

The Environmental Bi-Weekly

High Country News

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Steven Mather rescued languishing national parks

A conservation pioneer

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One night in 1870 a group of soldiers and civilians sat arguing around a camp fire in the wilds of Montana. The party was returning from an expedition to the fabled mud volcanoes and subterranean fires on the upper Yellowstone River. Now, with the fantasies fresh in their minds, they debated how to exploit the wonders.

Cornelius Hedges, one of the leaders, came up with a novel suggestion: why not

To most people the wonders of Yellowstone were curiosities, a national sideshow.

ask the government to make a public park of the unusual area? It was a radical proposal in a time when any idea of stewardship had a crackpot ring to it, when rapid conversion into dollars was the standard approach to the West's seemingly limitless resources.

Nevertheless, the men, many of them prominent figures in the Montana Territory, did the unpredictable: they organized a citizens' campaign for preservation. Two years later their efforts succeeded. In 1872 President Grant signed a bill creating Yellowstone, the country's first national park — the first public preserve of its kind in the world.

It would make the job easier for historians if that happy event had precipitated the orderly creation of the splendid National Park System of today. However, Frank Graham characterizes the age as one that gave serious consideration to making Phineas T. Barnum head of the Smithsonian Institution. To most people the wonders of Yellowstone were curiosities, a national sideshow. In the closing decades of the 19th century, Congress did see fit to set aside a number of similar areas, including the Sequoia and Yosemite Parks of today — but only when a local populace grew heady on visions of tourist dollars and was able to outshout the local miners and lumbermen.

For its part, Congress did not envision a coordinated park system, and the parcels it now and then set aside often became refuges more for bandits and poachers than for tourists and wildlife. Each unit struggled along as best it could — without adequate leadership, laws, or money from Washington. The Department of Interior administered most, but the Department of



Stephen Mather, National Park Service Photo

Leases suspended, what next?

Utah oil shale boom: not if, but when

by Dorothy Harvey and Bruce Hamilton

In early 1975, oil shale development looked imminent, and the wild semi-arid land southeast of Vernal, Utah, was one likely location for the industry to begin. The 1970s looked like the climax to a century-long effort to find a commercially feasible way to extract oil from this locally-abundant rock.

All signs were go. Tracts were leased to major energy companies. Presidents Richard M. Nixon and Gerald R. Ford, the state government, and many local residents were eager for development to commence. In the wake of the Arab oil embargo, the nation felt desperate and seemed anxious to unlock any and all new sources of energy to become energy independent.

But this fall the energy companies leasing federal oil shale tracts in Utah asked

for, and were granted, a one year suspension of operation of their leases. Earlier in the year, the only other oil shale leases — two in northwestern Colorado — were granted suspensions.

Now some Vernal residents say oil shale development is inevitable, but 20 years away from production. Others won't hazard a guess. There are too many unknowns — the projected cost and availability of imported oil, the country's projected demand for energy, changing environmental standards, the energy policy of the Carter Administration, the willingness of the new Congress to guarantee loans to encourage development.

"We don't know how to plan with all this uncertainty," laments one Vernal official who sees advance planning as imperative to minimize adverse social impacts.

"We need jobs and income from this industry," says a Vernal resident. "If the

program requires federal help to keep it going, get the help."

Vim Wright, a conservationist on the federal government's Oil Shale Environmental Advisory Panel, says the leasing program was established "to determine whether production of this source of energy was feasible. In asking for the suspension... the oil companies have shown that development isn't feasible."

CAN'T KEEP CLEAN AIR

The lease suspension involves two 5,000-acre tracts along the White River on public land. One tract is leased by Phillips Petroleum Co. and Sun Oil Co. The other is leased by White River Shale Project — a joint venture of Phillips, Sun, and Standard Oil of Ohio (Sohio).

The suspension means the companies

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HCN Letters

IDYL-IZE DAKOTAS

Dear editors:

Abbey's story was tremendous. Reminded me of the Grateful Dead concert in Boulder in 1972. Steve Catterall looked out at the stadium-packing thousands and said, "Just think, everyone here wants to move to the mountains and build a dome." What we don't need is more L.A. cowboys singing about life in the Rockies. If only someone would write a song idylizing the Dakotas or Nevada!

Keep up the good work and give my best to the sagebrush.

Dan Ray
Winters, Calif.

MORE REALISM URGED

Dear HCN,

Since 1971 I've spent three years in various state agencies or graduate programs studying animal ecology in Taos, N.M.; Monte Vista and Durango, Colo.; and most recently, Bill, Wyo. My sympathy is with your cause to save the wildlands. Every square inch should be preserved as much as possible.

But I urge realism and maturity which can accept change. Nothing (even Telluride) remains as it was "in the good old days." Weepy prose, urging no change in the face of poorly understood and vastly powerful economic factors, is immature at best. Man evolved in an ecosystem whose very nature involves the constant ability to change.

Some of your recent articles have used high density of human populations per se as a whipping boy. This reveals a striking provincialism which remains blissfully (and self-righteously) ignorant of the graceful way man can live in high densities in London, Japan, and yes, even in Madison, Wis., while still caring for and preserving natural areas adjacent to living areas.

The violent means Edward Abbey urges are as pitiable as those of any zealot who, convinced that "God is on his side," will wage any battle. How many wars will it take to prove their futility? If Abbey insists on joining the ranks of Napoleon, even in the spirit of Don Quixote, I can only wonder.

Keep up the good work at HCN. I sympathize entirely with your cause, but I urge your readers to keep an open mind.

Mark Stromberg
Madison, Wis.

MORE AD POLICY ADVICE

Editors' note: To our delight, we're still getting letters from readers concerned enough about High Country News to offer advice on what our ad policy should be. As explained in the Oct. 22, 1976, "Dear Friends" column, we are now reevaluating our policy on advertising. Presently, we refuse all advertising that does not agree with our editorial bias.

More letters are still welcome. As we said then, it's your paper.

BEGINNING OF EVIL

Dear HCN:

I can truly empathize with your problem of anti-environmental ads and free speech rights. However, I am curious as to the motives of such organizations. For what purposes do they wish to advertise in a newspaper which so often opposes their viewpoints and desires? Surely, the recent disaster of environmental initiatives in Colorado should give you some idea. As Thoreau once noted, "It is best to avoid the beginnings of evil." Thank you for allowing myself and others to comment before making your decision.

Dennis Lamb
Lander, Wyo.

NOT TOO MANY

Dear editors,

I support your present advertising policy: Not too many, not too big, and not counter to your environmental philosophy.

Freedom of choice is just as important as freedom of speech. Just as you choose what articles you will print, you should choose what advertising you will print. I do not want to see HCN converted to "just another periodical filled with commercial messages." We have daily papers for that.

Your paper is top quality. It is the only paper that I read from beginning to end. Keep up the good work.

Richard Wilson
Des Plaines, Ill.



RESPOND TO ADS

Dear HCN:

Take all ads. Set up a regular box on your editorial page titled *On Ads* or the like. Take that space to comment, ridicule, praise, etc. any ads you deem worthy. Your readers will automatically turn to your evaluations if it is in the same place in your newspaper every two weeks. If that sounds like too much work, take all ads and comment editorially on the more blatant.

No more censorship, you get the money, and people will know where you stand.

John Bacon
Fruitvale, Idaho

CASE BY CASE

Dear HCN,

When a publication becomes an advocate, it seems to me that the whole publication should be designed-created-shaped to work toward that end. Advertising is not just a means of raising bucks; it's a way of rounding out the total shape of a paper or magazine. And I think that grossly inconsistent and inharmonious ads should be either: a) rejected or b) revised.

I've seen other publications be doctrinaire about this, and I don't think that's the way to go; it's a case-by-case thing. Once when I worked at *Colorado Magazine*, an ORV ad was bounced back

to the agency because it showed a machine (jeep, trail bike, can't remember which) rummaging across a mountain meadow. The revise showed the machine on a road, and in the process perhaps a point was made with both agency and client.

Sometimes that approach can work. There are also cases, though, where the incompatibility can't be resolved. It's understanding, for example, that *Backpacker* just does not accept tobacco or booze ads.

What I think we need is more conscientiousness on the part of all media about the advertising it runs or airs. Right now, it's pretty much a matter (on any large scale, large audience matter) of the publication or radio station or TV station taking what it gets, running or airing it as is and pocketing the desperately needed bucks. It's been said many times, and in many different ways: the advertisers control the media.

This raises another question: what should a publication do when it receives an ad whose standards (inherent, implicit) of communication are unacceptable. Were I a Colorado publisher this past October, I'd have had a hard time with all the advertising that accompanied the initiative campaigns—especially those that defeated the nuclear safeguard, the bottle deposit proposal, and the repeal of the sales tax on food.

The problem there was twofold. First, because some groups had millions and others pennies, any notion of equal time (or space) went belly up in a hurry. Blitz was it. In significant measure, the defeat of those initiatives was bought. Secondly, the buying was done in a way that was dishonest—i.e., with catchy slogans, the folksy voice of Will Rogers, Jr., cartoons of pigs, lemons and frozen bodies, etc.

All communication is, from one perspective, manipulation; it's unavoidable. But somewhere, standards of manipulation need to be considered.

In the case of an election that is being bought with sleazy campaigns, I think a publisher has a pretty clear course to take. First, he gives both "sides" equal advertising space, or time. Secondly, he gives both "sides" standards to which they must adhere. Otherwise, no dice.

David Sumner
Denver, Colo.

CHINESE SOLUTION

Dear HCN,

You raised the issue about advertising and I have what I call the "Chinese solution."

After the revolution in China, someone noticed that the rich could afford silk and stylish clothes by the ton while the masses were wearing rags; now everyone wears the same clothes and no one worries about who is rich or poor.

You could accept only classified ads (and even limit the number of lines) regardless of complexion—that way everyone would have an equal opportunity to sell their wares without feeling a richer advertiser could put in a flashier ad. No single ad would be so blatant or outrageous that you would have to fear for the purity of your readers' opinions.

The obvious drawbacks would be limited ad revenue and dull ad reading. Your next problem would be that HCN could start getting "personal ads (e.g. "Ecology-minded professor wishes to meet like-minded student for discussion of comparative anatomy in non-impacting cabin high in untouched watershed.")

Bill Riddle
Olympia, Wash.



PUBLISH RADICAL VIEWS

Dear HCN,

It is my hope that you will be able to keep up the fine work of covering the exhaustive amounts of Rocky Mountain environmental news. It is good to know that there is at least one publication with which I can identify.

It is important, in my opinion, to publish radical views, such as those of Edward Abbey. It is important that we do not play down how we feel about issues that touch our hearts; the destruction of the West, indeed, need not be inevitable.

Karl Mayer
Steamboat Springs, Colo.

FOR A WELL-FED STAFF

Dear Folks,

I'd like to add my two cents worth on the advertising question. In short, I think you should advertise. I believe that your long-term financial stability demands that you do so. I would much rather have a **High Country News** which is "impure" than no newspaper at all.

Inherent within your newspaper are numerous checks to thwart the effectiveness of any offensive ad. First, there is your fine (and underpaid) staff. Do you really envision Marjane or anyone else being pulled off a story because it might offend an advertiser? And what reader of **HCN** has ever had their values changed by a Texaco ad? I think the staff and readership of **HCN** are adequate checks on advertising.

Another thing people should consider is that **HCN** is in a very unique position as an environmental advocate. Namely they can increase their financial viability by providing their services (ad space) to a segment of

society that will pay for it. Few other advocates in the Northern Rockies can do this and still do the work that needs to be done.

As a newspaper you still have the right to accept or deny certain advertising. Advertising is not free speech, as several courts have ruled. It's subject to the regulations of the Federal Trade Commission.

I hope this helps. I vote for a well-fed staff and a slightly thicker newspaper.

Joe Lamson
Helena, Mont.

QUICK TO CONDEMN

Dear HCN:

Have come to rely heavily on the paper for honest evaluations of all the legislation, controversial matters concerning coal, uranium, wilderness, and wildlife, that comes up. . . the latest being the anti-grizzly bear habitat testimony in Wyoming. . . good old hunters and outfitters never change their greedy ways. . . but you know I'm not in sympathy with that segment. They are quick to condemn anything that might threaten their precious hunting "rights," even though having been repeatedly assured that creation of a study area contemplates nothing of the sort. Same as they read "confiscation" into any attempt to control unlawful use of firearms; nobody has ever mentioned confiscating hunting weapons, but hysteria rises regular as the tides.

Martha M. Eads
Sheridan, Wyo.



SUN SIGN SUBSCRIBER MESSAGE

SUN SIGN MESSAGE

If there's a "1-77" after your address label, then thank your lucky stars: you're a Capricorn subscriber. Capricorn subscribers are among our most reliable readers, and they usually renew their subscriptions promptly in January. But many "1-77" subscribers don't realize they can send in their renewals early and save us the cost of sending out a reminder.

Many Capricorn subscribers are miserly so it's often hard to get them to send in their renewals early. But when we remind them about what a bargain **HCN** is at only \$10 per year, they make the prudent decision and renew. So, if you're a Capricorn subscriber call on the positive virtues within you and send in your \$10 renewal today.

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Box K, Lander, Wyoming 82520

Cleaning up your tax problems before the new year?

Consider the HCN Research Fund

You can make a tax deductible donation to the High Country News Research Fund and help fund better news coverage in 1977. Make your contribution out to: "Wyoming Environmental Institute — HCN Research Fund," and send it to P.O. Box 2497, Jackson, Wyo. 83001. Thank you, and Merry Christmas.



Editorial



Conservation starts in the home

Despite the loss of Joe Browder from the transition team (see "Reckoning" this issue), we're generally pleased and optimistic about Jimmy Carter. We're especially pleased because it looks like energy conservation and alternative renewable energy research and development may gain a new place of prominence in Washington energy policy decisions.

Carter's liaison with the Energy Research and Development Administration is S. David Freeman. Freeman headed a Ford Foundation energy policy study which recommended reducing energy demand and emphasizing conservation as the best supply option.

Carter's liaison with the Interior Department is Kathy Fletcher, a former staff scientist with the Environmental Defense Fund in Denver. Fletcher knows Western resource issues firsthand and is another staunch advocate of energy conservation.

We even hear that Carter is planning to have a solar-heated review stand for the inaugural parade. Let's hope the sun shines on inauguration day. Better yet, let's hope Carter decides to install the collectors on the White House when the inauguration hoopla is over.

But while conservation gains new attention in Washington, the American public is still burning up our precious energy supplies too quickly. We are still building homes with inadequate insulation. We are still buying far too many big cars. The old habits die hard.

Experts say energy costs will have to rise before Americans seriously start to conserve. Outgoing Federal Energy Administrator Frank Zarb is hoping Carter and his new energy advisors will consider an excise tax on energy.

Energy costs seemed destined to rise with or without a new excise tax. It would be a bleak prospect indeed — if there weren't so many easy ways to save energy and combat rising costs. For most Americans, it's not a matter of wondering where they could save, but deciding where and when they will start saving.

The Idaho State Energy Office has been a leader in helping its citizens begin conserving. The office has written a series of articles on how to build solar greenhouses and solar water heaters and how to install wood stoves and storm windows. One article tells readers how to use the new state income tax deduction which allows a 100% deduction for the cost of installing insulation,

heat pumps, and renewable energy systems. The state government is calling its citizens' attention to appropriate technology advocates like ECOTOPE, RAIN, and the Rodale Press.

How to encourage Americans to make the initial investment and buy a storm door or a wood stove is a harder problem. Offering tax incentives is one good approach. Educating the public to look at the life cycle costs rather than the initial costs of an energy conservation item is another important step.

Another step is to make money available to those who would have difficulty financing a solar system or a set of storm windows. Environmental economist Barry Commoner recently proposed a \$100 billion system of "urban energy banks" which would make interest free loans to homeowners and building managers for energy conservation and renewable energy systems. Commoner described his program as an alternative to the one proposed by President Ford and Vice-president Rockefeller which would have set up a \$100 billion Energy Independence Authority to provide public funds for nuclear power and synthetic fuel development. The banks under Commoner's system would be run by municipalities. Borrowers wouldn't pay interest, but would pay back in addition to the principal the annual savings in fuel.

Commoner estimates that after 10 years of the loan program, most single family homes and commercial buildings would be properly insulated and solar-equipped.

We admit there would be many bugs in such a system, but we like the idea of emphasizing individual efforts to conserve rather than corporate efforts to produce more energy.

David Brower, president of Friends of the Earth, has urged Americans to get out of the energy crisis mentality which demands destroying the environment to heat our homes. "If you go on a diet, for health or cosmetic reasons, you don't call it a food crisis," he said.

Let's expect leadership and support from the Carter Administration, but let's not expect miracles. In the end we must all call on our own resourcefulness and ingenuity to move toward energy self-sufficiency. It all begins at home.

—BH

Pass along some seasonal hope and charity. Contribute to the conservation group that looks after your land, health, and happiness.

- A few deserving examples:
- Colorado Open Space Council. 1325 Delaware, Denver, Colo. 80204
 - Environmental Action. 2239 E. Colfax Ave., Denver, Colo. 80206
 - Environmental Information Center. P.O. Box 12, Helena, Mont. 59601.
 - Idaho Conservation League. P.O. Box 844, Boise, Idaho 83701
 - Idaho Environmental Council. P.O. Box 1708, Idaho Falls, Idaho 83401
 - New Mexico Citizens For Clean Air and Water. 100 Circle Drive, Santa Fe, N.M. 87501
 - Northern Plains Resource Council. 437 Stapleton Building, Billings, Mont. 59101
 - Utah Environment Center. 8 E Broadway, Suite 610, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111



- South Dakota Environmental Coalition. P.O. Drawer G, University Station, Brookings, S.D. 57006
- Powder River Basin Resource Council. 150 W. Brundage St., Sheridan, Wyo. 82801
- United Family Farmers. c/o George Piper, Carpenter, S.D. 57322
- United Plainsmen. c/o Gary Sprecher, Mott, N.D. 58646
- Wyoming Outdoor Council. Box 1184, Cheyenne, Wyo. 82001

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Mather . . .

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Agriculture looked after others. Adding to the confusion, a number of units fell under the egis of the U.S. Army.

In the main the soldiers did a creditable job, but their trigger fingers itched. Perhaps they couldn't be condemned for trying to break the boredom in such God-forsaken places — often hundreds of miles from the nearest railroad — by taking potshots at the bear and elk they encountered out on patrol. The few tourists who girded their loins and crossed half a continent, only to be greeted by bad food, medieval roads, and shabby accommodations, likely as not returned home appalled at their experience. In short, the parks were a mess.

Then in 1914 occurred a fluke, a bright spot, a memorable vignette in the history of conservation. Franklin K. Lane, Secretary of Interior, sat brooding over his mail, as usual much of it complaining about his wretched parks. One signature caught his eye, that of Stephen T. Mather, an old friend. Lane shot back a wry note: "If you don't like the way the national parks are being run, come on down to Washington and run them yourself."

Mather came, and as fate would have it, he brought precisely the qualities that the languishing parks needed. From a California family with ancestors going back to the fiery New England preacher, Cotton Mather, he arrived in Washington, a figure larger than life — tall, blue-eyed, ally of avant-garde poetry, a man of "colossal popularity" in the business world, an "alloy of drive and amiability."

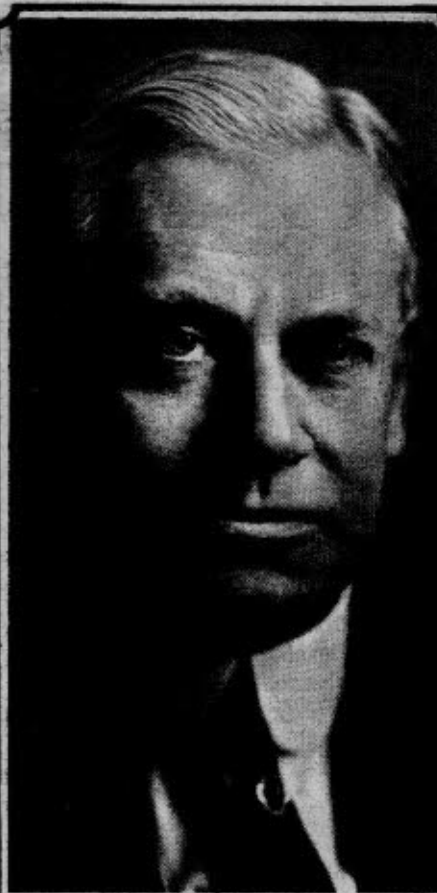
The new Assistant Secretary of Interior was an outdoor enthusiast, a member of the Sierra Club. Prone to breakdowns from overwork, he had often fled to the Western mountains for respite from his business in Chicago. Furthermore, he was not only ambitious, but rich — a windfall indeed for an agency that had trouble luring talent to high-level positions with salaries of \$2,750 a year. The cranky magnate "Borax" Smith owed much of his fortune to this advertising executive, who created the famous "20-Mule Team" trademark for him. Now Mather ran his own borax company, and at 47, wealthy and restless, he was casting about for some philanthropic cause. He was just the man for the job, and he had his heart and his pocketbook in it.

When Congressmen sleepily shoved aside requests to buy the privately-owned Tioga Road that ran through Yosemite, Mather piqued the consciences of wealthy friends. They pitched in half of the needed \$15,500; Mather wrote a personal check for the balance. When there was no provision in the lean budget to arm the rangers in Yellowstone, Mather bought each man a revolver.

Sometimes enthusiasm got the best of him. Waxing rhapsodic before a rally in Humboldt County, Calif., he made a spontaneous contribution of \$15,000 — no mean sum in 1919, even for a rich man — to help save the threatened redwoods. Buoyed by the crowd's cheers, he then pledged a like amount from the pocket of his traveling companion, Congressman William Kent, who sat on the platform stunned.

If all this smacks of boosterism, that's exactly what it was. The parks would remain in government limbo until Congress appropriated funds for access, expansion, and attractive facilities. But the politicians wouldn't move until the public visited the reserves in large enough numbers to make a favorable stir in Washington.

To break the vicious circle, Mather brought Robert Sterling Yard to Washington as the parks' first publicity chief. Because there was no money for the



National Park Service Photo

STEPHEN MATHER CONSERVATION PIONEER

This is the second in our series of articles on our forbears, the Rocky Mountain conservation pioneers. The people you'll read about here were not only competent explorers, scientists, or statesmen; they also struggled to shape public land policy. Some, like Stephen Mather, first chief of the National Park Service, were amusing, flamboyant characters as well.

Coming up soon in the series: Bernard DeVoto and Aldo Leopold.

unheard-of position, Mather juggled the bookkeeping. Officially, Yard worked for the Geological Survey, though he was on loan to Mather. The Princeton graduate received \$30 a month from the government, while Mather made up the rest of Yard's promised \$5,000 salary — more than his own job paid — out of his private purse. Together they sponsored conferences of leading citizens and produced leaflets celebrating the parks. They gave gentle twists to the arms of literary friends, who in a two-year period published a staggering 1,050 articles about the parks. Garnering further publicity and aid, the assistant secretary went fly-casting in Yellowstone with the Crown Prince of Sweden; he encouraged the magnanimity of John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who helped add needed chunks of territory in Acadia, Jackson Hole, and Yosemite.

Mather took a boyish delight in his aggressive stumping. The railroads worked closely with him in promoting Western travel, but in 1925 the Great Northern balked. It refused to remove a sawmill from Glacier National Park. Always keen for the dramatic, Mather appeared and invited tourists to a "demonstration." Then in mock dignity he lit the fuses to dynamite charges planted under the eyesore. With a wave of the hand, he announced that he was merely celebrating his daughter's 19th birthday, which it happened to be.

Congressmen found themselves on festive expeditions into mountains needing their attention. Mather knew how to make them forget their blisters and aching muscles. A rollicking camp fire entertainment might include a sham confrontation of the assistant secretary and a greasy mountain

man armed with a musket. When the official threatened to arrest him for carrying firearms, "... the old scout, in the process of explaining himself, would slide into a recital of Yellowstone yarns, lifted for the most part from the buffalo chronicles of Liver-Eatin' Johnson."

At a sumptuous Washington dinner, Mather ended a program with a trained myna bird, which concluded its tricks by addressing the assembled Congressmen and Cabinet officers: "What about appropriations?" The audience cheered — and got the message.

With this combination of tactics, Mather achieved his first goal within a year — to bring the national parks to the fore of the public's awareness. World War I helped the promotional effort. Cut off from travel to Europe, American tourists followed Mather's propaganda west to the improved park facilities. They came back marvelling at their discoveries; Congress' fingers loosened on the purse strings.

However, Stephen Mather, good businessman that he was, always looked ahead. The parks still limped along under the direction of three agencies. Even as his visitor statistics soared and the preserves grew in size and number, he realized that the units must be brought under a single bureau if they were to survive constant pressures for exploitation.

Conservationists had tried to pilot a parks bill through Congress in 1912 and 1913. Both times their efforts failed, torpedoed by those who scoffed at the preservation of wildlands. Such powerful government leaders as Gifford Pinchot, chief of the young Forest Service, wanted nothing to do with the birth of a bureau that would

Phony patriotism carried the day. Sheep baaed in Yosemite, miners blasted holes in Yellowstone.

Stephen Mather



National Park Service Photo

be his rival, that would preserve the forests he wanted to cut down. Nevertheless, the climate was changing, and in 1916 Representative Kent of California submitted a parks bill. It had been honed and polished by the jinn of the early conservation movement: Mather himself and his assistant Horace Albright; wilderness advocate Robert Marshall; the writer Enos Mills; Gilbert Grosvenor, editor of the *National Geographic Magazine*; and the landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead, whose father had designed Central Park. They were aided by J. Horace McFarland, whose American Civic Association had kept the drums beating for the parks.

While the bill's chief opponent, Congressman William Stafford, was flailing away on the golf links — where Mather's confederates lured him — the bill passed through the House on a drowsy Friday afternoon in August. Eager to sew up the scheme, Albright dashed over to the White House and convinced the legislative clerk to slip the bill in with others awaiting President Wilson's signature. The Park Service Act became law a few hours later.

Its provisions brought order out of chaos. They placed all federal parks under the control of the National Park Service, a new bureau under the Department of Interior. The organization's purpose was: "To conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wildlife and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such a manner and by such means as will leave

In short, the parks were a mess.

them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." Olmstead had contributed the noble words to the bill, but their contradiction concerning use versus protection would create endless headache for all directors of the service.

Nevertheless, as its first director, Mather had a more immediate problem on his hands. At the turn of the century San Francisco was looking for water and hydroelectric power. In 1913 — much to the grief of the aging John Muir — Congress granted the city the right to dam Hetch Hetchy, a valley in Yosemite Park. The reservoir turned out to be a mistake, a nightmare both for engineers and conservationists. Yet Hetch Hetchy stood as a precedent for further invasions of the parks.

Then in April of 1917 President Wilson dropped the olive branch, and the nation geared up for its first major foreign war. It was just the excuse that the exploiters needed. As would happen to a lesser degree in World War II, they wrapped themselves in the flag and cried that unless the parks were grazed, logged, and mined to support the war effort, the Huns would be hammering at the country's doors with mailed fists.

In fact, since the national parks held less than one per cent of the nation's land — much of that rocky peaks, park resources would have made little difference — except to "a handful of private bank balances." Nonetheless, the phony patriotism carried the day. Sheep baaed in Yosemite, miners blasted holes in Yellowstone. Mather did the best he could to brake the damage; after the armistice he ordered the exploiters out.

Yet the next five years forced him to consolidate gains with one hand, while fighting off new raids with the other. This time the struggle seemed hopeless; his boss, Secretary of Interior Franklin Lane, developed a passion for water development. Special interests applauded as the secretary instructed the Park Service to submit

favorable reports on bills that would place dams and canals — the paraphernalia of irrigation and hydroelectric projects — within the parks. Mather stormed: "Is there not some place in this great nation of ours where lakes can be preserved in their natural state; where we and all generations to follow us can enjoy the beauty and charm of mountain waters in the midst of primeval forests?" His rhetorical question left Lane unmoved. However, just as Mather was about to resign in disgust, the secretary quit to take a job as vice-president of a Baltimore bank.

There was no stronger advocate of park sanctity than Lane's replacement, John Barton Payne. With President Wilson's help, the new secretary persuaded senators sponsoring the federal water-power bill of 1920 to exclude the parks from their schemes — but not without damage. The amendment safeguarded only those parks already in existence. Thus the preserves remained vulnerable, and the way was left open for the Eisenhower Administration's proposal to build Echo Park Dam in Dinosaur National Monument, a treasure house of fossils lying across the Utah-Colorado border. Thirty-five years after Wilson's compromise the Echo Park dispute would galvanize the conservation movement into its present fighting shape.

Foreseeing such troubles, Mather made a strong case for absolute preservation in his 1920 report to Congress. He wrote that the parks should be, "... conserved in a complete state of nature for the use of the whole people and should remain undisturbed in their natural condition for all time." Casting an eye on Pinchot, he added, "In fact, this is the only real distinction between the national parks and national forests..."

For all he did to pass on the parks untouched, Mather had blind spots. His first job was to popularize the parks, and in his

Gifford Pinchot, chief of the young Forest Service, wanted nothing to do with the birth of a bureau that would be his rival.

efforts to entice tourists he threw the reserves open to America's new plaything, the automobile — not envisioning today's traffic snarls and pollution in the very midsts of the nation's most scenic prizes. He believed that parks were for people, but the early Park Service did not foresee the specter of overuse from millions of visitors swarming over its lands, each year placing heavier demands on fragile and limited resources.

As to politics, Mather survived three presidents — Wilson, Harding, and Coolidge; but he was a trusting man and hobnobbed dangerously with Albert B. Fall, Harding's Secretary of Interior. As Representative Kent put it, Fall was a "bright and shining light in the world of crooks," eagerly lining his pockets with kickbacks from leases of government oil lands. The resulting scandal, Teapot Dome, stands second only to Watergate in the nation's exposés of corruption.

In contrast, Mather's own financial wheeling and dealing was an effective and selfless effort for the benefit of the parks. But it also raised cautious eyebrows and placed Horace Albright, his successor of modest means, in a difficult position.

Yet Stephen Mather's extraordinary accomplishments outweigh the peccadillos. Because of his enthusiasm the nation has the most splendid park system in the world. Despite three mental breakdowns from overwork during his 14 years of service, the director never quit until shortly before he died in 1929. He doubled the area

under Park Service control, adding seven parks and fifteen monuments to the system. He attracted bright, eager employees, set standards for sometimes shoddy concessionaires, and bought up private holdings within park borders.

Under his administration the Park Service won favor with Congress, which took special note when Mather laid plans for establishing parks in the East, where most of the population — and votes — were. His combined tactics crystallized the position of the parks as permanent legacies in the country's natural heritage. Upon his death in 1928, Congressman Camton summed up his career: "There never will come an end to the good he has done."

"There will never come an end to the good he has done."

All of the above quotes are from Robert Shankland's *Steve Mather of the National Parks*, a thorough biography and in-depth study of the early Park Service. Frank Graham, Jr. provides a concise sketch of Mather's life in *Man's Dominion: The Story of Conservation in America*. Of particular note, "America's National Parks," a supplement to the October 1976 issue of *Natural History*, analyzes the zeitgeist behind the movement for establishing parks. In it Joseph L. Sax makes a case for considering Yosemite, rather than Yellowstone, as the nation's first park.



Carter appointment rumors rampant

As the time draws near for President-elect Jimmy Carter to name his cabinet, new rumors of potential candidates abound.

The list of names of potential appointees for the Secretary of Interior post includes (but is surely not limited to): Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus, former Oregon Gov. Tom McCall a Republican, former Rep. Patsy Mink (D-Hawaii), U.S. Geological Survey water expert Luna Leopold, Rep. Morris Udall (D-Ariz.), Audubon Society President Elvis Stahr, National Wildlife Federation Executive Director Thomas Kimball, retiring Washington Gov. Dan Evans, retiring Utah Gov. Calvin Rampton, defeated Sen. Frank Moss (D-Utah), defeated Sen. Gale McGee (D-Wyo.), and retiring Western Governors Regional Energy Policy Office Director William Guy.

Guy is also being recommended by five Northern Plains governors for the Secretary of Agriculture position. Guy is a former governor of North Dakota.

A Rocky Mountain News story speculated that Thomas Quinn, head of the California Air Resources Board, may be named administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency.



Stephen Mather

National Park Service Photo

6-High Country News — Dec. 3, 1976

Shale. . .

(continued from page 1)

won't have to pay the remaining installments on their leases for at least a year.

The companies said they wanted the suspension because they couldn't meet federal clean air standards. In fact, natural existing air quality without any oil shale industry sometimes violates federal clean air standards. Sagebrush and pinyon pines release naturally high levels of ozone and nonmethane hydrocarbon, according to White River Shale Project Director Earl Ramsey. Also airborne dust during windstorms might pose a problem in meeting particulate air quality standards.

Part of the reason for the suspension request is that industry wants to see if the new Congress will strengthen or weaken the Clean Air Act.

Advisory panel member Wright believes "... the lessees are working and planning to use the suspension period to weaken the environmental laws and standards rather than spending equal energy to comply with existing standards and laws.

"What would the members of this panel think if I were to announce that the environmental organizations right now are requesting a suspension of all actions for a year or two until we strengthen the Clean Air Act?" she asked the advisory panel at a meeting in Utah this summer.

HANG THE ECONOMICS

Another reason for the suspension request is that shale oil can't compete with domestic and imported oil at today's prices.

In applying for a suspension, the companies said that a period of devastating inflation had raised the estimated cost to

construct a 100,000 barrel per day shale oil plant from about \$600 million to over \$1.5 billion. As a consequence, the projected price of shale oil required to yield a 15% return on investment exceeds \$20 per barrel. This price is not competitive with a \$12 world oil price today.

Ramsey told the advisory panel considering the suspension request, "... we think there is so much risk attached to this development, both economic risks and other risks, that private industry is not able to supply the financial burden of providing the technology."

Ramsey proposed construction of a demonstration full-scale shale oil plant jointly funded with the federal government to "demonstrate and find solutions to the problems that we see before us."

White River Shale and other oil shale interests have also recommended Congressional passage of synthetic fuels financial assistance legislation. Such legislation, twice rejected by the last Congress, would set up a system of federal loan guarantees and price supports to get the industry started and insure its competitive position.

Carolyn Johnson, a citizen conservationist with the Colorado Open Space Council's Mining Workshop, says those that back federal subsidies for oil shale want "the Federal Energy Administration to believe that, hang the economics — as they long ago hung the environment — oil shale can and will be developed no matter what the cost to the taxpayer."

Orlan Cook, chairman of the Uintah Basin Energy Planning Council, says all the talk about oil shale's uncertain future has made advanced planning impossible. "Nobody knows which way to plan," he says.

"We need many answers, sure answers as to the economic viability of producing oil

from oil shale over the long period of time," he told the advisory panel. "It will cost us substantial money to build our community facilities, housing, roads, schools, and to absorb the impact created by the construction of a full-scale commercial oil shale plant. We cannot and hope not to build our people into debt for a project that may never materialize."

Rees Madsen, director of research for White River Shale, says the way to minimize adverse social impact is to take the uncertainty away from the planners. "If the government has seen the need for this energy source, it ought to be willing to help develop it," he says. "There is lead time now, so we shouldn't have to enter a crash program sometime in the future."

Conservationists argue that the best way to minimize adverse impacts is to leave the resource in the ground until it becomes environmentally, economically, and socially desirable to extract it.

QUIET RESERVATIONS

The most vocal opposition to oil shale development comes from environmentalists in Colorado. Utah environmentalists have kept a low profile on the issue. When Colorado conservationists like Johnson have ventured into Utah oil shale issues, they have been labeled "carpetbaggers" by Utah development boosters.

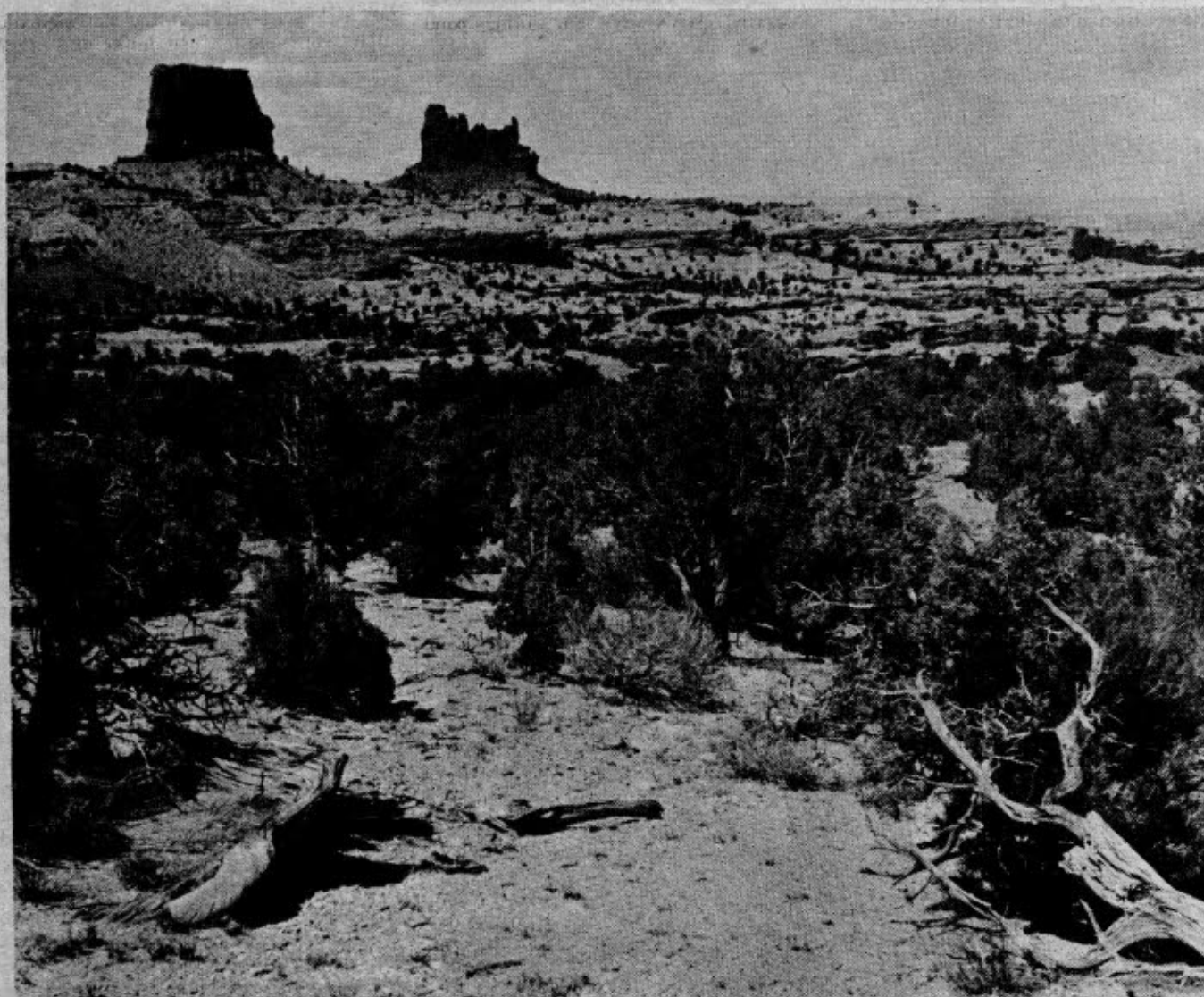
Yet, not everyone in Utah is eager to see the wild area around Vernal boom with new industry.

One young Vernal resident, who asked not to be identified, says, "I came out here from the strip mined lands of the Eastern United States. I wanted to come where I could hunt and fish and float wild rivers and enjoy the great openness and clean air and solitude that we have here. Where will I go when the mining changes what we have? What will I have to raise my son



UTAH'S OIL SHALE COUNTRY is a land of great diversity which supports an abundance of wildlife. The lease tracts are in a pinyon pine, juniper community which is good habitat for deer, antelope, ground squirrels, and other animals. The river bottoms support Canada geese, heavers, eagles, and others. At the higher elevations you may find golden-mantled ground squirrels (pictured above), elk, bear, and bighorn sheep. If development occurs, the increase in human activity in the region will probably have more impact on the wildlife than the actual mining.

Photo by Stouffer Productions



LEASED FOR MINING. Pictured above is a tract of public land in Utah leased for oil shale development. The federal government has leased four 5,000 acre tracts — two in Utah, and two in Colorado. Millions of dollars were bid for the leases. Now all four leases have been

suspended for a year. The Utah tracts would be mined by underground room-and-pillar method. Mine wastes would be dumped in neighboring canyons.

Photo by Dorothy Harvey

with, but a repeat of what I left behind?"

Federal and state resource managers in the Vernal area see industrial development as inevitable. "I think with oil shale development, it is not if, but when," says Lloyd Ferguson, district manager for the U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

Even if oil shale was not developed, the region seems destined for change. The Vernal area is underlain with oil, gas, gilsonite, phosphate, and tar sands, as well as oil shale. A dam is proposed for the White River to provide water for oil shale development, irrigation, and other uses. (The White is a candidate for wild and scenic river protection.) North of the oil shale tracts Moon Lake Electric is planning a coal-fired power plant.

All this development is scheduled for an area now populated primarily by deer, elk, moose, bighorn sheep, wild horses, golden eagles, coyotes, Canada geese, and beaver.

It's a unique area — both from the standpoint of wildlife abundance and solitude, and from the standpoint of valuable mineral occurrence. Something has to give.

SWINGING PENDULUM

One local citizen, George Cozert, told the advisory panel this summer he is ready to (continued on page 7)

Dec. 3, 1976 — High Country News-7

Local rancher challenges AMAX grazing permit

by Marjane Ambler

Many ranchers in the West have financially borderline operations because of the low price they get for cattle combined with the constantly escalating costs of their feed and equipment. Now they are also facing a growing competition for grazing rights on public lands.

The competition is coming from corporations. It usually occurs quietly, as large corporate interests acquire ranches and

the grazing permits that go with them. But in Meeteetse, Wyo., the battle between a local family rancher, Arthur Thomas, and AMAX, an international metals corporation, is surfacing and becoming a controversy among some of the ranchers in the area.

Thomas is relying on the Forest Service's own policies and objectives to back up his argument that he should get a contested grazing permit on national forest land — and not AMAX. AMAX, which is proposing

a copper mine nearby, now holds the permit temporarily while the Forest Service ponders its decision.

According to the Forest Service manual, one of the agency's four principal objectives is to "promote stability of family ranches and farms within local communities." Furthermore, Forest Service employees are instructed to "protect the established family farms and ranches against unfair competition in using Forest Service administered range."

VALUABLE PERMIT

The Forest Service considers the grazing permit that AMAX holds the most productive per acre in the area. It's also the third largest — 326 head. When AMAX bought the Sunshine Ranch, the grazing permit went with it, which is standard procedure. While technically grazing permits cannot be bought or sold, the Forest Service gives priority to the new ranch owner. Mortgage companies consider grazing permits as part of the assets of a ranch, and a permit such as the one AMAX now holds adds considerably to the value of a ranch.

For Arthur Thomas and his son, Fred, and their families, getting the grazing permit would "make the difference between a losing proposition and a paying proposition."

For AMAX, the grazing permit is part of a ranch that the corporation bought to get a copper mine tailings pond site — one of four sites the firm is considering. Another tailings pond site that it first considered had been rejected because of environmental considerations. AMAX wanted to buy only the tailings pond site but couldn't get it without buying the entire ranch. Jim Cooper of AMAX says four tailings pond sites are still being examined.

For the Forest Service, the grazing permit has become one giant headache. District Ranger Dalton Ellis refused to tell HCN what his office had recommended be done with the permit. However, if he had recommended that it be granted, AMAX would have its "term permit" by now, a permit that allows it grazing rights for 10 years. The regional Forest Service office in Denver is expected to make the final decision soon. But Ellis says that no matter what the decision is, it will be challenged by either Thomas or AMAX.

PROMOTING CORPORATIONS?

In the Shoshone National Forest, as well as in other public lands across the country, the question of public grazing rights going to giant corporate interests is a growing concern among some people. Forest Service

officials indicate, for example, that some of the grazing permits in the Shoshone National Forest are held by Hunt Oil Co., officers of Ford Motor Co. and Quaker Oats, and by the Disney family.

Ranger Ellis seems to take his responsibility seriously. He is trying to make decisions based on the Forest Service manual, but he says the language used in the manual is vague. "Promoting a family farmer could be patting him on his back. . . . If it said give him the grazing permit, there would be no question," he says.

He admits there's a growing trend. "There's becoming fewer and fewer local ranchers who are running cattle on permits," he says, because of the growing numbers of corporations. However, because of the vague wording, he doesn't know how to deal with the problem.

The AMAX grazing permit decision likely won't be the test case that will settle the question of whether large corporations have the right to grazing permits if local ranchers contest them.

Instead, the AMAX decision will likely rest on the results of an investigation the Forest Service is conducting to determine if AMAX violated conditions of the permit.

AMAX VIOLATIONS?

Anyone who obtains a grazing permit must certify that all the cattle being grazed on that permit are owned by him. The Forest Service has asked AMAX for affidavits to prove that it owned cattle grazed on the permit in 1975. The Forest Service file on AMAX reveals several curious things: AMAX never complied with a request for a cancelled check on the sale of the cattle in question. A bill of sale says the cattle were sold for "one dollar and other valuable considerations." And a state A-form, the legal document required to certify sales, is dated a year later than the date AMAX said the sale took place.

Cooper denies there has been any wrongdoing. "As far as I know," he told HCN, "there's no problem. We attempted to follow all the requirements, one of which is owning the animals."

Thomas' concern with the irregularities of the permit has prompted Wyoming Sen. Clifford Hansen to ask Forest Service Chief John McGuire to investigate the application.

Thomas says that he and other ranchers in the area who support his cause believe that if they had tried anything like what is being charged against AMAX, the Forest Service wouldn't allow them to keep their permits. "We'd be out of there by sunset," he says.



FLOODED OUT. Oil shale development in Utah may require a dam on the White River. A dam has been proposed for the section of the White pictured above. The river bottom provides important wildlife habitat. Raptors nest on the river's cliffs. This section of the White has also been proposed for wild and scenic river designation.

Photo by Dorothy Harvey.

Shale. . .

(continued from page 6)

make the trade off: "I was born and raised in the West and have enjoyed the environment we have here, and the solitude of the wildlife and the environment we find in the mountains. . . . But I don't think we want to sacrifice our economic standing, our future for our children, for the pristine qualities of our environment. . . ."

Cozert said that the pendulum seemed to be swinging to a point "where we are so concerned about the environment we forget other problems."

Environmentalists perceive the pendulum to be in a completely opposite position. They fear too many energy production decisions are being made on the basis of keeping economic development growing, despite important environmental considerations.

Pro-development forces will be working on a number of fronts in the coming months. They hope to:

- Weaken the Clean Air Act.
- Push more federal oil shale leases in Colorado and Utah for in-situ development. In-situ involves underground combustion of oil shale and extraction by shale oil wells instead of mining. The Interior Department plans a lease sale of in-situ tracts next year.

—Have the state of Utah take over control of much of the federal oil shale land in the state. The federal government owes the state some federal land as a condition of statehood. Industry hopes the state will

have fewer restrictions on development.

- Push off-site disposal legislation. Federal law prohibits industry from dumping oil shale wastes off the lease site. Industry hopes to amend the law to allow waste disposal on adjacent lands.

- Push synthetic fuels loan guarantees and price supports in Congress.

- Try to win approval of water development projects including the White River Dam.

Anti-development groups will also be active. They hope to:

- Have the Carter Administration develop a national energy policy which emphasizes energy conservation and renewable energy development (solar, wind, geothermal, tidal, etc.) and discourages oil shale development.

- Block legislation which would subsidize oil shale or allow off-site disposal.

- Strengthen the Clean Air Act.

- Give the White River wild and scenic river protection.

- Block unacceptable in-situ leases such as one proposed for a roadless area in the Book Cliffs near Vernal.

Dorothy Harvey is a resident of Manitowish, Wisc., who spends many of her summer vacations working on Western natural resource issues. She has studied phosphate development in Idaho and wilderness in the Uinta Range on the Utah-Wyoming border. This past summer she traveled around Utah in her camper and helped HCN prepare several stories on Utah environmental issues.

Bruce Hamilton is the news editor of HCN.



**Northern Rockies
Action Group, Inc.**

JOB OPENING

The Northern Rockies Action Group has a job opening for a person with skills and experience in community organizing. This person will work extensively in Idaho, Wyoming, and Montana with local citizen groups. The objective will be to train citizens in organizing skills. The person filling this position will be expected to work "on-site" for periods of up to three to six weeks. For more information contact the Northern Rockies Action Group, 9 Placer, Helena, Mont. 59601 (406) 442-6615.

A Public Interest Support Team

8-High Country News — Dec. 3, 1976

GOLDEN EAGLE COUNTRY

by Richard R. Olendorff, drawings by Robert Katona. Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1975. \$12.95, hard cover, 202 pages.

Review by Bruce Hamilton

It's always more fun to go bird watching with someone who is a little better than you are at ferreting out our feathered friends. In the beginning of your birding career, all you may see is a little black object flapping furiously out of the field of vision of your binoculars. But a patient, experienced birder can teach you to see wingbars, eye stripes, rump patches, and other distinguishing markings. Soon the black object is revealed to you as being one of the most ornate, exquisite members of the animal kingdom.

Once you've learned to see birds and realize that they do indeed look very similar to the extravagantly colored creatures

in your field guide, there are still other tricks to learn. By accompanying an experienced birder you can learn where to look for certain species of birds, how to tell what birds are around without seeing them (using other clues such as song, nests, carrion, and droppings), and what certain bird behavior is all about.

Finding the expert birder who has the time and the patience to teach you all this is not always easy. But if you like to look at raptors in the shortgrass prairie east of the Rocky Mountains your task is now much simpler. You can sit down in your living-room with **Golden Eagle Country** and have a "field trip" with one of the best — Richard R. Olendorff.

Olendorff spent several years of his life scouring a section of shortgrass prairie in eastern Colorado in search of nesting eagles, hawks, and owls. He walked creek bottoms, climbed cottonwoods, rappelled over cliffs, and drove along back roads in

search of his quarry. Once the raptors were located, he would observe courtship behavior, record hatching dates, weigh and band the young, and try to understand as much as he could about the life history of these remarkable birds of prey. The chronicle of his scientific adventures in this oft-times-ignored environment is recorded in **Golden Eagle Country**. The delightful, remarkably detailed drawings by Robert Katona add immeasurably to the text.

Olendorff continually complains that he has been too lab-locked: that he has spent his life studying the natural world from the university classroom instead of learning directly from nature. Now he looks at everything academically.

True, Olendorff lacks the spirit of the poet raised in the wilds. But he has an equally-important gift — the ability to see and articulate the poetry of science.

There is innate beauty in the way an



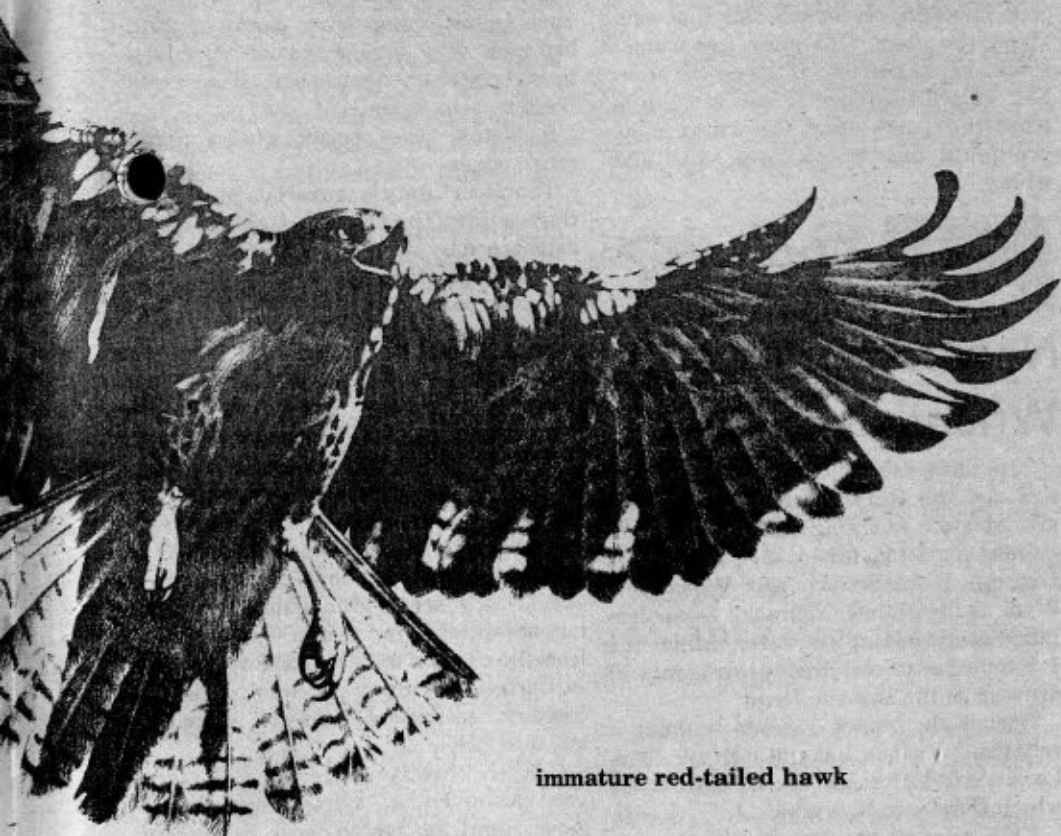
golden eagle fledglings

eagle soars through the sky. There is also scientific beauty in understanding the way the eagle's physical structure enables it to soar so gracefully. Olendorff understands both types of beauty, but he shines when he writes about the latter. He leaves the former to the poets.

Here is a sampling of Olendorff's observations from **Golden Eagle Country**:

"I saw the (marsh) hawk die from 20 feet and then, instead of disappearing into the tall cover, it flew sharply upward. Something emerged from the weeds to meet it; a feral cat was my first guess. The hawk seemed startled, but it circled back while I put the scope on it. Another stoop brought a large cock pheasant out of the grass — feet first! Fortunately, no contact was made; a pheasant's kick can easily break a raptor's wing or cut it open."





immature red-tailed hawk

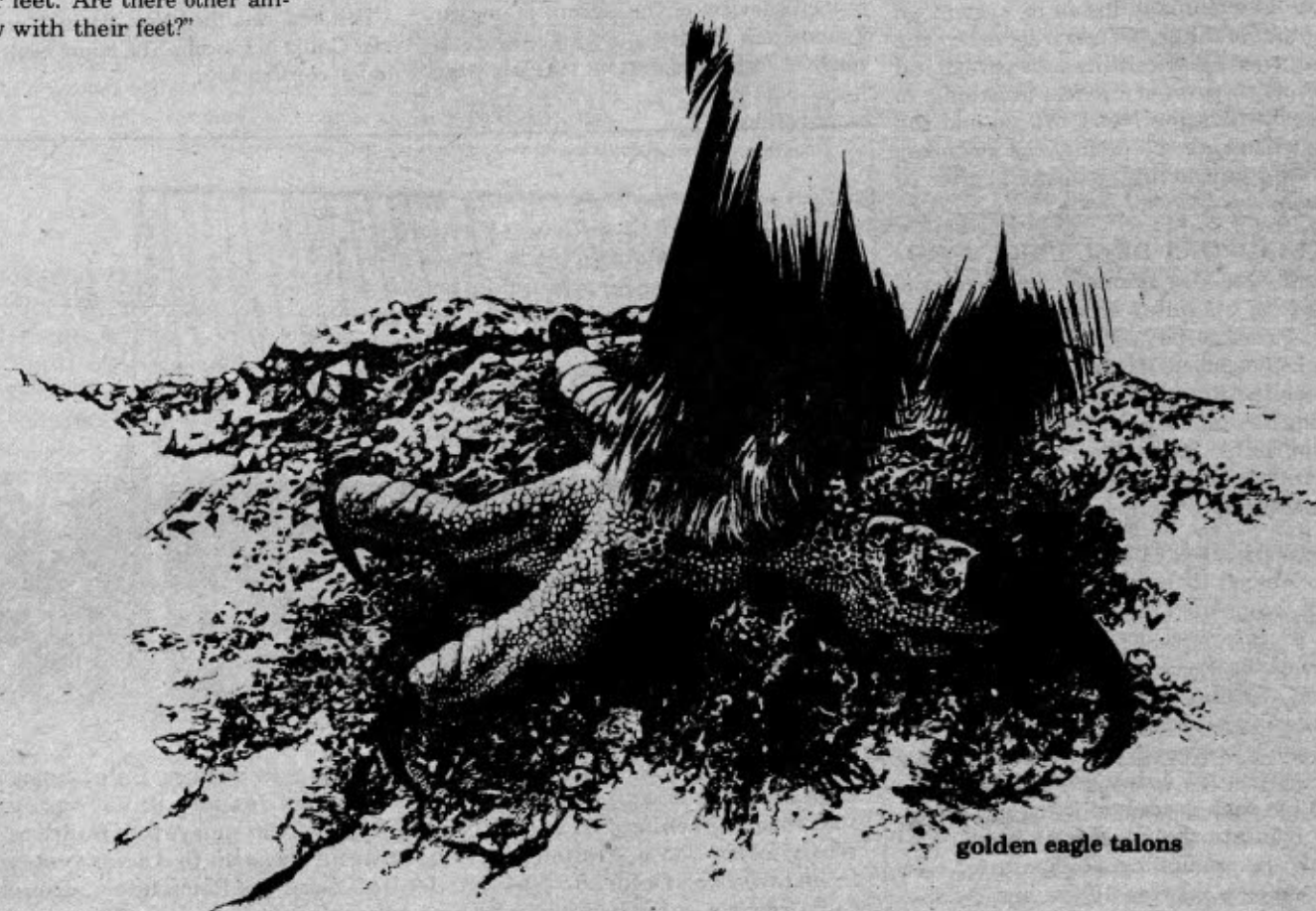
—“The hovering habit of rough-legs — no other buteo does it so often or so effectively — is an adaptation to hunting over treeless tundra. . . . Hovering is abandoned, to a certain extent, wherever leafless trees and utility poles afford adequately elevated perches from which to ambush unsuspecting prey. But rough-legs are slow to learn the fine art of perching, having previously perched only on cliffs and on the tundra. Instead of using large branches of trees, they settle into the small limbs of the crown — often with their feet spread and at different levels! Instead of landing on the platform or tail bar of a windmill, as an eagle would do, rough-legs perch on the top of motionless blades. They are dumped off by the slightest gusts, because once they are off center, their weight helps to carry the blades around.”

—“Jackrabbits, if overtaken by a hawk, will sometimes jump high into the air at the last moment and actually let a hawk pass almost underneath. Upon landing, they usually run in a different direction and travel a hundred feet or more while the hawk reorganizes its pursuit.”

—“The Swainson's hawk's method of grasshopper slaughter is also laughable. They often kill hoppers by running after them — not by flying — and then squashing the bite-sized prey by spasmodically clenching their feet. Are there other animals that chew with their feet?”



golden eagle and young



golden eagle talons

All drawings by Robert Katona from GOLDEN EAGLE COUNTRY.

10-High Country News — Dec. 3, 1976



The HCN Hot Line

energy news from across the country

COAL MINE GREENHOUSE.

Scientists at the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture are experimenting with using abandoned underground coal mines to heat greenhouses. Warm air is pumped from the mines to a greenhouse located at the mine mouth. Electricity is needed for the ventilation fans, but no auxiliary heating is needed. Mine-heated greenhouses use one-seventh as much electricity as electrically-heated greenhouses. Early tests indicate that gases in the mine air do not damage plants, according to a report in *The Mountain Eagle*.

INDIANS RESIST OIL CHANGE.

Faced with the prospect of offshore oil workers taking over their village, Tlingit Indians in Yakutat, Alaska, have imposed some tough conditions on the oil companies. According to an Associated Press report, the Indians control the city council and the native village corporation, and thus control most of the land. They prohibit the oil companies from owning property, housing employees locally, or constructing land-based storage and production facilities.

SOLAR ENERGY METERING. The Ocala, Fla., city council has agreed to allow a solar water heater promoter to test marketing solar-heated water in the community. Under the plan, Wilcon Corp. would install and maintain solar water heaters on 25 homes and charge the homeowners a set rate per Btu for solar-heated water which will be cheaper than electrically-heated water. The solar water heaters would have a Btu meter on them to measure solar energy used to heat water. Wilcon hopes to eventually install its system on over half of the 22,000 homes served by the city-owned electric utility and then expand into other parts of Florida, according to *Solar Utilization News*. Wilcon and the city will share the profits. The customer has the option to buy the unit for \$1 after 10 years.

ALASKA GAS DEAL DISCLOSED.

Alaska Gov. Jay Hammond has proposed swapping his state's share of natural gas from Prudhoe Bay for support of an all-Alaska gas pipeline route, according to the Associated Press. Hammond has proposed selling 500 billion cubic feet of natural gas from Prudhoe Bay to three major gas companies, but only if the all-Alaska gas route is selected by Congress and the President.

FRENCH MEAN BUSINESS. When France started its conservation program, it meant business. The country plans to save 16% of its projected 1985 petroleum use. Some of the special measures France has taken, according to the *L. A. Times*, are: prohibiting all advertising which encourages energy consumption, including portable heaters; tax deduction of \$1,500 plus \$200 for each dependent for homeowners who insulate their homes to meet new standards; prohibiting all illuminated advertisements between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m.; requiring individual meters for apartments in apartment buildings; a decree giving the police the right to enter premises to inspect heating systems.

Wheatland— should permit be revoked?

Opponents of the 1,500 megawatt Laramie River Station in Wheatland, Wyo., have won a significant battle in the long fight over the plant. The Wyoming Industrial Siting Council has voted to order the Missouri Basin Power Project to show why the plant's siting permit should not be revised or revoked. If MBPP can't make such a showing, the siting council will re-open the siting hearings.

The council's decision came as a result of questions raised by the Laramie River Conservation Council about the power project's water supply sources and the safety of the Grayrocks Dam, which would store 104,000 acre-feet for the plant.

In its original hearings, the company said that it wouldn't tap a shallow agricultural aquifer for water. Deep wells would supply 5,000 acre-feet per year, to supplement water supplies stored in the reservoir. Tests on the planned wells indicate, however, that they will supply only about 1,000 acre-feet of usable water, so the company has applied for permission to get 25,000 acre-feet over a three-year period from the shallow aquifer. Irrigators currently take only about 7,000 acre-feet annually from the aquifer.

The second problem revolves around charges that the Grayrocks Dam will be unsafe. Soil tests originally done on the material under the dam indicated that seepage through the soils would be only 100 linear feet per year. Subsequent tests show that seepage is actually 100,000 to 300,000 linear feet annually.

In addition, the abutments to the dam are a porous material and also present potential for seepage.

LRCC contends that these seepage problems may make the dam structure unsafe. MBPP's engineer for the dam, J. T. Banner Associates of Laramie, Wyo., contends that the permeability presents no unusual problems and can be dealt with under current engineering technology.

Exactly what will result from the siting council's review of the permit is unclear. Foundations for the power plant are already being poured and, at this late stage,

water supply problems probably won't present a deciding economic factor that would abort the plant. One state government source says, however, "If the power project had known then (during early planning) what they know about the water supply problems, they would have gone elsewhere."



Nebraska sues over Wheatland project

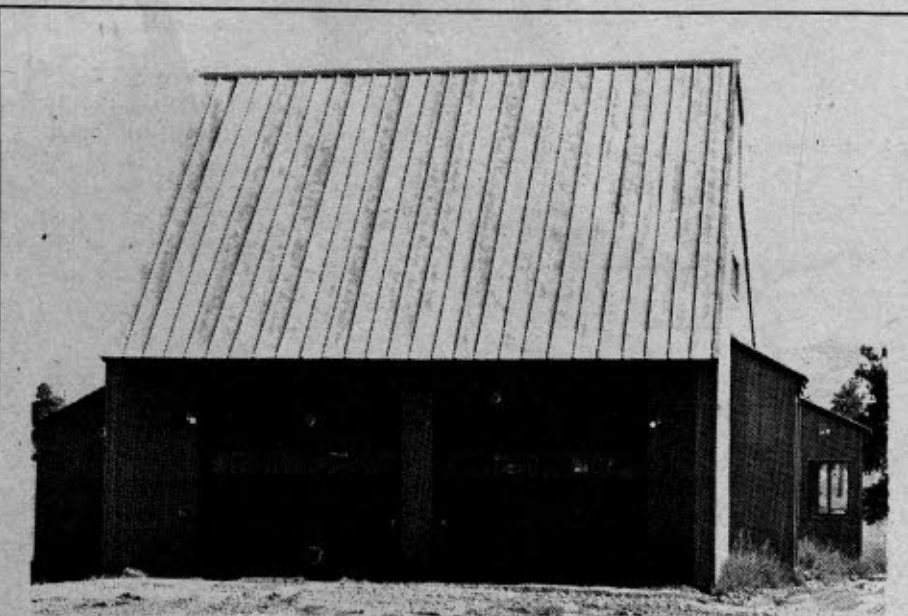
The state of Nebraska has filed suit against the Rural Electrification Administration charging that its environmental impact statement on the proposed Laramie River Station near Wheatland, Wyo., is inadequate. Nebraska is particularly concerned about water which the 1,500 megawatt coal-fired power plant will draw from the Laramie River.

Part of the project involves building a reservoir on the Laramie River. The Laramie flows into the North Platte River which flows into Nebraska.

REA released the impact statement in May as a prerequisite to granting loan guarantees to help finance the project. In the suit, Nebraska asks the court to restrain REA from issuing loan guarantees and calls for preparation of a new impact statement which more adequately addresses the water issues.

Nebraska claims the impact statement failed to supply sufficient data on the impact of the project on Nebraska water quality and ground water quantity. The document also failed to consider the impact of reduced flows on outdoor recreation and whooping crane habitat along the Platte. Alternative plant sites and alternative cooling methods were insufficiently addressed, the state says.

The suit was filed Nov. 24 in U.S. District Court in Lincoln. The plant is already under construction.



SOLAR FIRE STATION. The fire station in Pagosa Springs, Colo., hasn't used anything except heat from the sun since last January. Its 700 square foot solar heat collectors cost \$5,000 and heat a 2,700 square foot building. When it went into operation Jan. 2, the structure was the first solar system in southwestern Colorado. Now, builder Dan Armijo of Eaton International Corp. reports, solar heating in the area is becoming contagious. "I am very pleased with the enthusiasm developing, especially in the housing industry," Armijo told HCN. His building managed to maintain a minimum temperature of 52 degrees, despite several days of sub-zero weather and two periods of three overcast days in a row.

Reckoning from Washington

by Lee Catterall

Although accused of being vague on some issues, campaigner Jimmy Carter had some very specific and unkind things to say about energy company designs on Western coal fields.

Suddenly, those specifics are acquiring rough edges.

The uncertainty is caused by a high-level clash within the Carter transition team, heightened by the angry departure of a top aide and questions about whom the next President will entrust with responsibility in his administration.

Joseph Browder, whom Carter trusted for advice on energy and environmental matters during the campaign, recently left Carter's team in a huff, charging he had been stripped of responsibility.

Browder, formerly head of the Environmental Policy Center, a Washington lobby, remains convinced that Carter's "instincts" on energy and environmental matters are similar to his own. However, he fears the views of some top aides may result in Carter making presidential decisions based on recommendations that are too limited in scope.

Calling Browder "very outspoken and very controversial," Carter personnel director Hamilton Jordan denied in a recent press conference that his departure was connected to any policy or personnel conflict.

"I understand he (Browder) quit because he was not given a top job," Jordan said.

Browder's views, while controversial, are no more so than those taken by Carter during the campaign. Carter opposed plans in Congress to provide multi-million dollar loan guarantees to the energy industry for turning coal into synthetic oil and gas and for financing oil shale development. He opposed further coal leasing in the West and favored strong federal strip mining regulation. Browder has been an advocate of all those Carter positions.

However, Browder said there is now disagreement within the transition team over what positions Carter should take on such issues. He said Jordan and policy director Stuart Eizenstat are in conflict with young conservationists who have been advising Carter on energy issues.

Browder was particularly vexed at what he described as a deal made during the campaign between a Carter fundraiser and a group of independent oil producers in Texas.

He said Frank Moore, Carter's chief fundraiser in the South during the primary campaign, agreed to deny certain conservation-minded persons key roles in return for a promise by the oilmen to contribute \$200,000 to the Carter effort.

Two of the aides, Browder said, are S. David Freeman, who directed a Ford Foundation study that concluded two years ago that energy growth should be sharply reduced, and Lee White, who, as a member of the Federal Power Commission, opposed deregulation of natural gas.

Browder said he learned of the "deal" in August when Moore insisted that Freeman be excluded from an energy briefing for Carter.

Jordan has denied there was any such deal. "That's not true," he said. "I don't know what he (Browder) was talking about." Browder said Jordan does know of the agreement.

Freeman has remained a member of Carter's transition team. He is the liaison to the Energy Research and Development Administration.

BN probing Big Horns

by Dan Whipple

BurWest, a joint venture of Burlington Northern Railroad and Westinghouse, is conducting intensive uranium exploration along the entire BN right-of-way from Wisconsin to the West Coast. However, most interest has been shown in the Big Horn Basin of northcentral Wyoming and in Montana.

Most of the activity is in the foothills of the Pryor Mountains in Wyoming. One area resident says, "The Pryor Basin has drill holes all over it."

Local officials fear that a sudden population increase will occur in the area from a uranium "boom," straining public services past the breaking point.

BurWest has 220 claims on about 2,500 acres of uranium land in Big Horn County and an unknown number of claims in Montana. Jack Avery, the BurWest manager in Billings, Mont., says that the company is merely in the exploration stages and has made no decision about whether to proceed with development in the area.

Planners for Big Horn County fear that BurWest's activity signals pending development and a sudden influx of people. A report prepared in August of this year for the Big Horn Planning Commission suggests that an influx of 900 to 1,160 people could be expected from the uranium development. The present population of the north end of the county, where most of the development would occur, is about 5,100 people.

The largest town in the area is Lovell, population of 2,600. Under the most probable development levels, the county planners estimate that between 400 and 525

additional residents would settle there, an increase of 15% to 20%. Smaller towns in the area could as much as double in population.

The planning commission report estimates that, for the six potentially impacted communities, to provide the most basic community services alone could cost as much as \$2,905,000.

Financial arrangements from uranium-related growth could present additional problems. Current government assistance is now directed toward coal impact areas. Development resulting from a uranium

Current assistance is directed toward coal impact. Development resulting from a uranium boom in Big Horn County, Wyo., may run into financing problems as a result.

boom in Big Horn County may run into financing problems as a result of this definition of "energy impact."

Finally, if uranium mining does become a reality in the Big Horn Basin, the possibility exists that a uranium enrichment plant could be built, according to the planning report.

Yellowtail Reservoir and flow rights from the lower Big Horn River could provide 600,000 acre-feet of water for such a facility. Electricity is potentially available from coal either from within the county or from the Powder River Basin. In addition,



AN OPEN PIT uranium mine and exploration roads near Crooks Gap, Wyo. Some form of uranium mining is projected for north-central Wyoming in the Big Horn Basin.

since the exploration itself is being conducted along the Burlington Northern right-of-way, a railroad would be within easy access.

Should an enrichment plant be built, it would employ another 1,100 people and occupy about 1,000 acres of land.

While much of this development may be in the future — if at all — the planners for

the county are worried that it will occur without warning to the local communities, making planning for the impact more difficult. So far, BurWest hasn't contacted any community officials in the area to inform them of development plans. Lack of communication, if continued, could result in compounding of the impact problems, the county fears.

NO NUCLEAR NEED. Surprisingly soon after the sound defeat of a nuclear safeguards initiative in Montana, a state advisory council has recommended that all forms of nuclear energy be discouraged in Montana. The recommendation was part of a progress report from Lt. Gov. Bill Christiansen, chairman of the Montana Energy Advisory Council. The council was set up to formulate a state energy plan to be submitted to the 1977 state legislature. Nuclear power plants should not be needed in Montana because of the large coal reserves available, according to the report.

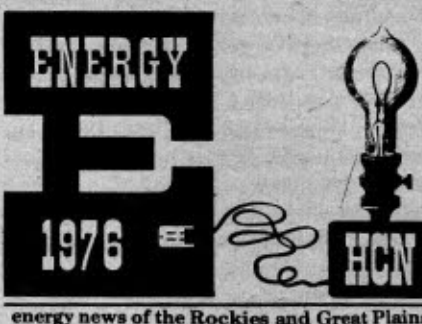
GASIFICATION CAUTION. American Natural Resource Co. says it has not abandoned plans for a coal gasification plant in Mercer County, N.D., but that it is being more cautious. The company has decided to establish a reserve of \$9.6 million, just in case it loses its gasification investment. The company is also considering joining forces with other gas firms to finance the project, ANR Chairman Arthur Seder told North Dakotans this month.

IMPACT LOANS PROPOSED. A committee set up to advise Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm on energy impact communities has proposed creating a state fund to provide low interest loans and grants. Other recommendations included creation of an energy impact financial assistance office, which would coordinate state actions involving energy impact; legislation to better distribute tax revenues between impacted municipalities and counties; long-range financial contingency planning; and comprehensive state and national energy policies, according to United Press International.

GIANT WINDMILL TEST. The U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration plans to begin operating a 200-kilowatt wind electric generator near Clayton, N.M., next year. The windmill, the world's largest, will help generate electricity for the town's 3,000 residences, according to United Press International. The Clayton municipal utility will operate the windmill. It hopes the windmill will cover from 5% to 15% of the town's demand on windy days.

SHALE SHUFFLE. Just as Shell Oil Co. stepped out of Western Colorado oil shale projects, Occidental Petroleum Corp. stepped in. Shell officials cited economic reasons for pulling out of projects on both private and public lands in November. Shell had been a part of the Colony Development Operation on Parachute Creek and the group of companies that leased tract C-b in the Interior Department's prototype oil shale leasing program. Occidental, which has stepped into the C-b tract group, says it plans to test its modified in situ oil shale mining technology.

TENNECO PLANS FOR MONT. Tenneco, Inc., has plans to site a large, coal-fired energy complex in eastern Montana, according to the Northern Plains Resource Council (NPRC). The plans include strip mines and coal gasification, liquefaction, and electrical generating plants along the North Dakota-Montana border. NPRC points out that one of Tenneco's subsidiaries, Intake Water Co., has filed for over 550,350 acre-feet of water from the Yellowstone River, Fort Peck Reservoir, and Powder River.



energy news of the Rockies and Great Plains

NEW COALITION? Governors of 16 Western states will meet in Denver Dec. 10 to discuss issues including whether they should set up a regional agency to deal with energy related matters in the West. The comprehensive energy office would replace existing organizations including the Western Governors Regional Energy Office and the Western Interstate Nuclear Board.

COLO. EIS RUSH. Interior Secretary Thomas Kleppe is eager to approve the draft environmental impact statement for Northwest Colorado so he can approve several pending mining plans there before leaving office, Interior sources tell HCN. However, some Interior officials believe he won't be able to move as fast as he would like on other coal activities in the area since the impact statement doesn't cover all the tracts industry nominated for coal leasing. The EIS covers only six of the 100-plus tracts nominated in the area, according to Coal Week. Site specific EISs will probably be required for the remainder of the tracts which will slow down Kleppe's timetable if site specific EISs are prepared for Colorado leases, it will set a precedent for similar EISs in other regions which would further delay leasing.

MANDATORY SOLAR SYSTEMS? Pitkin County (Colo.) Commissioners are considering requiring that every new building in the county have a passive solar heating system. The requirement could be fulfilled by having a large south-facing window which would let sunlight fall on a heat collector inside, which could be a rock wall. At sundown, the window would be insulated with movable partitions, bead walls, or special curtains. Public hearings would have to be held before such a requirement could be made official, the commissioners say.

ANOTHER IDAHO COAL PLANT. After just having turned down a large proposed coal-fired generating facility near Boise, Idahoans are facing a decision on an even larger power plant. According to the Idaho Conservation League, Utah Power and Light Co. is about to propose a 1,600 megawatt power plant for a site about 30 miles east of Pocatello. Most of the electricity would be used to supply the needs of nearby large cities in Utah, according to the group.

SKINFLINTS REWARDED. As of Jan. 1, 1976, the state of Idaho has been rewarding its energy skinflints. A bill passed by the state legislature last session provides a state income tax deduction for 100% of the cost of installing insulation materials, including storm doors and windows. The same deduction is allowed for renewable energy systems such as heat pumps, solar equipment, wind generators, geothermal plumbing, and even fireplaces — if they are equipped with control doors, a regulated draft, and a metal heat exchanger. The deduction is good up to \$12,500.

12-High Country News — Dec. 3, 1976

Pilot study to help towns meet quandary of impact

According to a recent survey, at least 26 communities are considered impacted in Wyoming — a state with only 81 incorporated municipalities. Of those 26 communities, 15 had populations of less than 1,000 people.

Despite all the talk of new sources for federal and state impact funds that raise the hopes of the communities facing booms, in actuality it is difficult to get those funds where they're needed — especially WHEN they're needed, according to Dave Freudenthal, Wyoming state planning coordinator in the governor's office.

Gov. Ed Herschler and the planning office are concerned about these small towns, according to Freudenthal, and consequently they've designed a pilot project for impact assistance, which is apparently unique in the region. The project is designed to establish a formula that would turn the now complex, circuitous process for meeting impact into a straight-forward, step-by-step procedure which any community in Wyoming could follow.

"I'd hate to be in their position. These local officials go from one agency to another for funding and get the bureaucratic runaround," Freudenthal says. "These people don't have the extra manpower to fill out three or four applications to get one grant of funds," he says. Even after all the forms are properly filled out, the funds often aren't available.

For the study, Herschler chose two counties in southwestern Wyoming, Lincoln and Uinta, which may grow by more than 50% in the next six to ten years due to expansion of local coal, trona, phosphate, and petroleum industries. The state asked the communities to set up task forces composed of local and state officials and representatives of industry. The task forces, with the assistance of state staff members, compiled community profiles and then projected needs.

Freudenthal says the state hopes to avoid the failing common to most boom town studies, which say, "Yup, there's a problem; now what are we going to do about it?" This time, he says, the result will hopefully be a process that would be applicable to other towns.

Wyoming boom towns' histories reveal several hurdles to managing growth, Freudenthal says. Applications for federal funds are designed so that unless the population has already boomed, the funds are

not available. Population projections are discounted by the agencies. Often the projections are incorrect because of incomplete information from industry. In addition, Freudenthal says, federal money is skewed away from this region to the population centers.

To magnify this dilemma, the "lion's share" of state programs are either federally funded or tied to federal funds through matching monies. Examples are the highway, sewer and water, and social services

funds. "The discretion of the state for moving those dollars is not that much," Freudenthal says.

Maybe more of the solutions lie with the local governments, Freudenthal says. "There's a question of how much state agencies can — and ought — to do. . . . The relative responsibilities of the different levels of governments is not now clearly defined." Sometimes the local governments lack the professional expertise to effectively manage the increased social and economic problems, which they haven't en-

countered before.

Now the communities in Lincoln and Uinta counties are reviewing the document which projects their growth and are determining their own priorities for attention. Then state and federal officials will be helping to write applications for grants and loans. The project may prove that further state or federal legislation is needed.

"We may come up with just another dissertation on why these programs don't work," Freudenthal told HCN. "I hope not."

Conservation Voters focused on Montana races



TORIAN DONOHUE AND TIM SWEENEY helped organize campaigns for 25 legislative candidates in Montana under the auspices of the League of Conservation Voters. They see full-time legislative campaigning as a new tool which has tremendous potential for the region's environmentalists.

Because of the tax status of most environmental groups in the region, they are able to lobby on issues but are restricted from participating, as groups, in campaigns for specific candidates. Therefore, most groups limited their pre-election activity to publishing surveys showing voting records of incumbents and candidates' answers to environmental questions.

In Montana, however, the League of Conservation Voters (LCV) launched an effort unique in this region to actively participate in 25 targeted legislative races. Torian Donohue and Tim Sweeney worked more than full-time for several months prior to the election as "advance men."

Traveling more than 10,000 miles, the two helped local support groups form, raised money, made posters, helped prepare brochures, and propped the candidates up when they became discouraged, according to Donohue. Since both Donohue and Sweeney had worked with other environmental groups in the state, they were able to introduce the candidates to many helpful contacts.

Donohue estimates that they won half the races they targeted. However, other political observers say that legislators who beat LCV-supported candidates by only slim margins are more likely to be nervous about voting against environmental legislation in the coming session.

Aside from the value in helping sympathetic candidates, Donohue says she also learned that such an election effort can serve as a "tremendous pre-lobbying force." As they talked with candidates in the months prior to the election, they realized that industry lobbyists, such as Montana Power Co., had already been courting the candidates. This puts industry far ahead of environmental groups before the session even begins.

However, LCV efforts succeeded in building up early trust and friendship among candidates toward environmentalists this year. The importance of this relationship is illustrated by the response

LCV got at the Democratic platform convention. Donohue and Sweeney had contacted all their candidates before the convention and supplied them with information packets containing brochures on issues prepared by environmental groups and other materials. "They were glad to see us; they needed the information," she says. During the convention, several of the candidates consulted with them before voting on platforms.

The Montana chapter of LCV was organized specifically for this election and will not be re-activated until another election approaches. The national LCV, which helps national candidates who have good environmental records, is willing to set up chapters in other states if there is enough interest. In Montana, LCV formed a 10 member board which chose candidates, using information from both political parties, from local people, and from people with experience lobbying in Montana. Funding letters were sent out and almost all the money for salaries, travel, and expenses was raised within the state.



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Western Roundup

HCN

Wyoming wants to manage wolves

The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission says that since no wolves are known to exist in the state and since the Rocky Mountain timber wolf is on the federal endangered species list, it should be taken off the predator list and designated as a protected species in Wyoming. In its recommendations to the legislature, the commission suggests that bobcats be taken off the predator list and put on the furbearer list. Audubon Societies in the state had expressed concern for the bobcats since the combination of bounties and fur prices has increased their desirability to trappers. The state can manage the bobcat better if it is classified as a furbearer. The commission also says the state needs to find a source of funding for managing nongame species and says it supports legislative action to regulate stream channelization and to recognize minimum stream flows.



FOUR SEASONS Ski Resort will be built in critical habitat for peregrine falcons in the mountains above Provo, Utah.

Four Seasons Resort in Utah approved

Forest Service officials have approved the final environmental impact statement and given the go-ahead for construction of the Four Seasons Ski Resort in the mountains east of Provo, Utah. This decision came despite protests by the Rocky Mountain Peregrine Falcon Recovery team whose responsibility, mandated by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, is to restore endangered species as a viable self-sustaining member of its ecosystem. The team leader, Gerald Craig, accused the Forest Service of a "purposeful effort to de-emphasize the peregrine and the impact of the proposed project on its critical habitat. . . ." A village will be built on Maple Flat, regarded as peregrine critical habitat by the recovery team. The team has also charged that "the Forest Service has relied rather heavily on data supplied by the developers" who have no expertise concerning peregrine falcons. The data is said to be "distorted" and "without facts" to support the statements. Forest Supervisor, Don Nebeker, feels comfortable with his decision to issue the construction permit saying, "it is not feasible to reduce the scale of development." Construction will begin this spring.

North Dakotans against cloud seeding

A new group known as the North Dakota Citizens Against Cloud Seeding has formed. Mrs. A.D. Christenson, secretary-treasurer of the group, says, "The record of costly failures in the business of weather modification has proven conclusively that the only weather modification man can guarantee is rain reduction. This we do not need." Members plan to lobby the legislature, gather signatures on petitions, and prepare information packets. For more information, contact Christenson at Cooperstown, N.D. 58425.

Bottle bill may bring back breweries

The sponsor of a bottle bill in Montana believes its passage could bring the breweries back to Montana. State Sen. Chet Blaylock says that with the advent of the throwaway, large breweries overwhelmed the markets of smaller, local competitors. But with the passage of a bottle bill, he believes it would probably be cheaper to brew or at least bottle the beverages in Montana — thus eliminating the necessity of transporting the bottles long distances twice. Nevertheless, Blaylock says in an article in *Montana Outdoors* that he expects opposition this year from the same people who opposed the bill when he proposed it last session: bottlers, aluminum workers, and (ironically) recycling businesses. Young recyclers said they were afraid of losing the aluminum can portion of their businesses.

FWS calls for Colorado Basin EIS

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and several environmental groups are asking that the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation prepare an environmental impact statement on the impacts of the entire Colorado River Storage Act, according to the *Denver Post*. The act includes 20 projects, many of which are still immersed in controversy over whether or not they should be built. Among the regionwide impacts are the conversion of game winter range to irrigated crop land, the effects the projects will have on downstream salinity levels, and other cumulative impacts, according to Bob Weaver of Trout Unlimited. Many of these costs, such as the desalinization costs, are not figured into the bureau's cost-benefit analysis, although bureau officials tell HCN that more than one quarter billion dollars is being spent on desalinization facilities. In Colorado, seven water development projects by the bureau are now in the final stages of review and approval, but if an impact statement were required, the timetable would at least be delayed.

Court to reconsider landmark ruling

Elated in July by a favorable Montana Supreme Court ruling, two Montana groups are now dismayed and bewildered by the court's decision to reconsider its earlier decision. A July 22 court ruling was considered a landmark because it recognized the right of citizens to sue to obtain a clean environment, according to the *Missoulian*. The court said a state environmental impact statement was inadequate in assessing the impact of a subdivision which would be adjacent to a big game winter range and public hunting area purchased by Montana sportsmen. The Supreme Court upheld three main points: the right of sportsmen's associations to sue, the right of sportsmen's associations to get injunctions, and the responsibility of state agencies to assess all environmental impacts — not just their special interests. However, now one of the justices says he didn't think the court meant to go as far as has been interpreted in giving citizens standing to sue. The original suit was brought by the Montana Wilderness Association and by the Gallatin Sportsmen's Association.

Idaho refuses to be dumping ground

Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus (D) doesn't want Idaho to get a reputation as a convenient dumping ground for "other people's mistakes." Consequently, he says the state will not accept 130,000 pounds of Kepone-contaminated sludge and machinery that was to be transported there from Virginia. Owners of the missile silos where the materials were to be stored tell the *Idaho Statesman* that other more deadly chemicals than Kepone are already stored there, but they are not feared as much by the public. Kepone became well known nationally after Allied Chemical and another firm were fined \$16.9 million in October for polluting the James River in Virginia. Several workers who worked with Kepone there reported suffering such symptoms as loss of memory, tremors, and brain and liver damage. The Kepone proposed for Idaho disposal represents about five percent of the total amount of the toxic chemical that must be disposed of. The privately owned silos are one of 10 sites in the country approved by the Environmental Protection Agency as depositories for materials that could threaten life or damage the environment if dumped without control.

While many Idahoans are applauding Andrus' Kepone decision, others are pointing out the irony of refusing a pesticide while accepting nuclear wastes. Radioactive wastes from the Idaho National Engineering Laboratories in eastern Idaho are stored in the state. Idaho is also being considered as a site for storing nuclear wastes from elsewhere in the country.

Groups demand protection for cranes

The Sierra Club and the National Audubon Society have petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to take immediate steps to prevent threats to whooping crane migration habitat. The organizations specified three federal water projects as threatening habitat for the bird, which is endangered. The three are the Garrison Diversion in North Dakota, the Norden Dam on the Niobrara River in Nebraska, and the Pollock-Herred Unit in South Dakota. The groups' petition notes that the country's only self-sustaining whooping crane group of some 68 birds must migrate through the Great Plains between its winter range on the Gulf Coast and its breeding grounds in Canada. However, the FWS is now reviewing only critical habitat areas from the Platte River south and ignoring the Northern Plains. Other crane migration habitat areas involved in the petition include Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge in Montana and an area northwest of Minot, N.D.

Andrus protests reforestation policy

Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus is tired of seeing Idaho mountainsides barren because of National Forest Service policy, and his anger is apparently having an effect. After discovering recently that the Forest Service follows stricter guidelines in Oregon than in Idaho in replanting trees in logged over areas, Andrus hired an airplane to fly over some areas of his state and take pictures. When Forest Service officials pled ignorance about the difference in guidelines, Andrus showed them the films to prove that some areas logged in the 1950s still haven't been replanted, according to the *Idaho Statesman*. The Forest Service now says that if Congress allocates enough funds, the backlog in Idaho of 177,300 acres of forest land will be replanted.

14-High Country News — Dec. 3, 1976

DISTAFF CORNER

by Myra Connell

My research of *Artemisia tridentata*, the big sage, led along many trails: into data on soils, land planning, medicine, early Indian life, Western pioneering, and photography.

Among my snapshots I found some of large snowdrifts in the lee of big sage, sculptured in fantastic shapes, pleasing to the eye but of more than esthetic value. Lacking the sage, the snow would have been widely dissipated. The brush had broken the force of the winter winds, causing the snow to collect. Thus the precious moisture is held in place, to soak slowly into the ground as the hard-packed drifts melt during mild weather. (Please see photo.)

I received an encouraging clipping from a friend who reads the *Christian Science Monitor*. Villain sagebrush is about to be elevated to the status of friend. For more than 100 years ranchers and range managers have burned, sprayed, ripped, and bulldozed the sagebrush, trying to eradicate it from the pasturelands. But since environmental concerns have become prevalent in our consciousness, sagebrush is being widely praised as a valuable agent for revegetating strip mined and burned-over areas. Donald Christensen of the Utah Department of Wildlife Services considers sagebrush mixed with grass "the key to Western reforestation," according to the article. "After a forest fire if both grass and sagebrush seeds are used, there is excellent ground cover in a few years," he says. The department buys about a ton of sagebrush seed every year.

High Country News has often pointed out the chief values of sagebrush to soil and moisture conditions and its vital and indispensable use to wildlife. It has other, perhaps lesser, but still important values as well:

The dry trunks and twigs make a quick, hot fire that has often added to the comfort and survival of Indians, pioneers, and desert travelers. Indians used the easily ignited wood for starting a fire by friction. Ranchers find that it makes a very good branding fire. Pioneers on the Oregon Trail called sagebrush a very suitable substitute for the customary buffalo chips of the prairie.

In an 1852 Oregon Trail diary E. W. Congers wrote "... eight days journey from Fort Laramie. No wood but we used wild sagebrush ... which grows here in great abundance." What if the energy crisis should reduce all of us to burning sagebrush?

Besides its obvious practical values, sagebrush has esthetic qualities also.

My friend who dyes and weaves wool by hand showed me yarn dyed with sage — lovely soft gray-greens and yellows, depending on strength of brew and type of stabilizing agent.

I have found the elusive leopard lily (*Fritillaria atropurpurea*), growing in the shelter of a clump of sage. I think of the big sage as Mother-protector of all small tender wildlings.

Fragrance, color, maternal qualities, and sound endear the sage to me. The sound has been well-described by one naturalist who said: "If I stretched out on the ground and listened I could hear ... the sage ... join the symphony ... (It) lets the wind go softly and tirelessly through its fingers ... in memory of the Indians whose plains it covered ... and the verse of its song is ... Shoshone, Shoshone."



HCN

Bulletin Board



LOONEY LIMERICKS

by Zane E. Cology

A young wall builder named Doyle,
Hauled rocks, which was no small toil.
But when time to retire,
The wall, it caught fire.
Poor Doyle discovered shale oil.

BLM COAL MEETINGS

Public meetings focusing on land use and environmental impacts of coal development on public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management in southcentral and southwestern Wyoming will be held in the following towns: Dec. 7 in Evanston, Dec. 8 in Rock Springs, Dec. 9 in Kemmerer. For further details write to the Office of Public Affairs, Wyoming Office, Box 1828, Cheyenne, Wyo. 82001.

CASH FOR ENERGY PROJECTS

Several hundred dollars in cash prizes are being offered to high school students in Ravalli, Missoula, and Mineral counties in Montana. The prizes will go to the students who develop the best projects to promote the use of alternative forms of energy. Details can be obtained from Stan Rasmussen, Missoula Extension Service, 818 Burlington Ave., Missoula, Mont. 59801.

SIERRA CLUB SEEKS INFO

The Sierra Club needs information about the interests, expertise, and environmental viewpoint of the 71 new members of Congress. Write: Conservation Dept., The Sierra Club, 530 Bush St., San Francisco, Calif. 94108.

WETLANDS REPORT AVAILABLE

"Impacts of Construction Activities in the Wetlands of the U.S." is a 424-page document which gives recommendations to insure survival of wetlands. Free single copies are available from the Public Affairs Office, Corvallis Environmental Research Lab, 200 S.W. 35th St., Corvallis, Ore. 97330. Ask for publication number 600-3-76-045.

BRUNEAU RIVER EIS

The final environmental impact statement studying the proposal to add the Bruneau River of southwestern Idaho to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System has been released. Copies are available at the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, 915 Second Ave., Seattle, Wash. 98104.

FLOAT TRIP APPLICATIONS

Dinosaur National Monument is accepting applications for non-commercial float trips on the Green and Yampa Rivers. Information and applications for permits may be obtained by writing: superintendent, Dinosaur National Monument, Box 210, Dinosaur, Colo. 81610.



Sage holding snow. Photo by Myra Connell

INDIAN PEAKS EIS READY

The draft environmental impact statement for the Indian Peaks area west of Boulder, Colo., has just been released. A public information meeting sponsored by the Forest Service will be held to explain the proposals at 7 p.m. in Boulder's National Bureau of Standards, Dec. 16. A copy of the draft EIS is available from the District Ranger, Sulfur District, Box 216, Hot Sulfur Springs, Colo. 80451.

FORUM EXAMINES NUKES

The Sioux Falls League of Women Voters is sponsoring a public forum on "Nuclear Energy, Problem or Promise for South Dakota" Jan. 8 at the Downtown Holiday Inn, Sioux Falls, S.D. For more information call Mrs. Kay Anderson at (605) 338-1633.

NAVAJO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

"Appropriate Technology and Navajo Economic Development," studies the economic situation of the Navajo Nation and proposes increased productivity at the local level in harmony with traditional values and lifestyles. A limited number of free copies are available from: The Navajo Community College, Shiprock, N.M. 87420.



Eavesdropper

environmental news from around the world

RETURNABLES SAVE. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the League of Women Voters have released national survey results which show returnable beverage containers are lower priced than non-returnables. A survey of 28 states shows that on the average consumers save 30 cents per six pack if the cans or bottles are returnable. "Throwaway containers, in addition to adding to the purchase (price) of beverages, result in increased quantities of solid waste" and litter, reported EPA. Non-returnable can and bottle manufacturers have argued against mandatory returnable beverage container legislation on the grounds that cost to the consumer would increase.

WORLD GROWTH SLOWS. World population growth has slowed significantly during the last five years, according to the Worldwatch Institute. Last year's increase was 1.64% — down from 1.9% in 1970. "Neither war, nor epidemics, but hunger and nutritional stress are to blame," reported Worldwatch. The apparent decline in the birth rate in China "may be family planning's greatest success story," says Worldwatch.

EPA INITIATES NONCOMPLIANCE LIST. In a warning to industrial polluters, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has placed two companies on a list which prevents those firms from receiving any Federal contracts, grants, or loans. 1975 EPA regulations provide for such listing in instances of "continuing or recurring" non-compliance with air or water pollution cleanup schedules. EPA has named subsidiaries of Star-Kist Foods and Del Monte Corp. for continued violations. A Del Monte spokesman claimed the company is the victim of a "bum rap." An EPA spokesman warned that other violators would be listed shortly.

FARM-WATER SEMINAR PLANNED

The Colorado Water Congress and the Larimer-Weld Regional Council of Governments will sponsor a one-day public seminar Dec. 11 on pollution regulations they claim "threaten water and property rights." It will begin at 9 a.m. at the Greeley Community Center in Greeley, Colo. The cost is \$5. Further details can be obtained from the Colorado Water Congress, 5600 S. Syracuse Circle, Englewood, Colo., 80110.

HEARINGS TO DECONTROL GAS

The Federal Energy Administration has scheduled public hearings in Denver Dec. 14 and 15 to hear comments on its proposal to decontrol gasoline prices and supply allocation. Persons wishing to testify must send a written request by Dec. 8 to FEA regional administrator, Box 26247, Belmar Branch, Lakewood, Colo. 80226. Hearings will begin at 9:30 a.m. in room 269 of the U.S. Post Office Bldg., 1823 Stout St.

WILLIAMS FORK PLANNING UNIT

Participants in this workshop will be asked to review the preliminary list of management options. The meeting will be held at the Keystone Lodge near Dillon, Dec. 7, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

CITY ADMISSION CHARGE. Berkeley, Calif., may become the first American city to charge a fee for using a car within the city limits. The Federal Urban Mass transportation Administration has asked Berkeley to set up toll booths which charge \$1 or \$2 a day from motorists choosing to drive in the city. The money would pay for shuttle buses which would transport people from city edge parking lots to their destinations within the city, according to United Press International. The city council has not approved the proposal yet. Singapore is the only large city in the world known to charge for use of its streets.

HOW FAR CAN EPA GO? Court decisions on the Environmental Protection Agency's power to force states to comply with the Clean Air Act will be reviewed by the Supreme Court. Conflicting decisions from courts in California, Arizona, Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia will come under the high court's scrutiny. Oral arguments will be heard this winter and a decision is expected by June 1977. At stake are EPA plans which require some states to designate more freeway lanes for buses and car pools, to set up mandatory inspection systems for all vehicles, to limit the use of motorcycles, and to establish computerized car pool programs.

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Dec. 3, 1976 — High Country News-15



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Charles Belding and his Graphic Arts Center Publishing Company of Portland, Ore. have generously allowed High Country News to have all the retail profits from the sales of the books described here.



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More of Ron's work will be appearing in the next two issues of HCN.

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Ron Mamot
Wyoming
photographer.



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Greeting Cards

Holly Merrifield, wildlife artist and friend, has designed these note cards for High Country News. These cards were so popular last year, we're trying them again. Ready for your personal notes, the cards are 3½ by 7 inches on ivory stock with gold envelopes. Designs are in wheatfield gold. A handsome complement to any message. (Please specify Moose or Eagle.) \$2. Ten cards and envelopes per set.

16-High Country News — Dec. 3, 1976

Award-winning study center

Camp fosters environmental awareness

Now I know the secret of making the best persons: it is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth.

—Walt Whitman

by Mark Peterson

Thirty-five miles west of Colorado Springs, Colo., tucked away amongst rock bluffs and tall pines, lies a 6,000-acre school of the outdoors. Quietly and without fanfare, this unorthodox school known as High Trails, is fast gaining a reputation as being a leading environmental education



Using natural objects in their work, the art program attempts to loosen up imaginations to the beauty of the natural world. Here one student draws a bird.

program in Colorado. By bringing students into direct contact with nature in small groups, the curriculum stresses concepts of ecology, conservation, local history, and the life and physical sciences in a way that actively involves each student.

The High Trails program began 10 years ago. Laura and Roger Sanborn, who owned and operated a summer camp in the backwoods near Florissant, proposed that their facilities be used for a program aimed at fostering environmental awareness. The Colorado Springs school board agreed to try this on an experimental basis with one class.

Today, the program involves 43 schools in the area. About 250 students from the sixth grade participate in the program every week. They spend five days at the camp in either the spring or fall. For many students, it is their first real experience with the natural world.

The foundation for the curriculum is 12 "discovery groups," each emphasizing different aspects of the outdoors. Each student chooses five groups of interest to attend during the week. These groups range from pretending you're a prospector in the 1800s and learning about geology, to taking a journey through a time machine and learning about the earth's evolution.

For example, if you choose to become a trapper, your group will hike the area exploring animal behavior, animal signs, and the interdependence of all living things. First-hand observations and insights are gained of forest, meadow, and pond communities.

The following day you may be a woodsman and become acquainted with the variety of tree and plant forms in the camp, and the processes involved — succession, decomposition, and photosynthesis.

"One of our aims is to make environmental learning a part of every activity," says Jane McAtee, the program's director. Even

if a student chooses the art group, the artwork will be done using natural objects such as leaves and grasses. In the process the student will learn to identify many of these objects and, hopefully, gain a greater appreciation for their beauty.

In addition to these scheduled programs, the camp has many optional activities for the students. These may include a pre-breakfast hike to the top of a nearby bluff, or a star-gazing session at night.

"Unlike Outward Bound and other outdoor programs, we don't confront kids with the challenge of nature as something to be conquered, but an appreciation and sense of wonder in nature," says Laura Sanborn. Further presentations and discussions develop a realization of man's place in the environment and his responsibility to help preserve and improve it.

Another aim of the school is teaching recreation. The High Trails program attempts to counterbalance our society's emphasis on spectator sports and elaborate equipment by showing that simple unstructured activities, such as a quiet sunrise hike, can be rewarding.

Because so many schools are involved, students gain an exposure to children with different socio-economic backgrounds. It is hoped this will promote better human relationships and social understanding — one of the primary goals of the program. "Some kids find out there are other kids who don't even have a pair of waterproof boots. The difference between the have and the have-nots becomes clear," says Georgia Jones, a teacher who has participated in the program for the past six years.

The camp's site makes a wide variety of learning experiences possible. Within the camp boundaries are an 1870 homestead, a working ranch, and a replica of an Indian



The 6,000-acre camp encompasses a wide range of botanical, geological, and historical features.

village. Plant life ranges from delicate wildflowers to 1,000-year-old Bristlecone pines. Nearby lies Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument — a valuable geological resource.

The High Trails program is funded both by students and the public schools. In exchange for providing lodging, meals, materials, and staff, the public school agrees to pay the camp a \$50 fee per student, and send teachers to supplement the regular teaching staff. The fee is usually divided in half between the family and the school itself. Scholarships are also available.

In 1975 the camp was honored to be designated a "National Environmental Study Area" by the Department of Interior — one of only 10 camps across the country

to receive the honor. The award praises the camp as "possessing distinctive values in revealing natural, historical, and cultural processes through an effective environmental education program."

The Sanborns are working to expand the school. They have recently submitted proposals to offer high school students a similar program. And, explaining that families "don't need fancy trips to Baja or the Grand Canyon" to appreciate the miracle of nature, the Sanborns hope to devise a program and persuade families to spend their vacations at the camp.

The Sanborns are also working to convince other summer camps to open their doors in other seasons and provide a similar program. "We want to show that you don't have to come to High Trails. The same thing can be done in Pueblo or other places," says McAtee. Under the Sanborn's guidance, one camp near Gypsum, Colo., has already done this.

The contributions of the High Trails program can be summed up by one teacher who said, "It teaches what an individual can do to help save the earth. These kids are much more aware than their parents because of experiences like this. They are a slightly different group when they go home, and many will grow up to be staunch conservationists."

Dear Friends,

'Tis the season to be jolly, and we do enjoy the good fellowship that the season can inspire, but... Sometimes the overzealous merchants and the omnipresent Christmas Muzak pouring out of every chamber of commerce succeeds only in making us feel a bit like Scrooge for wishing there weren't some alternative.

It was with that thought in mind that we created the "alternative gift shop" last year. August has tried to include gift suggestions there that might be a little more meaningful — drawings, photographs, and note cards by high country artists, Wyoming cheese boxes, books about the land and the way of life we love, and, of course, HCN and The Best of HCN, our magazine.

We know that we might seem overzealous, too — that's the guilt twinge that inspired us to call the page "seasonal profiteering." Just to admit that we know full well what we're doing — we're asking for your money for us in a more subtle way than usual. All the individuals and companies listed on page 15 have agreed to share their profits with us.

Fortunately, already this year many of you have liked our offers and Mary

Margaret is now processing your orders so they'll get to you in time for Christmas.

We don't even try to be subtle with our plea for funds for the research fund. The HCN Research Fund was set up last year to support our research efforts with tax-deductible donations. Some friends of HCN find it especially attractive at this time of year when they're trying to find some worthy causes to give money to before the tax year ends.

For those of you who have especially good-hearted friends who resist your spending money on them, you might consider showing your affection by giving donations in their names to the research fund. Make checks payable to "Wyoming Environmental Institute — HCN Research Fund," and send them to P.O. Box 2497, Jackson, Wyo. 83001.

Or, give the donation in his or her name to one of the worthy organizations listed elsewhere in the paper. We're sure we missed some that are equally deserving, but you probably know about the groups in your area that need your help.

And for you, dear friends, we send our warmest wishes from the high country — and promise to send you the best newspaper that we can every two weeks throughout the next year.

—the editors

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