



High Country News

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Friday, October 2, 1981

Vol. 13 No. 19

In the News

ROUNDUP

2

Ferrets redux...Colorado coal conflict...Dust limits lost...Fowl cooking constrained...BOLD Utah land swap...Lakota dreamtown dumped...and more.

IDB BLUES

6

Industrial revenue bonds seem tailor-made for small entrepreneurs in the rural Rockies. But it's the K-Marts that often get to use them, and the days of these low-interest bonanzas may be numbered.

ROUTE 66

8

It's been relegated to legendary status, but it's still there — a ribbon of cracking concrete, crossing the high deserts of New Mexico and Arizona on its way from Chicago to Los Angeles.

WESTERN WATT

13

James Watt came West to woo dubious — and Democrat — governors. Dan Whipple gives his own jaundiced view of the Western Governors' Carnival.

RECYCLING DAD

16

Your environmentalist friends may be saving their old newspapers and empty cans — but one writer found her contractor father was the real recycler.

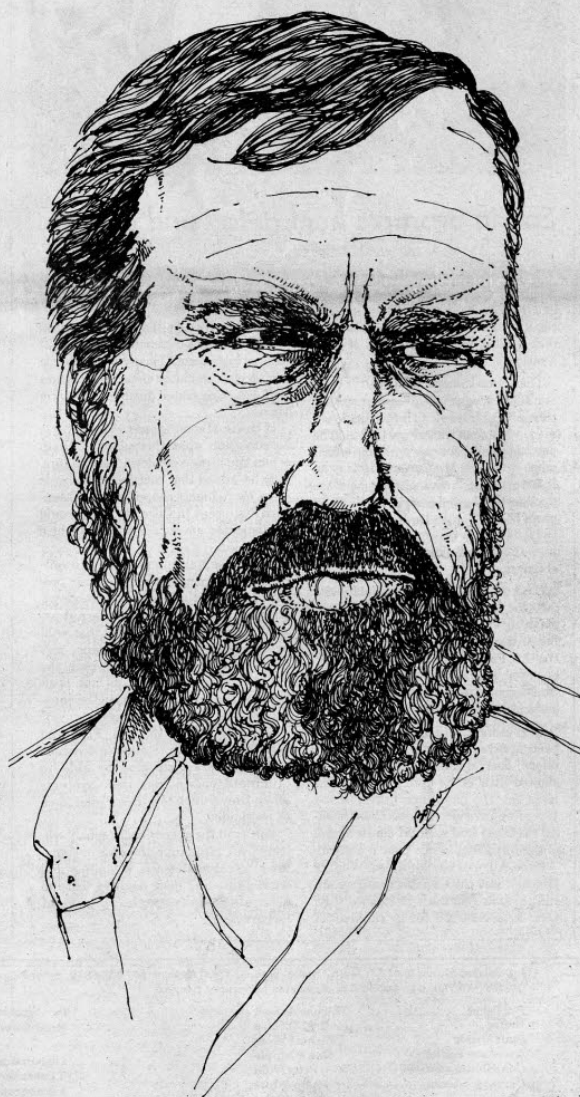


Dear Friends.....	2
Hotline.....	4
Barbed Wire.....	5
Classified.....	12
Bulletin Board.....	14
Opinion.....	15
Letters.....	15

Encounters with Henry on Utah's Green River

(The following is excerpted from the introduction to a new edition of Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* published by Peregrine Smith Books.)

by Edward Abbey



November 8, 1880. Who won the election? What election? Mere vapors on the gelid air, like the breath from my lungs. I rebuild the fire on the embers of last night's fire. I construct the coffee. One by one five human forms reassemble themselves about me, repeating themselves, with minor variations, for another golden day. The two vegetarians in our group — Rennie and Lorna — prepare their breakfast oatmeal, viscous gray slime. I dump two pounds of Buck-sliced slab bacon into the expedition's wok, to the horror of the vegetarians, and stir it roughly about with a fork. Stir-cooking. The four carnivores look on with hungry eyes. "Pig meat," says Lorna, "for your four fat pork faces." "Eat your pussy food," says Dusty Teale, "and be quiet."

The melody of morning. Black-throated desert sparrows chattering in the willows: chirr chirr chit chit. The sun comes up with a clang! like clash of cymbals! over yonder canyon rim. Quickly the temperature rises five, ten, twenty degrees, at the rate of a degree a minute, Fahrenheit, from freezing to fifty-two. Or so it feels. We peel off parkas, sweaters, shirts, thermal underwear. Ravens croak, a rock falls, the river flows.

The fluvial life. The alluvial shore. "A river is superior to a lake," writes Henry in his *Journal*, "in its liberating influence. It has motion and indefinite length.... With its rapid current it is a slightly fluttering wing. River towns are winged towns."

Down southeastern Utah's Green River. Lorna rows the dory, I row the raft. We are edified by water music from our string trio, a rich mesmeric tune of Peru called "Urubamba." The song goes on and on and never long enough. The Indians must have composed it for a journey down the Amazon.

Fresh slides appear on the mud banks; a beaver plops into the water ahead of us, disappears. The beavers are making a comeback on the Green. Time for D. Julien, Jim Bridger, Joe Meek, Jed Smith and Jim Beckwourth to reappear. Eternal recurrence, announced Nietzsche. Time for the mountain men to return. The American West has not given us, so far, sufficient men to match our mountains. Or not since the defeat of Crazy Horse, Sitting Bull, Dull Knife, Red Cloud, Chief Joseph, Little Wolf, Red Shirt, Gall, Geronimo, Cochise, Tenaya (to name but a few), and their comrades. With their defeat died a bold, brave, heroic way of life, one as fine as anything recorded history has to show us. Speaking for myself, I'd sooner have been a liver-eating, savage horseman, riding with Red Cloud, than a slave-owning sophist sipping tempered wine in Periclean Athens. For example. Even Attila the Hun, known locally as The Scourge of God, brought more fresh air and freedom into Europe than the men who gave us the syl-

(continued on page 12)

Dear Friends,

The paper you now hold in your hands should be a little different from the HCN's you thumbbed through four and two weeks ago.

Yesterday, Kathy loaded the laid-out pages for today's paper into the back of Geoff's car. Then she and Michael drove north, up Highway 287, across the Wind River Indian Reservation, over Togwotee Pass, to Jackson.

Traditionally, the **High Country News** has been run on presses here in Lander. But we made the decision recently to print on a higher grade of newsprint, and the best printing offer we got was from the **Jackson Hole News**. So here we are. Or rather, there we are.

There are two graphic changes worth noting. First, the new Catalina paper is whiter, and lasts longer without yellowing, than regular newsprint. Second, the News's press runs a longer tabloid size page — lengthening HCN by two inches, which effectively adds two more pages of copy to a 16-page publication.

So you'll be getting more news, clearer pictures, and a paper that should last longer on your bedside table.

This change does break a long-standing business and collegial relationship with Lander's **Wyoming State Journal**. The **Journal** has seen **High Country News** through good times and bad, and we make the break with regret, for purely financial reasons. A couple of years back, when HCN was feeling financially rudderless, we asked Tom Bell where we should go for advice, and he said: "Talk to Bill Sniffin; he was always a big help to me." Sniffin is the **Journal's** editor and publisher; we talked to him then, and we expect to in the future when we need hardheaded business advice from a sympathetic hardhead.

We'll do less business with the **Journal** in the future, but the staff over there is the other half of the Lander Valley Journalism Guild, and that's still good for a beer up at the Hitching Rack.

Kathy, or whoever makes the trip to Jackson on a given press week, will probably have a few beers in absentia up in Jackson Thursday evening before returning on Friday. Then she'll make the trip back, by a route that offers for the moment a splash of golden aspen against stern granite mountains.

The piece by Edward Abbey appearing on page one of this issue was the generous contribution of Peregrine Smith Books from Layton, Utah. Publisher Gibbs Smith sent us a query — unsolicited — asking if we were interested in using a portion of the new introduction to their edition of Thoreau's **Walden**. We were, of course.

What we've printed is only a portion of a long introduction. The whole thing is good.

— the staff

Western Roundup



Ernie Day-Ridley Department of Commerce and Development

Endrin prompts hunt delay and caution

The Canada goose hunting season has been postponed six weeks in Montana and the state has recommended restrictions on eating waterfowl that may take a lot of the pleasure out of duck hunting.

The action came in response to tests conducted in September that showed a high level of the pesticide endrin in Montana waterfowl tissues. The pesticide had been sprayed on wheat crops in eastern Montana to destroy an infestation of Army cutworms. One duck tested showed endrin levels of 1.2 parts per million in its fat, well above the 0.33 ppm level considered safe for human consumption under federal standards.

Other states along the central flyway traveled by ducks and geese are not planning to restrict the hunting or eating of waterfowl. A spokeswoman for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said, however, that Wyoming and Colorado would continue to test waterfowl for pesticide contamination.

In Wyoming, where endrin has also been sprayed on crops, tests on antelope, deer, ducks and wild turkeys showed little or no endrin in the animals' fat. Dr. Lawrence Cohen of the Wyoming Division of Health and Medical Services, said normal consumption of the birds should not pose a hazard.

Gene Allen of the Montana Wildlife Division said the Canada goose season in that state had been postponed from Oct. 3 to Nov. 18 for a number of

reasons. First, thousands of birds will join the Montana flock from across the Canadian border as winter nears, diminishing the likelihood that hunters will shoot birds contaminated by Montana crops. Second, many of the birds eating contaminated crops in Montana will have migrated further south by then.

"I think Wyoming and Colorado have to consider what this means to them when the birds come down," said Allen. But he added that contaminated birds were more highly concentrated in Montana, whereas in Colorado they would be dispersed among a much larger bird population.

For those still interested, state officials recommended the following precautions in eating Montana waterfowl: Discard the fat, skin and internal organs of the bird in such a way that wild or domestic animals, or humans, will not be able to eat them; fully cook the skinned bird on a rack; do not stuff birds; and discard drippings in the same manner as the internal organs.

Violette Solt of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Denver, said recent tests indicate birds may be able to eliminate endrin from their systems when they switch to a "clean" diet, free of pesticides.

Solt said the agency had recently collected 45 birds from the endrin-using areas of Montana and Wyoming and was conducting more detailed tests to determine what pesticides they might be carrying.

Big Horn rivers get wild look

The Little Horn River, which drops more than one half a mile through 1600-foot high red rock canyon walls in the mountains of the Big Horn National Forest in north central Wyoming has been identified as a candidate for the nation's Wild and Scenic River System, according to a U.S. Forest Service study.

The agency has also selected the nearby Tongue River for possible inclusion. The Forest Service study found the rivers had "outstanding" physical and biological characteristics.

The identification puts a new twist in an ongoing controversy among several local groups who claim they have water rights on the Little Horn. The part of the Little Horn which flows through the forest is the same section which the Little Horn Water Group wants to develop and market by building a series of dams and reservoirs. Though the Wyoming legislature earlier this year rejected the group's plan to export the water in a coal slurry line, the group is fighting to hold its water rights for other possible projects.

"Nomination of the rivers as candidates is not a recommendation," stressed Big Horn National Forest staffer Len Ruggiero. "The identification simply means that they meet all the necessary characteristics of wild and scenic rivers."

Over the next two to three years, while the Forest Service and other agencies study these streams, "development which might preclude their inclusion in the Wild and Scenic River System will not be allowed," said Ruggiero. "We don't want the decision to be made by default."

Representatives of the Little Horn Water Group said they could not comment publicly at this time.

The identification will not affect downstream rights holders where the river emerges from the national forest, the land surface flattens, and storage ponds, diversion, roadways and other developments have tamed the rushing water. In 1980, the now-defunct Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service decided because of these developments that the 133-mile river did not qualify for wild and scenic designation. That agency, however, did advise the interagency committee reviewing possible additions to the system that the 17 miles of the river within the national forest had "much merit" and should be considered further. The Forest Service also got a positive response from the public to wild and scenic designation.

On Sept. 9, Craig Rupp, the regional forester in Denver, approved the identification as part of the Big Horn Planning Group's management scheme. While the draft land management plan and environmental impact statement on the entire Big Horn National Forest should be complete by next spring, the study on the rivers and their final designation is expected to take another two to three years, said Forest Service officials.

If plans for development of the river are received in the interim, these alternative uses will be examined in the separate study.

— V.M. Kahn

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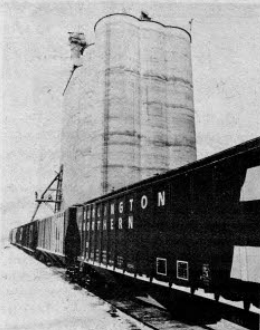
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Railroad ads ruffle farmers

A newspaper and radio advertising campaign waged by Burlington Northern Railroad to promote its branch line abandonment program is chafing grain growers in the northern Rockies.

"The ads not only insult our intelligence, but (BN) is using our money to do it — money taken from us in excessive and discriminatory rail grain rates for mounting their brainwashing effort," Dale Schneidt, head of the Montana Grain Growers Association told the Agri-News last week.

That publication, along with newspapers in Montana and North Dakota, have run full-page ads, picturing a wood grain elevator and weed-infested train track. The caption reads: "In 1881, this track was worth its weight in gold. Today, every farmer in Montana is losing money because of it."

Schneidt and other grain producers have criticized BN's abandonment program, which calls for scrapping some 600 miles of seldom-used tracks in Montana alone. They fear higher operating costs and the loss of rural communities dependent on local grain elevators (see HCN, 9-4-81).

Advertising is the only way BN can tell its side of the story, said BN spokesman Bill Joplin in Billings, Mont. "Grain growers can make a statement and get front page coverage," he said. "We can't."

Joplin did not know the total cost of the ad campaign, he said, but "it wouldn't have paid for one year's maintenance on 2 miles of branch line."

Powerlines pay up

A Wyoming rancher, dissatisfied with a utility's offer of \$18,000 to cross his land with power lines, took his case to court and won an award of \$128,000. The settlement will "help landowners across America," he said.

Three miles of John Morris's land west of Cheyenne was crossed by 16 power lines in a project by Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, Inc. Negotiations over compensation fell through, Morris charges, because the utility's attitude is basically, "screw the landowner."

"Instead of following a section line, they insisted on crossing at an angle, taking land we intended to irrigate with a sprinkler system. Their computer plan was more valuable than my land," said Morris, whose cow and calf operation is in fourth generation family ownership.

A Laramie County Court jury agreed last week that Morris deserved more compensation than Tri-State was offering. "It was a principle," said Morris. "By the time the lawyers and everyone is paid, I'll probably have to get a loan to pay the rest. But it has shown that the landowner has some recourse."

Tri-State spokesman Jerry Demel said the association was surprised at the decision, and that they try hard to settle compensation cases out of court. Tri-State is considering whether to appeal the award.

Soil controls tied to price subsidies

Unable to get an amendment in edgewise to the 1982 Farm Bill, Sen. Bill Armstrong (R-Colo.) is drafting separate legislation to help curtail soil erosion in the West. He's aiming straight for the pocketbook.

Armstrong was inspired by the Farm Bill's cornucopia of price supports to concoct an innovative scheme for saving some of the 5 billion tons of soil lost each year to wind and water. West of the 100th meridian, farmers would no longer get price supports for corn and wheat grown on lands with steep slopes or otherwise unstable soils susceptible to erosion.

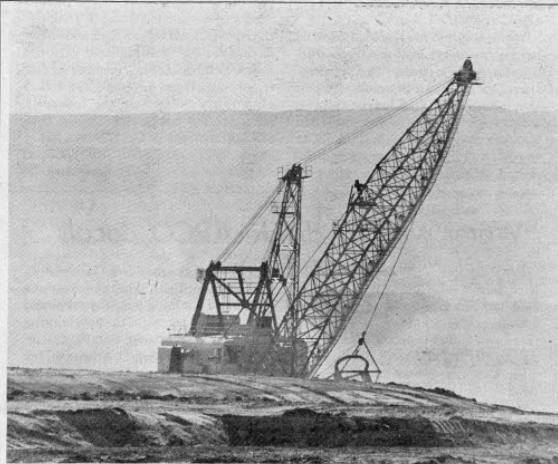
"The bill stops just short of telling a farmer how to use the land," said Greg Walcher, the senator's aide for agriculture in Washington, D.C. Walcher couldn't predict how many of the West's 225 million acres of cropland would be



affected.

Tom Barlow of the Natural Resources Defense Council said it will help stem a land conversion tide that in the last 15 years has turned 11 million acres of grasslands to plowed wheat in the Rocky Mountain and Central states.

Armstrong's plan may be heard by the Senate Agriculture Committee this winter.



Fugitive dust rules scrapped

In March the Wyoming Environmental Quality Council unanimously approved a regulation aimed at reducing airborne dust from coal mines. Last week, the council unanimously rescinded the rule.

The original regulation "posed an unfair economic constraint on the mineral industry," said council member David Park, explaining the reversal.

Months of haggling with the mineral industry had made members of the council uneasy. They emerged from a re-hearing unsure that the data used by the state to justify the regulation would hold up in court, members said, and decided to play it safe and back off.

At issue was a rule that forced most surface coal operators to apply to the state for a Prevention of Significant Deterioration (PSD) permit. Where before fugitive dust from mines was not considered an air contaminant, under the new rule it was to be measured against the small increase in pollution allowable under federal and state PSD rules. Since even small mines were raising thousands of tons of dust a year, the board decided that mines should apply for the same permit required of other industrial facilities in areas with relatively clean air.

The coal industry said the move would halt mining in the coal-rich Powder River Basin. The state called that a gross exaggeration.

At a meeting in May, after the rule had first been adopted, industry representatives told the council they were not so worried about the tough standards as they were about the state's computer modeling. They feared they could be blocked from building a mine on the basis of bureaucrats' bad guesses. They filled the council's mail boxes

with petitions and protests.

At the September meeting, the council seemed weary of the controversy. "When you do modeling, you get into arguments," said council member Park.

He proposed attacking the problem from a different angle. As the council chucked the PSD rule, it decided to study the idea of requiring that all coal mines use best available pollution control technology.

Only after that proposal passed unanimously did the council discover that the best available control technology at coal mines is already required by state regulations.

Befuddled council members called in state Air Quality Administrator Randall Wood to answer a reporter's questions about what the decision would mean for the state's air.

"In most places in Wyoming it's not going to change the total amount of particulate matter emitted into the air," Wood said. He said that many coal mining areas in the state are already too polluted by existing mines to benefit from PSD rules. When that "baseline" of existing pollution is added to the pollution increase allowable under PSD rules, the rules become no more restrictive than the limit set to protect human health and welfare — the ambient air quality standards.

But in areas underlain by coal where clear vistas still exist, industry won a significant victory last week. In the Carbon Basin in southcentral Wyoming, for instance, where the state is processing its first application to mine coal, twice as much pollution will be allowable under the new rule as would have been under the old one.

— Joan Nice

Utah land switch gets public airing

Utahns are gathering at public meetings around the state this week and next to examine two maps of their state. One, with 14 bold circles around some 2 million acres of federal lands valued mainly for their minerals, is a wish list. The other outlines about 700,000 acres of isolated tracts that the state would be willing to give up — all within military reservations, national forests, national parks and Indian reservations.

Every state in the West has exchanged land with the federal government at one time or another, but none has attempted the sweeping changes proposed by the state of Utah in Project BOLD. The idea, the state says, is to eliminate the management conflicts that occur when scattered state sections are surrounded by a sea of federal land.

So far, county officials have been among those most worried about the proposed swap, according to Margaret Wilde, director of public affairs for the state Department of Natural Resources and Energy. Wilde said counties are most concerned about income that the federal government pays them in lieu of property taxes. But they are also seeking assurances that existing leases, permits and rights of access would not be lost in the land swap shuffle.

Environmental groups are also expected to raise difficult questions at the meetings.

"The coal people get the Kaiparowits Plateau. The oil and gas people get the southeast corner of Utah. The oil shale people get all of eastern Utah. But what does the public get?" Dick Carter of the Utah Wilderness Association asked in a telephone interview. Carter, who said he wants Project BOLD to work, is upset by the state's preliminary proposal because it leaves a patchwork pattern of ownership within the lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management.

"We will never see any BLM wilderness in this state if BLM lands remain encumbered by state holdings," Carter said.

For instance, Carter said, a 500,000-acre wilderness study area managed by BLM in the Book Cliffs contains 150,000 acres of isolated state tracts. "If we don't block up those lands, we don't get a Book Cliffs wilderness," Carter said.

Wilde of the state natural resources department said that BLM lands weren't initially included in the state's trading material because the state and the federal managers use these lands in such similar ways that coordinating is not difficult.

The state tracts selected for trade, on the other hand, are essentially worthless to the state. "Within a national park or on a military reservation, we can't do anything, because we can't get to our land," Wilde said.

However, Wilde emphasized that the proposal before the public is a preliminary one. "As we proceed, the state will be looking at tracts within BLM wilderness (study) areas to add to the relinquishment list," she said.

Utahns who attend the public meetings will be commenting on preliminary selections that include oil shale and tar sands areas in the Uintah Basin, potash deposits and rangeland in Grand County, the coal-rich Kaiparowits Plateau, the Alton coal fields near Bryce Canyon National Park and the Tar Sands Triangle.

After the last public meeting Oct. 8, the state land board will review comments and write a revised proposal for another round of public meetings in January or February. The state hopes to seek congressional approval of a final proposal late in 1982, according to Wilde.

— Joan Nice

Western Roundup



Indians fight for Black Hills camp

All they want is a home, say Lakota tribal leaders. But the land they're seeking is now publicly owned, and its federal administrators say they can't let go.

The tribe wants to settle some 800 acres of the Black Hills National Forest near Victoria Lake in South Dakota. Their dream is to build a community, a "model of self-sufficiency" called Yellow Thunder Camp. It would include a school, a religious center, and 80 buried, passive solar homes, lighted by two wind-driven generators.

The tribe asked the U.S. Forest Service for the land earlier this year, and on August 24, Forest Supervisor James Mathers denied their request.

The Lakota based their claim on the 1868 Fort Laramie Treaty, the 1978 Indian Freedom of Religion Act, and an 1897 federal law authorizing the Forest Service to give up small amounts of public land for the establishment of schools and churches for people living near forest land.

None of those claims are valid, Mathers ruled. The homestead law, for instance, hadn't been used for decades and was repealed in 1962.

Furthermore, ongoing grazing and timbering in the area would be affected, Mathers found, concluding that the Indian's plan was "not in the public interest." Though an appeal of the decision was expected, Mathers ordered the tribe to leave the land they were occupying.

The Lakota did appeal Mathers' ruling to Regional Forester Craig Rupp in Denver, and, to sustain their occupancy asked the U.S. District Court in Rapid City to grant them an injunction. The court case is scheduled for Oct. 5; the administrative appeal will include an Oct. 9 public hearing in Denver.

But the merit of the Indian claim is not at issue. "We've been caught in the middle of this thing," said Deputy Regional Forester Sid Hanks. "I can't second-guess Rupp on this, but we simply have no authority to give the lands away. It's never been done."

The Lakota succeeded recently in convincing the U.S. Supreme Court that they had valid claims in the Black Hills. But the court granted the tribe a monetary settlement, not land, which the tribe rejected. "The Black Hills are not for sale," they said.

Lakota attorney Bruce Ellison said ownership of the land is still an issue, and that he'll argue it before the court next week. But Hanks said only an act of Congress would allow the agency to release the lands if the court agrees with Mathers' interpretation of law. Such legislation has not been drafted.

Second tribe gets first class air

The Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribes will soon join the Northern Cheyenne as the only local governments in the country to acquire Class I air protection.

The Salish-Kootenai tribal council voted 8-2 on Sept. 18 to redesignate the air on the Flathead reservation after a lengthy impact study. The federal Environmental Protection Agency is expected to officially make the change within the next few months following a notice in the *Federal Register*.

Under the Clean Air Act, Indian tribes and other local governments can protect their air through redesignation to Class I, which allows only small increments of degradation. Congress declared most of the nation Class II except for national parks and wilderness areas, which are Class I.

While the Salish-Kootenai face no imminent threats to their air quality, proponents of the change said preservation of the clear and clean air is important to protect the local tourist industry and the tribal members' health. Tribal member Ron Theriault said, "The importance of pristine air sets aside industry, private gain and the almighty

dollar. All you have to do is compare Missoula, a trash town garbage pit the last 30 days, with this valley."

The reservation is located northeast of Missoula. Since prevailing winds do not blow from that city toward the reservation, the Class I designation is not expected to affect the pulp mill there. Nor is it expected to affect the nearby Anaconda aluminum smelter.

Opponents of the redesignation feared effects on these and other jobs, such as wood processing industries on the reservation. James Couture, a tribal member and an employee of Montana Power Co., said, "Currently only national parks and the Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation are classified Class I. It would seem if 99 percent of the habitable area of the United States is designated Class II, that designation should be sufficient and satisfactory for the Flathead Reservation."

Bearhead Swaney, a member of the tribal council and director of the tribal air quality office, said the federally mandated redesignation study cost \$74,000.

— Marjane Ambler

Water worries divide ARCO, locals

PAONIA, Colo. — When the Atlantic Richfield Coal Company proposed doubling coal mining activity here by opening new veins under Mt. Gunnison, there were smiles from the area's many un- or under-employed miners. But since then, the new mine has raised doubts; the ensuing regulatory battle has caught national attention.

This beautiful Western Slope valley has endured underground coal mines for over a century. But to some one-half dozen local residents on a mesa above the town, the issue is water for their orchards. They're concerned the ARCO project will wreak havoc with their water supplies, creating subsidence that could drain or contaminate the aquifer. In the 1950s, the nearby Mt. Oliver mine literally swallowed a stream.

Throughout the permitting process, which has taken ARCO from the town council to the state and federal mining regulators, the residents have asked for assurances that ARCO will work to prevent any contamination, or at least bear legal responsibility for possible damages.

With just one small permit pending from Gunnison County, ARCO public relations officer Sherman Karcher feels certain the firm has protected local interests. The residents disagree, and have appealed the major administrative permit — from the state Mined Land Reclamation Board — to the Denver District Court.

"It's just a difference of opinion about how much protection is needed," said Karcher.

The procedural steps the mine board took in granting their permit are also in question. In short, the agency found that there may be possible water supply damages. But lacking the data to rule on the issue, the board granted ARCO a five-year operating permit while more facts are gathered.

Federal lands are also involved. Because Colorado does not have a cooperative agreement with federal regulators, the federal Office of Surface Mining also studied the ARCO project. It, too, issued a permit that critics say was based on inadequate data; they say OSM ignored many key provisions of the federal Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) sees a dangerous pre-

cedent, said attorney Tom Galloway in Washington, D.C. "What they've done is allowed a mining company to comply with 70 or 80 percent of the law, leaving the other performance standards, including water protection, to be resolved down the road," he said. "That turns the strip mine law on its head. The company should plan first, then mine."

NRDC this week filed a protest with the Department of the Interior's Administrative Appeals Board.

Both the state suit and the federal appeal ask their respective hearers to halt the preliminary construction work now occurring at the ARCO mine site.

Meanwhile, the Bureau of Land Management is reconsidering its 1976 management plans for the area, with an eye towards quintupling the acreage open to competitive coal leasing. The impetus is a request by Colorado Westmoreland, Inc., to expand its coal mine operations.

But again, nearby residents are worried about their water. As in the ARCO case, they fear their concerns are being ignored.

"There are two drainages in the proposed leasing areas that are used by some 40 fruit and livestock ranchers," said Steve Wolcott, a young area farmer and local head of the National Farmers Union. Wolcott and several neighbors unsuccessfully petitioned the BLM to drop the areas from their new leasing considerations.

BLM planner Henry Bisson in Montrose said Wolcott's concern is valid, but that it comes too early in the permit process. "We're not ducking the issue," he said. "We're just saying it will be more appropriate to consider water protection when we do the specific environmental research."

Bisson said his office planned to bring in a hydrologist to study the affected water sources. But Wolcott remains concerned that as the permit processing rolls along, a political momentum — including cries for more jobs — will endanger adequate consideration of his concerns.

The local residents' attorney in the ARCO case, Kent Hanson of Denver, said that's what happened with the Mt. Gunnison project. "ARCO simply bootstrapped itself into a permit," he said.

That won't happen again, said Bisson.



Rare ferret found

A black-footed ferret — an animal considered all but gone from North America — was apparently killed by dogs near Meeteetse, Wyo., last week. Biologists in the region termed the discovery of a black-footed ferret of major significance.

The only confirmed black-footed ferret sightings in recent years were in South Dakota in 1976 and in Custer County, Montana, in 1978.

The animal, which is listed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as an endangered species, was killed by dogs in a ranchyard in Pitchfork, west of Meeteetse. The carcass was frozen, turned over to game wardens, and eventually wound up in the hands of the Fish and Wildlife Service in Billings, Mont.

Wayne Bruster, who handles endangered species for the service in Wyoming and Montana, said, "It appears to be a classic black-footed ferret," but added that mammalogists would have to make the final judgment. The carcass is male.

The black-footed ferret has black feet, tail tip and face. Normally, ferrets feed on prairie dogs, and some biologists claim efforts by ranchers to eliminate prairie dogs from rangeland have contributed to the ferrets' reduction.

The Fish and Wildlife Service and Wyoming Game and Fish Department are discussing a special survey of the area where the black-footed ferret was killed. Bruster said the find provided an opportunity — the first in Wyoming in a decade — to study the kind of habitat in which a ferret can survive. The Fish and Wildlife Service presently has a team searching for ferrets in South Dakota and Montana.

Bruster, however, was not as enthusiastic about the significance of the find as some other biologists: "It confirms," he said, "that up until a few days ago ferrets did exist."



GRAZING HAZING

The Natural Resources Defense Council has warned the Bureau of Land Management that it will not let new BLM grazing rules go into effect without a court fight. The new BLM policy would limit the in-depth study of grazing lands to areas with particular problems. NRDC, had forced the BLM to write environmental impact statements evaluating its grazing lands in a landmark court suit in the 1960s. The group claims the new policy would "favor livestock" over other uses of BLM lands and cause further deterioration of BLM lands.

hotline

ACID RAIN ATTACKED

Citing severe health and environmental damage from acid rain, the National Academy of Sciences is advocating tighter pollution controls on coal-fired power plants to prevent further acidic emissions. The group said a direct link between the pollution and possible environmental effects can not be made yet, but that circumstantial evidence merits the new controls. However, the General Accounting Office reported last month that more information on the issue is needed. Until then, the investigators concluded, emissions controls "would stand a risk of producing no benefits."

POOR REFUGE FOR WILDLIFE

Under increasing pressure to defend fish and wildlife habitat from natural resource development, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is failing to keep up with its job, charged the General Accounting Office. The agency is unable to properly manage many of its refuges, and can meet only half of the requests from other agencies for advice on wildlife planning. The GAO recommended in its report that the agency adopt a priority system for working on those refuges most in need of help. It warned that the vast acreage in Alaska added to the system recently will need massive management attention.

SELL THE FARM

Rep. Ken Kramer (R-Colo.) suggests that the government get out of its budget deficit the way a lot of regular folks do — sell the farm. "Shouldn't we at least ask ourselves if it's necessary for the federal government to own one-third of the land in the country?" Kramer was quoted in the newsletter, *Land Use Planning Report*. Kramer isn't thinking of Rocky Mountain National Park, however. He has in mind dilapidated military training centers and similar properties that are no longer in use.

FEDS WANT ANOTHER LOOK

The Department of the Interior has asked the U.S. District Court in Utah to let it review a controversial decision by the Carter administration on strip mining in Utah's Alton coal field. A ruling last December by former Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus, limited coal development in order to provide environmental protection for nearby Bryce Canyon National Park. But advocates on all sides in the issue remained dissatisfied and went to court. Interior Secretary James Watt says he can do a better job than Andrus. His review would look at a web of states' rights concerns and federal mining rules, including criteria for designating an area unsuitable for strip mining. A spokesman for one plaintiff, the Environmental Defense Fund, urged the court to settle the issue.

LEAD SUIT UNEARTHS NEGLECT

A medical consultant for Bunker Hill Company testified in court last week that he knowingly used an unreliable method to determine the extent of lead exposure among children in Kellogg, Idaho, during the early 1970s. His testimony is part of an ongoing federal court case involving a \$20 million lawsuit, filed by nine former Kellogg residents, charging the mining firm with inflicting permanent harm from lead poisoning. The consultant, Dr. Ronald Panke, said he relied on urine tests rather than blood sampling, though the latter can detect poisoning at lower levels. Attorneys for the plaintiffs charge the use of blood tests might have prevented an "epidemic" of lead exposure during the years following the initial testing.

NUCLEAR HANGUP

As many as 92 Northwest utilities and towns, including 16 in Idaho, may suffer from their dependency on two planned nuclear power plants, the *Idaho Statesman* reports. The Washington Public Power Supply System is likely to scrap at least two of its proposed five new power plants. That would leave municipalities and utilities which contracted for the nuclear power with a debt and no power. Idaho Falls, for example, has invested \$22 million in the two plants.

LEACHING SHALE STUDY

Some experts fear that discarded oil shale piles will be flushed of a slew of toxic chemicals and heavy metals, polluting surface and ground waters. But "We just don't know," said Jay Messer of the Utah Water Research Lab in Logan. Toxics could be absorbed by aquatic plants and animals, broken down by organic molecules in stream sediments or oxidized by the sun. To find some answers, Messer has captured a federal grant and is building a test facility complete with a massive greenhouse and a running river.

LOTTERY FEES RAISED

The Department of the Interior has raised the filing fees for non-competitive oil and gas leases on federal land, from \$10 to \$25. Known as the oil and gas lottery, the system attracted some four million people last year. Most of those stood little chance of scoring a hot tract (see HCN, 8-7-81). The agency expects the fee increase to double its revenue from the lottery to \$80 million annually.

IMPACT RULES NEGLECTED

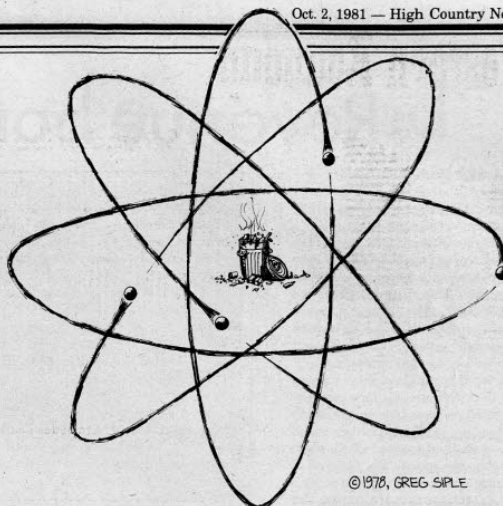
Citizens of Mercer County, N.D., charge that the state's Public Service Commission violated state law by neglecting to force new industries to pay for socioeconomic impacts. At issue is whether a 1979 energy conversion and transmission siting act gives the PSC such authority. Litigation is being considered by the Hazen Hospital Development Committee, which wants energy-related enterprises to pay for a \$1.2 million expansion of a local hospital.

FARMS KEEP LOSING

Young people continue to be the biggest crop raised on America's farms, while the number of farms and farmers continue to shrink. Last year's 6 million farm population was down three percent from 1979; the median age was up to 35.5 years for all farm residents; fewer than 700 counties nationwide now earn the greatest share of income from farming. A map of farming counties in 1950 showed lots of activity in the Rocky Mountain region. Today, except for Montana and Idaho, most of the states in the region have few counties that derive more than one-fifth of their income from farming.

WILD STATUS FOR ARAVAIPA

Arizona's Aravaipa Canyon will become the first Bureau of Land Management area to receive wilderness classification, if Congress accepts a recommendation by Interior Secretary James Watt. Watt called the 5,000-acre canyon area a "jewel in the desert," noting the presence of bighorn sheep, mountain lions, javalina, and unique fish and bird species. Aravaipa is not part of the ongoing study of BLM lands roadless areas for wilderness designation.



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WASTE RULES REVAMPED

Hazardous waste management is getting a fresh look from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and one proposed reform would release facility operators from insuring themselves against potential accidents. In Colorado, charged Sen. Gary Hart (D), the proposal "could leave our state completely unprotected...at one or more of the 20 Colorado sites" handling hazardous wastes. His and many other states, he noted, are prevented by law from imposing financial and safety rules more stringent than federal standards.

SMALL POWER PLUGS IN

A lumber company has signed a contract with the Idaho Power Co. in what may portend a new wave of small power producers in the state. The firm plans to build a waste-burning project at its mill co-generating electricity to sell to the utility. The contract was precipitated by the 1978 Public Utilities Regulatory Policies Act encouraging the utilities to begin purchasing power from small producers. Hung up for months on a debate over how much the utility would pay, state rules have just been finalized between the IPC and the Idaho Public Utility Commission.

TIMBER DEBT DEFERRED

Recognizing the timber industry's financial plight this year, the Idaho Land Board last week deferred more than \$1 million in payments for state timber. Four firms got a one-year delay, paying only the 11 percent interest in advance. The board in August granted a \$1.8 million deferment to the Potlatch Corp. Industry officials said the delay in payment would let it keep more employees working. Timber sale receipts go to endowment funds; the investment income is subsequently distributed to state agencies.

barbed wire

Maybe now those Office of Surface Mining employees will feel better about it. A front-page headline in the *Casper* (Wyo.) *Star-Tribune* on September 22 read, "Open heart surgery OK'd for Casper."



Cooking with SERI. Budget cuts will force a major reduction in the activities of the Solar Energy Research Institute, which is federally funded, but Harold Hubbard of the parent Midwest Research Institute, sounds like he expects to be rolling in dough. "We're going to produce a yeast research and development environment here," said Hubbard. Hubbard did not specify whether SERI would be baking bread or spreading infections.



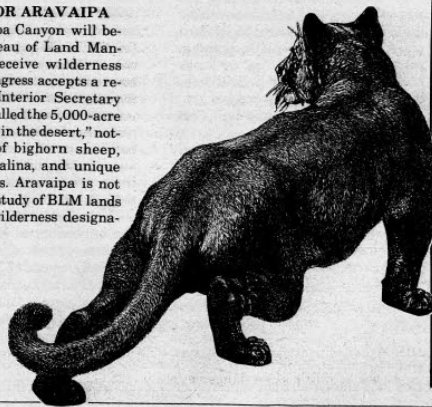
There goes the neighborhood. Interior Secretary James Watt has decided to change his voting address from Colorado to his parents' ranch in Arvada, Wyo.



They can use 'em after their lungs wear out. An item in the *Casper* (Wyo.) *Star-Tribune's* "Briefing" section reports, "UMW President Frank Church wants a sharp increase in the coal tax to overcome a \$1.2 billion deficit in the black wing program."



...But Jerry Falwell plans to put a stop to it. A Brigham Young University scientist said that, under conditions of stress, several types of desert plants and shrubs can change their sex.



Revenue bonds put some firms

by Michael Moss

When a manufacturing plant opened its doors in Mississippi 45 years ago, a proud smile spread across town. The small business would bring new jobs and revenue to a severely depressed community. The financial trick that spawned the plant — a tax-free, industrial revenue bond — has since been used throughout the country, but now it brings frowns as well as smiles.

The bonds have a particular glamour in the Rocky Mountains, for which they seem to have been tailor-made. Many communities in the region are small and financially undernourished, which the bonds are specifically designed to ameliorate, while many of the region's local entrepreneurs are hungry for cheap capital to keep up with the growth caused by the energy boom.

The problem is, the bonds are doing much more than just help out Rocky Mountain communities and firms which can't afford to help themselves. Some very large, national retail companies are opening their doors with the bonds in some not-so-poor areas.

The attraction of industrial revenue bonds, or IDBs, is a below average interest rate, now hovering at 14 percent. So when K-Mart came to Missoula, Mont., earlier this year hoping to build its 1,867th store, it naturally asked for an IDB. It got one.

The chain also got IDBs in 27 other places last year. Towers West, Inc., got IDB financing for a new motel-restaurant in Gillette, Wyo. Gibson's, for a new emporium in Glenwood Springs, Colo. And Dow Chemical, for a fleet of new Western Slope oil well-servicing trucks.

The good news about IDBs has spread. Their use has escalated as traditional financing has tightened. National IDB sales quintupled to \$8.4 billion in the last five years alone.

Liberal reformers, seeing the turn IDBs have taken from their original purpose of serving economically hard-pressed firms and localities, are aghast. The Internal Revenue Service, feeling robbed of millions in lost taxes, is in shock. Local officials, not sure where they stand, are confused, but they go along with the bonds.

The industrial revenue bond is out of control, and there's a struggle underway between those who would increase its use, and those who would terminate it. The outcome will affect financial and community planning throughout the Rocky Mountain region.

HUNTING DOLLARS

"We're in a hinterland out here," said Bruce MacKenzie, a broker for B.A. Davidson & Co. of Missoula. He has procured IDBs for medical clinics, grain train loading facilities, a Coca-Cola bottling plant, and other clients in Montana and North Dakota.

The Rocky Mountain area is a difficult situation. Small industries are looking for start-up capital, but they can't afford to go with a full stock issue or any of the conventional financing," he said.

"It's definitely a difficult market," agreed Mary Keating, a bond broker in Cheyenne, Wyo. Steve Bell, an underwriter for the Denver-based Hanifen, Imhoff, Inc., investment firm, predicts that Colorado's Western Slope "is going to be one of the most difficult places to finance in the history of this country."

No region is immune from the current high interest rates that are frustrating money seekers. But the Rockies, said Bell, have an added handicap in the eyes of eastern investors. "They've been burned in Alaska, left holding empty office buildings," he



Mike McClure

said. "And to many New York investors, Colorado brings back that memory."

In today's market, says Bell, "lenders are calling the shots." With his partner Gil Lipp, Bell travels the state packaging financing deals for both small and large ventures. On his desk is a foot-high stack of paperwork for a new Wyoming Technical Institute dormitory. Increasingly, his clients are large, rather than small.

"Take (a hypothetical) Steve and Gil's shoe shop in Delta," he said, nodding to his partner. "By the time we add in floating interest rates, points up front, and a maximum five-year term — things smart investors are insisting on today — there is no way we could afford to borrow."

Where would Steve and Gil go for money? "To their father," he said.

A NEW DEAL

There's one other avenue for the shoe dreamers: the industrial development bond.

Federal law exempts from taxation the interest income investors get on bonds issued by state and local governments. Tax-exempt bonds are typically used to finance schools, sewers and other public projects.

The municipal bond known as an IDB was created in 1936 to finance private industrial ventures like the Mississippi plant. A special type of IDB, issued in relatively small \$1 million amounts, has since evolved for use by retail stores and other commercial businesses.

"They're not magic," said Bell, "but they are helpful."

In fact, IDBs are a good deal all around. For the money seeker, they are a low-interest loan significantly below the market rate. The rate is low because the money lender in a high tax bracket makes the real gain in tax savings. A lender in the 50 percent tax bracket can earn from a 14 percent interest IDB the equivalent income as from a 20 percent or higher interest conventional, taxable loan.

And, the town or county issuing the IDB takes no financial risk. Its signature is a mere formality, and it scores a new local enterprise, from which it can

collect new sales and property taxes.

But there are two problems. For money lenders, IDBs are losing their shine. New tax brackets proposed by the Reagan administration would drop the ceiling for tax-exempt investments, leaving many investors overbooked on IDBs. Without that incentive, the investors market noted by Bell is demanding even higher interest rates and ever sweeter perquisites (such as short, five-year terms and interest rates that float — lately only up — with the market).

The second problem is that while lenders and borrowers gain, there's one big loser — the federal government. Strapped for revenue today more than ever, the feds have turned sore.

Just how much the Internal Revenue Service loses by not collecting taxes on IDBs is a hotly contested figure. According to an April 1, 1981 report by the Congressional Budget Office, the feds lost \$700 million last year. The study projected a \$2.9 billion loss by 1986.

The Treasury Department agreed with those figures. But a University of Chicago study put the losses at only one-sixth those amounts, while one economist sees a net gain. Norman Ture, currently Treasury Undersecretary for Tax and Economic Affairs, concluded in a 1980 study that IDBs are net revenue producers because they expand all tax bases through new economic activity. No IDBs, Ture argued, and no K-Mart.

The loss of federal tax revenue is not the only complaint. Ralph Nader's Congress Watch cites a slew of abuses that have turned IDBs into "corporate welfare." The bonds, Nader believes, largely benefit upper-income taxpayers, while often subsidizing already profitable multi-billion dollar businesses. No IDBs, Nader argued, mean only less profit for K-Mart.

Furthermore, critics point out that

the IDBs no longer serve their original purpose of attracting small industry to depressed areas. Retailers and other commercial businesses also enjoy IDBs today.

The congressional intent in establishing IDBs is vague and open to interpretation. The original 1968 law defining "small issues" (marketed in \$1 million lumps) mentioned only "small businesses." Also, a 1978 statute raising the limit on small issues to \$10 million referred only to industrial development, making no distinction between commercial and industrial.

FEDERAL REFORM

Smelling a giant loophole, the federal reformers are trying to close the books on IDBs. The House Ways and Means Oversight Subcommittee has held hearings on suggestions ranging from a myriad of stricter conditions to a complete ban.

According to panel staffer Bess Kuntz, the subcommittee is likely to recommend both — a complete ban by 1984 and, until then, several restrictions. Among the interim rules: public hearings prior to issuing IDBs to determine if they're really needed and if they'll drive other firms out of business; annual reporting to the Treasury Department, which now does not formally gather any data on IDBs; targeting commercial IDB projects to economically-distressed areas; banning the use of IDBs for purchasing farmland, which critics say benefits only current landowners and drives up the cost of land for all.

Treasury Secretary Donald Regan has also attacked IDBs and has promised to axe them in a provision of the Reagan administration's second tax bill.

The reaction to possible federal reform is, predictably, mixed.

in black, but feds see only red



Mike McClure

unfair competition. And over better off without them."

— State Rep. Frank Randall, (R-Colo. Springs)

Kutak Rock & Huie, with investment offices in Denver and five other money centers, is furious. The firm wants only the interim reforms recommended by the subcommittee. In a weekly summary of federal action distributed to its clients, the company urges readers to lobby their representatives, stressing the benefit of increased local jobs.

K-Mart spokesman Bob Stevenson said restricting IDBs "would dry up our whole program." Of the 193 stores K-Mart built last year (through private developers; K-Mart doesn't own but rather rents its stores), 80 would not have opened without IDBs, said Stevenson.

He has a different view of discrimination. "If manufacturers can use them, so should we," he argued. "Per dollar invested, we provide three times the jobs and more of a tax base than manufacturing." And what small businesses call unfair, he calls misconception. "Your little guy downtown will typically be paying \$1.40 a square foot rent. For us, it's over \$4."

Gary Chaffin of Chaffin, Inc., the Dodge City, Kansas-based firm that owns Gibson's, said times are hard for his firm, too. "Construction costs are two or three times what they used to be, and IDBs often make the difference in siting a store."

"I, too, have mixed emotions about IDBs and can see why existing businesses would ask why we should get a special favor. But take Delta, Colo. We will help them by bringing in new trade, and that's a decision they should make." (See accompanying story.)

Also stumping for local, or at least state, control is the National Council of State Legislatures. Staff Director Susanne Hiegle conceded some controls are needed, but argued that states, and not the feds, should make those changes. Individual circumstances, she said, are too varied for one comprehensive

sive policy.

Pleased with the subcommittee's recommendation, however, is Colorado State Representative and chairman of the Rules Committee, Frank Randall (R-Colo. Springs). "These things are out of hand... There is abuse. There is unfair competition. And over the long run, we will all be better off without them," he said.

Randall said he would not support a state reform bill because it might put Colorado at a disadvantage to other states that would still allow their uninhibited use.

Idaho official Karl Tueller would validate that fear. The Gem State remains the lone holdout on IDBs in the nation.

Tueller, who heads the Idaho Economic Analysis agency, said he's tried in vain for several years to get the state legislature to allow IDBs. He said the legislature's hesitance is baffling, although he blames last year's defeat on lobbying efforts by the Idaho Power Co., which was concerned that small power producers would use the bonds to compete with the utility.

Whatever the reason, Tueller feels the pinch. "Most companies expect us to have them," he said, and added, "It's a lack of attraction to businesses which, yes, might go elsewhere because we don't."

LOCAL SCRUPLES

The competitive fever is even more intense in town halls.

Not all governments are receptive to IDBs. In the Missoula K-Mart case, for example, the bond was approved by the county for a site in the city. But the city, predicted deputy city attorney MaeNan Ellingson, will scuttle the project by turning down a necessary zoning change.

The city is balking in part because K-Mart would violate its master plan.

But its guidelines for issuing bonds discourage their use for large commercial ventures that could obtain financing elsewhere. K-Mart, said Ellingson, does not qualify.

Missoula County attorney Mike Sehestedt said that K-Mart probably wouldn't be built there without the IDB. He also blames criticism of IDBs on an "elite" group. "A lot of the opposition was that K-Mart is tacky and architecturally unattractive — not the kind of store those protesting would shop at," he said.

Throughout Montana, said Missoula-based investor MacKenzie, communities have shown "tremendous

discretion" in issuing IDBs. "There's usually a tremendous turnout at local meetings considering IDBs," he said.

But in Wyoming, concedes broker Keating, community reaction varies widely from hostility to open arms. Other states throughout the region exhibit the same conflict.

Welcome or not, however, IDBs for the little guy are increasingly out of reach anyway. The interest rates may be lower, but the criteria an investor will require of a borrower's financial stability are not.

"There's no preferential treatment," said Bell. "The bonds are available to all, if they can market their project. But that's the problem. Small business ventures simply don't have the portfolio today to get a loan, any kind of loan."

Or as Sehestedt put it: "What's the use in financing a small hardware store if it's only going to go belly up?" With or without federal reforms, Steve and Gil's shoe shop is likely to remain a dream.

Critics say IDBs are also hurting traditional municipal bonds by competing with them in a limited money market and driving up borrowing costs for both. One estimate calculated that last year's sale of \$8.4 billion in IDBs raised the interest rates on general municipal bonds by 0.4 percent.

No one keeps accurate figures, but Bell and other brokers in the region note an upswing in local resolutions approving IDBs.

Witnesses before the congressional oversight subcommittee, in fact, said competition between towns and counties and neighboring jurisdictions was pressuring communities to relax their standards for issuing IDBs. Bob Cantine, director of the Wyoming Association of Municipalities, said the state rules have steadily regressed, leaving a void filled by local policies running the gamut of restrictiveness.

The possibility that Congress might act to axe IDBs, in fact, prompted Delta, Colo., officials to pass an IDB this month for a new Gibson's store. "We're in a time bind," said one council member, "and we can always come back later to resolve the details."

DELTA, Colo. — It was to have been a simple item on the town council's agenda. Similar resolutions had been routine matters in other Rocky Mountain towns.

But a month and three meetings later, the issue flared into a Main Street war. The town divided. Debate became accusatory. Tempers rose, prompting one council member to lament, "This is one of the most disgusting things I have experienced."

What troubled this farm town, sitting at the junction of the Gunnison and Uncompahgre Rivers on the Western Slope some 200 miles southwest of Denver, was a request for its good name.

A department store chain, Gibson's, would like to build its 26th emporium in the area. To help alleviate prohibitive construction costs and exorbitant interest rates on loans, the firm would like to use a \$2 million tax-exempt, low-interest industrial revenue bond.

It was a sweet offer. Delta is aching for new enterprise to boost its sagging economy.

It was a no-risk offer. Gibson's would bear the monetary risk, with Delta merely lending its bonding rights.

And it may have been Delta's last chance. Gibson's implied it would go elsewhere — north to Grand Junction or south to Montrose — if the town

proved uncooperative.

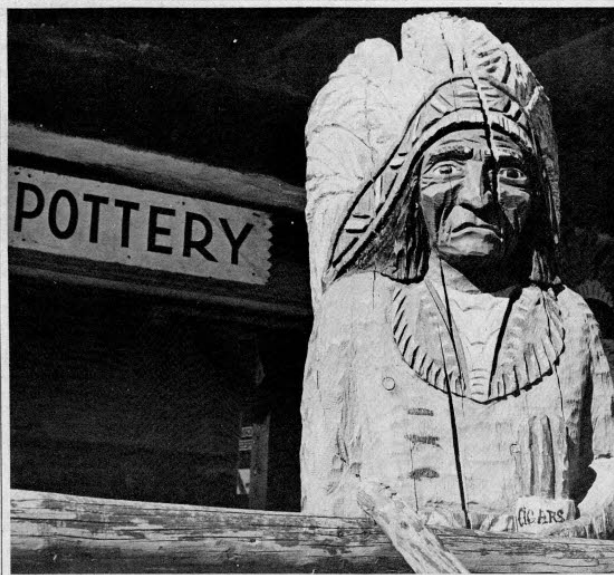
But local merchants grumbled about new competition. Others predicted that if Gibson's chose to build on the town's edge it would dry up an already parched downtown and withering Main Street. Still more — two-thirds of the merchants polled — opposed the bond request as an unfair subsidy the department store chain doesn't deserve.

Throughout the region, local enterprise is sometimes a sickly affair. Officials in desperation reach for any tool they can find to lure new businesses. If the only takers are chain stores that build on the outer town limits, shredding the town plan, well, at least it's something for the coffers. To Delta, Gibson's will turn over \$20,000 in sales taxes for every \$1 million of goods sold.

It's also something, albeit temporary, for local builders. And with a new name emblazoned on the Chamber of Commerce roster, it'll enlarge the company of merchants. Unless a handful of downtown little guys get nudged off.

Again and again, though, the Delta debate returned to one agreed upon fact: the town needs Gibson's. It needs anything it can get.

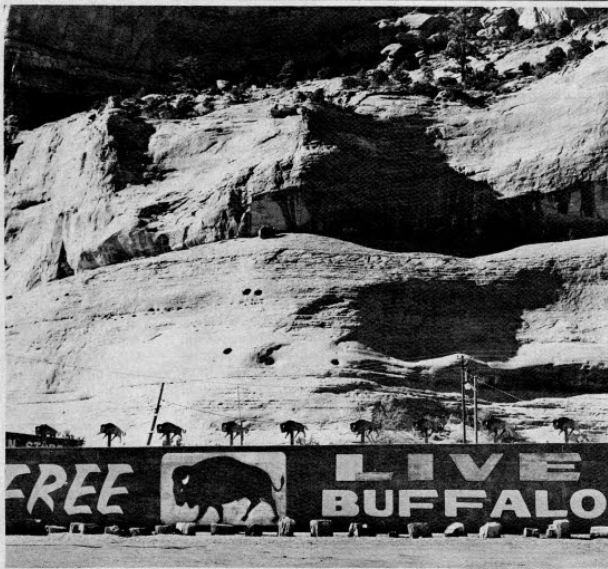
That dependency finally swayed the council, and a bond resolution was approved last month.



Chaparral Indian Store near Arizona - New Mexico border



Hopi Village Cafe and Motel, Joseph City, Arizona



Tomahawk Indian Store near Arizona - New Mexico border



Photos by Dale Schicketanz

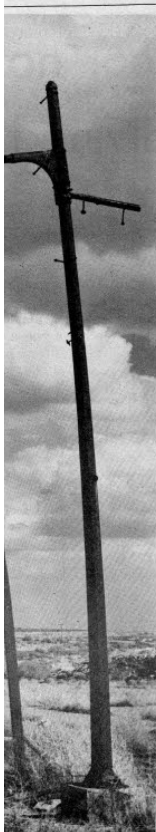
Flat tires, rattlesnakes, Navajos, Burma Shave, the Andrews Sisters, Continental Divide, Joshua trees, abandoned mine camps, scorpions, bad coffee, George Maharis, chuckholes, the Main Street of America...

If all these things, individually or together, don't remind you of Route 66, that road now more of memory than of the moment, so be it. There is not a whole lot left of it — much of it has been replaced by the fancier, faster Interstates; other bits wander off into the desert and rarely feel an automobile wheel.

Once upon a time it was called the Main Street of America; it had an association to promote and defend it; it had a song and a television series named after it; and it helped the migrating thousands of the Depression years get across the Great Divide on their way to California.

Once upon a time an Army Lieutenant named Ned Beale led a string of camels across the high desert as he surveyed its route. It was the only continuous ribbon of pavement from the corner of Michigan Avenue and Jackson Boulevard in Chicago to California's Santa Monica Beach. John Steinbeck called it "mother road, road of flight."

It's still there.



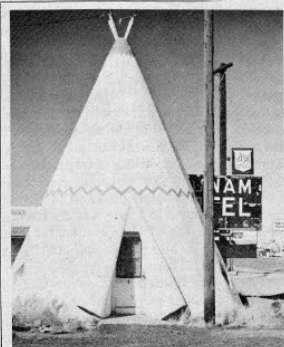
Two Guns, Arizona



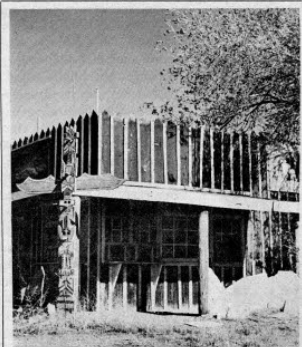
Hopi Village Cafe and Motel, Joseph City, Arizona



Dr. Nightlinger's Meteor Crater Overlook



Wigwam Motel, Holbrook, Arizona



Fort Apache, Joseph City, Arizona



Sittling Bull Indian Store, Joseph City, Arizona

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reporter's notebook

Watt comes West to woo; no wedding vows divined

by Dan Whipple

To hear Interior Secretary James Watt tell it, the current governors of the western states represent the greatest collection of statesmen since the Constitutional Convention. These men are far-sighted, right-thinking and, most of all, "cooperative."

This effusive praise — which Watt laid on thicker than cheese dip at a bridge party — seemed slightly out of place, since nearly all of the governors he was addressing were Democrats, members of the very party his boss, President Ronald Reagan, so often castigates for bringing the country to the very edge of financial ruin. But, for a few days last month in Jackson, Wyo., at the Western Governors' Conference, all was bi-partisan harmony as the governors and the feds sat eyeball to eyeball to discuss weighty matters.

Watt knows, of course, that the Western states, though having chief executives who are Democrats, are staunch Reagan territory. The governors know it, too. So Secretary Watt praised... and praised. When he could, he praised the governors for something specific each had done: "Gov. Matheson (D-Utah) has come up with some excellent ideas for federal-state land exchanges. These ideas are so excellent and innovative, I wish I could claim some credit for them — call it the Matheson-Watt plan — though I don't deserve any of the credit, because they have been initiated entirely by Scott."

If he couldn't think of anything specific, Watt lauded a governor under the general banner of cooperation: "Gov. Hammond has been very cooperative in this, Gov. Schwinden has been extremely cooperative in that." And so on. Fortunately, Gov. Jerry Brown of California did not show, sparing the secretary the superhuman effort of thinking up something nice to say about him.

Watt has obviously been practicing his politics. However, he still isn't very good at it. His overblown accolades were clumsy, transparent and condescending. The governors loved it. One said, "It's hard to get too mad at a guy who keeps telling you he loves you all the time." It will be interesting to see if the love lasts until an election year.

The secretary has also been practicing his gestures. When he makes a statement that he considers particularly significant, he makes a gesture. Unfortunately, he hasn't learned very many of them yet, and his first-line gesture is to raise his right arm above his head like a fellow about to deliver a karate chop to a brick. He sometimes raises his left arm in the same fashion, but this radical innovation is still in its infancy. Once or twice, he raised both arms over his head.

Given the bludgeoning he has received from the press, one goes to these rare public appearances expecting the devil incarnate. After the conference was over and the "wrap-ups" started to appear, a number of commentators wrote the obligatory, "I expected a monster but he's not such a bad guy after all" story. Despite this outpouring of good feeling by a part of the media, there was very little likable about Watt's style. The whole shebang was very carefully orchestrated and very tightly controlled. Watt has the stiffest "informal" style since Adlai Stevenson. Questions about his policies and past attacks on opponents were evaded or ignored.

In a number of cases, he seemed ill-prepared, a cardinal sin among politicians. For instance, he seemed to know scarcely anything about the controversy surrounding the Jackson Hole Airport — the very airport he landed in when he visited: "It hasn't come across my desk." When asked about Interior's defense of the congressionally-mandated order to withdraw the Bob Marshall wilderness area in Montana from oil and gas leasing, he replied, "That's no longer an issue." This will doubtless come as news to the Sierra Club and other environmental groups, which are charging Watt with the possibility of collusion with his former law firm, Mountain States Legal Foundation. MSFL is taking its old boss to court, and the Attorney General has agreed with MSFL that the withdrawal of the Bob is probably unconstitutional. The groups fear that Interior will not vigorously defend the withdrawal in court.

The nation is currently ruled by an entire collection of people whose idea of comedy is Bob Hope. Consequently, Watt opens his speeches with the tired saw, "I'm from the government and I'm here to help you."

The secretary didn't risk any one-on-one interviews while he visited Wyoming. He refused an interview that **High Country News** tried to arrange well in advance of the meeting and similarly refused all individual requests from the media. Reporters attempting to talk to him informally were gently nudged by his press secretary.

There were well over a hundred media representatives pre-registered for the conference. It was a carnival and Watt was the carnal barker. Media people were tripping over each other to get a story; anyone who looked even marginally official was interview material.

At the Friday morning session Watt attended, there were 19 television cameras and dozens of radio folks. By way of comparison, there was only one TV camera when a man first landed on the moon.

At about 1:30 on Friday afternoon, there was a press conference. Watt smiled a lot. He was asked a wide variety of questions. He said, for probably the zillionth time, that he represents the mainstream of environmental thinking. He quoted some interesting, but irrelevant, statistics to back up this claim: "We deal with some 220 special interest groups in our work at the Interior Department. Fewer than 10 are against Jim Watt."

All the "environmental extremists" will be happy to know that they are now free from slander from the secretary's lips. He has expunged the phrase from his vocabulary. He said, "That phrase doesn't help me do my job. I don't have to look for a fight." This is all well and good, but the questioner had asked the secretary to explain further the "environmental extremist" remarks, used by both him and Reagan, which helped create the antagonistic atmosphere now prevailing between the administration and virtually every major environmental group. Who, the reporter wanted to know, was the secretary referring to when he used the term?

He also played down the importance of his born-again religious principles in the formation of public lands policy. Earlier comments by the secretary implied that he expected the Second Coming at any moment and, therefore, the long-term health of federal lands for "future generations" need not overly

Photos by Kathy Bogan



concern him. This interpretation, he said, was out of context and distorted. He said, "I hope my Christian principles make me a better steward. We've got to provide for generations and generations."

Watt also repeated, ad nauseum, that there would be no drilling, mining or other mineral activity in the national parks. This was very curious, because, as far as HCN can determine, no one has ever accused him of trying to do that.

The most confusing revelation to come from the meeting was the pronouncement that the Sagebrush Rebellion was over. Watt and the Reagan Administration, in presenting their "report card," as he called it, are taking credit for defusing the land grab. Conversely, at the press conference, Watt said that, while the rebellion is dead, "I hope it is not in its coffin. The president and Jim Watt continue to be sagebrush rebels."

But the Watt hype wasn't the only one at Teton Village. About 350 anti-Watt demonstrators gathered in the parking lot to protest Watt's policies. They held a mock trial and convicted the secretary of crimes against the environment. "Johnny Sagebrush" sang some songs. People carried signs with slogans like, "Only wimps are against wilderness," "Rednecks for wilderness," and the ubiquitous "Dump Watt." There was a black labrador with a sandwich board over its back reading, "Dogs against Watt." Ample patriotism was displayed by the presence of a few American flags and a poster reading, "Bomb Iran."

Immediately next to the anti-Watt crowd were about a dozen pro-Watt demonstrators. These folks definitely won the flag-waving contest and they wore brown baseball caps with yellow lettering saying, "WATT." On the side of one truck was a large sign reading, "Gallop (sic) poll shows 70 percent support Watt."

The general milling around continued until about 12:15. Then about 25 pickup trucks arrived, their beds loaded with cut firewood. Each one had a sign reading, "Thanks, Mr. Watt, for multiple use." They also had green bumper stickers reading, "75 percent support Watt."

This demonstration had been organized by Bob Baker, the chief forester for Louisiana-Pacific's lumber mill in Dubois, Wyo. LP is the country's largest single user of timber from public land.

The pro-Watt demonstrators were not nearly as vocal, relying on their truck horns and the siren from a fire truck provided by the Dubois Volunteer Fire Department.

When the secretary finished his morning session with the governors, he left the hall for lunch. Spotting the pro-Watt demonstration, he proceeded up the line of trucks, shaking hands with supporters and offering a little encouragement to fight the good fight. To one man, Watt said, "We're just trying to keep jobs coming and protect the environment, too. That's just what you've been doing all your life, probably."

The man, obviously flustered, said, "I'll bet I have."

As Watt marched up the line of trucks, Howie Wolke of Earth First! appeared from between two of them. He didn't so much shake Watt's hand as seize it. He said, "Mr. Secretary, I just wanted to shake your hand. I'm Howie Wolke and I organized the 'Dump Watt' demonstration over there." Watt yanked his hand away, at great peril to his wrist.

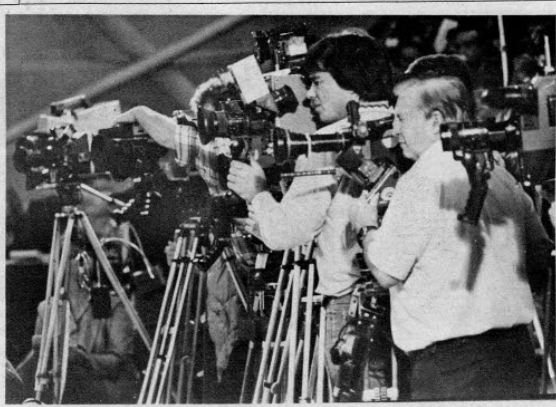
Then the anti-Watt people left their assigned area and moved over to confront the secretary. For a man who has said he does not like to walk, he showed good speed in the 70 or so yards to the shelter of the restaurant. One man, who had introduced himself earlier as being from the Michigan Republican Party, yelled at the approaching demonstrators, "You're playing right into the hands of the Communists!"

The anti-Watt demonstrators loudly chanted "Dump Watt," but made no move to storm the restaurant. After about 15 minutes, they faded into the day.

Then, of course, there were the governors. This was, after all, officially the Western Governors' Conference, not the Watt Carnival. There were 10 state governors present; absent were Brown, Richard Lamm of Colorado and Arizona's Bruce Babbitt. These were the governors most likely to give Watt a hard time, so their absence severely reduced the potential for fireworks.

The chairman of the conference was Robert F. List, Republican of Nevada, one of only three Republican governors present. List is young-looking 45 with a ready smile and easy manner. In a day and age when politicians are sprinting to out-conservative each other, List wins the title in a walk.

The host governor, and voted next chairman of the group, was Wyoming's Ed Herschler, a Democrat. Ed, as he is called by nearly everybody after the



manner of Wyoming politicians, is a competent, mildly conservative man, who often looks as though he is about to fall asleep. Herschler is reportedly not crazy about Watt, but he is also aware of Reagan's great popularity in his state. Herschler is still undecided about whether to run for a third term as governor, run for Republican Malcolm Wallop's U.S. Senate seat or retire from politics. There is nothing unusual about Gov. Ed's indecision; he may be the most reluctant politician in the lower 48 states.

HCN's personal favorite governor was Bruce King, Democrat from New Mexico. In a room that was packed to the rafters with good old boys, King out good-old-boyed them all. He was boisterous, folksy, friendly, quick-witted and continually smoked a huge brown cigar — the kind your grandmother used to scold your grandfather about.

The crowd pleaser was bearded Gov. Jay Hammond of Alaska, a Republican. Hammond stuck a few innocent barbs into the secretary, including the surprising revelation that he wasn't as adamantly opposed to the "federal presence" in his state as many of the others.

The only governor voicing substantial disagreement with Watt was Montana Democrat Ted Schwinden. Schwinden made it clear that, while the administration was talking a good game with its promises of federal-state cooperation, the few instances of "cooperation" so far pointed to the same old federal snow job. He referred specifically to the federal government's decision to ignore the recommendations of the state-federal Powder River Basin Coal Team and increase federal coal leasing targets in the area by 150 percent.

Watt gets good cheer from Western Slope developers

"Some of you have been begging for change for years, and now we're getting it," Secretary of the Interior James Watt told some 500 listeners in Grand Junction, Colo., last month. But unlike the more cautious response that declaration received from western governors in Jackson, Wyo., the reaction here was fervently enthusiastic.

Local officials, small and large entrepreneurs, and just plain fans, his Grand Junction audience was primed. They'd heard a succession of speakers present their visions of developing the West in a day-long rally sponsored by Club 20, an association of Western Slope pro-development interests (See HCN, 7-24-81).

Wayne Aspinall mustered his 85 years of pro-growth spirit to ask, "Isn't it a wonderful thing that once again we of Colorado, especially we of Western Colorado, are back in the big leagues?" Then the gathering rose and for thirty minutes gave the secretary one of the most joyful receptions he'd received during his month-long tour of the West. "I've been looking for a friendly crowd," joked Watt.

In return, the audience got glad tidings from Washington. Flanked by Assistant Secretary Dan Miller and Bureau of Land Management Director Bob Burford, the secretary brought news of President Reagan's federalism and an unwavering commitment to develop the nation's natural resources.

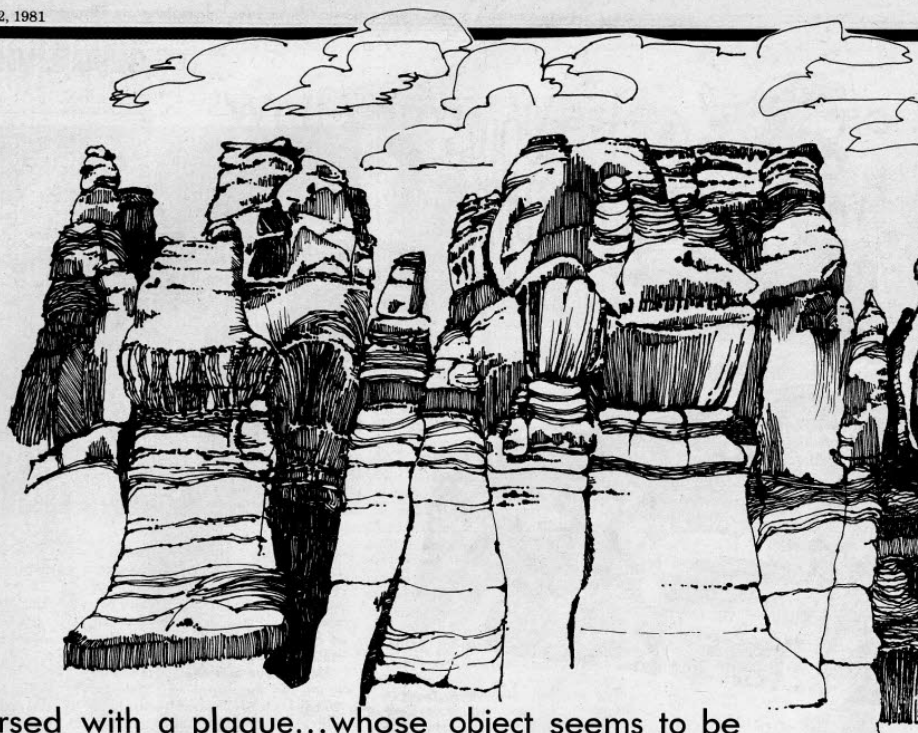
At stake, the secretary warned, was the nation's security and the pitfall of becoming "another glob on the planet." The cure, he said, lay in a new spirit of patriotism and electoral campaigning that will put "good people" in office right down to the local school boards.

Aspinall, a former congressional kingpin and now a lobbyist for AMAX and other natural resources firms, smiled. So did Club 20 director John Vanderhoof. And so did the banquetiers, from the Head of Multi-Minerals Corporation down to a Paonia city council member; they deserted their glasses of Paul Masson Rose to give a series of standing ovations.

The secretary bestowed praise on President Reagan, then delivered barbs to others, including Sen. Gary Hart (D-Colo.) who he characterized as a "prima donna senator" for his opposition to releasing more federal land for disposing of spent oil shale. Some 75 people who demonstrated against the secretary earlier that evening were chided for not backing his goal of improving national park management. And the Carter administration was blamed for transforming "balanced, common-sense management" into an "endangered species."

But most of the secretary's speech was upbeat, smooth and heart-warming. "The change we're bringing," he said, "will renew and restore America's greatness... Change that will allow us not to be so dependent upon foreign sources and foreign influences and the daily newspapers. But dependent upon people, Americans."

— Michael Moss



We are accursed with a plague...whose object seems to be
to make our mountains match our men — to reduce our mountains to

Abbey...

(continued from page 1)

logism, and Plato and his Laws.

Instead of mountain men we are accursed with a plague of diggers, drillers, borers, grubbers, asphalt-spreaders, dam-builders, over-grazers, clear-cutters, and strip-miners whose object seems to be to make our mountains to molehills for a race of molehill dwellers.

Oh well...revenge is on the way. We see it in those high thin clouds far on the northern sky. We feel it in those rumbles of discontent deep in the cupboards of the earth: tectonic crockery trembling on the continental shelves. We hear it on the slipface of the dunes, a blue wind moaning out of nowhere. We smell it on the air: the smell of danger. Death before dishonor? What other? Liberty or death? Naturally.

When no one else would do it, it was Thoreau, Henry Thoreau the intolerable bore, the mean skulker, the "quaint stump figure of a man," as William Dean Howells saw him, who rang the Concord firebell to summon the villagers to a speech by Emerson attacking slavery. And when John Brown stood on trial for his life, when all Americans, even the most ardent Abolitionists, were denouncing him, it was Henry who delivered a public address first in Concord then in Boston not only defending but praising, even eulogizing, the "madman" of Harper's Ferry.

Where the White Rim rises from the river, we pause at noon to fill our water jugs from a series of potholes full of last week's rainwater. We drink, sitting in the sunlight on the pale sandstone, and

make our lunch — slabs of dark bread, quite authentic, from a bohemian bakery in Moab; a very serious hard-core hippie peanut butter, heavy as wet concrete, from some beatnik food co-op in Durango, Colorado (where Teale and Corson live); raspberry jam; and wild honey, thick as axle grease, for esophageal lubrication.

"What is your favorite dish?" another guest asked Thoreau as they sat down to a sumptuous Emersonian dinner.

"The nearest," Henry replied. "At Harvard they teach all branches of learning," said Ralph Waldo.

"But none of the roots," said Henry. Refusing to pay a dollar for his Harvard diploma, he said "Let every sheep keep its own skin." When objections were raised to his habit of exaggeration, Henry said, "You must speak loud to those who are hard of hearing." Asked to write for the *Ladies' Companion*, he declined on the grounds that he "could not write anything companionable." He defines a pearl as "the hardened tear of a diseased clam, murdered in its old age." On the art of writing he said to a correspondent, "You must work very long to write short sentences." And added that "the one great rule of composition...is to speak the truth."

And so on. The man seemingly composed wisecracks and epigrams even in his sleep. Even on his deathbed. "Henry, have you made your peace with God?" asked a relative. "I am not aware that we have ever quarreled, Aunt," said Henry. To another visitor, attempting to arouse in Henry a decent Christian concern with the next world, he said, "One world at a time, please."

Many of his friends, neighbors, rela-

tives and relative friends must have sighed in relief, when Henry finally croaked his last, mumbling "moose...Indians..." and was safely buried under Concord sod. Peace, they thought, at last. But, to paraphrase the corpse, they had somewhat hastily concluded that he was dead.

His passing did not go unnoticed outside of Concord. Thoreau had achieved regional notoriety by 1862. But at a time when the giants of New England literature were thought to be Emerson, Hawthorne, Alcott, Channing, Irving, Longfellow, Lowell and Dr. Holmes, Thoreau was but a minor writer. Not even a major minor writer.

Today we see it differently. In the ultimate democracy of time, Henry has well outlived his contemporaries. Hawthorne and Emerson are still read, at least in university English departments, but as for the others, they are forgotten by everyone but specialists in American literature. Thoreau however becomes more significant with each passing decade. The deeper and faster our United States hurl themselves into industrialism, urbanism, militarism and authoritarianism — with the rest of the world doing its best to emulate America — the more poignant, strong and appealing becomes Thoreau's demand for the right of every man, every woman, every child, every dog, every tree, every snail darter, every lousewort, every living thing, to live its life in its own way at its own pace in its own square mile.

Looking at my watersoaked, beer-stained, bacon-grease-spotted cheap old paperback copy of *Walden*, I see that mine was the 33rd printing. And this only one edition of at least a dozen cur-

rent American editions of the book. (Here I sit writing a brief preface to yet another.) Furthermore, *Walden* has been published abroad in every country where English can be read, as in India — God knows they need it there! — or can be translated, as in Russia, where they need it even more. The Kremlin's commissars of literature have classified Thoreau as a 19th century social-reformer, proving once again that censors can read but seldom understand.

We walk up a small side canyon toward an area called Soda Springs Basin; the canyon branches and branches again, forming more canyons. The floor of each is flood-levelled sand, the walls are perpendicular sandstone. Each little canyon resembles a winding corridor in a labyrinth. We listen for the breathing of the minotaur but find only cottonwoods glowing green and gold against the red rock, and rabbitbrush with its mustard-yellow bloom, and mule-ear sunflowers facing the sunlight, their coarse petals the color of butter, and the skull and curled ram's horns of a desert bighorn sheep, half buried in the auburn sand.

We camp today at Anderson Bottom, across the river from Unknown Bottom. There are pictographs and petroglyphs here, painted on and chiseled into the rock: pictures of deer, bighorns, warriors, and spectral figures representing — who knows — gods, spirits, demons. They do not trouble us. We cook our dinner and sing our songs and go to sleep.

November 10, 1980. Now for a day or two in Stillwater Canyon. We have left Labyrinth behind, though how Major



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molehills for a race of molehill dwellers.

Powell distinguished the two is hard to determine. The current is slow, but no slower than before, the canyons as serpentine as ever. In the few straight stretches of water we gain a view of Candlestick Tower, now behind us, and off to the southwest, ahead, the great sandstone monadnock known as Cleopatra's Chair, "bathed," as Henry would say, "in a golden flood of sunlight."

We row around an anvil-shaped butte called Turk's Head. Hard to see any reason for the name. Is there any reason, out here, for any name? These huge walls and giant towers and vast mazy avenues of solid stone resist all attempts at verbal reduction. The historical view, the geological view, the aesthetical view, the rock-climber's view, give us only superficial aspects of a massive presence that is fundamentally unknowable. The world is big and it is incomprehensible. Molto misterioso...

A hot, still morning in Stillwater Canyon. We row and rest and glide, at two miles per hour, between riparian jungles of rusty willow, coppery tamarisk, brown cane and gold-leaf cottonwoods. On the shaded side the crickets sing their dirge-like autumnal monotone. They know, if we don't, that winter is coming.

We explore a couple of unnamed side canyons on the right, searching for a natural stone arch I think I found ten years ago, on a previous river journey. Hallucination Arch, we named it; a lovely span of rosy sandstone — not shown on any map — somewhere in the northern fringes of The Maze. We do not find it this time. We pass without investigating a third unknown canyon; that must have been the one.

We camp for two nights at the mouth of Jasper Canyon, spend the day between the nights exploring Jasper's higher ramifications, toward the heart of The Maze. If The Maze has a heart. We go on the following day, down the river, and come out one fine afternoon into the confluence of the two great desert streams. The Green meets the Colorado. They do not immediately merge, however, but rather flow along side by side like traffic lanes on a freeway, the greenish Colorado, the brownish

Green, with a thin line of flatsam serving as median.

Henry never was a joiner either.

"Know all men by these presents that I, Henry Thoreau, do not wish to be considered a member of any incorporated body which I have not joined."

A crusty character, Thoreau. An unpeeled man. A man with the bark on him.

We camp again at Spanish Bottom, near the first big rapids of Cataract Canyon. Sitting around our fire at sundown, four of us gnawing on spareribs, the other two picking at their pussy food — tofu and spinach greens, etc. — we can hear the roar of tons of silty water plunging among the limestone molar of Brown Betty Rapid: teeth set on edge. The thunderous vibrations rise and fall, come and go, with the shifting evening winds.

We spend the next day wandering about the top of The Maze, under the shadows of Lizard Rock, Standing Rock, The Chimney, looking down into 500-foot-deep canyons, indeed, for the rare storms of the canyon country to carve out of solid rock these intricate canyons, each with its unscalable walls, box-like heads, stomach-turning drop-offs. A man could spend the better part of a life exploring this one area, getting to know, so far as possible, its broad outline and its intimate details. You could make your summer camp on Pete's Mesa, your winter camp down in Ernie's Country, and use Candlestick Spire all year round for a personalized private sun dial. And die, when you're ready, with the secret center of The Maze clutched to your bosom. Or, more likely, never found.

Henry spent his life — or earned his life — exploring little more than the area surrounding his home town of Concord. His jaunts beyond his own territory do not amount to much. He traveled once to Minnesota, seeking health, but that was a failure. He never came West, although, as he says, he preferred walking in a westerly direction. He never saw our Rocky Mountains, or the Grand Canyon, or The Maze. He never reached the Amazon, Antarctica, the Upper Nile, or the Mountains of the Moon. He journeyed once to Staten Island but was not impressed.

Instead, he made a world out of Walden Pond, Concord, and their environs. He walked every day, he explored every day, he learned to know his world as few ever know any world. Walking in the woods with Thoreau, a friend of his expressed his long-felt wish to find an Indian arrowhead. At once Henry stopped, bent down, and picked one up.

November 14, 1980. Today will be our last day on the river. We plan to run the rapids of Cataract this morning, camp on the shore of Lake Powell this afternoon, go on to Hite Marina and back to civilization, such as it is, tomorrow.

I rise early, as usual, and before breakfast go for a long walk into the fields of Spanish Bottom. I see two sharpshinned hawks roosting in a cottonwood. A tree of trembling leaves, pale gold and acid green. The hawks rise at my approach, circle, return to the tree as I go on. Out on the field, one hundred yards away, I see an erect neck, a rodentine head, a pair of muley ears displayed in clear silhouette against the redrock cliffs. I stop, we stare at each other — the transient human, the ephemeral desert mule deer. Then I notice other deer scattered beyond the first: one, two, three, four, five — nine all told. Two with antlers.

My first thought is meat. Unworthy thought, I suppose — but there they are, waiting, half of them standing broadside to me, their dear beating hearts on level with the top of the sand sage, salt-bush, rice grass. Two of them within a hundred yards — easy range for a thirty-three. Meat means survival. Survival, by Christ, with honor.

My second thought is more fitting, for the moment. Leave them in peace. Let them be. Efface yourself, for a change, and let the wild things be.

What would Henry say? Henry said, "There is a period in the history of the individual, as of the race, when the hunters are the 'best men,' as the Algonquians called them. We cannot but pity the boy who has never fired a gun; he is no more humane, while his education has been sadly neglected." And then he goes on to say: "(But) no humane being, past the thoughtless age of boyhood, will wantonly murder any

creature which holds its life by the same tenure that he does. The hare in its extremity cries like a child. I warn you, mothers, that my sympathies do not make the usual philanthropic distinctions." Is that his last word on the subject? Hardly. Henry had many words for every subject, and no last word for any. He also writes, "But I see that if I were to live in a wilderness, I should become...a fisher and hunter in earnest."

I turn back to camp. The deer take alarm finally, and move off at a walk. Their fear becomes contagious. One begins to run, they all run, bounding away toward the talus slopes of the canyon wall. I watch them leap upward into the rocks, expending energy with profligate ease, going farther and rising higher until they disappear at last, one by one, somewhere among the boulders and junipers at the foot of the vertical wall.

Back to camp and breakfast. We load the boats, secure the hatches, lash down all baggage, strap on lifejackets, face the river and the sun, the growing murmur of the rapids. First Brown Betty, then Ben Hur and Capsize Rapids, then the Big Drop and Satan's Gut. Delightful names, and fitting. We feel the familiar rush of adrenaline coursing through our blood. We've been through here before, however, and know that we'll survive once more. Most likely. The odds are good. Our brave oarsman and oarswoman, Dusty and Lorna, ply the oars and steer our fragile craft into the glassy tongue of the first rapid. The violent waters churn below, rainbows of broken sunlight dance in the spray. We descend.

Henry Thoreau, if only you were with us now! He should be; he is. Wherever there is risk and liberty, wherever there is wilderness, Henry Thoreau will find his home.

The preceding was excerpted from Edward Abbey's introduction to a new issue of *Walden* by Henry David Thoreau. The book is available for \$4.95 from Peregrine Smith Books, P.O. Box 667, Layton, Utah 84041. Abbey is the author of several books, including *The Monkey Wrench Gang* and *Desert Solitaire*.

14-High Country News — Oct. 2, 1981

Bulletin Board

MAPPING WYOMING

Five new maps in a 56-map series covering Wyoming are available from the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. On a 1:100,000 scale, they each cover some 1,800 square miles and show ownership, contours and elevations in meters. Many natural and human-made features are marked. The latest maps are Devil's Tower, Red Desert Basin, The Ramshorn, Lander and Sundance. The cost is \$2 each, from the BLM State Office, 2515 Warren Ave., Cheyenne, Wyo. 82001.

COLO. FOR YOUR WALL

A topographic map of Colorado, newly revised, is available for \$2 from the Western Distribution Branch, U.S. Geological Survey, Box 25286, Federal Center, Denver, 80225.

OPEN LANDS

More than 2,300 acres of public land in Wyoming's Bighorn Basin will be opened to bentonite mining and other development next week, ending the land's withdrawal for a reclamation project. If you're interested, contact the Chief, Branch of Lands and Minerals Operations, P.O. Box 1828, Cheyenne, Wyo. 82001.

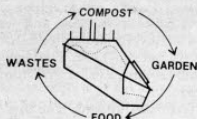


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UTAH MEETING POSTPONED

A meeting of the Utah Wilderness Association and a fundraising gathering scheduled for October have been postponed. The fundraising event, featuring music, art and food, is now scheduled for Nov. 6. The annual meeting of the UWA is off until April, 1982. For more information, contact the Utah Wilderness Association, 722 Judge Bldg., Salt Lake City 84111.

RENEWABLE ENERGY GRANTS

Montana is offering money again for renewable energy projects, financed by the state's coal severance tax. Wind, water, wood, solar, geothermal and biomass projects are eligible. Commercial ventures will be considered if their approach to renewable energy is innovative. For guidelines, write Renewable Energy Bureau, DNRC, 32 South Ewing, Helena, Mont. 59620; (406)

NEB. FOLK SCHOOL

Billed as a celebration of Danish culture in Nebraska, a five-day folk school will be held Oct. 7-12 in Aurora, Neb., by the Prairie Plains Resource Institute. The format is based on schools designed by Bishop N.F.S. Grundvig of Denmark, who objected to "classical" schools serving only the rich, and will include dancing, poetry readings, Danish dinners, and discussions of water resource and community planning issues. Contact Jan Whitney, 1219 16th St., Aurora, Neb. 68818; 402-694-3307.

IDAHO HYDRO PLANS

The Bureau of Reclamation has plans for adding new generating plants at both the Anderson Ranch Powerplant in Elmore County, and the Minidoka Powerplant at Minidoka, Idaho. Copies of the agency's draft environmental review of both proposals are available from the agency, Pacific Northwest Regional Office, Box 043-550 Fort Street, Boise, Idaho 83724.

WATER RULES

Calling federal rules for water project planning "too complicated, rigid, and cumbersome," the Water Resources Council is repealing regulations known as Principles, Standards and Procedures. Copies of a draft environmental assessment of the action are available from the council, 2120 1 St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

RADIATION EXPOSED

All you ever wanted to know about nuclear radiation but were afraid to expose yourself to, the Colorado School of Mines is offering in a two-day short course — "Uranium Production, Radiation and the Environment." Only the course fee is dangerous, at \$240. For that you get a review of natural radiation, monitoring equipment, the biological effects of radiation, and current worker and public exposure limits. The complete fuel cycle is traced; federal and state regulations are examined. Contact the school's Office of Continuing Education, Golden, Colo. 80401. Course dates are Oct. 28-29, and Dec. 2-3.

next in
HCN



OCTOBER 16

HCN floats along the Colorado River, a little higher in the water because of increased salinity; then flies over the Washakie Wilderness, which faces its moment of truth over oil and gas leasing. Joseph Sax writes about the national parks. And High Country News itself gets a facelift at age 12. (Shocking!)

OCTOBER 30

A little later than we expected, here is our special issue on Montana — its politics, its history, the issues that make it tick today. Features on the Rocky Mountain Front, the Charles M. Russell Refuge, and the crumbling beauty of Butte; opinion by Gov. Ted Schwinden and the late K. Ross Toole.



ZONING UPDATE

Bone up on your zoning and planning law expertise with the 1981 Zoning and Planning Law Handbook, promised to be a comprehensive overview of the most significant recent developments in land use control, incentive zoning, growth management and citizen group litigation. Single copies are \$27.50 from Clark Boardman Co., 435 Hudson St., New York, N.Y. 10014.

STATES TAKE STRIP RULES

The Department of Interior has given New Mexico and North Dakota primacy on regulating strip mining on federal lands within their borders. The agreements can be reviewed, respectively, at the Energy and Minerals Dept., First Northern Plaza-East, Room 200, Santa Fe, N.M. 87501; and at the Public Service Commission, State Capital Bldg., Bismarck, N.D. 58505.

COAL GOALS SET

The Department of the Interior has set preliminary coal leasing targets of up to 1.2 billion tons in the Fort Union Region of Montana and North Dakota, and public comments are being solicited. Meetings will be held at Bureau of Land Management offices in Dickinson, N.D., Oct. 15, and in Glendive, Mont., Oct. 21. Competitive bidding is scheduled for June, 1983, after an environmental impact statement is prepared.

SAVING LOCAL FARMS

Using Whitman County, Wash., as a test case, the American Planning Association has published a step-by-step guide to preserving agricultural land. It details the criteria used to determine which lands to fight for, as well as how county residents got involved in the program. Copies of guidebook, *Ecological Planning for Farmlands Preservation*, cost \$15.95 from the Planners Bookstore, 1313 E. 60th St., Chicago, Ill. 60637.

STRIP LAW TOO STRINGENT

There's merit behind new administration efforts to soften federal surface mining rules, says the National Academy of Sciences. The current rules are too strict and should be loosened to fit each circumstance. Copies of the report, "Disposal of Excess Spoil from Coal Mining and the Surface Mining Act," are available from the National Research Council, 2101 Constitution Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20418.

TRIBAL ENERGY

The Council of Energy Resource Tribes is gathering for its annual meeting in Denver, Oct. 26-27. Contact the group at 5660 S. Syracuse Circle, Suite 206, Englewood, Colo. 80111.

OIL TALK

Join oil and gas producers throughout the region at the annual Rocky Mountain Oil and Gas Association meeting in Denver, Oct. 7-9. Contact the group at 110 6th St., Suite 345, Denver 80202.

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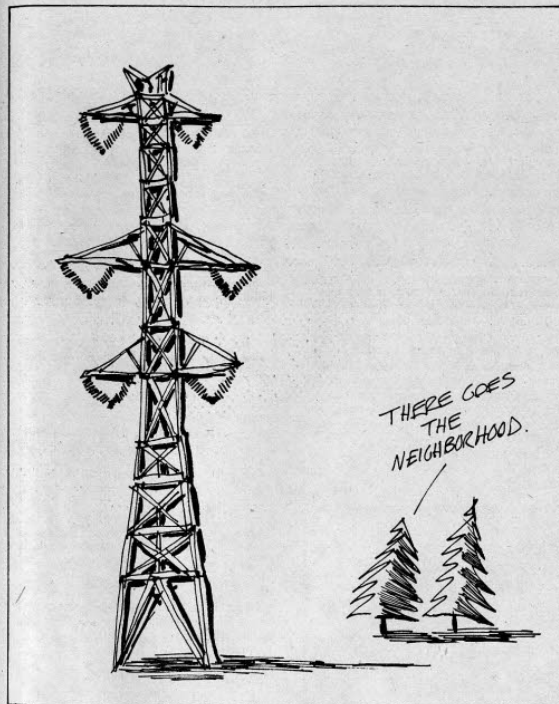
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Opinion



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Letters

HOLLOW RHETORIC

Dear HCN,

Putting the editorials of Brad Klafehn and Jim Santini side-by-side (HCN, 9-4-81) presented a wonderful overview of the strategic minerals debate. I may be accused of prejudice or partisanship, but I think Santini's stale rhetoric sounded hollow against the facts.

Dick Sear
Republicans for American Wilderness
Buena Vista, Colorado

COST-BENEFIT

Dear HCN,

Dan Whipple has hit a sensitive nail right on the head in his criticism of the tendency these days for environmentalists to bow to economics before taking advocacy roles (HCN, 5-11-81). We've all been sucked into the cost-benefit trap — in part, because it actually works from time to time. Turning these b-c's inside out, we've been able to persuade the Indiana legislature over the past few years to repudiate state participation in five authorized, but unstated, Corps of Engineers projects in Indiana. This has stopped the projects dead in their tracks. And legislation now pending in Washington would deauthorize three of the five at the federal level.

But my own experience in using such devices far predates the present decade, or even the last one. In our long campaign to create the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, dating from 1952, we were getting no place fast — until the early 1960s, when the state advocated location of a "deep water" port which would actually involve portions of the Lake Michigan dunes shoreline. Up until that time, our appeal was for saving "the birthplace of the study of ecol-

ogy in North America." Indiana politicians were seriously talking about "industrialization of the Lake Michigan crescent" (which would have involved the state's entire 43-mile lake shoreline, including the three miles preserved since the mid-1920s as part of the Indiana Dunes State Park).

These cannonballs were actually rolling until we ripped apart the economics of the proposed Burns Ditch port, and the shenanigans of the Indiana Port Commission in promoting it. Well, they got their port (nothing but a welfare handout for two flanking steel mills); but our data on the port were so devastating that we got a National Lakeshore as part of the "package."

All this notwithstanding, I have long been troubled by the ethics and mechanisms conservationists have had to use to gain some of their objectives. On the few issues we are winning, we are often gaining them for the wrong reasons; and I think that's part of what Dan had in mind.

Why should we have to roll around in the gutter with swine? Aren't the merits of what we are trying to do sufficient to prevail on their own strengths? The hard-eyed reality is that all too often the answer has to be "no." I doubt that we will defeat the most prominent proposal for the MX missile on environmental principle — certainly not on principle alone. The fears in the affected states, the enormous fiscal commitment, the Promethean "federal presence" will all be factors — perhaps the decisive ones.

So my heart goes out to Dan Whipple, and I'm with him in spirit; but we'll still use the benefit-cost ratio because it is often written by frauds, and is accordingly vulnerable. I think the most important thing for conservationists to have in mind when they go after their objectives is never to lose sight of the real reasons behind their positions — even as they are forced to argue GNP in some cases. We always knew the snail darter's biggest contribution was to "buy time" in hopes that Tellico's ludicrous economics would in the end

Club 20's candle burns only for energy

Club 20's annual fall gathering last month in the booming, high desert metropolis of Grand Junction was billed as a survey of non-energy-related developments on the Western Slope. There's just too much talk and emphasis on oil and gas and shale, this regional booster group declared.

But as the parade of developers stepped forth to display their wares, the heralded survey of alternative development slumped to a monotonous hash. All but a few of the schemes were energy related.

There was news of a new ARCO Coal Company mine near Somerset. Mid-Continent Resources, Inc., told how it had weathered a strike at its mine and continued digging. The head of Multi-Minerals Corporation predicted natcholite and other minerals found amidst oil shale would make shale mining in the Piceance Basin profitable. Dudley Blancke of Union Carbide Corporation even predicted better times for the depressed uranium industry over at Uruvan.

There were some refreshing oddities on the symposium's agenda. One firm wants to build ski lifts locally, while another had resort expansion plans. But even the exceptions were generally related to energy. Coors Porcelain is making oil well caps. The Mount Sopris Instrument Company has many of its 40 Delta employees assembling geiger counters. The Valley View Hospital is designing new programs to deal with energy boom health problems.

Yet instead of being displeased with the presentation, Club 20 leaders were satisfied, if not delighted, with the lineup. "The biggest (export) crop in this area, especially Delta County, is young people," explained Club 20 staffer Roger Blouch, a long-time real estate broker from Delta. "We've got the highest attrition rate in the state." What the Western Slope needs is jobs, said Blouch, and since times are hard, if all the providers are energy firms, well, that will have to do.

Craig Sabatke, a community planner also from Delta who did not fit on the Club 20 roster, says that will not do. He believes that many energy projects will not provide jobs for local young people. For a proposed Colorado-Ute Electrical Association coal-fired power plant in Delta, for example, "We don't have people in this county who are qualified to take those jobs," he says.

Sabatke is offering a true line up of alternative enterprise. His not-for-profit firm, Forward Delta County, has some 60 to 70 small business clients, whom he is helping to expand, or just hang on. He has assisted in bringing new tourism, manufacturers, and a variety of retail businesses not dependent on energy development.

Diversity is the goal. On the scenic mesas reaching above Grand Junction, where the aspens are now turning color, diversity makes for a stable environment. That's something Blouch, who has a degree in biology, should understand. And so should Club 20.

Sabatke's ventures, however, lack the appeal of rapid growth schemes and the big-money shine of a sparkling new power plant. So Club 20 is again taking the boom and bust ride that first rolled through this region a century ago. The Western Slope can do better this time.

— MM

sink the project. The "system" would never restrain itself solely to save that endangered little organism.

Thanks again to Dan for his remarkable editorial.

Thomas E. Dustin
Executive Secretary,
Indiana Izaak Walton League
Huntersville, Indiana

TEACHING ETHICS

Dear HCN,

I would like to respond to John Soisson's guest editorial (HCN, 7-10-81) so erroneously subtitled, "Tuning in media causes environmental fadeout..." Soisson charges that the environmental movement, to get more public support, has surrendered its religious mindset, has adopted a linear, technological style, and has curved away from community organization, legal reform and evolutionary change towards the media. He suggests, apparently, that this has or will lead to centralization of the environmental movement and its blind rush into "technology's arms."

He says the environmental movement is one of values, essentially. But to suggest that carrying environmental messages to audiences via television taints those values is absurd. The message is NOT the medium, rabid McLuhanites aside. The environmental movement has not surrendered its value system — it has set about very successfully to convince the American

public that each person has a moral responsibility to change one's lifestyle and to affect the decisions of local, state and federal governmental systems to protect our environment.

To charge that one cannot "teach" ethics on television is ignoring all the evidence. Perhaps Soisson is one of those who simply don't lower themselves to watch such a plebeian medium. If he did, he might notice several successful efforts to affect moral values sponsored by religious, civic, governmental and even environmental groups.

He also pleads for us not to lower ourselves to a "linear, technological style effective in the news media..." Who is he kidding? If he is not interested in demonstrating against nuclear power, developing landfills of petitions against the predations of Watt, writing letters and lobbying in support of wildlands — then what is he going to do that is effective? I assume he is going to wait for the world to come to kneel at his feet, waiting for him to reveal what is nonlinear, nontechnological and exquisitely morally and ethically right.

The use or non-use of television has little to do with the success or failure of the environmental movement. It is succeeding because it effectively appeals to more Americans than ever before and is growing rapidly in a decentralized fashion — with strong skills in fighting legal and public relations battles. And it is doing so without becoming like its opponents.

Mark A. Larson
Eureka, California

He says he's no environmentalist, but...

Put that beer can in Bucket No. 14, please

Story and photos by Betsy Bernfeld

All my friends are environmentalists; all my relatives are construction workers, mining engineers and nuclear power advocates. Guess which ones are recycling their aluminum cans?

On a recent trip to Tucson to visit my parents, my father—a hard hat, son-of-a-coal-miner, construction company owner—told me a story about a chair. He had bought a quarter of a junk yard for \$20 and was hauling it to his back yard to sort through. Among the junk was an apple crate containing the battered remains of an old chair.

Much of the wood was delaminating and there wasn't a good screw in the whole thing. The crate fell off the truck on the way home, and he had to hold up traffic while he picked up all the little pieces in the road. He glued it back together, put in new screws and reincarnated a very nice oak chair. He was going to take it to a yard sale, but one of my sisters scooped it up for her own use.

While he was telling this story, he was pounding some tiny copper windings out of a small steel innard of an old TV set and I was poking around his shop looking for a garbage can for my gum wrapper. I found fourteen buckets, but couldn't tell which one was garbage. So, next I got a tour of his buckets.

He had one each for clear glass, brown glass, green glass, paper, cardboard, tin cans, aluminum cans, pot metal, No. 1 copper, No. 2 copper, light iron, cast iron, yellow brass and stainless steel.

"Put your gum wrapper in with the paper," he said. I noticed the birthday card I had just sent him was in there. "How much do you get for paper?" I asked. The going rate was one cent per pound. He said he had just taken in a load of newspapers and Christmas wrappings and gotten \$32. He put the tiny bits of copper in the No. 2 copper bucket. "You can't make a living recycling," he said, "but it's a good hobby. I only recycle after work hours."

"Where do you get all this stuff?" I asked. He said his main source of supply is the apartments he rents out. People never move without leaving behind a least a plunger; more frequently, they leave truckloads of things. He sorts through it all, meticulously taking apart old motors for their various metals, mending furniture, framing pictures and holding yard sales. He uses the money he makes to travel. His last yard sale (which included 38 plungers) netted enough cash so that he and my mother could fly to Pittsburgh, Orlando and New Orleans.

Watching him work, I realized his recycling had been going on long before soda pop came in aluminum cans. I remembered one day years ago when my mother told him my sister needed

braces on her teeth. He said, "I'll swap metal for metal." He went out, loaded some stuff on the truck and came home with a bunch of money.

I also remembered him taking my sisters and me to his completed construction jobs and making us pick up all the bent nails that were lying around.

"Come on, I want to show you something," he said. I had a feeling the recycling story didn't end with the fourteenth bucket. We hopped in the truck and drove to one of his storage garages a few blocks away.

The storage shed was neatly stacked to the ceiling with what looked like large wooden pieces from a jigsaw puzzle. Every time he had a piece of scrap plywood or one-by material, he explained, he cut it into one of these shapes. They were truss gussets and he had designed a new style of roof to incorporate them.

About 25 years ago, in his early building days, the typical roof had a fairly steep pitch. The supporting trusses required a V-shaped bracing system of two-by-four boards. A structural engineer designed a truss for him which used 14 smaller gussets in a W-shaped bracing system.

So far, he has built about 30 buildings using this truss (one building alone required 46 trusses—644 gussets) and he said, "After the first building I have never had to buy a single piece of wood for a truss gusset." All were cut from scraps that accumulated at other phases of construction jobs. There has always been enough wood left over from the gussets to furnish firewood all winter for himself, my three sisters and Mrs. Fabian, an old lady he knows.

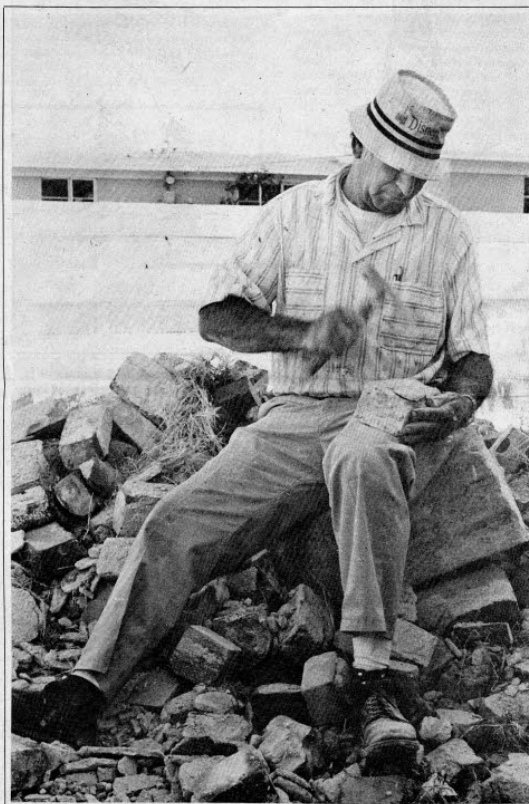
A further advantage of the truss is that it lessens the angle of the roof. Now instead of using shingles (which are expensive, time-consuming to put on and leaky), he could mop the roof with tar and paint on an outer reflective covering containing asphalt, asbestos and aluminum pigment. He puts the money saved into extra felt paper so that each joint has three layers, making it virtually leakproof.

After the truss lesson, we drove to Country Club Estates, one of the exclusive older neighborhoods in Tucson, and pulled up beside an enormous house built out of used red brick. One of his first jobs had been putting up the walls on that house, and he had been struck with the beauty of used brick.

Many of the other homes in the neighborhood were built of new red brick and some had been mortar-washed to achieve a rustic appearance. "But you just can't copy that mellow color of used brick," he said.

The dry Southwest climate makes brick practical for recycling, but you can rarely buy used brick in a brickyard. You have to go looking.

Twice a large drug store was torn down and the bricks were dumped at a



rock and sand company. Before that company could make use of them, they had an urgent need for the dumping site. My father paid \$125 and hauled out 20 truckloads.

Another time, he tore down a Shell gas station and got yellow brick to intersperse among the red.

Unfortunately, the largest demolition company in Tucson never sells its bricks. "But sometimes when you can't talk money, you can talk boat." His friend had taken in a boat on a truck deal. They traded the boat to the demolition company for enough bricks to build six houses.

My father estimates that over the years he has paid between one and ten cents per used brick, including the cost of hauling them and the extra labor involved in cleaning off the old mortar. A new brick in Tucson now costs 17 cents. And appraisers in Tucson are now calling used bricks "antique" and assigning them a higher value.

My father had just torn down a brick

wall so we went to the lot where he had dumped the brick. He explained that it was much easier to lay up a used brick wall than one using new bricks. Since the idea is to achieve a rustic appearance, the mortar joints need not be perfectly uniform. Also, any mortar splashed on a new brick breaks the glaze and leaves a stain. A bricklayer must trowel away from the brick, invariably wasting mortar.

If you called my father an environmentalist he might come after you with a two-by-four. He goes to great lengths "to save a tree or shovel of sand," but he does not want to be lumped with those who favor setting aside large wilderness areas. If Edward Abbey were introduced to him, Abbey would probably toss a beer can at him.

My father would pick it up and put it in the proper bucket.

Betsy Bernfeld is a freelance writer in Wilson, Wyo.