Wyo. |
| Alan Gallagher
Boulder, Colo. | Robert C. Hughes
Trenton, N.J. | Robert Redford
Provo, Utah |
| Wilder F. Bellamy
Jackson, Wyo. | L. A. Bibler
Kalispell, Mont. | Arthur D. Tobkin
Maplewood, Minn. |
| Larry Sourbeer
Boulder, Colo. | Dan L. Plank
Boulder, Colo. | Kevin A. Dahl
Scottsdale, Ariz. |
| Mr & Mrs Charles Beck
Ojai, Calif. | Bruce Anderson
Billings, Mont. | Mrs. Dorothy Durham
Carmel Valley, Calif. |
| Roxanne Sayre
New York, N.Y. | Lloyd & Helen Wampler
Casper, Wyo. | W. R. Morgan
Hamilton, Mont. |
| Sheila Arnold
Laramie, Wyo. | Richard McCutchen
Columbus, Ohio | David Ernst
Rocky Ford, Colo. |
| Donn Driscoll
Casper, Wyo. | Jerry Plunkett
Butte, Mont. | Ruth C. Douglas
St. Helena, Calif. |
| Glen F. Cole
Yellowstone Park, Wyo. | Mr & Mrs Spencer Amend
Tigard, Ore. | Loren & Gail O'Haver
Sundance, Wyo. |
| Mr & Mrs John O'Neale
Yellowstone Park, Wyo. | Edward Foss
Condon, Mont. | Edward Abbey
Wolf Hole, Ariz. |

HIGH PRAISE FOR YOUR HELP

High praise must go to the writers, photographers, and artists who have donated their work over the past six months. Our book reviewer, Arizona poet Peter Wild, has been the most productive and provocative. (Will you ever stop writing love-hate letters about his review of *Monkey Wrench Gang*?) Sarah Doll, a musician from Lander, is responsible for most of the fine layout and writing in our recent centerspreads.

Jeff Clack, our design consultant, continues relentlessly to try to make graphics artists of the entire staff. He's working 16 hours a day at two jobs in Texas, but still manages to send us cassette tapes full of ideas.

Myra Connell, a retired librarian in Lander, is indexing High Country News. Here at the office, we've already made good use of her work. We hope to begin publishing her index soon so that you can dig out information from back issues, too.

And there are others. To mention a few volunteers:

Writers — John Bartlit, Mike Weber, Bart Koehler, Ann L. Schimpf, Greg Capito, Ernest Linford, Charles Nations, Kevin Markey, Chuck Williams, Lee Nellis.

Photographers — Dave Sumner, Charles W. Smith, Dick Randall, Lynne Bama, Ann and Myron Sutton. Plus other writers and photographers who have loaned us their skill for the small pittance we can pay.

Artists — Carol Snow, Bob Lewis, Holly Merrifield, Paul Breeden and his agent, The Singing Sparrow.

Diligent information clippers — Bill Frye, Dorothy Nice, Dave Olson, Carl Long, Howard Dellard, Sally Forbes, R. A. Atkins.

Thanks should also go to the individuals and organizations who sent us lists of people to send a sample paper to. And thanks to Central Bank and Trust and the Wyoming State Journal for their help.

8-High Country News — Feb. 13, 1976

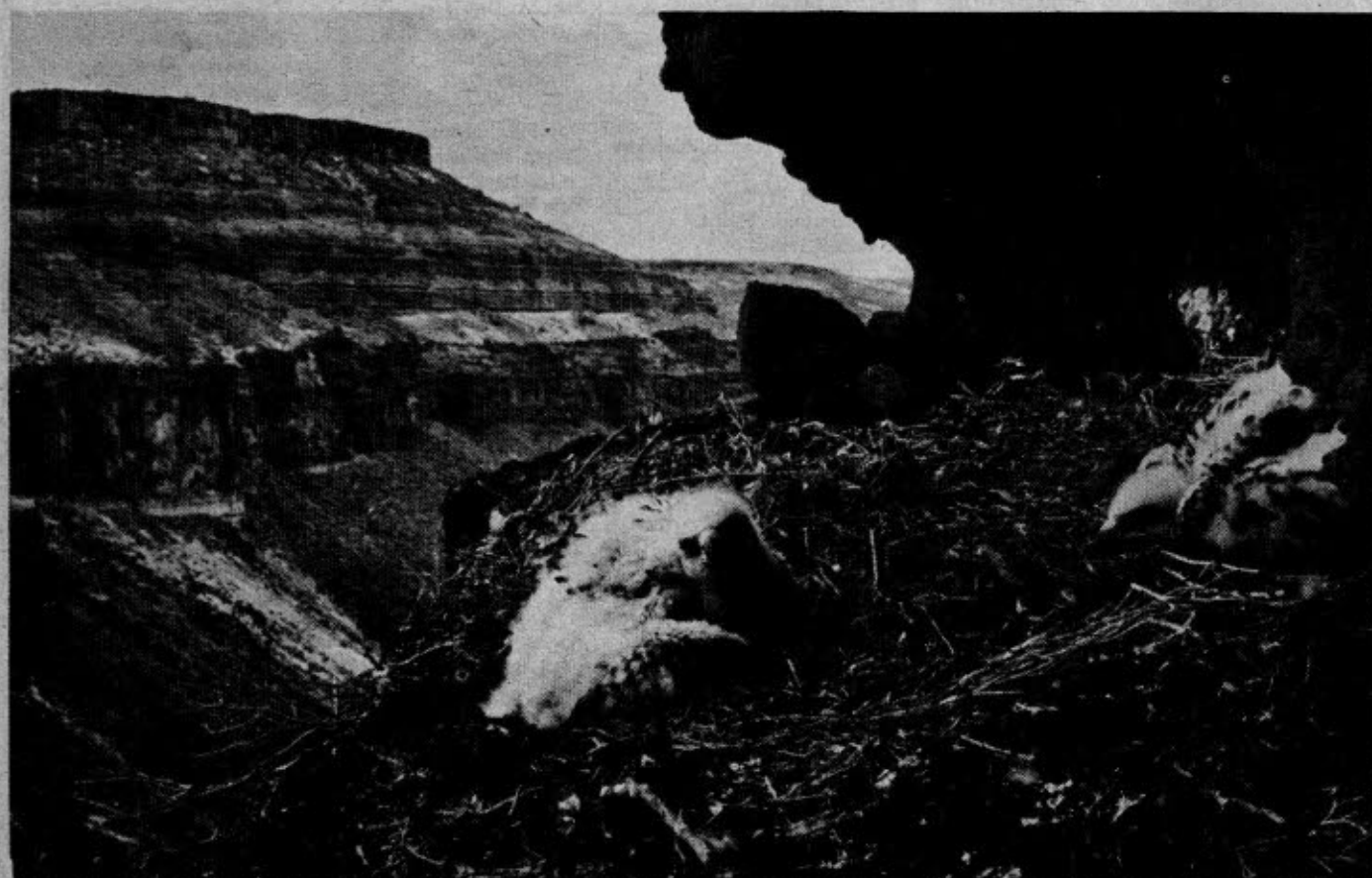


Photo by Michael N. Kochert and courtesy of BLM

He clasps the crag with hooked hands:
Close to the sun in lonely lands.
Ringed with the azure world, he stands.

The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls
He watches from his mountain walls,
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

From "The Eagle" by Alfred Lord Tennyson 1809-92



YOUNG EAGLES. Researchers place remote control movie cameras in raptor nests to determine what the birds are eating. Photo by Michael N. Kochert and courtesy of BLM.

Snake River Birds

Studies tell how

by Bruce Hamilton

The Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area was established in 1971 by the Secretary of the Interior to protect eagles, hawks, falcons, owls, ospreys, and vultures — birds that are collectively known as raptors. The natural area, located 35 miles south of Boise, Idaho, is home to the greatest known concentration of breeding raptors in the world.

The natural area encompasses 31,000 acres of land along 33 miles of rugged volcanic river canyon. The cliffs, which rise more than 500 feet above the river, provide excellent protected nesting sites.

Fourteen different species of raptors have been sighted in the natural area. Golden eagles and prairie falcons are the most abundant. Other raptors in the area include peregrine falcons, bald eagles, burrowing owls, ospreys, ferruginous hawks, great horned owls, red-tailed hawks, marsh hawks, American kestrels (sparrow hawks), and American rough-legged hawks.

The Bureau of Land Management, the federal agency which administers the natural area, is in the process of studying adjacent lands to determine how much

land is needed for what future expansion is made. The study area, which is 30 miles long and 30 miles wide, stretches from the mile wide buffalo canyon.

BLM has tested that would cover the study area. "The BLM raptor biologist" is the competition for an area which development is a page story for

BLM is also the study area for the location and development of

A dam and falls—Guffey Falls—Bureau of Reclamation would inundate and could include nesting raptors is exempt from according to

In 1972 res in the study ecological req



PREY SPECIES. Young Townsend's ground squirrels are weighed and tagged by researchers. This rodent is 75% of the prairie falcon's diet. Photo by W. E. Melquist and courtesy of BLM.



ACCIPITER

COLOR CODED. Birds of Prey Natural study area and Michael N. Kochert

Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area Studies tell how to protect raptors

Hamilton

of Prey Natural
1971 f. the Sec-
to prot. eagles,
reys, and vultures
ely known as rap-
located 35 miles
is home to the
ation of breeding

ompasses 31,000
les of rugged vol-
cliffs, which rise
the river, provide
ng sites.

pecies of raptors
natural area. Gol-
cons are the most
s in the area in-
bald eagles, bur-
ruginous hawks,
d-tailed hawks,
kestrels (sparrow
n rough-legged

Management, the
administers the
ocess of studying
mine how much

land is needed to protect the raptors and what future expansion proposals should be made. The study area covers 755 square miles and includes the natural area, a 30-mile stretch of river canyon just upstream from the natural area, and a five-mile wide buffer zone on either side of the canyon.

BLM has temporarily banned activities that would conflict with raptors in the study area. "The key conflict," according to BLM raptor biologist Michael N. Kochert, "is the competition between man and bird for an area highly suited for agricultural development and bird habitat (see front page story for more details)."

BLM is also being pressured to open up the study area for geothermal energy exploration and development.

A dam and reservoir known as Swan Falls-Guffey has been proposed by the Bureau of Reclamation and the state which would inundate part of the natural area and could increase human disturbance of nesting raptors. Swan Falls-Guffey plans is exempt from the protective withdrawal, according to BLM.

In 1972 research was initiated by BLM in the study area to determine the birds' ecological requirements and potential con-

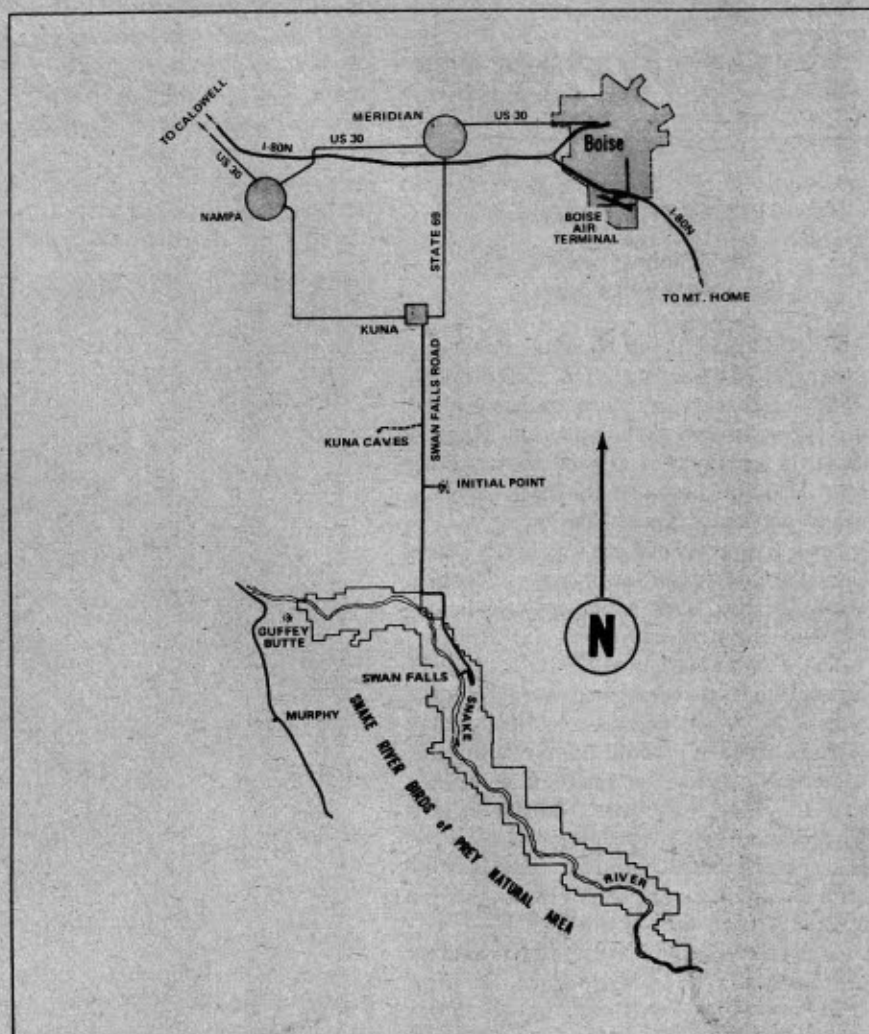
flicts with development proposals. "Before we make management decisions we need to get the results of the study," says natural area manager Douglas Smithey. The study will be completed in 1980.

Kochert says BLM has contracted with researchers from several universities as well as relying on agency employees. "We have 18 researchers studying everything from snakes to eagles," he says.

One researcher is studying livestock grazing in the buffer zone and how it modifies the raptors' environment. Preliminary studies show that grazing may benefit the rare prairie falcon. "Prairie falcons hunt on low dives and close clipped grass helps," explains Smithey.

On the other hand, row crop agriculture appears detrimental to prairie falcons and other raptors. The falcons depend on Townsend's ground squirrels for food, but the rodents are eliminated when the natural desert is irrigated and farmed. BLM is considering purchasing private in-holdings and rejecting future agricultural conversion proposals in the natural area to protect the birds' habitat.

BLM has prepared a free color brochure on the natural area and its raptors which is available by writing: Manager, Birds of Prey Natural Area, Boise District Office, Bureau of Land Management, 230 Collins Road, Boise, Idaho 83702. Requests for group tours of the area or additional information should also be sent to the manager.



Young
squirrels
ed by re-
is 75% of
et. Photo
courtesy



HARRIER



COLOR CODED. A young eagle is fitted with vinyl wing markers by researchers in the Birds of Prey Natural Area. The birds are marked to aid in their identification within the study area and to provide data on migration routes and wintering areas. Photo by Michael N. Kochert and courtesy of BLM.



BUGGED BIRD. A radio transmitter is attached to the back of a prairie falcon to help determine where the bird hunts during the day. One breeding falcon had a primary range of 37 square miles and a total range of 55 square miles. Photo by Tom Dunstan and courtesy of BLM.

10-High Country News — Feb. 13, 1976

Reckoning from Washington

TAXING PARKS

by Michael Sellett
guest columnist

When Grand Teton National Park was expanded 25 years ago, Sen. Cliff Hansen (R-Wyo.), then a county commissioner, led the opposition to park expansion. Hansen and his supporters argued that taking some 200,000 acres off the local tax rolls would bankrupt Teton County.

Now, a quarter of a century later, Teton County Commissioners are concerned about further park expansion, again because of lost property taxes.

The U.S. House is studying a piece of legislation that seems to answer all of their questions. A bill proposed by Rep. James Weaver (D-Ore.) would authorize annual in-lieu-of-tax payments to counties for federal lands within their boundaries. Intended to offset the property tax revenue lost from federal holdings, the measure calls for paying counties 75 cents per acre of federal land within the county.

At present the bill includes lands held by the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. But staff aides on the subcommittee studying the legislation say that it appears certain that National Park Service lands will be included in the final proposal.

In addition, Rep. Teno Roncalio (D-Wyo.) is going to propose an amendment that would double the payment for wilderness areas to encourage setting aside more land for that purpose. If Roncalio's amendment were accepted and park lands were also included in the bill, Teton County would realize more than \$2 million annually in federal payments.

Although the bill would represent a windfall for park-rich Teton County, its overall implications for the state of Wyoming could be less positive, according to Sen. Cliff Hansen. By accepting the 75 cents per acre formula, Hansen says, the state would be forfeiting current income from mineral royalties, grazing fees, and timber sales.

With slightly over 30 million acres of federal land in the state, Wyoming would receive \$22.5 million under the bills before both the House and Senate. Under the present system, Hansen said, the state received \$27.8 million last year in mineral royalties and forest receipts.

Furthermore, amendments to the mineral leasing act which increase the amount of royalties returned to the state would have given the state \$44.3 million last year, if they had been in effect. These amendments have already passed the House and Senate and appear to have a good chance of approval by the President.

Ideally, Congress would allow individual counties to decide whether they want to accept the 75 cents per acre or continue to accept the revenues from mineral, grazing and timber development. In reality, the prospects of such an agreement appear dim, according to Hansen.

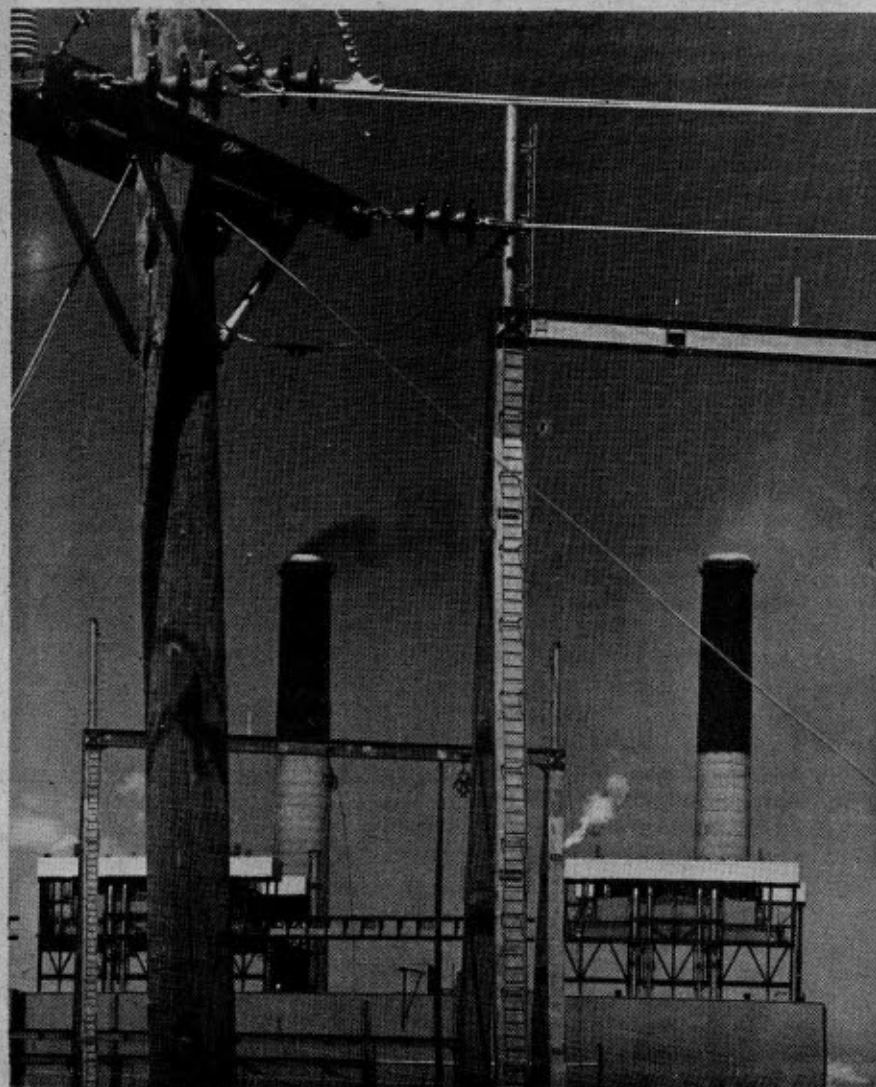
Your opinion valued.

We do value your opinion. The January 30th issue of HCN contains a reader survey. To guide us along, why not fill it out and send it to us?

Don't forget!

TVA HEARING SOON. The Senate Public Works Committee will be holding hearings Feb. 17-18 on the nomination of James Hooper as a director of the three man Tennessee Valley Authority board. Hooper is opposed by the United Mine Workers, the Friends of the Earth, the Sierra Club, the Environmental Policy Center, and several Senators and Representatives because of his ethically questionable business back-

ground and his lack of knowledge of energy questions. A staff report on his business dealings is being kept quiet by Sen. Howard Baker (R-Tenn.). Hooper's vote would be crucial on the board since one of the other two directors is cautious about TVA's massive expansion into nuclear energy production. Western Senators on the committee are Mike Gravel (D-Alaska) and Gary Hart (D-Colo.).



Jim Bridger power plant in Wyoming. Photo by Jack McLellan.

Sulfur dioxide control battle rages

Despite an agreement between Pacific Power and Light Co. and the state, the battle over sulfur dioxide control equipment still appears to be raging in Wyoming.

State officials heralded the January agreement as a sign of the utility's commitment to put sulfur dioxide clean-up equipment on all four units of the Jim Bridger coal-fired power plant near Rock Springs, Wyo.

Bob Moench, division manager for PP&L in Wyoming, says the clean-up technology is not ready, however. "Blue sky technology," he calls it. His company is prepared to return to the courts to try to void the regulations if the state asks them to install sulfur equipment before they are ready.

On the first three units, PP&L has agreed to install the equipment, but they haven't said when. On unit four, PP&L has said it will install the clean-up equipment before the unit goes into operation, but has warned the state that it may ask for a variance.

Despite these gaps in the agreement, state attorney Marilyn Kite says PP&L's "willingness to comply is a big step."

"Their attitude is 100% different than when they were in the last legislative session (trying to overturn the state regs)," Kite says. Nevertheless, PP&L has made sure that signing the agreement will not weaken its position in a court suit, Kite admits.

PP&L was the first utility willing to begin negotiations with the state about the strict sulfur dioxide regulations, which took effect a year ago. A number of other

utilities have also found themselves at odds with the state over sulfur emissions — Idaho Power Co., Utah Power and Light Co., and Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. Each of these companies, including PP&L, has tried to void the state regulations through a court review, but court hearings have been indefinitely postponed while out-of-court settlements are tried.

In its court petition, PP&L called the state's rules "arbitrary, capricious, and characterized by an abuse of discretion." The rule-making body, the Environmental Quality Council, has not shown that the power plants will cause air pollution as defined in the Wyoming Environmental Quality Act, PP&L claims.

While the agreement signed in January may have created the impression that PP&L has lost interest in its lawsuit, actually the company has not — for at least two reasons.

On the first three units, while PP&L has said it will install scrubbers, no compliance schedule has been agreed upon.

On unit four, the company has agreed to have equipment ready when the plant goes into operation, probably in December of 1979. But PP&L has warned that it may request a variance, to allow the plant to go into operation if the sulfur equipment is not ready by that date.

If the state doesn't satisfy PP&L on both the compliance schedule and the variance, PP&L will presumably revive their lawsuit, already filed in state district court.

PP&L attorney Richard Bach in Port-

INSIDERS QUIT OVER NUCLEAR RISKS. Three General Electric Co. engineers who designed and built nuclear reactors have quit their jobs to work as volunteers against nuclear power. "Nuclear generation is a technological monster that threatens all future generations," they said. In their estimation, nuclear power plants cannot be made safe enough to justify the consequences of the risks involved. All three gave up \$30,000 to \$40,000 jobs to volunteer their services to Project Survival, a Palo Alto, Calif., environmental organization which supports the nuclear moratorium initiative to be on the ballot in June.



**The HCN
Hot Line**

energy news from across the country

EASTERN COAL CHALLENGE. A \$45 million coal dock being built on Lake Superior "will make Western coal available for the first time to Michigan generating plants and will challenge Appalachian coal's dominance throughout the Midwest," according to the *Detroit Free Press*, as quoted in *The Onlooker*. The dock is being built by Detroit Edison Co. and will be used for moving coal from Ducker, Mont., and perhaps from North Dakota. Edison proposes to ship coal by rail to the Lake Superior port and then move it by barges to Detroit.

WIND POWERED HUTS. The Appalachian Mountain Club is investigating the feasibility of powering its mountain huts with windmills. Presently, huts in the White Mountains of New Hampshire are powered with propane which is either packed in or flown in by helicopter.

land, Ore., says his company will drop the suit only "when the company obtains the relief it needs." The standard set by the state for existing plants "pushes the limits of the technology right to the pin," says Bach. "There has never been a scrubber designed to meet that strict a standard." Other scrubbers in operation have been on smaller units, using different types of coal, he explains.

Other challenges to the regulations may be ahead. "If we don't get a strong commitment from UP&L (Utah Power and Light Co.) we will have to go to court soon," Kite says. UP&L has not responded to the state's offers to negotiate a compliance schedule for the company's Naughton coal-fired power plant near Kemmerer, Wyo.

State officials have been more successful negotiating with the utilities behind the proposed Laramie River plant near Wheatland, Wyo. There the state has promised to grant a variance from the sulfur dioxide regulations — if the control equipment purchased by the operator doesn't work. With that assurance, Basin Electric Co., one of the utilities, dropped its application for a 10-year variance from the regulations. In addition, another partner in the Wheatland project, Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, agreed to drop mention of the Wheatland plant from its petition to have the regulations reviewed in state district court. Like PP&L, it has not dropped its legal threat to the state's rules altogether, however.



GILLETTE TO DOUGLAS SPUR APPROVED

The federal government has taken another important step toward development of Western coal by approving construction of a new rail line designed to haul coal out of the rich Powder River Basin fields to existing rail lines at Gillette or Douglas, Wyo. The 115-mile line between the two cities was sought by the Burlington Northern and the Chicago and Northwestern Railroads. The project was approved by the Interstate Commerce Commission at the end of January. It had been at a standstill until the Supreme Court lifted an injunction on activities in the Eastern Powder River Basin earlier last month.

Long-range plans call for hauling coal at a rate of 48 unit trains per day, each with about 110 cars.

The ICC also ruled that the railroads must provide "suitable and safe" crossings for property owners in the area. This seems to satisfy a group of 38 landowners who had filed petitions with the ICC protesting an environmental impact statement which showed that the railroads had definite plans for only two underpasses.

Construction on the rail spur could begin this year, according to a project engineer. It is the largest railway project in the U.S. since 1931.



Lamm happy, Judge enraged

Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm said the net effect of a resumption of federal coal leasing will be beneficial for his state. Montana Gov. Tom Judge called the end to the four-year federal moratorium "unbelievable" and "very ill timed."

While Lamm commended Interior Secretary Thomas Kleppe for the "open manner in which the secretary has allowed the states to examine and work with proposed federal reclamation regulations," Judge had harsher words. "We had hoped that uniform federal regulations would be established before the moratorium was lifted," said Judge; "...remember that President Ford has twice vetoed federal strip mining laws."

Lamm said he thought the states scored a "major breakthrough" when Kleppe pledged to apply state reclamation laws on federal land if they were more stringent than federal standards. Judge reserved praise of this decision, stating that there are still problems for Montana in the absence of uniform nationwide standards. For instance, Judge said coal developers can threaten to jump to other states if one state's standards are not relaxed.

"It puts us in a bad position," Judge said. Lamm said he would "prefer" to have seen federal reclamation and leasing laws enacted before the leasing moratorium was lifted.

Wyoming Gov. Ed Herschler said he was still "very much concerned" about federal preemption of Wyoming's land reclamation law. He said the new policy leaves to the discretion of the Secretary of Interior the exact nature of state involvement in leasing decisions.

The Colorado Open Space Council took issue with Lamm's optimism on the effect of the leasing resumption. COSC president Mary Taylor said, "It is irresponsible -- we're still without meaningful state strip mining controls in Colorado, and the Department of Interior has never demonstrated the need for more coal leasing..."

"Sixteen billion tons of federal coal are under lease now yet only 10% of the leaseholders mined coal last year, producing two per cent of the national coal production," she said.

"The fact that Kleppe has apparently agreed that more stringent state laws will apply to federal lands may help Montana, but won't help Colorado at all," said Taylor, "...we have a law as bad or worse than the regulations themselves."

BLM flooded by coal applications

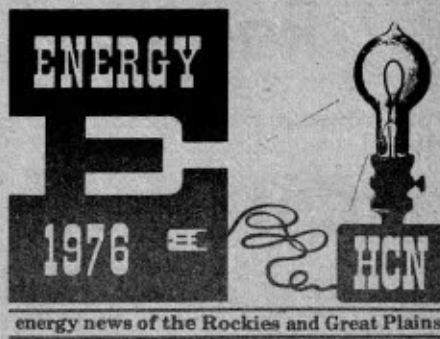
While the stage is being set by the Interior Department for renewed coal leasing on federal lands, the Bureau of Land Management is wondering how it will handle the volume of preference right lease applications that have been awarded in the West, according to *Coal Week*.

Under the old leasing regulations, the applications were awarded to companies which discovered previously unknown coal reserves. These preference right applications have not been processed since 1973, due to the Interior Department's coal leasing moratorium. Secretary of Interior Thomas Kleppe lifted that moratorium last month. Under the new leasing regulations, there are no preference rights to companies which discover reserves. All leasing will be competitive.

Wyoming has more preference right lease applications than any other state -- 72. Fifty-one of these are in the Powder River Basin.

In northwestern Colorado, 13 applications cover 21,983 acres and 1,075 million tons of reserves.

In Utah, Utah Power and Light Co. has seven applications, Amax Coal has 12, and Mountain States Resources has five.



PSC-SHAPES DEVELOPMENT. In North Dakota, utilities seeking water from the state must first obtain a certificate of site compatibility from the North Dakota Public Service Commission. This new procedure, instituted by the N.D. Water Conservation Commission, makes the PSC and not the water commission the lead agency in energy development matters in North Dakota. Mike Jacobs, editor and publisher of a North Dakota newspaper called *The Onlooker*, says the water commission "acted to remove themselves from the front lines" of energy development controversies.

WALL STREET INTEREST. The office of the Northern Great Plains Resource Program (NGPRP) is receiving requests from Wall Street brokers for copies of the report recently released on coal development in the region. The brokers explained they're trying to decide whether to invest in draglines or in offshore oil, according to John VanDerwalker, NGPRP project manager, in a speech in Casper, Wyo.

NO MORE NUKES, SAYS COSC. The Colorado Open Space Council says it will oppose "unconditionally" any proposals for nuclear power plants in the state. The council is also against new nuclear fuel processing and nuclear weapons facilities, and the shipment of nuclear materials through Colorado. In a formal policy statement on nuclear fission, the council said it "feels grave concern over" accidental releases of radioactivity from nuclear activities, possible diversion of radioactive material for terrorist uses, and toxic waste storage problems. COSC is a coalition of more than 40 state environmental and citizen groups.

WATER PLANS FOR UTAH SHALE. The Ute Indians have expressed interest in owning 50% of a dam on the White River in Utah that would supply water for the White River Shale Project, according to a manager for the project quoted in the *Deseret News*. The Indians would be willing to pay a proportionate share of construction costs. The oil shale developers would purchase the water from the tribe and from conservancy districts. The proposed oil shale plant would require between 2,000 and 3,000 acre-feet of water per year and would be completed within about three years.

ARIZONA NUKE OPPOSED. Arizona citizen groups are opposing a three reactor nuclear power plant west of Phoenix. The Arizona Clean Energy Coalition is arguing against it at construction permit hearings in December and January. In addition, Arizonans for Safe Energy is circulating a petition to strengthen state regulation of nuclear power. Similar nuclear regulation initiative petitions are being circulated in other states in the region.



Feb. 13, 1976 — High Country News-11

RIVER COMPACT CHALLENGED.

Following a successful district court battle against the Montana Department of Natural Resources, Intake Water Co. is planning action against the Yellowstone River Compact Commission. Intake, a subsidiary of Tenneco, wants water from the Yellowstone River for coal gas projects using a lignite field along the Montana-North Dakota border, according to *Coal Week*. Signed by Montana, Wyoming, and North Dakota, the compact prevents diversion of water to coal fields outside the basin without the approval of all three states. The company is challenging the constitutionality of the unanimous consent provision in the river compact. The company's battle with the state in district court was over the validity of a water claim for Yellowstone River water which was filed just prior to a state moratorium on water.

STOP THAT EIS! Ten environmental organizations are trying to stop work on a final environmental impact statement (EIS) on an oil shale project in northwestern Colorado. The project, planned by Colony Development Operation, has been indefinitely suspended. The groups have asked the Secretary of Interior to halt action on the impact statement until "there is an active project with a proposed time schedule." Hollis Dole, president of Colony, criticized the groups for "attempting to terminate prematurely the most thorough (environmental impact) analysis undertaken to date." The groups argue that Colony's impacts might change when viewed in combination with other shale plants which may go ahead in the area, rendering an EIS based on current conditions useless.

SITE IDEAL FOR SOLAR. The first three residences in a new development in southwest Colorado all will use solar energy heating and cooling systems, according to the *Ouray County Plaindealer*. The location has been rated excellent by the National Science Foundation for available sunshine and clarity of atmosphere necessary for efficient use of solar radiation. The solar energy systems are being engineered for the Loghill Village development by Solar Energy Corp. of Pueblo, Colo.

CROW TRIBE REFILES SUIT. The Crow Tribal Council has refiled its lawsuit to cancel existing coal prospecting permits and mining leases in federal district court in Billings. The original lawsuit was dismissed on a technicality. The suit charges that the permits and leases do not comply with the Code of Federal Regulations, that the Interior Department and the Bureau of Indian Affairs did not exercise their trust responsibility, and that the leases and permits do not comply with the National Environmental Policy Act.

WASTE WATERS COULD CARRY COAL. Sewage effluent could help send coal from Wyoming to Arkansas, says Energy Transportation Systems Inc. The firm, which is planning a coal slurry pipeline connecting the two states, has offered to buy effluent at about \$12 an acre-foot from the Wyoming cities of Torrington, Gillette, and Casper. The wastewater receives secondary treatment by the cities and ETSI would treat it further with oxygen before mixing it with coal. An ETSI spokesman said the firm wanted to supplement underground reserves which they have permission to tap in the Madison Formation. He said that Rep. Tom Bonior (D-Wyo.) has promised to withdraw his opposition to the pipeline if ETSI can develop 25% of its required 15,000 acre-feet a year from above-ground sources.



Regional legislative review

Land use opponents push legislators to compromise

Opponents of land use planning outnumbered its supporters at a public hearing in Boise, Ida. And some of the state's legislators seem to be reacting to the mood of the vocal opponents by looking for compromise in the three land use bills proposed this session.

At the hearing, one man threatened to file charges of treason, malfeasance of office, violation of civil rights, and violation of oath against any senator who votes for the bills. Representatives of the Idaho Conservation League, the League of Women Voters, and the American Association of University Women spoke favoring land use planning.

Three different compromise proposals have been suggested, all of which would seriously hamper planning, according to critics. The House Resources and Conservation Committee called for passage of a bill that requires a property owner's permission to include his land in a land use plan.

The Senate Local Government and Taxation Committee authorized introduction of a bill that would require a referendum on comprehensive land use plans or changes in such plans. The bill would provide that a "change in designation of 10% or more of the land area . . . must be approved by the voters," according to *The Idaho Statesman*.

The third possible compromise calls for compensating property owners for loss of values as a result of zoning. The proposal came before Senate committee. Such a bill was proposed last year in both Arizona and New Mexico but defeated, partially because of its prohibitive cost.

PHOSPHATE ROYALTIES

Two bills aimed at getting royalties from phosphate mining back to the counties where the impact occurs have been proposed in Idaho. The House passed and sent to the Senate a bill which would return 10% of the federal mineral royalties to the county in which the resource was produced, according to *The Idaho Statesman*. This would mean about \$100,000 per year to the

four counties which produce phosphate. Presently, the state receives about \$1 million a year in royalties from phosphates mined on federal lands in the state.

The second measure, sponsored by Rep. Perry Swisher, would require a mining company to use the same valuation of its ore for its mine tax payments as it uses for its depletion allowance. Because of the large differences now existing between the two, this bill would mean an additional tax

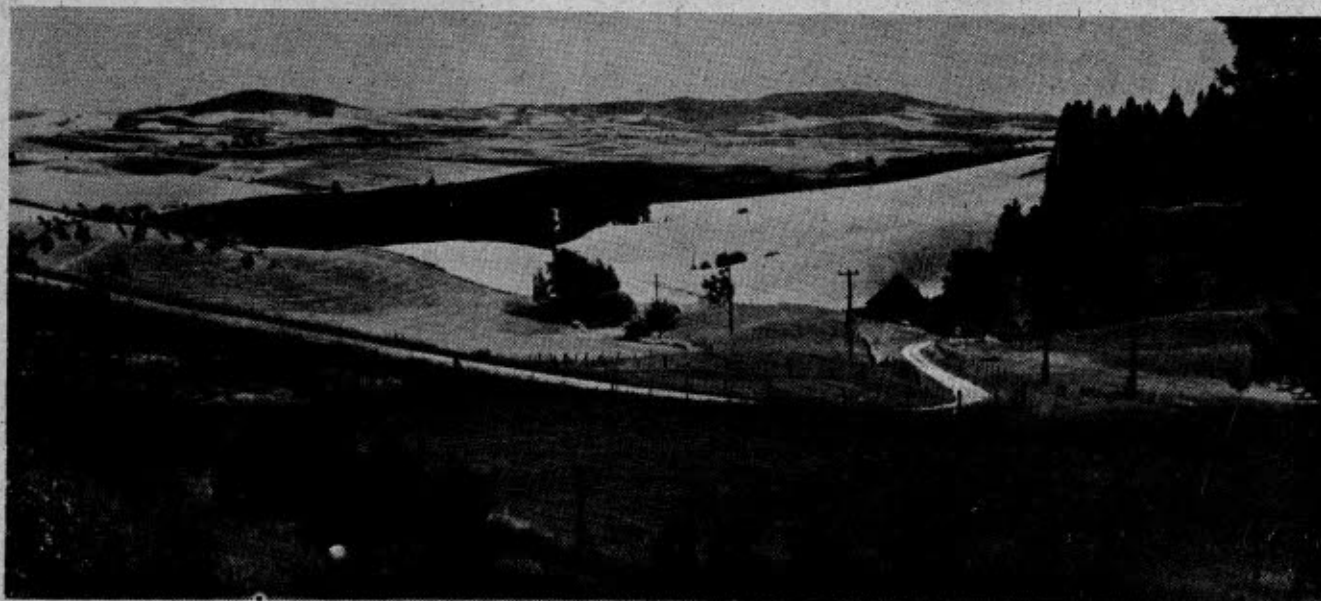
of about \$1 million a year, according to *The Idaho Statesman*.

MINIMUM STREAM FLOW

The Idaho Statesman editorialized in favor of minimum stream flow last week, partially because it would assure enough water for power generation. "Additional irrigation should be possible. The question is, how to achieve it without reducing the

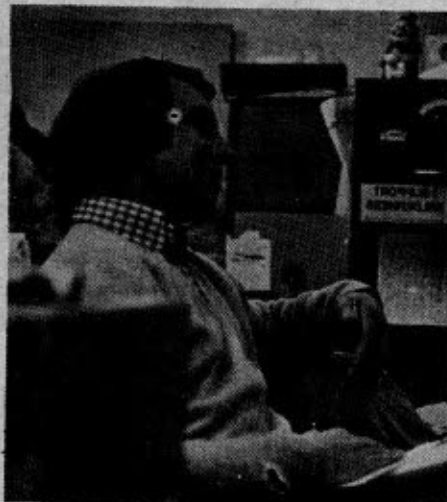
flow and quality of the river and destroying part of the value of dams already built," the *Statesman* said.

The editorial pointed out that Idaho Power Co. bases part of its case for the proposed 1,000 megawatt coal-fired power plant on the assumption that extensive added irrigation will deplete Snake River flows. Power from the Pioneer plant will be more expensive than hydropower, the editorial points out.



IDAHO WHEAT LAND. Gov. Cecil Andrus insists the three land use bills he is proposing are to protect Idaho agricultural land, but many rural residents of the state are resisting any land use controls.

Photo courtesy of Idaho Dept. of Commerce



JEFF FEREDAY. Lobbyist for the Idaho Conservation League.

Colorado

Nuclear liability limits debated

A bill implementing the Price-Anderson Act in Colorado has been introduced in the state legislature. It won preliminary approval in the Colorado House recently. According to the bill's sponsor, Rep. Pat Burrows (D), the bill isn't being backed only by a bunch of "kooky environmentalists."

The federal Price-Anderson Act limits the liability for nuclear accidents to \$560 million and promises that the federal government, not the utility, will foot most of the bill. It is up to the states, however, to decide how liability will be determined, according to the *Rocky Mountain News*.

Burrow's bill would hold the operators of nuclear facilities "strictly liable" for accidents causing off-site damage. Strict liability means that those injured don't have to prove negligence on the part of the operator to recover damages in a civil suit.

Amendments were defeated which would have exempted accidents caused by an "act of God" or an act of sabotage.

Two existing facilities would be covered by the bill — Rockwell International's Rocky Flats plant, where hydrogen bomb triggers are made, and Public Service Co.'s Fort St. Vrain nuclear generating station which isn't yet operating.

NEBRASKA

Meanwhile, in Nebraska and in Califor-

nia, bills have been introduced to help control nuclear power development.

Unlike Colorado, Nebraska already has two nuclear plants in operation. The bill being considered calls for a moratorium on further construction of nuclear power plants in the state "until such time as the evidence demonstrates with overwhelming certainty that nuclear energy is a safe and efficient power source for the people of the state." A similar bill was killed in committee last year.

CALIFORNIA

California's legislative effort defines more specifically how to determine the safety of nuclear energy production.

A package of four bills would ban construction of new nuclear power plants until 1) the feasibility of underground plantsites had been studied, 2) accident liability insurance limitations are completely lifted to ensure full compensation, 3) at least one method of disposing of long-term radioactive wastes is designated, and 4) adequate facilities exist for reprocessing spent nuclear fuel capable of handling the expected future fuel demand.

Californians will be voting in June on a nuclear power moratorium as the result of a successful initiative drive to put the question on the ballot.

South Dakota

Environmental loans proposed

A bill being introduced into the South Dakota legislature would establish an environmental protection loan fund. The Department of Environmental Protection would make loans to "political subdivisions in meeting or maintaining environmental standards . . . or when a situation arises which endangers the health, safety, or public welfare of the residents of such political subdivisions."

The bill is proposed to help small communities which don't have enough money to meet environmental laws.

Another bill would provide state grants for construction of livestock water pollution control projects. This would help operators of large feedlots meet federal standards.

Other bills designed to maintain water quality include a soil erosion

and sedimentation bill, a water quality improvement areas bill, and a safe drinking water act.

Stream channels and lakes would be protected by a bill which requires permits before altering stream channels.

PROTECTING FARMLAND

Under another bill, the state would buy farmland and lease it to operators for two to seven years, according to *Land Use Planning Reports*. Lease holders would pay property taxes and would have the option to buy the land. Sponsors of the bill hope to preserve some of the smaller farms in the state in this way and to increase opportunities for younger farmers to get started.

Feb. 13, 1976



Western Roundup

HCN

12

Federal court protects game ranges

Three Western game ranges will remain under the control of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, after a ruling by a federal judge making his preliminary injunction permanent. U.S. District Judge William B. Bryant said the Interior Department does not have legal authority to juggle agency control of the ranges, according to *The Idaho Statesman*. The ranges — Kofa in Arizona, Russell in Montana, and Sheldon in Nevada — are currently operated jointly by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management. Interior had proposed transferring them to the BLM's exclusive management. A bill has been introduced in Congress to put all ranges and refuges under the USFWS control.

Johns-Manville may face pollution fine

The Johns-Manville Corp. may be facing state-imposed fines of \$10,000 per day if tests by the state of Montana confirm that the J-M mine is polluting the West Fork of the Stillwater River. The problem began before Christmas when workmen sliced into a fault in the 3,000 foot tunnel of the mine. The 50-gallon-per-minute leak is suspected of carrying blasting compounds (ammonia nitrate) out of the mine and into ground water. Randall Gloege, Friends of the Earth representative, spotlighted the problem, according to the *Billings Gazette*. J-M is now exploring for platinum and paladium in the Stillwater area. Anaconda Co. recently said the complex also contains 90% of the chrome reserves in the Western Hemisphere and most of this country's nickel deposits.

Power, copper giants seek merger

Anaconda Co. and Tenneco, Inc., have proposed a merger which could have far-reaching impacts on development of natural resources in Montana and in the region. If the proposal is approved by the two companies' boards and shareholders and is not opposed by the U.S. Justice Dept. or the Federal Trade Commission, then Anaconda would become a wholly owned subsidiary of Tenneco.

Anaconda has always been a dominant force in Montana, employing more people than any other private company and, until 1959, owning most of the state's newspapers. It has copper mines and refineries and aluminum plants in Montana, as well as mines and other facilities in about 25 other states. Tenneco manufactures ships, farm equipment, and construction equipment and has chemical, natural gas, and oil operations. It has rights to 80,000 acre-feet of water a year at the Montana-North Dakota border and proposes at least eight gasification plants there.

The merger could have a devastating effect on the state because it could allow Anaconda to expand its mining operation, according to Torian Donohoe of the Environmental Information Center.

Anaconda is now in the red, partially because of the Chilean expropriation of its huge copper holdings there and because of falling copper prices. A major stockholder, Crane Co., of New York, opposes the merger.

Oahe listed top priority by MRBC

The Oahe Irrigation Unit in South Dakota received top priority for implementation from the Missouri River Basin Commission (MRBC) at its meeting determining priorities for state and federal funding from October 1977 through September 1980. A comprehensive study of the James River Basin in North and South Dakota got top priority for regional or basin planning. A hydrologic study of the Madison Limestone Formation was the number one priority for basic data collection. MRBC priorities are used by Congress and by state legislatures as guides for appropriations. The commission is composed of representatives of 10 states and of several federal agencies involved in water and land resource planning.

Trout-coal conflict in Ricardo Creek

The Colorado Division of Wildlife and the CF&I Steel Corp. are in water court over Ricardo Creek. The division wants to secure a minimum flow in the stream to protect what may be a last surviving remnant of the endangered Arkansas River cutthroat trout. CF&I wants to divert all of Ricardo Creek to a nearby coal development project. The entire Ricardo Creek drainage is on CF&I land. CF&I says there is no alternative water source to meet anticipated needs of the firm, according to the *Denver Post*. The Colorado Water Conservation Board will take up the matter in March.

Letters oppose Ski Yellowstone area

Letters from all over the country are flooding into the Forest Service office in Montana opposing development of the Ski Yellowstone resort, according to the *Billings Gazette*. An assistant planner with the Gallatin National Forest staff says the mail is being read and evaluated for factual information that could improve decision-making. But planners say opponents aren't going to be able to "vote" the project down, since it is supposed to be an administrative, not a political decision. About 400 letters have been received. At the beginning, 90% of the letters supported the project, but after press coverage, 90% opposed it, according to the Forest Service. Some of the negative letters have come from nearby ski areas which question whether there are enough skiers to support the new area.



CLAWS: SON OF JAWS

A blood-thirsty, giant, savage grizzly bear on the rampage may be Hollywood's sequel to the killer shark in "Jaws." The Wilderness Society is urging the U.S. Forest Service and the Montana Fish and Game Department to discourage the film. Cliff Merritt, the society's acting director, says the film could "so distort the facts about this noble animal as to build widespread opposition to its proper management and perpetuation." The film producers might need assistance and permits from the two government agencies if they were going to film grizzlies in the wild.

Grizzly photo by Tom Warren, Montana Fish and Game Dept.

Denver runs out of space for trash

Denver and its suburbs have just about run out of a place to dump their garbage. "Within the next five to 10 years the present landfills will be filled up," says Alan Foster of the Denver Regional Council of Governments. Foster says that new sites can be found east of Denver, but that transportation costs make the sites economically unattractive. Foster hopes that a large-scale recycling project which the council is researching will solve the disposal problem.

Stamm tells how to increase water

Weather modification and desalting sea water are the two most promising methods of increasing water supply in the West, Bureau of Reclamation commissioner Gilbert Stamm told the *Idaho Statesman*. Referring to old BuRec plans to divert water from the Pacific Northwest to augment Southern California supplies, he said, "I doubt if they will be revived; I think there are other means of augmenting water supplies that ought to come first."

Senate protects parks from mining

The Senate voted 70-16 recently to protect six national parks and monuments from mining. The bill was sent to the House where similar action is pending. The bill would repeal laws allowing miners to file claims in Death Valley National Monument, Crater Lake National Park in Oregon, Mt. McKinley National Park and Glacier Bay National Monument in Alaska, and Coronado National Memorial and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument in Arizona. The Secretary of Interior would be required to report to Congress on the feasibility of government purchase of existing mining claims in the national park system. A four year moratorium would be imposed on open pit or strip mining in Death Valley, Organ Pipe, and Mt. McKinley. Sen. Ted Stevens (R-Alaska) was opposed to including the Glacier Bay National Monument because of the rich deposits of nickel and copper there, but his amendment to delete it from the bill failed.

Senators attack air regs for Kennecott

The Kennecott Copper Corp. announced plans to shut down indefinitely its mine and smelter in eastern Nevada, laying off about 500 of the Nevada mines division's 1,150 employees, according to *The Idaho Statesman*. Nevada's two Senators immediately rushed a bill to Congress to forestall the closure by relaxing federal air pollution standards. The change would give older, established industries in isolated areas the flexibility to use intermittent pollution control systems such as tall stacks or production cutbacks rather than the more costly constant control systems, according to the *Deseret News*. "The Environmental Protection Agency has been acting like a mindless bulldozer grinding through community after community unable to differentiate between the air quality problems of populous industrial areas and those underpopulated rural areas," Sen. Howard Cannon (D-Nev.) told the Senate. Kennecott said its decision was based on environmental mandates, adverse mining conditions, escalating costs, and depressed worldwide market conditions for copper.

water drilling include a soil erosion

Montana Wildlife and Fish Commission

14-High Country News — Feb. 13, 1976

Fired twice for naming names

Mike Frome nails resource scandals

by Joan Nice

Conservation writer Michael Frome has built a reputation for tough talk. He sends spears through the armor of bureaucracies and politicians.

Aiming at the National Park Service, he told HCN, "By golly if I were the superintendent of Grand Teton National Park, I'd say we're going to expand this airport (and bring in jets) over my dead body. But they don't do that. The higher up you get the less you want to lose your job, so you keep your mouth shut."

Frome is well-qualified to comment on the risks of speaking out. He's spent most of his career nailing down natural resource scandals and naming the people responsible for them. He's lost two jobs for his candor — jobs he valued as a way to reach "little people" and tell them how to change things.

Despite editors' attempts to soften his blows in the two publications that fired him, *American Forests* and *Field & Stream*, Frome's style remains crustier than ever.

"I think you've got to come off strong. Because if you don't, you're going to lose the battle," Frome says. He says he won't let down the people, many of them hunters and fishermen, who have responded to his writing over the years. "They don't look for compromise," Frome says.

Frome started as a newspaper reporter for the *Washington Post*, among other papers. Gradually he became a travel writer, specializing in the national parks.

Ironically, the U.S. Forest Service groomed Frome to become the conservation muckraker that he is today.

"It was a different Forest Service at that time," Frome says. "They were crusaders. They'd slip stuff to Bernard DeVoto and he'd put it in *Harpers*. They thought I'd be the new DeVoto."

The Forest Service sent Frome to forests around the country and he began learning about issues that would become more important to him than anything he'd ever written about before — public lands and conservation. Although he lives near



Mike Frome

its readers more. We tackled critical issues in all parts of the country, dealing with logging, mining, grazing, land use, pesticides, and pollution," Frome said in an article about his firing published in *The Center Magazine*.

Among Frome's targets were the Corps of Engineers, Hells Canyon, Alaskan oil, waterfowl on the prairies, and eagle killings in Wyoming.

When he realized how interested in conservation the sportsmen who read the magazine were, he set up a feature called "Conservation Action Line." He hoped to "give heart to the little people, demonstrating ways and means they can be effective in saving our vanishing open space."

Frome believes that trouble at *Field & Stream* started when the magazine became part of a conglomerate. The publication, which had stood on its own for almost 80 years, was bought by Holt publishing company which was soon bought by CBS, Inc. It became impossible "to say anything of importance without stepping on somebody's toes and irritating the financial nerve, directly or indirectly," Frome says.

Shortly after the merger, the magazine's

a heady feeling of freedom. Writing a column for *Defenders of Wildlife's* magazine.

"I don't want to be cautious and that's the best thing about being canned from *Field & Stream*," he told HCN. "I feel I'm free to say what I want."

When he seems vain about personal publicity (a write-up about his firing in *Time* magazine in 1974 surprised and pleased him), his two children set him straight again, he says. He says his son told him, "O.K., quit blowing your horn and go back and blow the whistle." That's what Frome really believes is needed to solve environmental problems — and he wishes more people would join him.

A longtime critic of the agencies administering public lands, Frome has recently sensed that something is amiss in the environmental movement itself.

"Something is lacking in this conservation thing. Do you get that feeling?" he asks. "I say that without being critical because people are working on so many issues. But they're not willing to come out slugging. People should be saying Gerald

"Let's not play footsy with these people."

Ford is the most anti-environment president in U.S. history. That's what the Sierra Club president should be saying, I think. Let's not play footsy with these people."

In the last 10 years Frome has seen an awakening of ordinary people without a corresponding awakening of the people in power.

"There is not one single federal agency that is really responsive. The worst agency is the Forest Service," Frome says.

He says the Forest Service is organized like a "paramilitary mafia. The chief is like Godfather."

"Up and down the Rocky Mountains, we should take lands away from the Forest Service and put them into preservation

where they belong," Frome says. "Those lands are too fragile. They should not be exploited; they should be preserved. Wyoming has been well worked over by the forest butchers. Your forests have been clobbered with utmost insensitivity and lasting damage."

Frome doesn't think much of the citizen participation afforded by the Forest Service's unit planning system. He says, "Unit planning is just a device on the part of the Forest Service to wipe out the forest unit by unit. That's what it is in my humble judgment."

Laws like the National Environmental Policy Act, the Wilderness Act, and the Endangered Species Act "are just obstacles for them (the agencies) to go around," Frome says.

Part of the solution will have to come from within, Frome says. "The little guys in all of these agencies should create a pressure from within. No supervisor should overcut his forest."

Frome says agencies usually respond to this kind of criticism by asking him to work with them, to understand how they are changing. They tell him how they need him and how they are trying. They ask him not to criticize so much and to give them some credit for the good things they are doing.

"We've had that ad nauseum with all of these agencies," Frome says. "The Bureau of Land Management is sliding. And I don't see any change in the Forest Service. Just more papers."

The conservationist's role? "It's not just a job. It's got to be a passion. You've got to be experts in your own right. I know more about the forests than they (Forest Service personnel) do. I know more about the Great Smokies National Park than anybody in the park service."

All segments of society should be addressing a central question, Frome believes: the question of growth.

"What do we do after we've strip mined the Western lands and gotten all the oil out of Alaska? What do we do then?"

Frome answers his own question by quoting a Wyoming conservationist, Colleen Kelly: "We must alter the lifestyle that makes us the enemies of ourselves."

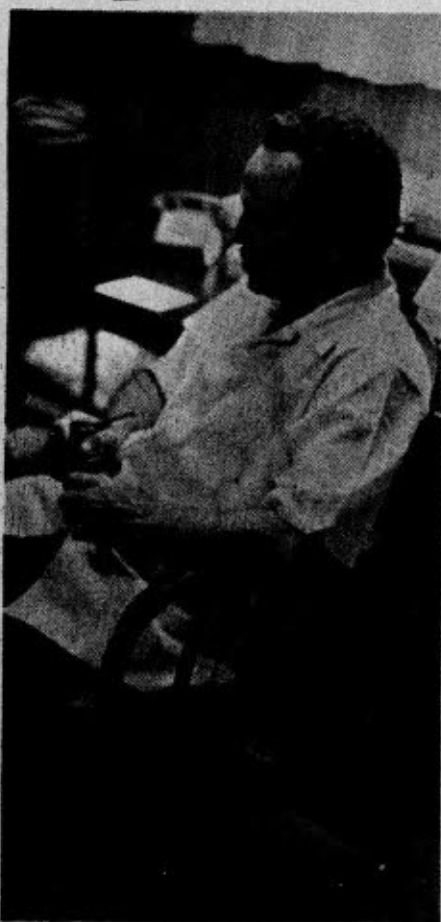
Classified Ads

TEACHING POSITIONS OFFERED

Assistant Professor in the field of Natural Sciences and Technology on undergraduate faculty, beginning Fall 1976. Must have terminal degree, teaching and research experience in at least one of the following: resource management, physics, chemistry, environmental engineering, conservation, ecology, or other applied science disciplines related to environmental problem-solving and design.

Assistant Professor in the field of Societal Science on undergraduate faculty, beginning Fall 1976. Must have terminal degree, teaching and research experience in at least one of the following: physical anthropology, archeology, environmental law, resource economics, politics, history, or other behavioral science discipline related to environmental problem-solving and design.

To Apply: Send resume, 3 letters of reference, and other appropriate information to Spenser W. Haylick, Assistant Dean, College of Environmental Design, University of Colorado, Boulder, CO, 80309 — An equal opportunity employer.



MICHAEL FROME: "I don't want to be cautious and that's the best thing about being canned from *Field & Stream*. I feel I'm free to say what I want."

"Unit planning is just a device on the part of the Forest Service to wipe out the forest unit by unit."

Washington, D.C., he's an expert on issues in the West as well as in the East.

"To ward off blandness" in *American Forests*, the magazine of the American Forestry Association, the editor asked Frome to write a regular column. The AFA's timid board of directors eventually decided that blandness was better than Frome's brand of liveliness. He was asked by the board first to stay away from personalities, and later to refrain from criticizing "the U.S. Forest Service, the forestry industry, the profession or (writing) about controversial forestry issues."

Frome refused. His column was censored. When he complained, his column was "discontinued."

Later Frome received the same kind of treatment at the hands of an independent publication — *Field & Stream*. At first it seemed free of the entanglements which bound the AFA.

Frome takes pride in most of the 6½ years he served as "conservation editor" for *Field & Stream*. During most of that time, Frome says, the magazine was "a crusading force."

"I doubt that any magazine took a tougher environmental stand or involved

new editor began to censor Frome's work.

"The crusading days were plainly finished. I was instructed to write in generalities without naming names," Frome says.

In Oct. 1974 the new editor fired Frome. Frome says he was given no explanation for the action. Angry Frome-supporters were told that he was dismissed because his book, *Battle for Wilderness*, contained "anti-hunting" statements. (Frome says he is not anti-hunting, just anti-slob-hunting.) *Time Magazine* reported that the management felt that Frome "just didn't do a very good job."

His readers, judging by the picketing and letter-writing that followed the firing, didn't agree. A spokesman for the Society of Magazine writers told CBS that the society found Frome's firing to be "peculiarly suspect and an implicit threat, by extension, to the intellectual and expressive freedom of every free lance writer in America."

How is Mike Frome today? Concerned about his loss of the *Field & Stream* audience, but bolstered by the outcry that followed his firing. Peppery as ever. Full of



Photo by Mike Lawyers

Eavesdropper

environmental news from around the world

LOONEY LIMERICKS

by Zane E. Cology

Desert land's being turned into crops.
The Snake River's left nary a drop.
The grazing cows,
Are chased out by plows.
When we're out of land, I hope they stop.

KLEPPE WEAKENS CREDIBILITY.

Secretary of Interior Thomas Kleppe recently joined with Arizona's two conservative Senators to cosponsor a fundraiser on behalf of Arizona Rep. Sam Steiger (R). Steiger was number one on the "dirty dozen" list of environmentalists at the last election and has a reputation for anti-environmentalist positions. Brock Evans, Sierra Club director, said "The Secretary of Interior... should be the number one environmentalist in the country." He added, "To so closely and directly identify with (Steiger)... does not speak well either for Kleppe's credibility with environmentalists or for the future of the lands under his trust."

CLEAN AIR BILL MOVES. The Senate Public Works Committee last week agreed to report to the Senate its revision of the Clean Air Act. The bill is "seriously diluted" from the original prepared by the subcommittee, according to the Sierra Club, which hopes for improvements on the floor. The club has several objections to the version of the bill. It doesn't protect national monuments, recreation areas, or wildlife refuges from significant degradation unless both the Secretary of Interior and the state agree. Non-ferrous smelters are exempted from the requirement for continuous pollution control equipment. Attorney's fees and other costs of litigations could be awarded to industries which prevail in enforcement actions. The club says the House committee will probably report a strong Clean Air Act amendment bill.

PROTECTING AGRICULTURAL LAND. A bill aimed at preserving California's prime agricultural land has passed the California General Assembly and been sent to the Senate, according to **Land Use Planning Reports**. The bill would create an Agricultural Resources Council. All cities and counties would map prime agricultural land within their boundaries and send them to the council for certification and recommendations for types of permissible uses. The sponsor of

the bill refers to it as a growth moratorium; the moratorium aspect would be enacted over a period of 10 years. California provides 40% of the fresh vegetables and fruit consumed in this country and 25% of all the table food. It has been losing an estimated 20,000 acres of prime agricultural land to urbanization each year.

FORD LIMITING GROWTH? President Gerald Ford's proposed \$38 million cut in Environmental Protection Agency Section 208 funding may result inadvertently in limiting growth, according to a spokesman for the National Association of Counties quoted in **Land Use Planning Reports**. "Budgetary constraints will preclude most water resource planning activity by communities unless more federal aid is made available... Without an acceptable water resource management plan, EPA cannot release waste water treatment facility grant money. Limited sewer treatment capabilities are generally considered to be a major handicap to community expansion," **LUP Reports** says. The 208 section of the 1972 Water Pollution Control Amendments provided planning funds.

EPA JOBS FOR JOBLESS. The Environmental Protection Agency has found jobs for 719 people on welfare in environmentally related fields. EPA funding was divided among seven states, including Colorado and Montana. EPA Administrator Russell Train said the program not only provided needed labor, it also placed women in jobs traditionally held by men. These included jobs operating waste water treatment plants, maintaining water meters, collecting refuse, and working as pesticide control technicians. The pilot project was designed for adults who were receiving federal welfare assistance for dependent children.

QUALITY INDEX DOWN. Environmental quality in the U.S. declined slightly in 1975, according to a study conducted by the National Wildlife Federation. The only category experiencing a net gain in quality in the last year was reduction of air pollution. Setbacks were experienced in water pollution, minerals, wildlife, soil, and open space, according to the study.

OVERGRAZING & DROUGHTS. Overgrazing by livestock could cause droughts in low rainfall regions, says Dr. Russell C. Schnell of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Vegetation — not soil — provides the most "seeds" for cumulus clouds to make rain, he believes. If plants are overgrazed, fewer nuclei are released into the atmosphere. This causes clouds to become less efficient rain producers.

Thoughts from the Distaff Corner

by Marge Higley

During the past forty years I have occasionally been reminded of a certain "Gobbledygook" game, but up until a few days ago I had completely forgotten about Ernest. I can't recall his last name, but that's not surprising, since I have neither seen him nor heard of him since our high school days.

We were both members of the debate team which, 10 those many years ago, traveled to Rock Springs to take part in a speech festival. We managed to squeak into the finals, at which point we were ignominiously defeated by our glib, self-assured opponents. Still smarting at the loss of our hoped-for victory, we rehearsed the debate on the long journey home.

"I'll admit they out-debated us," said one teammate, "but I don't understand how. Our research was better — I'm sure we had more facts on our side..."

"Yeah," answered someone, "when you stop to think of it, their facts were mostly generalities... a bunch of gobbledygook!"

So how had they managed to convince the judges, the audience, and yes, even our own team which had thoroughly researched the subject? By the time we reached home we had concluded that generalities, a little bit of truth, and a straight-forward, self-assured presentation could make the listener quit doing his own thinking, and accept the presented facts as the true ones — at least until he got to thinking about it later.

By that conclusion the Gobbledygook game was born.

"Let's try it out on the kids at school!" suggested someone. (I have a hunch that that was Ernest.)

We did set a few ground rules for the game. Any time we Gobbledygooked, it had to sound reasonable, and it had to fit into the conversation.

We tried it out on our classmates, and surprisingly enough, it worked more often than not. Even those of us who were in on the game got Gobbledygooked a time or two. Walking down the hall towards English class, I remarked "I'll see you later, Ernest. I have to run down to the office and make a phone call before the bell rings." "Okay," he answered, then, as I turned toward the steps he added "Hey! Do me a favor, will ya? While you're there, call Dr. Wilson (the local dentist) and tell him I can't make my appointment after school... I have such a bad toothache I'm going right home."

I was halfway down the steps before I realized I'd been Gobbledygooked!

Well, the novelty of the game lasted about a week before it (fortunately!) died down. That is, for most of us it faded away,

but not for Ernest. He kept it up throughout the rest of the year. He became so expert, in fact, that some of us tended to dodge into a nearby classroom when we saw him coming down the hall!

Well, the year came to a close, we graduated and went our many separate ways. The Gobbledygook game has come to mind on a few occasions since then, but not often. Election years, of course, bring back the memories of it, as do some of the TV commercials. (Most commercials are ruled out on the grounds of Rule No. 1 — it has to sound reasonable!) Just offhand, I do think of a couple of them that might qualify.

"Now watch it turn blue! That means that it's really cleaning!" On first listen, that sounds reasonable, I guess — but why blue? Wouldn't red or purple or green make just about as much sense?

A few days ago I happened upon a consumer report — from a utility company to its consumers. It concerned the "Lifeline Rate" for the cost of electricity. Basically, the lifeline rate, if adopted, would change the present concept from "the more you use, the cheaper it gets" to "higher rates to higher users." If you bother to think it through, that makes sense, doesn't it? But listen, for a moment, to the gobbledygook:

"There are usually a significant number of affluent, but minimum use, electric customers. These include people: who use their residence only part of the year; who dine out frequently; who take frequent vacations; or who are absent from home a great deal. These are all factors with a negative influence on use of electric energy in a residence."

"In an offsetting manner, there are significant numbers of people with very constricted circumstances: who have fairly large families; who are so limited in funds that they cannot leave home frequently; who do all of their cooking at home; who must provide essentially all of their recreation at home including watching television; who have inadequately insulated homes requiring a greater use of energy to stay warm in the winter time, etc."

"Consider a system with a significant number of customers in these situations. If it imposed a lifeline rate including a substantial number of underpriced kilowatt-hours in the first energy block, it would be in the position of subsidizing many well-to-do families and requiring many poor, but energy requiring, families to pay more to subsidize these wealthy but energy conserving families."

It concludes: "From the standpoint of the social objective of the lifeline concept, it would be self-defeating."

Perhaps it's not so strange, really, that I suddenly remembered Ernest — after all those years!

BULLETIN BOARD

WHEATLAND PLANT HEARING SET

The Missouri River Basin Power Project, the utilities proposing the Laramie River Station to be built near Wheatland, Wyo., will present its plans to the state's Industrial Siting Council Feb. 23. Parties who oppose the plant will also be heard. The public hearing will be at 9 a.m. in the Wheatland High School auditorium.

WYOMING BENEFIT DANCE

The Atlantic City Buffalo Chips are coming to Casper! While not well-known in other high culture centers, the fame of this group has spread from Farson to Shoshoni, Wyo. Composed of a piano, a bass, a fiddle, and a banjo player, the band plays music which is fit for polkas, folk dances, or just plain stomping. The benefit dance on Friday, Feb. 20, will be held at the Moose

Lodge at 225 N. Wolcott, Casper, beginning at 9 p.m. Proceeds go to the Wyoming Outdoor Council and the Powder River Basin Resource Council for their legislative effort. Tickets can be ordered from Marjane Ambler, Box K, Lander, Wyo. 82520. Or buy them at the door.

ERDA ENERGY CHOICES

The Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) will hold a public meeting in Denver, Colo., on March 3-4. The meeting will focus on ERDA's "National Plan for Energy Research, Development, and Demonstration: Creating Energy Choices for the Future." For information, contact James R. Nicks, Denver Public Meeting Coordinator, ERDA, Rocky Flats Area Office P.O. Box 928, Golden, Colo. 80401.

16-High Country News — Feb. 13, 1976



Reflections on coal and our future

One Time Harvest

by Mike Jacobs, Box 351, Mandan, N.D. 58554. \$6.45 including postage, soft cover, 300 pages.

Review by Marjane Ambler

The hills and the valleys around the farm where Mike Jacobs grew up in North Dakota all have secret names he gave them as a child. Now that he's grown, he's giving names to the sorrows of North Dakota and of the region. He's telling everyone who will listen in his book, *One Time Harvest*, although there are those who would just as soon he kept these secrets, too.

The sorrows he names are coal — "the rock that burns" — and strip mining, which he refers to as "skinning the earth alive." The title of the book, *One Time Harvest*, is borrowed from North Dakota Gov. Arthur Link who uses the phrase to

Dakota. To exploit the resources of the region, the industry also needs good transportation, which can be built, and complacent labor, which can be bought — probably cheaper here than in the East. These six factors are the basis for the coal industry's rush westward."

Yet *One Time Harvest* is not a bitter book. The poetic impulse that inspired him to name his hills at home has survived and makes the book a love story of North Dakota, as one reviewer describes it.

This love story, however, is full of concise, well-researched material that could also qualify it as a text on coal, fully indexed and footnoted.

Jacobs' easy manner is perhaps too informal for readers who want to feel they're not learning anything unless it's painful. "Dear reader," Jacobs says. "The subject of this section is conglomeration, an old and

legal, geological, and political perspectives.

A journalist for eight years, he displays the intense curiosity found only in the best of the profession. (He now publishes a biweekly independent newspaper, *The Onlooker*.) The curiosity enticed him not only to spend several dark months in research libraries, but also to tour coal mines in six states before writing the book. It also forced him, somewhat reluctantly, to lie on his belly on a coal mine shuttle, skidding down a narrow tunnel for a closer look at the insides of a Pennsylvania underground coal mine.

The section analyzing a sample lease illustrates the value of Jacob's skill at translating technical material into lay language. He takes the lease apart, piece by piece, telling what dangers are built into the contract. While Jacobs emphasizes that his synopsis can't substitute for legal advice, it shows prospective lessors some of the dangers of not fully investigating such a contract. Uninformed leasing has been a serious problem in North Dakota and in the rest of the region, especially when strip mining was just beginning.

REGIONAL RELEVANCE

The section also exemplifies the value of the book to other residents of the region — not just North Dakotans. Each state needs such a reference to analyze its own leaseholdings, legislators, industrial water permits, and planning efforts.

But in the meantime, we have Jacobs. Completed last fall, his book is an up-to-date comparison of legislation in North Dakota, Wyoming, and Montana on landowners' rights, severance taxes, water laws, and industrial siting. He also details what development is now projected for each state. Telling why plainsmen have tradi-

tionally not felt a sense of unity because of differing cultural, economic, and news media centers, he predicts a new sense of community arising.

Students of regional politics may be interested to read Jacobs' analysis of William Guy, now director of the Western Regional Governors Energy Policy Office and formerly governor of North Dakota. He discusses the Guy administration's search for business and industrial expansion in the state. "Now it appears these agencies, which went fishing for small business minnows, have caught a shark. The energy industry is coming to North Dakota," he writes.

HIGHEST, BEST USE

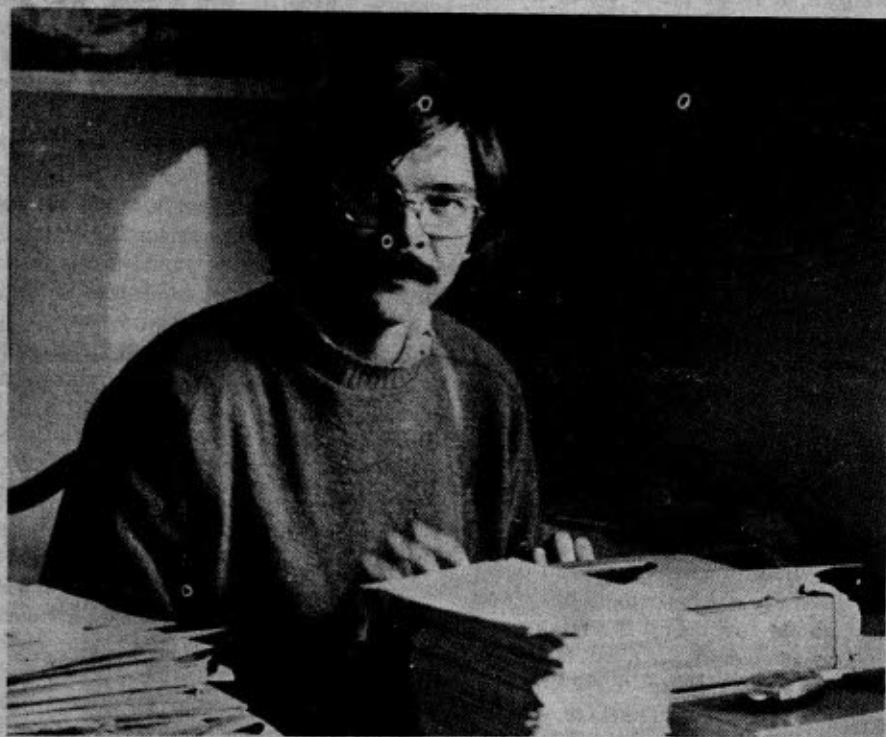
Jacobs courts controversy. Some readers may question the basic premise of the book, which is that coal's highest and best use is holding up agricultural land. Others will disagree with his analysis of the availability of water or the relative economics of slurry lines v. railroads.

But whether or not the reader agrees, he or she will find it a useful book. It is a text to tote to the legislature for lobbying. It is a map of the region now and its possible future, complete with overlays showing it through different disciplines. And it is an excuse to sit down beside the fire and contemplate the state of the world.

Although it is a sorrowful book, it is definitely not fatalistic. While he seems to be saying the odds are against us, he doesn't think the plains and the people are destined for only a "one time harvest."

He quotes Thoreau saying, "Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it."

"It is the same with the future," Jacobs concludes.



MIKE JACOBS. "The highest and best use for coal is holding up agricultural land."

contrast the mining of coal to the yearly agricultural harvests which have been the basis of his state's economy.

Jacobs looks in his book at coal development in the region with a clever cynicism that strikes not only the energy conglomerates and the politicians. It also strikes the Rural Electric Cooperatives (even though he grew up on a farm and so supposedly benefited from their services) and the North Dakota Farmers Union (which employed him as an editor at one time and which printed his book).

"The coal industry has come west in search of four basic resources: cheap clean air, cheap coal, cheap water, and cheap politicians," he writes.

"They've found each of these in North

tired topic by which you've likely been bored before."

He proceeds to then philosophically delve into the subject of capitalism v. free enterprise in a way that intrigues, rather than bores.

FULL PERSPECTIVE

The section on conglomeration is an example of one of the more remarkable aspects of the book. He describes himself as a "27 year old malcontent who's raised more trouble than wheat, after all." But his deep understanding of agricultural economics and politics is evident. He also forces us to look at coal development from other directions, including historical, theological,

Dear Friends

Americans waste more than half the energy they consume. Energy conservation efforts alone could mean the country could meet U.S. energy needs for the next 25 years without developing new sources.

The federal government knows this now. After all, they hired the Independent Worldwatch Institute to come up with such figures.

Another study shows that while the residential sector was saying one-by-one, "Alas! How can I matter?" a lot of conservation was going on where dollars mattered — in the industrial sector. Industry, motivated by a recession, has been making dramatic changes while we are still trying to decide how to be effective. The Petroleum Industry Research Foundation says that while overall demand for electric power has been below 1973 and 1974 levels, residential demand actually has been up.

The industrial cutbacks seem to have made a difference. Plans for the largest power plant in the country, Kaiparowits, have been delayed a year. One of the major reasons, says Arizona Public Service Co., is the lack of need for that much additional power — 3,000 megawatts. Demand for

power grew at a lower rate than ever last year.

The public will increase its demand for power much faster than business interests will, says "Energy Intelligence and Analysis Report," a newsletter put out by journalists who specialize in energy affairs. Why? Because the public feels too fragmented to be effective? How do we galvanize the good intentions of many homemakers to use less and to use it more efficiently?

One suggestion made to us by a reader was that we set goals for ourselves and monitor our meters and our progress each month. The same reader suggested that *High Country News* could do its bit by embarrassing "high-livers" into conservation. In the guise of bird-watchers, we could amble through suspicious-looking neighborhoods, reading meters through our binoculars and taking notes. A month later, we would retrace our stealthy steps, compare notes, and then print the most embarrassing material. Now there's an idea! But we'd better put the weather stripping around our own front door before we begin.

—the editors

In The News

New desert farms

public land gets the plow 1

Burro rebuttal

donkey's home on the range 6

Stockholder report

inflating to stay afloat 7

Raptor refuge

developing the natural area 8

Sulfur scrubbers

uneasy compromise in Wyoming 10

Mike Frome

he won't be silenced 14