

High Country

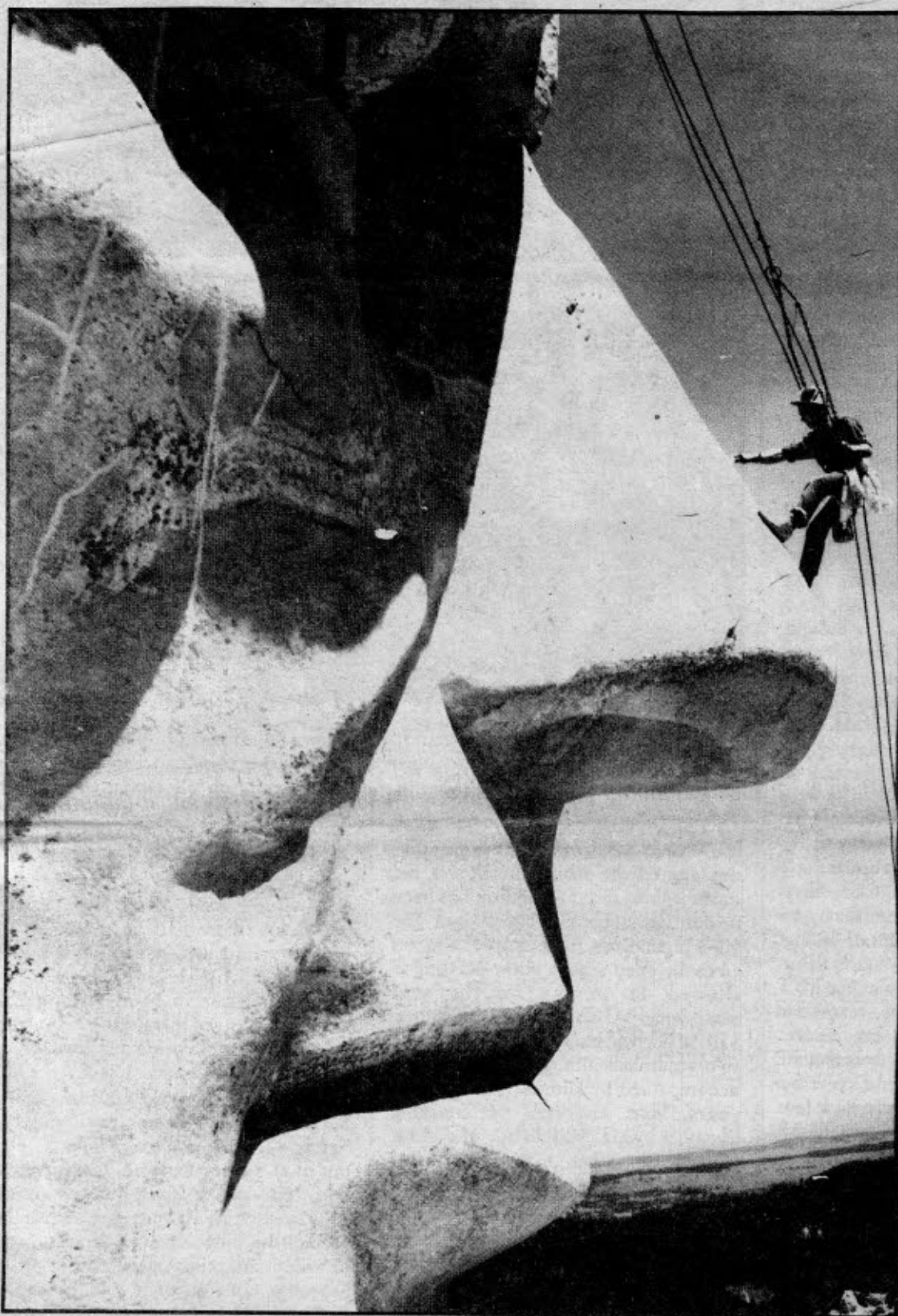
news

April 16, 1984

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The Paper for People who Care about the West

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National Park Service

The nose is Abraham Lincoln's at Mount Rushmore, South Dakota

The Park Service mission hangs in the balance

A cruel Mother Nature rules the Parks

by Jim Robbins

The Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep is among the most regal reclusive animals on the North American continent. With powerfully packed legs and chest and an almost preternatural sense of balance, it thrives in the harsh high country of the northern Rockies, gracefully traversing the precipitous slopes and cliffs.

The bighorns are also among the most sensitive mammals. They are creatures of another geologic time, the Pleistocene epoch, and are better suited to an ice age than the temperate climate of North America today. If the earth is subjected to another ice age, the bighorn may flourish, but for now the animal is out of its element and susceptible to the diseases that thrive

in a warm age. That may explain what happened to Yellowstone National Park's northern herd of bighorns during the winter of 1981.

Just before Christmas, wildlife photographers shooting the northern herd of 300 bighorns on McMinn Ridge noticed unusual behavior among the sheep. Several of them, particularly the males, appeared disoriented and uninterested in eating; others wandered aimlessly.

Park officials were alerted and began monitoring the animals. The first thing they noticed about the sheep that were behaving oddly was that their eyes were covered with a milky white discharge and their eyelids were severely swollen. That led them to the source of the disorientation: the sheep were temporarily blind.

The illness swept through the animals as if pushed by a strong wind, eventually affecting some 200 bighorn sheep. While the illness itself was not fatal, the blindness was devastating. For ten days the sheep wandered gracelessly and aimlessly across the ridge, unable to see or forage. Some fell through storm grates and broke their legs; others died as they tumbled into canyons and crevasses. Post-mortem examinations of some of the dead animals indicated that the cause of the blindness was a bacterial infection called karatoconjunctivitis, commonly known as pinkeye.

To end the misery of the animals injured in falls, rangers began shooting them with an overdose of tranquilizer. But throughout the incident, the park service never seriously considered treating the

animals with antibiotics because the pinkeye, which ultimately resulted in the death of 107 sheep, was determined to be naturally occurring. It is against the policy of the National Park Service to interfere with the workings of nature.

The keystone of the National Park Service's management policy, from the swampy, alligator-filled Everglades in southern Florida to the grizzly bear tundra of Mount McKinley in Alaska, is to allow nature to take its course. There is no official differentiation between "good" and "bad" in nature. Each natural occurrence contributes to the complexity of the ecosystem; when elk and deer die of starvation in the winter, as

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WESTERN ROUNDUP

New Mexico's mountain lions get protection

In the West, mountain lions have not had an easy life. No matter their nominal protection, they have been generally regarded and treated as varmints to be exterminated. That was the case in New Mexico until February 1984 when the state Game Commission, responding to pressure from conservationists, increased protection for the mountain lion by drastically reducing the hunting season.

Ironically, it was pressure from ranchers who wanted more lions killed that led New Mexico to act. Protests from ranchers led the state legislature last year to ask the Game and Fish Department for a report on the mountain lion in New Mexico.

Written by Dr. Wain Evans, the Game and Fish's assistant director, the report contained some unexpected news. First, Evans said the total number of lions in New Mexico was unknown and probably unknowable because of the animal's elusiveness. But Evans said the population statewide was declining 5 to 10 percent a year.

Second, Evans said that lion-caused livestock depredation was infrequent, highly localized, and economically insignificant. Only about one percent of the state's ranchers, or 11 people, reported problems from lions, with claimed losses of \$29,500 annually. Third, Evans said lion control has not been effective in reducing attacks either on livestock or bighorn sheep.

Conservationists were alarmed by the report's findings, particularly by the decline in lion population. Organized by the Sierra Club, they urged the Game Commission to declare a moratorium on all killing until state officials knew more about the resource and how to manage it.

For different reasons, ranchers were also unhappy with the report. They charged that Evans understated depredation complaints and costs by half, but they agreed that only a few ranchers had problems caused by lions.

To some ranchers, the lion issue wasn't easily reduced to numbers. They trusted their observations in the field and agreed with Lewis Oliver, a Grant County rancher who says 60 of his calves have been killed by mountain lions in two years. As Oliver puts it: "I don't think we need to worry about exterminating these animals. We know mountain lion



Stouffer Productions

populations are greater today than in our fathers' time or in our grandfathers' time."

Conservationists reply that since the New Mexico state legislature designated the mountain lion a big game animal in 1971, the lion has been under fierce hunting pressure. The 1983 regulations, for example, allowed virtually open season since hunting is allowed 11 months of the year state-wide by anyone purchasing a \$10.50 license. Each hunter could take two adult lions although not a female accompanied by kittens. Through the years, lions suspected of attacking livestock were killed by the New Mexico Game and Fish Department officials or by ranchers who were issued permits. Some ranchers admitted publicly that they have killed lions without a permit, and a citation was rarely if ever issued until recently. In addition, Game and Fish personnel said they killed some 20 to 30 lions each year to protect desert bighorn sheep.

On February 23, 1984 the Game

Commission voted to increase protection of the mountain lion. It cut the hunting season to 3 months except in 5 areas of "high depredation" where the season would be 5 months with a quota. Now the bag limit is one rather than two. With the new restrictions, the Game and Fish Department estimates there will be a 30 to 40 percent reduction in the lions killed next year. Conservationists wanted the commission to be even tougher, but were pleased that for the first time in years New Mexico acted to protect lions as well as livestock.

Lions live in most western states but hunting regulations vary widely. Texas does not protect its lions at all, but at the other extreme, California's lions cannot be sport hunted until 1986, if then. In Arizona, the season is 12 months long and even kittens may be killed. All other states have shorter seasons and many -- Montana, Nevada, Colorado -- have hunting by units with a quota per unit which cannot be exceeded.

--Carol Cochran



High Country News

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Dear friends,

Despite the snow falling on this bleak Monday, we know it is spring for our rhubarb are rising and unfurling like a deeply rooted, green phoenix. Some think we're crazy -- to hold a sour-tasting unattractive plant in such high esteem. But it's our favorite, both because of its wonderful tart taste and because it beats even the ditchbank asparagus as a harbinger of the season.

In fact, this issue is a direct result of rhubarb. For several months we've had letters on our desk from remote parts of America telling us the National Parks are in danger. Perhaps out of laziness, we ignored the letters, telling ourselves that so long as most parks were under 10 feet of snow, they were safe. But a month ago, thanks to the first visible fist of rhubarb, we

realized time might be running out for the nation's parks.

So this week we focus on the management of our 334 National Parks -- on the Park Service's attempt to run their parks as nature would run them in the absence of man, and on Interior's attempt to impose efficiency in the form of a bureaucratic directive called A-76.

Journalists are supposed to be hard-hearted, especially when it comes to federal bureaucracies. We usually see ourselves as gallant little mongooses stalking cobras. But we came away from this Park Service issue with a feeling very close to affection for a gallant agency. From top to bottom, the Park Service strikes us as dedicated people working together with a minimum of hierarchy and caste separation to enhance and

protect the best of America's historic traditions and natural land.

Another sign of spring is the scheduling of the sixth annual High Country News footrace. The four-mile race will be run mostly on trails starting at 1 P.M., Saturday, May 26. Runners and non-runners are then invited to a potluck and volleyball in the Paonia Town Park. Co-sponsor of the race is Burrell's Market. For more information, write: Footrace, HCN, Box V, Paonia, CO 81428.

Finally, nothing makes us angrier than to read a newspaper which sets down a long, pious list of rules which letter-writers must adhere to. HCN won't do that. But we should say that the printing of several long letters about the U.S. Forest Service is not a precedent. As always, the shorter the letter, the better the chance of publication.

--the staff

Fishing Bridge and bears still co-exist

When Senator Malcolm Wallop (R-Wyo.) announced that the National Park Service had "put on hold" plans to tear down camping facilities at the Fishing Bridge area in Yellowstone National Park, it was a victory for Bill Shurtleff but a defeat for Number 88.

Shurtleff travels from Laguna Beach, California every year to camp in Yellowstone, and he has circulated petitions opposing the dismantling of 308 campsites and 353 recreational vehicle slots at Fishing Bridge.

Number 88 is a grizzly bear who seems to agree with park biologists that the Fishing Bridge Area -- at the north end of Yellowstone Lake, where the Yellowstone River flows out -- is prime grizzly habitat. Number 88 finds it such delightful terrain that he keeps coming back, and last year park officials had to carry him by helicopter to the other side of the lake.

If the Park Service had followed its 1974 Master Plan to the letter, the facilities at Fishing Bridge would have been on their way out this year. That would have coincided with the opening of extensive new visitor facilities at Grant Village, located along the lakeshore to the south. The Fish and Wildlife Service, which can block park developments if they would jeopardize a threatened species like the grizzly, had agreed in 1979 to allow Grant Village development (which is built in some potential but not prime grizzly habitat) as long as the Park Service took down Fishing Bridge.

"Given my druthers, I'd rather Grant Village wasn't there," said the FWS's Chris Servheen in 1983. He is a Montana-based biologist who coordinates various state and federal grizzly programs. "But we're getting rid of Fishing Bridge, and that's the big one."

Well, maybe. Last year, the Park Service held pro forma public meetings to describe the various alternatives for campgrounds in the park. Long-time campers like Shurtleff were outraged at the thought that campsites, already at a premium in the park, might be reduced. Park officials were bowled over by the public outcry.

"Over a hundred congressional



offices have contacted the Park Service," said Dan Wenk, the park's planner. "The issue was too hot, and it happened at a bad time."

The bad time, in this case, was the transition period between outgoing Interior Secretary James Watt and incoming William Clark, a relative novice in the resources field. Rather than press the issue, Park Service officials took it back to the drawing boards.

"What the Park Service is doing," said Servheen, "is reanalyzing the impact data on Fishing Bridge as grizzly habitat. They're trying to build a better biological justification for moving it."

In the meantime, though, work has gone ahead on Grant Village, a project dear to the heart of TWA Services, Inc., the company that runs the park concessions. TWA is loaning the Park Service the funds to construct the facility, which TWA will operate. It includes restaurants, shops and "modular lodging" that looks very like upscale condominiums. For the campers who customarily nestle in their sleeping bags or bunk in their RVs at Fishing Bridge, it's hard to envision shifting vacations to the new, plush Grant Village. Park officials say the Grant Village facilities will be open this summer.

This has caused some noisy anger among wildlife groups and quiet frustration among Park Service employees.

"It's unfortunate if they're going to wait on (dismantling) Fishing Bridge," said Bill Callaghan, vice-president of the Great Bear Foundation in Missoula, Montana. "We could lose a couple or three more bears at Fishing Bridge."

The grizzly population in the Yellowstone area is believed by biologists to have declined to such

critically low levels in recent years that every bear is critical. A memorandum written in 1982 by Roland Wauer, director of natural resource management for the National Park Service, said there were as few as 187 grizzlies in the park and surrounding national forests, and only a small percentage of reproducing females.

Park Service grizzly expert Gary Brown and others think the numbers are actually higher, but all agree that major steps must be taken to protect the bears. And while there has been a long-running argument about whether to provide supplemental feedings for bears or to allow hunting, there is no argument on the question of reducing bear-human conflicts. Brown lists the reduction of "unnatural" bear-human contacts as one of the four primary goals of the park's bear management program.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is taking a low-key approach. "There's been no change in the basic idea of moving Fishing Bridge," said FWS biologist Servheen. "I don't think anyone has said they're not going to move it. They want to pull everything together -- the information since that letter was written."

The letter referred to by Servheen was written by the Fish and Wildlife Service in 1980, and it admonished the Park Service to stick to its Master Plan and phase out Fishing Bridge. The FWS implied that its declaration in 1979 that Grant Village was "not likely to jeopardize" the grizzly was contingent on restoring the prime bear habitat at Fishing Bridge.

The park wrote back in 1981 that it planned to remove the Fishing Bridge facilities by 1985, a goal which is now impossible, according to Yellowstone's Dan Wenk.

Neither the Park Service nor the FWS will say that the Park Service has violated its agreement with the FWS, and officials at both agencies clearly want to avoid any sort of confrontation over the legal issues. Wenk estimates that the earliest possible starting point for phasing out Fishing Bridge is now 1986.

--Geoff O'Gara

HOTLINE

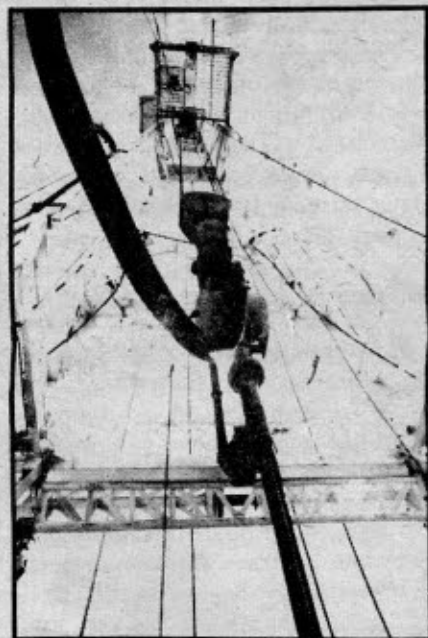
Utah land swap inches ahead

The state of Utah and the federal government continue to inch toward an exchange of 3 million acres of land each in an attempt to make each entity's land holdings more rational.

After much study, legislation has been introduced in the Senate and House to implement Project Bold, but the bill will not sail through Congress. The massive exchange will set a precedent for other western states with checkerboard land ownership holdings, so the Department of Interior and the states will be looking closely at the bill.

One sticking point is the possibility that one entity or the other will unknowingly trade away immense mineral rights in unexplored areas. Interior has suggested that each retain rights to 50 percent of the minerals in unexplored, traded land. The state does not like the idea and the bill does not incorporate it.

Oil and gas lotteries attacked



Little Granite Creek Well

Wyoming Governor Ed Herschler is supporting a congressional effort to eliminate lottery sales of oil and gas leases. His state, Herschler wrote, took that step a year ago and both the public treasury and oil producers benefitted. A federal study estimated that elimination of the BLM lottery, which has seen valuable oil and gas-bearing lands go for a \$75 fee, could increase federal income by \$700 million over five years.

Interior is reforming the lottery to eliminate abuses, and the smaller oil companies are fighting for it. They say Big Oil would profit from its elimination.

Convicted in Idaho

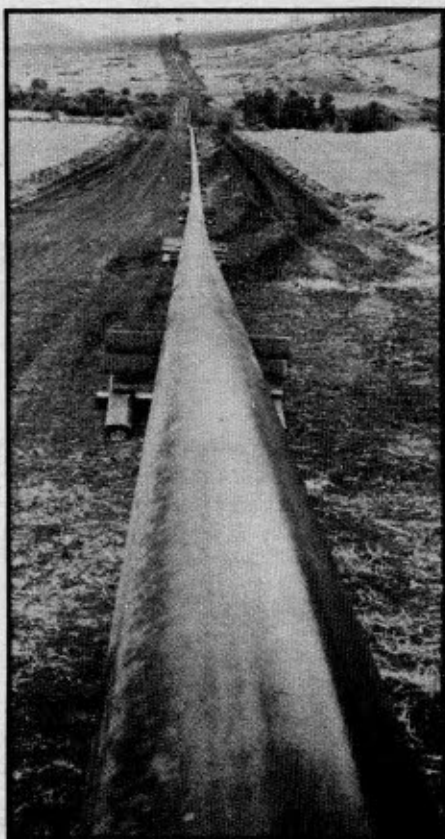
Idaho Congressman George V. Hansen (R) has been convicted of filing a false statement under the 1978 Ethics in Government Act. The four-felony conviction could bring up to 20 years in prison and \$40,000 in fines. Hansen said he would appeal the court finding that he illegally failed to report a \$245,000 loan and \$187,000 in silver profits. The seven-term congressman said he is being persecuted for his efforts against the IRS and on behalf of small farmers and others. He also said the District of Columbia is attempting to tell Idaho who will represent it in Congress. Hansen said he would continue to vote in the U.S. Congress despite rules that bar a convicted felon from voting.

Montana gas pipeline halted by coalition

A conservationist-union coalition has won a preliminary court injunction blocking further work on a natural gas pipeline through northwestern Montana (HCN, 11/14/83).

The issue for the Montana Environmental Information Center was the state's piecemeal permitting which allowed Montana Power Company to start building the line without environmental review. Judge Joseph Gary of Bozeman agreed. Looked at cumulatively, he said, permits issued by state agencies were not minor:

"The court finds it surprising that a preliminary environmental review was not taken at the time of the proposed pipeline in view of the 100-foot corridor, the 200-mile length, the 6-foot or deeper ditch, and the crossing of several major rivers, as well as over 200 streams, swamps, hillsides and agricultural lands." The judge said Montana's Environmental Policy Act required a comprehensive environmental assessment to see if an EIS is needed. The state's arguments, he said, were "creative excuses" for



Montana Power company's pipeline

bypassing obligations spelled out by law.

The environmental group and Laborers Local 254 brought their suit last fall against five state agencies, the power company, and Haines Pipeline Construction Company, an out-of-state, non-union firm. The Montana Environmental Information Center hailed Judge Gary's decision as a "major initial victory" confirming the intent of the state's environmental policy act.

--Betsy Marston

BARBS

What's in a name? Gordon M. Miner, a native of Colorado with extensive experience in the minerals industry, was appointed Deputy Director of the Interior Department's Bureau of Mines last month. Miner is a 1948 graduate of, you guessed it, the School of Mines.

HOTLINE



1985 looks lean for wildlife

Federal fish and wildlife programs will continue to encounter lean budgets in 1985 under the Reagan Administration unless Congress increases funding. According to an analysis by the Wildlife Management Institute, funding for wildlife and fish on national forests will be reduced more than three percent under the '85 budget while commodity production will be accelerated. The timber sale budget is up 8 percent and mining is increased by 14 percent. The Bureau of Land Management's '85 budget is also skewed toward commodity development. In the renewable resource divisions of BLM, the Administration wants 197 fewer employees. The wildlife program would lose \$2.1 million and 25 full time employees, leaving only \$11.7 million and 270 biologists to manage fish and wildlife on 327 acres of public lands. BLM's energy and minerals program, however, would have its budget increased by \$5.3 million and also gain 267 employees.

Synfuels get big bucks

In a race against Congress, the U.S. Synthetic Fuels Corporation has moved to distribute \$4.4 billion in price and loan guarantees to synthetic fuels projects. The bulk of the money, \$2.7 billion in price guarantees, would go to the second phase of Union Oil's Parachute, Colorado oil shale project. The rest would go to projects in Texas, California, Kentucky, Louisiana and Maine. The Cathedral Bluffs oil shale project in Western Colorado was not part of the April 4 action. Meanwhile, in Congress, almost 200 Representatives and 16 Senators are co-sponsoring legislation which would block distribution of the Synfuel Corp's \$15 billion. It will take the Synfuels Corp one to three months to get the final documents ready for signing.

Idaho won't cooperate

A House Committee in Idaho killed a bill which would have authorized the state's participation in a federal clean-up of its one abandoned uranium mill tailings dump. The Senate passed the bill 21-13. Republican Rep. Walter Little told the *Idaho Statesman* that the tailings were not an urgent health problem. He also said the legislature should not pay Idaho's 10 percent share because the Department of Energy may not have the money to pay 90 percent of the estimated \$4 million cost. Another Republican Rep., Lydia Edwards, supported the clean-up.

"People who live in the Lowman area do not realize the danger and have used the sand in children's sandboxes and building materials," she said. A state official with the Division of Environment said there may also be problems in the future if the 200,000 tons of radioactive sand are not removed or stabilized. The Lowman area is slated for growth as a recreation and cabin area.

Wilderness bills are flooding Congress

After a three year wilderness drought under the Reagan Administration in which only 340,000 acres of wilderness were added to the Wilderness Preservation System, more than two dozen bills covering some 10 million acres in 19 states are ready for Congress.

A number of factors are responsible for the current glut in wilderness legislation:

If states can pass wilderness legislation, an expensive and time-consuming RARE III (Roadless Area Review and Evaluation) study which National Forests are beginning won't have to be performed. RARE II would be considered sufficient despite a 1983 federal Circuit Court of Appeals decision to the contrary.

The timber and mining industries which use the National Forests don't want to wait for the completion of a RARE III study. They want the wilderness issue resolved once and for all and claim that only with the knowledge of which lands will be off-limits to development can they plan for the future with accuracy.

Many of the current wilderness bills have been in the making for years. After slews of hearings and debate, there is a feeling among all parties that now is the time to designate wilderness based upon the 1979 RARE II study. Also, some members of Congress up for reelection would like to have a wilderness bill under their belts going into the fall.

Although the time may be ripe for wilderness designation, there remains one large obstacle -- release language. The two central characters in the controversy are Senator James McClure (R-Idaho) who chairs the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and Representative John

Seiberling (D-Ohio) who sits at the throne of the Interior subcommittee on public lands and National Parks. Each staunchly defends opposing release language provisions.

McClure favors "hard release" language in wilderness bills which would release non-wilderness Forest Service lands from wilderness consideration for at least several decades. Mining and timber companies dependent upon public lands agree, saying they are tired of potential wilderness areas being managed as "de facto" wilderness.

Seiberling and conservationists believe that standard or "soft release" language which would allow non-wilderness lands to be reconsidered for wilderness designation after one Forest Service planning cycle (10-15 years) is a sufficient compromise to the resource industries. When asked if Seiberling would bend to break the release language impasse with Dick Cheney (R-Wyoming) over the Wyoming bill, Andy Weisner, an attorney to Seiberling's Public Land Subcommittee said, "We don't feel anything needs to be broken."

"We like the standard release language that was in the 1980 Colorado bill," he says, referring to one of the first RARE II bills to be passed into law.

Michael Scott, Denver-based representative for the Wilderness Society, says that the standard release language is the result of a compromise. "You have to realize that conservationists don't want any release." He adds that standard release foregoes wilderness as a multiple-use option for 10-15 years while hard release is "the process of permanently removing one of the

multiple-use options for Forest Service lands."

Gene Bergoffen, resource programs vice president for the National Forests Products Association, doesn't see the release issue in the same light. "The environmentalists are not willing to draw a line and stick to it." When the land base is "subjected to consistent upheaval every 5 or 10 years" with new wilderness studies, there is no way that forest managers can properly determine timbering levels, he adds.

Although no one is overly optimistic, a dialogue has been going on between Seiberling and McClure over a possible resolution of the language log jam. Conservationists say they see signs that McClure is standing alone on the release provision and will search for "face-saving release language" to gracefully concede on the issue.

Republican delegations in Oregon and Washington currently have soft-release bills before McClure's Energy and Natural Resources Committee. Earlier this month, McClure postponed mark-up hearings for the bills and replaced them with a hearing for his own hard-release Idaho bill, a move which one conservationist said angered the Oregon and Washington delegations.

In another development, Senator Jesse Helms (R-N. Carolina) has backed down from his hard stance on release language for his North Carolina bill. With traditionally conservative members backing soft-release provisions, conservationists are hopeful that McClure will capitulate and let the flood of wilderness bills flow through Congress to the President's desk.

--Paul Larmer

Where the wilderness bills are:

STATE	LEGISLATION	STATUS	COMMENTS
ARIZONA	H.R. 4707 (Udall) - 735,000 acres S. 2242 (Goldwater) - 735,000 acres	House passed the bill April 3 Senate field hearings have been held	Soft-release. House bill incorporates Arizona strip Wilderness and Aravaipa Canyon wilderness.
COLORADO	H.R.-- (Kogovsek) - 380,772 acres S. 2032 (Hart) - 733,000 acres	House Bill introduced April 10	This bill wraps up remaining wilderness not in 1980 bill. No big push since RARE III has been averted.
IDAHO	S. 2457 (McClure) - 520,000 acres	Hearing in Washington D.C. this month	McClure's 520,000 acre proposed is seen as ridiculously low by conservationists. Hard-release.
MONTANA	bill expected		
NEW MEXICO	bill expected		
NEVADA	bill expected	Field hearings held by Senate	
OREGON	H.R. 1149 (Weaver) - 1.2 million acres S. 1149 (Hatfield) - 970,000 acres	House passed April 13, 1983 Senate Mark-up this month	Soft-release. Great urgency to pass this bill due to pending lawsuits that could prevent timber harvesting.
UTAH	H.R. 4516 (Nielson) - 706,736 acres S. 2155 (Garn) - 706,736 acres	Senate hearing held in D.C.	Hard-release. Conservationists would like 1.6 million acres.
WYOMING	H.R. 1568 (Cheney) - 650,000 acres S. 5434 (Wallop & Simpson) - 650,000 acres	House hearing held in D.C. Senate passed April 13, 1983	Cheney and Seiberling are deadlocked over hard-release language.

Citizens oppose Northfork well permit

A recently released draft Environmental Impact Statement for a proposed oil well four miles outside Yellowstone National Park has mobilized grassroots opposition.

The Park County Resource Council, now an affiliate of the Powder River Basin Resource Council, formed last month to combat oil and gas development on the Shoshone National Forest and in particular, the Northfork well proposal by Marathon Oil Company. The group charges that a draft EIS inadequately analyzes threats to elk, bighorn sheep and grizzly bear, and to recreational activity and groundwater. The Bureau of Land Management will use the EIS as a basis for approving or disapproving Marathon's application for a permit to drill one well.

The Bureau of Land Management's draft EIS, however, examines impacts from the possible development of an entire oil field covering some 40,000 acres of Shoshone National Forest, including two wilderness study areas. BLM considered five alternatives ranging from a 210-well scenario to a no-development alternative.

Under the BLM's preferred

alternative, a 20-well field would disturb 90 acres and impair 10 acres permanently, increase soil loss by 5000 tons and sedimentary yield by 1600 tons and affect 8 miles of Class II trout stream which contain trout. The field would also affect 200 acres of wetlands, 200 acres of floodways and recreation on 3800 acres, change wilderness characteristics, degrade visual quality of 2900 acres, add 20 miles of road, and affect 10 acres of winter range critical for bighorn sheep and 30 acres critical for elk.

The BLM's John Thompson, who was team leader for the draft, said an entire field was analyzed for impacts in response to the Forest Service, which must mitigate surface impacts of development, and to the National Environmental Policy Act, which mandates analysis of cumulative impacts. There was also pressure on the BLM from local residents, who wrote some 200 letters protesting oil development near Yellowstone.

Thompson said he had no idea what kind of development will actually take place in the future and that a high percentage of wells turn up dry. "The only way to find out what's down there is to actually drill."

The Park County Resource Council wants the BLM to turn down Marathon's application to drill on environmental grounds, a rare occurrence. As Thompson puts it, "When people have leases, they have legal rights that we can't ignore." Thompson said the BLM and Forest Service prefer strict stipulations on a permit.

Marathon's lease preceded a California Court's finding that the Roadless Area Review and Evaluation II study inadequately studied potential wilderness. Since then, the Shoshone National Forest has suspended leasing activities in areas which would be reconsidered for wilderness potential under a RARE III study. Had the court decision been earlier, the Northfork well proposal would not now be under consideration.

The April 16 comment deadline for the BLM's draft EIS has been extended to May 1 due to the efforts of the Park County Resource Council. Comments and requests can be directed to John Thompson, BLM, Box 119, Worland, WY 82401.

--Paul Larmer

HOTLINE

No compromise on Red Rim coal leasing

Despite objections from the Wyoming Wildlife Federation, Gov. Ed Herschler has agreed to delay a mining unsuitability hearing for the Red Rim area in south-central Wyoming. The federation's attorney, Bob Golten, said the group had requested the hearing two years ago, and that by law it should be held within ten months. The Federation filed an unsuitability petition to prevent federal coal from being leased.

The delay was requested by rancher Taylor Lawrence, who blocked antelope migration this winter by erecting a 28-mile-long fence (HCN, 12/26/83). About 85 percent of that Baggs herd unit have been reported dead. Lawrence said postponing the April 9 hearing would give the Bureau of Land Management more time to consider his proposal for a land exchange.

Lawrence wants to exchange his land in the south for federal land to the north, thereby consolidating private land in the north and federal land in the south. Combined, the areas contain 2 million tons a year of stripable coal. Now, federal and private sections alternate in a checkerboard pattern throughout the Red Rim area.

Tom Dougherty of the Wildlife Federation said the land exchange is part of a compromise his group has been working on for several months. Dougherty and Dorothy Reid of Rocky Mountain Energy Co. said a good faith effort was made by both parties. Dougherty's group agreed to allow mining of the north portion of the Red Rim area, but was doubtful that the south, the most important area to antelope, could be reclaimed adequately to provide for wildlife after strip mining.

Dougherty said the wildlife group questions whether reclamation is feasible either economically or technically. With 18,000 acres involved, he said that means three shrubs must be planted every square meter. A company isn't going to do that if it costs \$100 each to successfully establish the shrubs, he said.

But if reclamation after mining is possible, he said, "It would not be responsible for us to stand in the way of mining."

--Marjane Ambler

Gary Hart joins attack



Senator Gary Hart has joined the attack on the Forest Service's timber-cutting plans in Colorado. On March 29 Hart asked the General Accounting Office to examine the costs and benefits of timber proposals in the Forest Management Plans. Hart said doubling the current harvest isn't documented by increased demand for timber, and in 1982, timber sale losses in the state were in the \$6 to \$15 million range. Hart also said recreation in Colorado depends on preserving the physical environment. Forest Management Plans in Colorado have been appealed both by the state and by the Natural Resources Defense Council.

He fights for wilderness

by Robert Cochran

The most powerful spokesman for preserving wilderness in Congress is John Seiberling, the scion of a nineteenth century Akron, Ohio family that founded the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company and the Seiberling Rubber Company.

Seiberling's concern for the land and its preservation is not unique in Congress, but his position as chairman of the Public Lands and National Parks Subcommittee of the House Interior Committee gives him a decisive voice in the ultimate fate of more than 700 million acres of federal land. Much of it is wilderness, mostly in the West and in Alaska.

A Democrat, there is no question in Seiberling's mind about who he works for -- and it isn't private interests, the states, or where the land happens to be.

"Local people and state delegations argue, 'Well, this is our state, why shouldn't we run it the way we want to?'" he said recently. "There's a very simple answer to that. 'Yes, it's your state, and you're entitled to every consideration, but the land belongs to all the American people.'"

Seiberling brings an urban background to environmental matters. During the 1960s, he was an attorney for Goodyear and president of Akron's Tri-County Planning Association. Western Ohio's Cuyahoga River was the nation's most polluted in stretches. Deciding that it was important to save the rest, Seiberling led a regional effort to create the Cuyahoga Valley National Recreation Area. Today, "all you have to do is look north and south of it to see what the river would be like. Just an industrial park."

Elected to Congress in 1970, Seiberling's first national environmental impact came with the 1979 Alaska Land Bill. "I was interested in taking a look," he said, "and I spent several weeks there. I was overwhelmed by the majesty of those lands. The scale is so stupendous; vast areas not changed since the Creation. It's a spiritual experience."

Back in Washington he preached to colleagues and showed photographs he'd taken. The only Democrat on the Interior Committee who'd actually seen the land, he was given a leading role in enacting legislation to preserve Alaska wilderness. Partly by default and partly by determination, he became the primary spokesman on the committee for all wilderness.

Wilderness preservation has advanced slowly since. "My first reaction was, let's just have an omnibus bill and do this thing in one fell swoop. But that won't work. It's just too big a bite to try and do it in a nationwide bill."

The detours along the way have been caused mainly by attacks against the Roadless Areas Review and Evaluation (RARE) process, the basis for wilderness determinations. RARE I began in 1972 and was soon challenged in court. RARE II succeeded it and there was a lawsuit in 1980.

"We've been working to resolve the issues ever since," Seiberling said. "Wilderness recommendations are opposed generally by forest products, mining and oil interests. Ranchers used to oppose but not so much any more, since grazing is now protected."

The issues aren't going to go away," he added. "It's to everybody's interest to get this settled. If wildernesses aren't settled and left for RARE III (son of RARE II), we'll be right back in court."

"I've been pushing to resolve this issue in this Congress," he continued. This means enacting wilderness bills for all the western states, including the coastal states of California, Oregon and Washington, as well as for several states in other parts of the country. Once done, Seiberling said, "people will look back and say, 'What was all the shouting about?'"

Resolution seemed within reach in 1980, he said, but then came the election. "The Reagan administration is far more oriented to the maximum



Rep. John Seiberling

economic development of the public lands," Seiberling noted drily.

There are practical as well as esthetic and spiritual reasons for protecting wilderness, Seiberling believes. "Europe's forests are dying. One expert predicts that within three years they will be completely dead. What will happen economically? Some environmental threats are catastrophic -- nature won't take care of itself. The biosphere is a unified system, and we don't know all the answers to disruption. We need the wilderness as a baseline. Shouldn't we preserve areas so that when everything else is cut down, dug up, pumped dry, there is some left?"

Seiberling said there was a time when national concern about the environment could only be called modest. "Today three-fourths of the voters are a national environmental constituency. In Congress we listen and we understand what the public wants, so we roll up these huge votes. The 1960s was the watershed decade. Before it, environmentalists were elitists. By the end of it, the landscape wasn't recognizable."

Seiberling thinks his committee has done, and is doing, a good job. "We've preserved important areas, but with a tradeoff. Industry has come off generally well but the oil companies, for example, aren't satisfied with 95 percent. They want 100 percent."

Parks...

[Continued from page 1]

hundreds often do, they are providing critical spring forage for the grizzly bear and other carnivores within the park.

Naturally caused fires are allowed, within limits, to burn because fire has been an important form of renewal for forests and grasslands since their origins. Constantly suppressing fires can cause so much fuel to accumulate that fires, when they start, burn much larger areas than they would naturally. In the case of the sheep, ecologists say, the disease culled those animals from the herd that were not disease-resistant, leaving the stronger animals to pass on that trait to progeny.

The concept of natural management has been heralded worldwide by ecologists and other professionals as the ultimate in wilderness management. Like wilderness areas, the parks are showcases for nature, they argue, and for both scientific and aesthetic reasons nature should work its wonders with a minimum of human interference.

"A national park," wrote A. Starker Leopold, the chairman of a 1963 committee that studied wildlife problems in national parks and presented the report that became the foundation for the park service's natural philosophy, "should represent a vignette of primitive America... as nearly as possible in the condition that prevailed when the area was first visited by white man."

But returning to that condition has been a rocky road for the park service: the islands of the national parks have been assaulted on all sides by the forces of the late twentieth century. In some cases these disturbances are playing havoc with the park's natural systems.

One of the most troubling examples of the natural management quandary has been the Yellowstone grizzly -- a population on the verge of extinction. There are numerous theories on why the big bear may be dying off, but at least one prominent grizzly expert lays the blame at the feet of the park service for its steadfast refusal to consider any but a natural course for the bear.

While the park service's management philosophy has sparked dozens of conflicts with the outside world, none has the drama of the grizzly situation. Drawing some flak for a hundred dead bighorn sheep is one thing, but the sense of loss and failure, not to mention public fury, that would accompany the disappearance of the grizzly from Yellowstone is enough to make the most hardened park service veteran quake.

The fundamental question seems to be what role humans should play in a natural environment. The park service must weigh what it considers "natural" human activities and how much "unnatural" activity the parks can tolerate without an adverse impact on the integrity of their ecosystems. In a place like Yellowstone where people have already had a profound impact, the question is especially difficult.

Last year, nearly 1.2 million people swarmed through Yellowstone. During the summer thousands of cars pour exhaust fumes into the air; the people themselves pour onto the trails and into the meadows and forests. Hotels, stores, restaurants, campgrounds, gas stations, administration buildings, a hospital, and other development intrude on Yellowstone's

'Natural management' leads to forest fires, drowned bison and, perhaps, vanishing grizzlies

grandeur. All affect the lot of the wildlife.

Grant Village, for example, a proposed \$28 million condominium project in Yellowstone Park, will be constructed on five trout-spawning streams and some of the most heavily used grizzly habitat in the park. (The park service admits to poor planning, but argues that the project was in the works long before the site was found to be important habitat.)

The Grant Village situation may be an anomaly, for park service officials have been reasonably consistent in adhering to their natural management philosophy. That adherence has cost them in the public relations department.

Last February, in the middle of a cold morning, a bison bull plunged through the ice-covered Yellowstone River near Fishing Bridge in the center of the park and was unable to extricate himself. Water vapor steaming from its nostrils in the crisp air, the 2,000-pound animal struggled, but succeeded only in enlarging the hole. About 10:30 A.M., park employee Barbara Seaquist, a member of the Young Adult Conservation Corps, discovered the drowning bison and contacted park headquarters. She was told that the incident was a natural occurrence, and the bison should be allowed to sink or swim on its own. Meanwhile, several persons who had heard about the struggling beast appeared on the scene to photograph it.

By about 5 P.M., as dusk was settling on the bison's struggle for life, a party of nine snowmobilers approached the bridge. After learning from Seaquist that assisting the buffalo was against park policy, one of the snowmobilers, Glenn Nielson, a vice president of Husky Oil Company from Cody, Wyoming, became outraged. He was struck by what he saw as the callous attitude of the photographers filming the incident. "If you're not going to help it," Nielson asked, "then why don't you put it out of its misery?"

The snowmobilers left the scene, but after a brief caucus four of them returned, Nielson carrying a sixty-foot orange nylon rope. Seaquist was gone when they returned. So, unimpeded, they fashioned a loop, tied it around the animal's horns, and walked gingerly out on the ice to try to haul the animal to safety.

Seaquist returned at this point and repeated her request that nature be allowed to prevail. She also warned the four men that they were endangering their own lives by walking out onto the ice.

They ignored her. According to Nielson the bison had almost made it out of the water when the rope broke. "The sad thing," he said, "is that he (the bison) knew we were trying to help. He laid his head at my feet, just exhausted." As it grew too dark for the rescuers to see, the attempt was abandoned. The temperature fell to -20 degrees F. that night. In the morning the bison was dead, frozen

into the ice. Coyotes and ravens soon descended on the animal. When the warmth of spring melted the river and freed the remainder of the carcass, a grizzly bear was observed feeding on the bison downstream, a shred of orange nylon rope still fastened to its horns.

Upon his return to Cody, Nielson wrote a letter to radio commentator Paul Harvey, describing what he felt was the park service's cruelty. Harvey seized on the incident and in three venom-filled broadcasts tore into the park service's policy of nonintervention, calling officials "knee-jerk ecologists." "It is not a scientific question, it is a moral one," Harvey said. "The reason Jesus came to earth was to keep nature from taking its course."

Nielson believes the park service is hypocritical. "It's no secret they trap bears and move them," he said. "That's not natural. Why shouldn't we have been allowed to save the buffalo?"

"There's no question nature is harsh," counters Yellowstone's chief ranger, Thomas Hobbs. "But a national park is not a ranch or a zoo. A weak animal is part of nature's way of doing business. It's the perpetuation of all life cycles; when an animal dies there are others that survive because of it."

There are, the park service will admit, a number of contradictions in natural management, as well as results that are sometimes extremely unpleasant. But officials point out that more manipulative management techniques have sometimes failed miserably. Parks throughout the country are living with past failures of well-meaning but anthropocentric park managers.

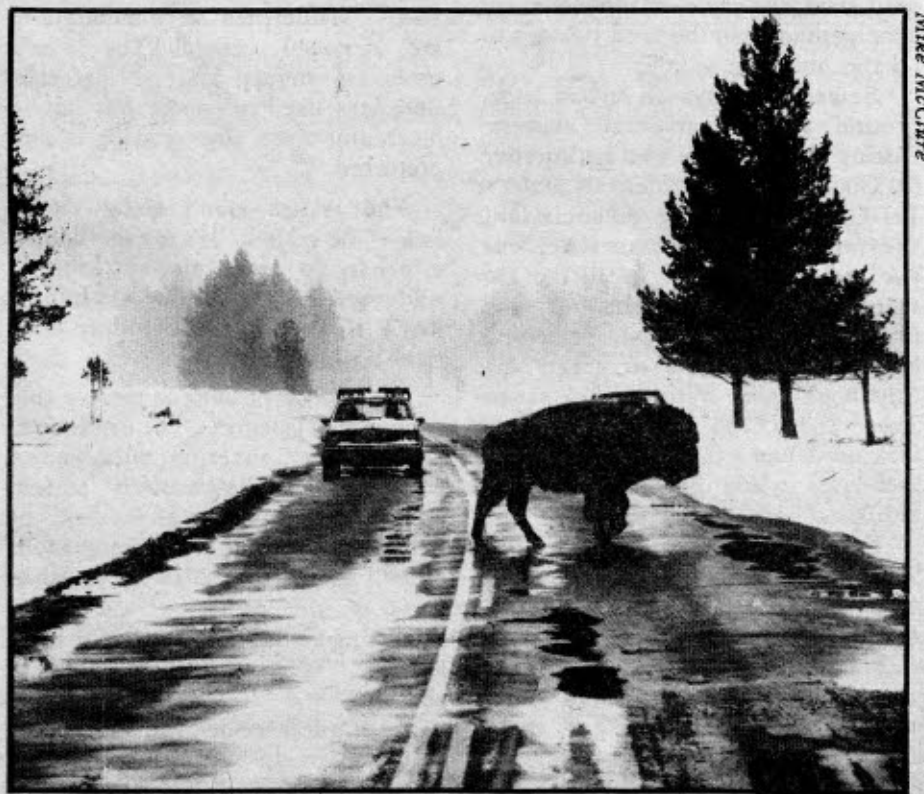
In the early part of the century, wolves and mountain lions were considered evil because of their violent methods of killing. Also,

wolves and lions took game that humans hunted. By the 1930s the wolf had been deliberately extirpated and the cougar was severely depleted in the Yellowstone ecosystem. Human manipulation of the environment has continued. In the 1960s thousands of elk were killed by Yellowstone Park officials because they had overpopulated their range.

Grizzlies, when they interfere with humans in the parks, are still trapped and moved and sometimes shot, and one effect of this may be a restructuring of the gene pool. Cliff Martinka, Glacier National Park's supervisory biologist, believes that by culling bears that show aggressive tendencies, the park service may be removing bears with the natural trait of curiosity.

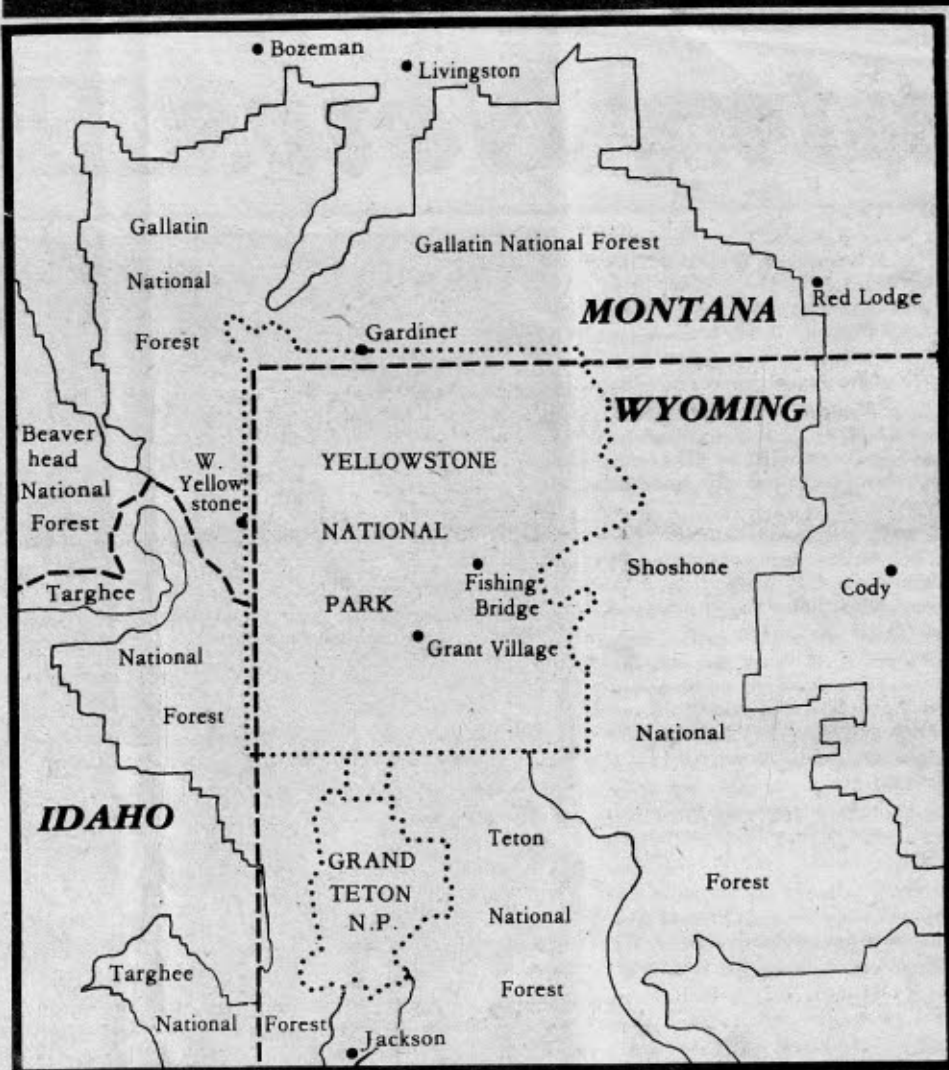
The wolves are still absent from Yellowstone. In fact, several critical parts of the ecosystem are missing. The wolf was integral to the Yellowstone ecosystem: it preyed on largely weak and sick animals and it kept down ungulate populations. The way wolves kill is cruel, but massive winter starvation due to overgrown populations is also cruel.

Even though it is 2.2 million acres -- larger than the combined areas of Rhode Island and Delaware -- Yellowstone Park covers less than half of the greater Yellowstone ecosystem. Only two parks, Denali and Olympic, have anywhere near a complete ecosystem. Because most parks embody only a portion of their ecosystems, the wildlife have needs outside park boundaries. Each winter, as they have for thousands of years, Yellowstone Park ungulates -- elk, deer, sheep, and bison -- move down from summer pastures in the high country to critical winter range where the climate is more moderate, grasses are swept clean by the wind, and snow is shallow enough to paw through. But today, the winter range is not always accessible. Many of the 16,000 elk in



Bison crossing at Yellowstone

Mike McClure



the northern herd, for example, find shelter in the fields of neighboring ranches, which were their traditional wintering areas, and destroy forage and haystacks.

The 2,000 bison in the park pose an even more difficult problem. Nearly 20 percent of the bison winter range is outside park boundaries, in and near Gardiner and West Yellowstone and on adjoining ranches. The ambling, Volkswagen-sized beasts wander into the tourist towns, where, beneath neon lights and amidst heavy traffic, they feed on exposed grasses.

Because the animals block traffic, cause accidents, and are a general nuisance, park authorities muster rangers on foot, horseback, and in vehicles to drive the bison into the park, where some may starve. Animals that refuse to be moved receive no reprieve: they are shot by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the meat is auctioned off.

The shaggy behemoths pose a different problem when they make their way to neighboring ranches. They are carriers of brucellosis, a disease to which they are immune but which causes domestic livestock to abort. Claiming the disease is naturally caused, the park service refuses to treat the bison, a policy that has cost park rangers friends.

"They should destroy animals in the park to keep the population down," said Frank Rigler, an angry neighboring rancher who also complained about broken fences and cows gored by testy bison. "For years they killed them in the parks to control populations."

The grizzly bear, *Ursus arctos horribilis*, a symbol of nature at its wildest, is the wildlife centerpiece of Yellowstone and Glacier national parks, the only two parks in the mainland United States with viable populations. Newsreels, travelogues, and Yogi Bear cartoons made Yellowstone as famous for its black and grizzly bears as for its punctual geyser, Old Faithful.

If you happen upon either one of these bears in Yellowstone today, you are one of a handful of people. Black bears have declined and until last year, when grizzly sightings increased sharply, the grizzly was considered by

some to be at the edge of extinction. In August 1982, Roland Wauer, chairman of the Interagency Grizzly Bear Steering Committee, wrote that the Yellowstone grizzly population had declined so seriously that "the probability of retaining this wildland species in Yellowstone National Park is minimal."

The revelation by the committee of state and federal agencies with jurisdiction over grizzly habitat came as a shock, for the park service had insisted until then that the population was a healthy 300 to 350 bears. Instead they now believe there are 200 to 250 bears, with as few as 30 breeding families. (The number of females is crucial -- grizzlies breed only once every three years.) But what is most alarming is that the population is declining -- bears are dying faster than the population can replace them.

"With the mortality rates we're getting, we're looking at the end of the grizzly bear population (in Yellowstone) in twenty to thirty years," said Richard Knight, who heads the federal Interagency Grizzly Bear Study Team, in Bozeman, Montana. "Something drastic needs to be done." But there is no consensus. Other biologists say the Yellowstone grizzly, while imperiled, is not at the stage where the fires of panic need to be stirred.

The blame for the threat to the grizzly was placed by the park service, the study team, and others on high mortality rates caused by poachers, as well as the deterioration of habitat caused by logging, energy development, mining, and other intrusions into the area around the park. The way to beef up the Yellowstone population, they believe, is to increase law enforcement pressures on poachers and to restrict and mitigate development pressures in surrounding habitat, measures the park service cannot implement by itself.

Park officials have been working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state officials to get tough with poachers. Help has also come from the National Audubon Society, which offers a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of grizzly poachers. Within its own domain, the park service has more autonomy. Authorities have fortified measures to keep people and bears apart, closing off back country

that impinges on bear habitat, relocating bears, restricting hiking trails, and improving garbage disposal techniques. They recently brought together seventy government employees who work in the Yellowstone ecosystem for a two-day workshop on grizzlies and have sent other employees into the field to educate the public about etiquette in grizzly country.

But some biologists think the park service's efforts are misdirected. It is not poaching or habitat deterioration that is the problem, these critics say, but the park authorities' decision in 1968 to close the garbage dumps where many bears were going for food. That decision, intended to create an entirely natural population of bears, was clearly an application of natural management.

At the top of the list of park service critics are ecologists John and Frank Craighead, who have studied the Yellowstone grizzlies since 1959. The Craigheads, twin brothers, have for many years faulted officials for closing the garbage dumps and then killing or removing those animals unable to go back to the wild. That debate was renewed in a controversial article last year in the *Atlantic* which, citing the Craigheads, said that myopic attempts to achieve a "natural" population have nearly eliminated the grizzly.

Natural management, according to the Craigheads, remains the stumbling block to an effective program to save the grizzly. They believe any scheme to save the bear must include the steering committee's recommendations and restructure Yellowstone's natural management philosophy.

"The Yellowstone Ecosystem, which includes the park, cannot be returned to pre-Colombian conditions and failure to recognize this has stymied a practical (bear) management program," John Craighead said at a Yellowstone Park symposium in October 1982. "In a park with a visitation of 2 million people annually, management must be designed to help man and bear coexist -- even if it means compromising an idealistic, but unrealistic, back-to-primal-nature concept."

Craighead believes that human intrusions into and around the park -- buildings, roads, people themselves -- have deprived the bears of portions of their food source and that there must be compensation for the deprivation. Craighead therefore recommends an

immediate, supplemental feeding of the bears to increase their numbers to a more viable level. The reproductive rate of grizzly bears, like that of most animals, is tied directly to the amount of available food.

Park authorities are fiercely opposed to feeding the bears. Their whole natural management and natural population philosophy is based on the idea that animal populations will reach a homeostasis based on available food supplies. To feed the bears, they say, would destroy gains made in restoring a natural population.

Gary Brown, Yellowstone's bear biologist, disputes Craighead's argument. No one favors returning the park to pre-Colombian conditions, he says: The goal is to "manage the park with a minimum of interference from man." And while Brown says that feeding the bears is not out of the question, he sees it as a long shot: "Feeding the bears can complicate things worse than they already are."

Chris Servheen, head of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Grizzly Bear Recovery Team, backs up Brown. He claims supplemental feeding would be an enormous task, requiring 5,000 to 6,000 elk per year. Further, he believes such feeding would not necessarily mean more bears. Grizzly litter size, he said, averaged 2.2 when the dumps were open. It is now 1.9, not a significant decrease according to Servheen.

Servheen also contends that, while population has dropped, the problem is not as serious as some believe. He says the decline is due to normal population dynamics after closure of a dump. "We're not going to whistle in the dark and assume everything's fine," Servheen said. "But we're not at the panic stage." Supplemental feeding is a last resort, he says.

What does the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service consider the minimum population to avoid extinction? "According to the best data we have," Servheen says, "about thirty to seventy bears." The scientific community agrees with Brown and Servheen. Craighead is the only biologist who has publicly supported feeding to enhance the grizzly population.

The dispute between the Craigheads and the park service is not new.

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Park Service can be single-minded

Unlike the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service, the National Park Service can be singleminded. It does not have to manage its lands for multiple use. It can concentrate on preservation and protection of natural, cultural and historical resources so as "to leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

Perhaps for that reason, the Park Service is something of an elite organization. Its 20,000 or so full and seasonal employees manage 334 "units" with an annual budget of \$873 million.

Its domain is vast and varied: the Fire Island National Seashore in New York, the National Mall in Washington D.C., Alcatraz Island in San Francisco Bay, presidential homes, and "natural" parks such as Yellowstone and Grand Canyon. Altogether, there are 21 separate classifications, including National Seashores, Preserves and Monuments.

Each of the 334 units (the Vietnam Memorial will come into the agency this fall, making it 335) has an enabling law which helps determine how it is managed.

The Park Service has developed general management plans for wildlife and other activities in accordance with its founding mission as laid out in the 1916 Organic Act. But when conflicts arise between the Park Service mission and the enabling legislation that created a unit, the enabling legislation wins.

That is how activities not consistent with the Park Service mission come about. Some of the more controversial examples are the elk reduction hunts -- some call them slaughters -- in the Grand Tetons, mining in Death Valley National Monument, and energy development in the Big Thicket National Preserve.

--the staff

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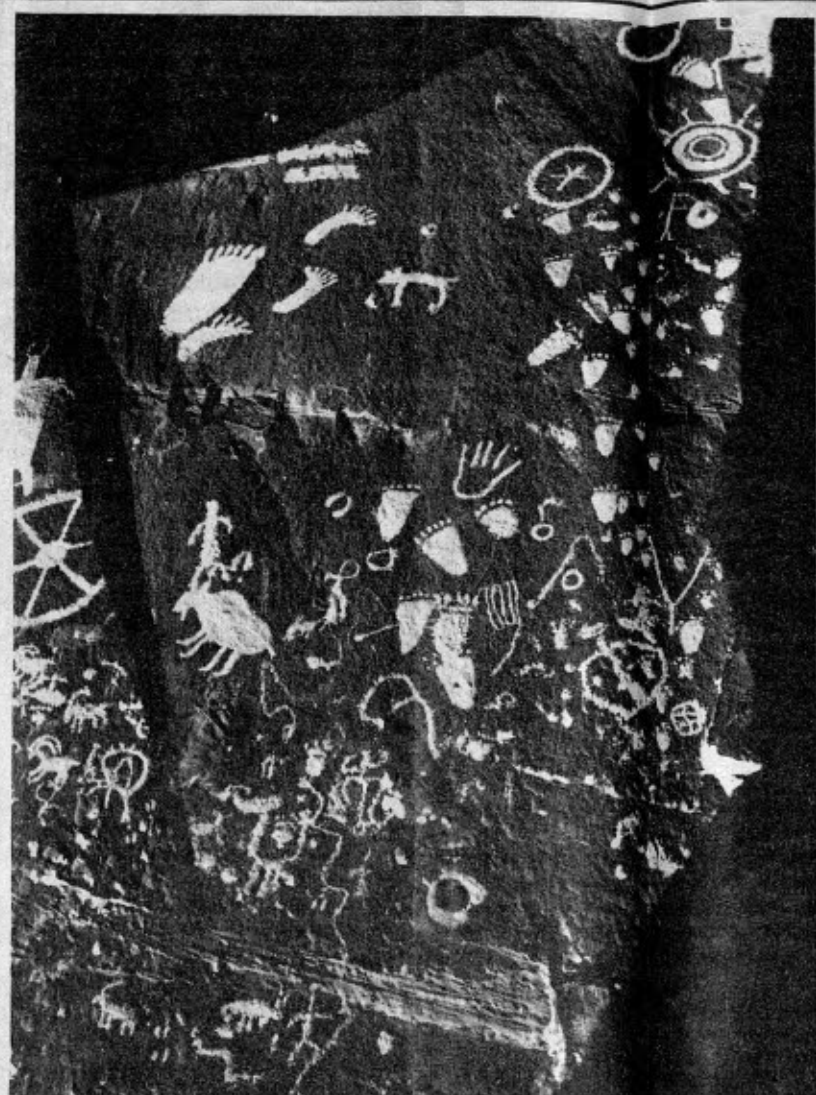
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Bob Greger

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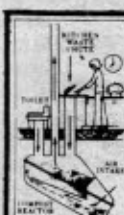
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Landscapes for Wildlife

A fierce animal gets aggressive help

A national campaign is underway to save the Yellowstone grizzly bear.

Wildlife biologist Tony Povilitis of Boulder, Colorado and his supporters have drawn up a "citizens proposal" which stresses more designation of wilderness areas in the Yellowstone ecosystem, a feeding center for the bears, and much less development and intrusion by man. That proposal will be hand-carried to Washington, D.C. this summer by Save The Grizzly Bike-A-Thon volunteers.

Last November, Povilitis met with biologists Frank Craighead of Moose, Wyoming and John Craighead of Missoula, Montana to draw up the citizens proposal. The Craigheads have studied Yellowstone's grizzlies intensively. Others who signed the three-page "holistic approach" are Walter Mersch, president of Wyoming's Murie Audubon Society, Clifton Merritt of the American Wilderness Alliance, and Lyn dePogter, president of Boulder Audubon.

Povilitis says fourteen conservation groups have endorsed the proposal as of April, including Friends of the Earth, the Idaho Wilderness Association, Wyoming Advocates of Animals, Greenpeace USA, Earth First! and the International Ecology Society. "We're seeking more support," he says.

Povilitis, 38, is a consulting biologist who has become a recognized authority on the Chilean huemul deer, an endangered species. He became concerned about America's grizzly, he says, because unless management is improved, "this species is likely to be lost from the Yellowstone area. The cards are stacked against them."

We've been "too timid," Povilitis charges, while the grizzly population has suffered a serious decline to 183-207 animals since the 1960s. Survival of the grizzly depends on an adequate habitat without human interference, he says, and any development such as the Ski Yellowstone area jeopardizes the grizzly's survival.



Ursus horribilis, the Yellowstone grizzly bear.

National Park Service

The citizens proposal urges four policies "with appropriate management actions to follow" to save the Yellowstone Park bears.

Key tenets are:

1. To end destruction of habitat by prohibiting development in critical areas where the bears roam.
2. Greatly reduce man-caused deaths to bears by eliminating poaching and phasing out livestock allotments on public lands.
3. Improve the health of the bear population by providing food near the geographic center of the ecosystem, designate the bear as "endangered"

under the Endangered Species Act, and accelerate the process of adding wilderness areas in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming.

4. Promote research to speed up population recovery and provide a better basis for bear management.

Povilitis sent the plan to the Secretary of the Interior two months ago. But "developing a plan that will work is one thing; getting our government to accept and fully implement it is another." The Bike-A-Thon was designed to focus public attention on the plan.

So far, 15 people have signed up to

carry the citizens proposal from Wyoming to the nation's public officials. They plan to leave from Yellowstone National Park on May 28 and pedal through eastern Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, West Virginia, Pennsylvania and Maryland before arriving in Washington, D.C. on July 27. Campaign volunteer Elizabeth English of Boulder is coordinating the Bike-A-Thon. She and the Campaign for Yellowstone Bears can be reached at Box 416, Boulder, CO 80306, 303/447-2975.

--Betsy Marston

Parks...

[Continued from page 7]

It goes back to the 1960s -- to an incident in August 1967 when two young women were killed on the same night in Glacier Park by grizzly bears that had grown used to eating garbage.

The park service had planned to close dumps in both Yellowstone and Glacier because of a federal edict on the matter, but the deaths hastened the process. The Craigheads publicly disagreed with the plan. Some dumps were surely troublesome, the Craigheads acknowledged, because of their proximity to areas used heavily by people. But some were far from areas of human use and many generations of bears had been raised on dump food -- old spaghetti, bones, stale pie, and spoiled bacon. The Craigheads argued that dumps could be considered "ecocenters," places with abnormally high concentrations of food. In that sense, said the ecologists, they were not different from and no less important than the fall salmon run on Alaskan rivers, which also attracts and sustains grizzly bears.

But the park service held fast, refusing to consider a proposal by the Craigheads that officials should phase out the dumps gradually. A natural

population, said the park service, could best be obtained by making the bears go "cold turkey." To do otherwise would encourage successive generations of garbage-fed grizzlies and prolong the problem.

The question of what "natural" means was a key point in the argument. The Craigheads felt, and still feel, that people and their products are part of the natural environment and should be accorded the same role that dead elk and other carrion are, within reason.

The dumps were closed in 1968. When bears displaced by the closing of the dumps began wandering into campgrounds and developed areas, officials relocated, transported, or when necessary, killed them outright. By about 1973, the need to do so declined; a natural population of bears which could live on roots, berries and ground squirrels had been achieved.

But how many bears were actually killed during the adjustment period is the subject of heated debate. The Park Service maintains it was 37 grizzlies, but the Craigheads, whom most experts believe have more accurate figures, put the count at 189. The number killed is significant. John Craighead believes the killing of bears in the late sixties and early seventies, coupled with the withdrawal of an important food source, may have

reduced the bear population to the point where it is now biologically impossible for the grizzlies to recover without help.

Park officials, however, are inclined to wait and see. To help the bears with food, of course, would not only disrupt the process of adjustment to natural

conditions; it would also be an implicit admission that natural management has failed and nearly caused the extinction of a Yellowstone species.

□

Jim Robbins is a writer who lives in Helena, Montana. This article was made possible by the High Country News Research Fund.

Wyoming agency supports nature

The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission last month passed a unanimous resolution opposing supplemental feeding of the grizzly bear in the Greater Yellowstone Area.

The Department said that supplemental feeding has been evaluated as a management tool for the bear in great detail but concluded it would not help the Yellowstone grizzly population to survive. This is the same position taken by the Inter-Agency Grizzly Bear Committee.

The Department said grizzlies should be able to sustain themselves at the present level of nutrition using natural foods in the environment if

human induced mortality is limited. "Long-term protection and enhancement of grizzly bear habitat and continued efforts to eliminate unnecessary man-caused mortality should allow the population to increase to recovery objectives," said Al Langston, a spokesman for the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

The Commission also endorsed the Inter-Agency Bear Committee's suggestion that a baiting technique be evaluated that would use temporary, emergency feeding techniques to help avoid or alleviate bear-human conflicts.

12-High Country News--April 16, 1984

A-76 stirs opposition

Are National Park employees fighting for their parks or against efficiency?

by Ed Marston

The Department of Interior is implementing a program that sounds as appealing as Mom and Apple Pie.

Known as A-76, it would increase government efficiency, reduce the number of civil servants, and provide businesses with new opportunities. It is being tried out on the National Park Service, but by 1987 will spread through the federal government.

Despite its economic appeal, it has opposition. Opponents say its application to the National Park Service is a threat to America's crown jewels -- parks such as Mount Rushmore, Yellowstone, the Gettysburg Battlefield, the Grand Canyon and Rocky Mountain National Park. Opponents don't see themselves fighting against efficiency; they see themselves fighting for America's 334 National Parks.

The struggle began in November 1983 when Interior told the Park Service to implement A-76 in about 45 parks. Most of the parks quietly followed the order. But Glacier National Park resisted. There, in a remote area on the Montana-Canada border which attracts two million visitors a year, administrators and employees attempted to change Washington's order to investigate contracting out road and trail maintenance.

The park's administrators resisted within the chain of command, and were accused of foot-dragging and insubordination by higher-ups in the Rocky Mountain regional office. Meanwhile, seasonal employees organized Friends of Glacier to publicize the little-known federal initiative and get Congressional help.

As a result of those efforts, Montana Senator Max Baucus (D) and others attached a rider on April 5 to a Senate appropriations bill. If the rider passes, it will slow down A-76. It would slow down rather than stop A-76 because few oppose the program's intent. Opposition centers on implementation.

At the moment, A-76 in the National Parks doesn't seem worth Congressional attention. The first wave of implementation will affect no more than 180 out of 16,000 jobs in a small fraction of the 500 National Park job "activities."

But opponents say the potential for damage to National Parks is great if A-76 spreads. If the "first wave," as the Park Service calls it, is judged successfully, it will be broadly

applied to road, building, trail and other maintenance activities in the nation's Parks. Opponents also fear the spreading of A-76 out of maintenance to such jobs as Ranger and Interpretation.

But even if it stays within maintenance, some see A-76 as a threat. The Park Service has a highly integrated work force. Everyone in the Park Service serves as information-giver and host as well as janitor, carpenter, or superintendent. That, Park Service supporters say, creates a work force that serves the public well and that could be damaged by A-76.

There is another objection to A-76: that once contractors get their feet in the door, they will exert influence on the parks, as park concessionaires do, increasing the jobs put up for bid and reducing the ability of superintendents to manage as they see fit.

There is real concern about these issues. But for now opponents of A-76 argue mainly that the Park Service is being forced to move too quickly and that it is unwise to contract out even a few activities. From the other side, it is argued that resistance to A-76 is to be expected from bureaucrats afraid of doing things differently and from employees who don't want to lose their jobs.

As described by Interior officials, A-76 is intended to make parks more efficient by forcing them to go head to head with private business. The parks selected for this first implementation are preparing studies and contracts on maintenance jobs that could be done by private firms. Yellowstone is studying garbage collection, Glacier is studying road and trail maintenance, Rocky Mountain National Park is studying building and utility maintenance, and Bryce Canyon is studying roads.

The studies of 62 activities at roughly 45 parks were to result in contracts by March 31, 1984, according to the November 1983 orders. Then, both private companies and the park administrations were to be invited to bid on the contracts. If the Park Service bid was lowest, after certain adjustments, it would continue the work. If a private firm won, Park Service employees would be transferred, riffed, or hired by the private firm taking over the job.

The parks were free to rearrange their approach to the activity to make themselves more competitive. In fact, increased internal efficiency is expected to be a major benefit of the program. Jeffrey Craig, who is in

charge of implementing A-76 in the Rocky Mountain region, says A-76 "is not a contracting-out program. It is a management efficiency program." Moreover, it exempts any jobs that require value judgments or deal with natural or historic resources.

Craig says the parks haven't met the March, 1984 deadline. "Only 6 of the 62 activities were completed in time." But, he says, contracts on garbage collection in Yellowstone; road, trail and vehicle maintenance in Rocky Mountain National Park; utility maintenance in Grand Teton; and road maintenance in Bryce Canyon are expected shortly.

Some in Interior think the parks are sabotaging the effort. The parks and their supporters say an enormously complex task is being hurried without funds. An aide to Representative Pat Williams (D-MT) says the Park Service is being rushed into a program fraught with peril. And the intent of the Baucus rider is to give the Park Service time to do the job right.

But some think even more time won't solve the basic problem: that contracting out may be incompatible with the essence of America's parks. Gene Koveney, as facility manager at Mount Rushmore National Park in South Dakota, is in charge of maintaining the famous granite heads of presidents. He says:

"We go over the heads each year and seal any fissures. We measure any changes each month. And we collect data on the rock and on sealants we use so that thousands of years later they'll have the data." The long-term view is a tradition at Mount Rushmore, he says, starting when the sculptor made Washington's nose a foot longer than proportion called for because he knew the prevailing wind would erode it more quickly than the rest of the head.

"If we turn maintenance of the heads over to a low bidder, what will happen to this natural resource when the bottom line is dollars?" Koveney asks. At the moment, maintenance of the heads isn't up for bids, but Koveney is fearful that the present process will spread from road maintenance to other areas.

At Glacier National Park, concern centers on the threat to an employee team that performs several jobs at once. As a result of their early outspokenness, in which the Glacier Superintendent Robert Haraden and his top aides criticized A-76, the Glacier staff has become a bit less public in their opposition. One employee said, "They (Interior) say we're crybabies, or insubordinate."

But the park staff is still making their concerns known.

A Glacier spokesman said Glacier was ordered in November 1983 to prepare contracts for roads and trails. The staff was especially upset by the trail order. "We didn't like the idea of unsupervised contractors performing trail maintenance" in the back country, where poor work could permanently damage the resource.

The Park Service regional office now apparently agrees that trail maintenance shouldn't be contracted. But Glacier is also not pleased about contracting out roads. "We found that many road maintenance activities are resource-related. Our Going-to-the-Sun road is on the National Historic Register. There's a lot of stone masonry guard rails that have to be preserved. We don't know how to write contracts for that preservation work."

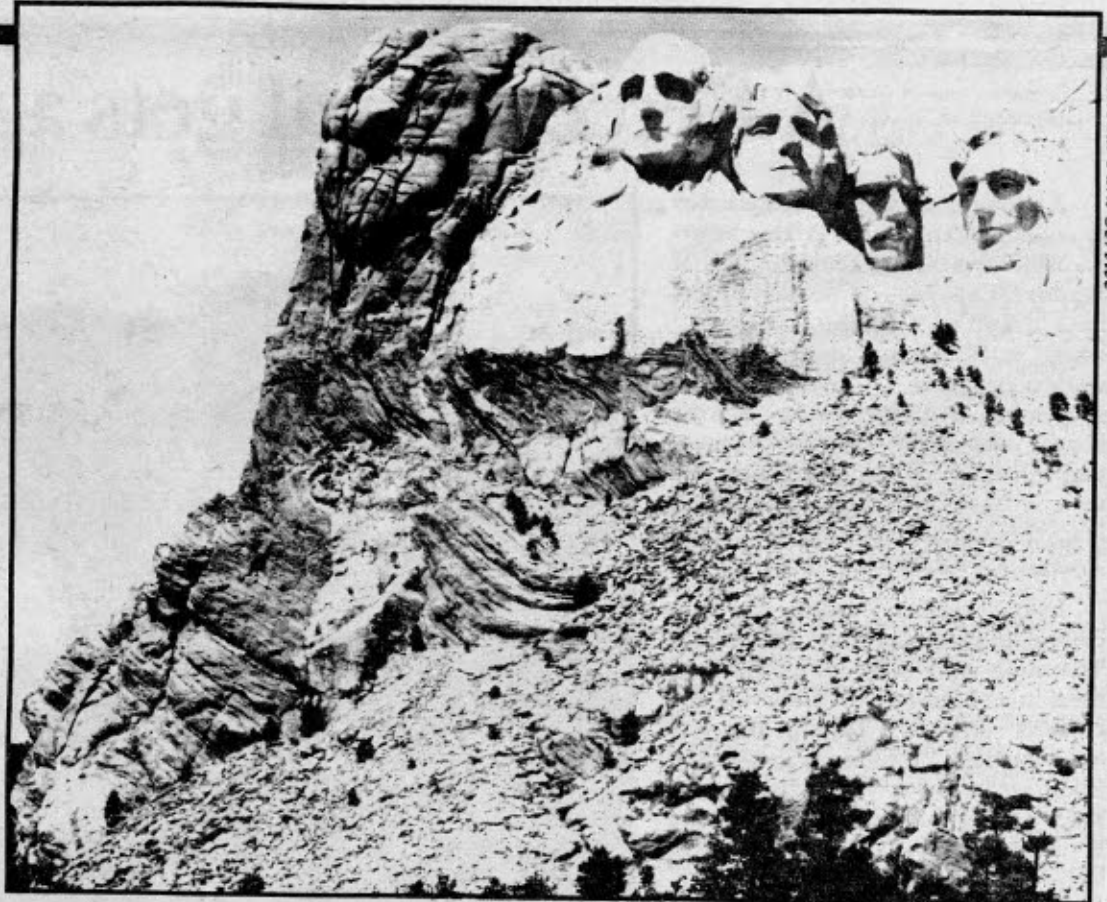
The spokesman also argues that the variability of mountain weather makes road maintenance difficult to specify. "We can have two feet or fourteen feet of snow. We can have many rock slides or a few. A contractor isn't bidding -- he's betting." The Park Service faces the same variability. "But if it's a light snow year, we'll do more trail work. We're flexible."

Glacier has come up with what it hopes is a compromise approach. "We say Glacier has to maintain its core capability to handle varying needs. We're trying to bring to the A-76 program the issue of core capability."

But even where activities are predictable and don't involve natural resources or value judgments -- such as pumping pit privies or sweeping walks -- A-76 has problems. The program bumps up against the highly integrated Park Service.

The Glacier spokesman says, "Every employee at Glacier has responsibility for giving visitors information, to act courteously, to help people. It's a big issue with us. You don't want a worker to say -- 'I clean culverts. Go to Visitor Information if you want directions.'" Park employees on all levels make good sources of information because most of them are long-term employees. At Glacier, for example, only three out of 12 seasonal employees in one maintenance unit have less than five years experience.

The Glacier spokesman says, "They're here because they like the park. It fits with the way they want to



National Park Service

live. Employees never transfer from the Park Service to other government agencies. It's a small agency with high morale."

To the east, at Mount Rushmore, Kovening says, "None of us quarrel with saving money. But if there's anything in the Park Service that has lowered morale, this is it. Employees see the years they've devoted to the Park going down the drain; not just their jobs, but also the resource. It's not just a paycheck -- it's a way of life."

Back in the Rocky Mountain regional office, Craig says he recognizes that Park Service employees do more than their official job. "A-76 tests the efficiency of that approach. The fact that the guy who picks up garbage also provides information costs money. You have to measure that."

He says contracting need not destroy flexibility. Under A-76 park superintendents can require contractors to base their bids on how much snow falls, or to have crews able to fight fires or participate in search and rescue operations.

Some park administrations complain that A-76 savings will be eaten up supervising the work. Craig says supervision costs can be written into the contracts. If those costs are excessive, he says an activity can be exempted. According to Craig, A-76 has already proven itself in the Department of Defense, where 12 to 19 percent savings were made when government units were forced to compete with private enterprise.

He says the idea of A-76 goes back to 1955 within the federal government. But the effort gained new life in the Reagan administration. Under David Stockman, the Office of Management and Budget revised A-76 in 1983 and called for all units of government to examine contracting out by 1987. Former Secretary of Interior James Watt accelerated the process by ordering implementation in the Park Service by 1984. A-76 is in earlier stages of implementation within Interior's Fish and Wildlife, BLM and Bureau of Reclamation agencies.

Opposition in Congress centers on the pace of implementation, where critics have gotten indirect support from Russell Dickenson, the career head of the Park Service. He supports A-76, but he also told Congress on three occasions that implementation is straining his agency and hurting morale. Because the Park Service has not received funds to implement A-76, it is cutting into other Park Service activities.

An aide to Montana Representative Pat Williams said adequate front-end financing is especially important because poorly drawn contracts could come back to haunt the parks. The Baucus rider mentioned earlier attempts to insure good work by giving Congress 45 days to review A-76 studies and contracts. Critics have also succeeded in getting the Government Accounting Office to study contracting out in the Park Service as well as in the Defense Department.

Meanwhile, numerous horror stories are circulating in the Park Service about attempts to implement A-76 elsewhere in the government. They tell about strikes by contract garbage collectors in the State Department; riffed civil servants having to train their replacements; and entire installations such as Dugway Proving Ground in Utah ceasing to operate in the first months under a contractor.

There is also fear that even if the contracts are properly drawn and the contractor does the job well, the parks will suffer. The aide to Rep. Williams said contractors will be able to do the jobs cheaper because their workers won't be acting as interpreters and guides. But that, he said, means the public will be getting less service. He also said:

"In our investigation of A-76, we found that no one cared about the results of the studies. We fear that there is a political goal -- to pare back federal payrolls."

A-76 has not yet attracted much attention from national conservation groups. One exception is the National Parks and Conservation Association.

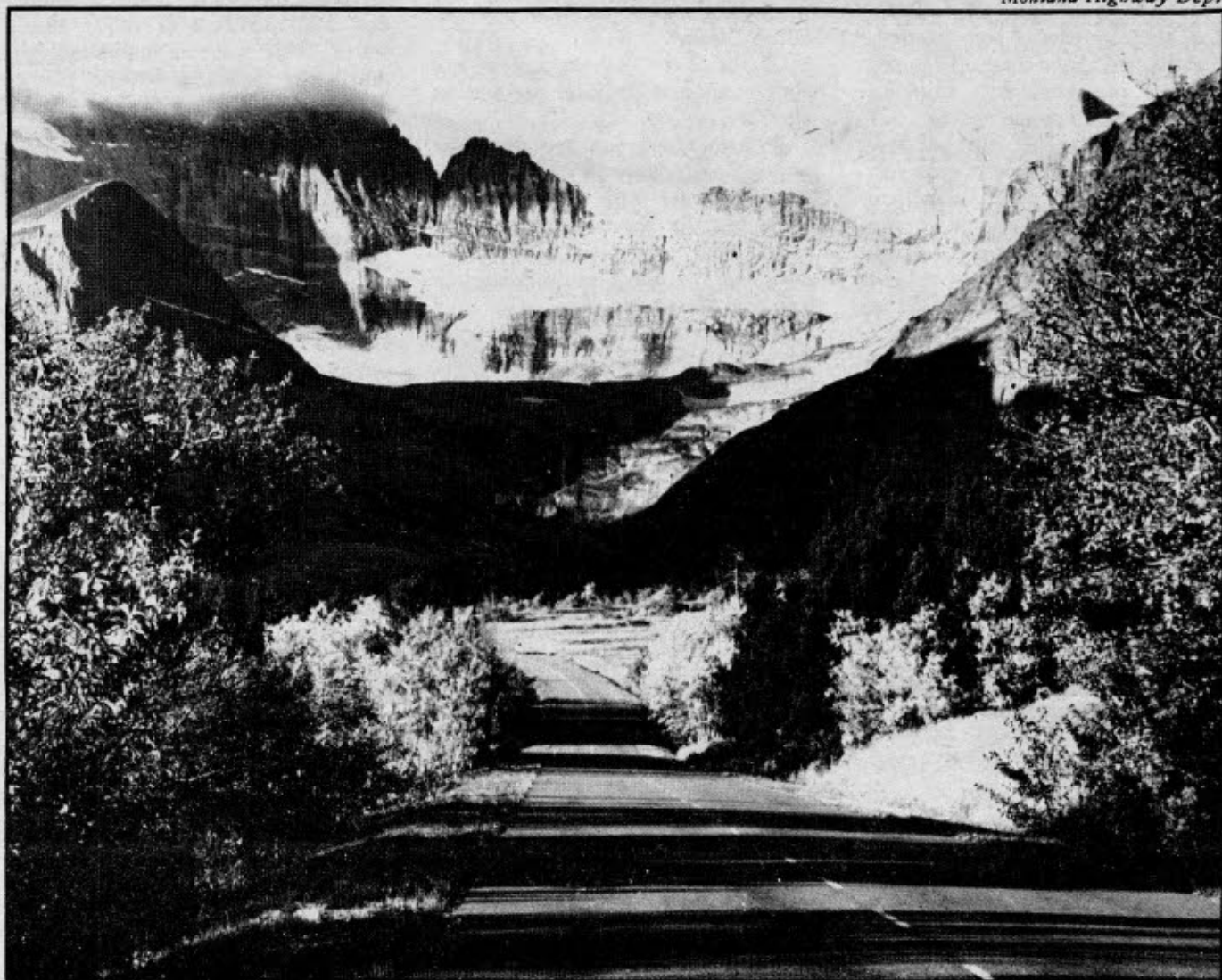
Staffer Laura Beaty in Washington, D.C., says:

"I've been working on it for a year. It's been a lonely battle. And we don't have the money for a lawsuit. But now I feel the tide is turning -- we're getting visibility on the Hill. And we're getting phone calls and letters from Park Superintendents. They feel their whole way of looking at the Park Service is being eliminated."

Ms. Beaty is mainly involved with the two-thirds of the National Parks that are cultural -- battlefields, the homes of presidents, the home of Eugene O'Neill, the Vietnam Memorial, Alcatraz, Ellis Island, and so on. She suggests that A-76 is more of a threat to the cultural parks than to the

large western parks. Preservation of historic structures is a very delicate and difficult task. And, she continues, the cultural parks are more likely to be in the East, near population centers, and therefore more attractive to contractors than isolated western parks.

But the *Hungry Horse News* in Montana reported that giant Morrison and Knudsen Construction Co. may be interested in maintaining the roads in Glacier, Teton and Yellowstone. It is possible that in these lean construction times other companies will be attracted.



Going-to-the-Sun Road in Glacier National Park.

A Glacier Park group fights contracting-out

Bill Dakin is a seasonal maintenance employee at Glacier National Park who has a new appreciation for his bosses thanks to A-76.

"I'm really proud of our administrators. You work out in the field like me and you see them come and go. But we are really lucky to have the men we have. They put the best interests of the park over their own interests. Those fellows have more to lose than someone like me. They (the Park Service central administration) can transfer them, cut their budgets, do all sorts of things. They certainly have not taken the easy route."

The administrators have taken risks by fighting the A-76 program within the Park Service and by talking frankly to the media. Dakin, who has worked in maintenance at Glacier for 13 years, has also played a key role in the battle. He was one of the organizers last winter of Friends of Glacier.

At first, he said, the group was made up of park employees. "There was a lot of concern over elimination of jobs. But a lot of us also saw that the program was being done clandestinely

-- there was no opportunity for public discussion.

"So we launched a campaign to bring it to the attention of the media and Washington. It was difficult to get the issue out. Public employees are held in low esteem and the local press coverage painted us as a group of government employees upset over losing our jobs.

"But what we saw was this federal contracting program that would privatize the parks to an extent they'd never recover from." He said from what he and other employees had seen in the past, the Park Service has no expertise in writing maintenance contracts; they didn't include supervision costs; and some contractors "low-balled" the initial bids, assuming they'd get more money out of the Service later.

Dakin said he and other seasonals weren't worried about retaliation. "The permanent workforce felt they had more at risk. But the seasonals weren't as worried. And it seemed too important an issue to hide from. Public employees have an obligation to speak out if you see something this dumb."

He said Glacier may have led the

fight because "you have an unusual degree of cohesion among rangers, resource specialists and maintenance people here. Divisions exist mainly on paper. It was apparent to the ranger staff that if maintenance was separated out, it would affect the Rangers.

"There's no caste system here. Parks are in relatively isolated places. Everyone mingles." West Glacier, the park's main town, has about 150 permanent residents, Dakin estimated.

Friends of Glacier wrote hundreds of letters, got stories in the local and regional press, and was successful in interesting Montana Senator Max Baucus and Congressman Pat Williams in the issue. But, he said, they didn't become part of any coalition. "We think there's a similar group in the Grand Tetons, but we're not sure."

Friends of Glacier did become more than a group of employees. "After a while, we began receiving letters from all over asking how they could help." The group can be reached c/o Bill Dakin, Box 215, Coram, MT 59913.

--the staff

14-High Country News--April 16, 1984

LETTERS

LIKE A MILITARY OUTFIT

Dear HCN,

Bingo! This is the editorial (March 19) you should have written in lieu of the previous one about the Forest Service. I get the sense that you now have effectively expressed your central dissatisfaction with the agency rather than with its proposed aspen harvest, per se. And my own experience with that agency in the past decade tends to corroborate yours to some extent. Although many sincere Forest Service staffers have tried to serve my immediate constituency, state forestry, to the best of the interests of both parties, time and again I have come up against the kind of monolithic thinking characteristic of a military outfit.

But there are at least a few documentable instances where, as you say, the FS held out a hand to "civilians." One that comes to my mind is that of District Ranger (White River NF) Ernie Nunn, with the help of a consultant outfit called FUND, in paving the way for the Beaver Creek Ski Area. I think Ernie has since transferred, but you could get the story, or leads on it, from FUND (headquarters in Denver).

For its own sake at the least, there are, however, too few of these instances. As you suggest, the FS needs friendly constituencies, and badly. That the agency does not seem to act like it comprehends this need makes it its own worst enemy in my eyes. Agencies of government are *always* constrained by their public funding and are, therefore, at the whim of elected/appointed officialdom, no matter the degree of professionalism of their heads (e.g., Chief of the FS). No matter the political climate, however, the FS has it in its power to improve its public relations. It will likely have to look outside its present expertise, if recent history is an effective indicator.

Can the FS be reformed? By political winds, yes; from within, I certainly don't know, but I would give it a better chance for constructive reform if it first realized the need. Thoughtful editorials are one more ally in this pursuit; thanks for yours.

Donna R. Story
LaPorte, CO

ATTACK THE FUNDING

Dear HCN,

First of all I'd better give you a little personal background info:

I retired a year ago from my job as range and wildlife staff officer for the Deerlodge National Forest. Most of my career was spent on the east slope of Colorado. I was District Ranger at Leadville 1974 through 1979 before moving to Butte and the staff job here. I've managed to misplace the paper so will have to answer your questions as best I can from memory.

1) *Why doesn't the FS develop a public constituency?*

They do. The FS has one of the strongest grassroots constituencies there are -- with the business establishment. Every professional employee is expected to become active in at least one service club. They work closely with the local C of C. Most of the hierarchy know the local congressional liaison well. They maintain the closest of relationships with the county commissioners and other local officials.

However, any Forest Service professionals that consistently align themselves with any organization's views that might disagree with the business establishment risk their career. For instance, the Service tends to promote only those Wildlife biologists who are apologists for the development interests.

2) *Are there any inservice heroes defending non-commodity values?*

Yes, there are a few. They tend to be wildlife biologists or landscape architects who are doing their level best to buffer the extreme agency bias towards commodity development. Theirs is a lonely fight and for the most part they have sacrificed their careers for the resource. The onus is great. Recognition would only make life more difficult for the ones I know.

3) *How should we deal with the Forest Service?*

With facts where they are appropriate and political pressure at all times.

I don't think it's too important whether you're nice or not. Everyone should operate with the style that works best for them. Just don't get caught with your facts down. Don't give them the opportunity to label us irrational extremists.

Take a look at the basic make-up of the organization. The FS is genetically development-oriented. Commodity professionals outnumber non-commodity professionals about 20 to 1. The amenity disciplines are vastly outnumbered. Internal social pressures are terrific against those who advocate wildlife, scenery, etc., especially if the issue threatens reduced grazing or logging.

The Reagan administration has the right idea. Don't attack the programs you don't like head-on; cut off their funding!

We could do more to move the Forest Service back toward even-handed multiple use by eliminating the capital investment (hard money) road funds than by any other single action. Not only would it halt this outright subsidy that makes entry into marginal lands possible but we would also force cutback of engineering staff. I don't think the public understands the negative impact of the engineering mind-set on FS policy. (But that's a whole 'nother story.)

National environmental lobbyists say it is virtually impossible to mobilize the public to amorphous issues. What a shame. The FS budgets deserve every bit the energy and drive we give wilderness classification.

The Forest Service doesn't need more money for amenity programs. They need *less money for development programs*. Road, timber sale, and range improvement funds all exceed those levels that are in the public interest. Congress seems to be in a budget cutting mood, let's go for it!

Dan Heinz
U.S. Forest Service, Retired
Butte, Montana

CHIP RAWLINS HELPED

Dear HCN,

Thanks for publishing Chip Rawlins' excellent essay on wilderness attitudes in Utah. I took it to Washington with me for hearings on H.R. 4516, the Utah wilderness bill, and it is now part of the hearing record. Unfortunately, the news media here in Utah have not succeeded in covering the wilderness issue nearly as well as *High Country News*.

Richard M. Warnick
Logan, UT

GIVE IT THE GOLDEN FLEECE AWARD

Dear HCN,

The centerspread by Jonathan Meyers that praised the virtues of the photovoltaic power system at Natural Bridges National Monument (HCN, 11/28/83) did not tell the full story. Instead of being a technological triumph it is a typical case of the government throwing away taxpayers' money; and instead of being glorified, it should be considered for the "Golden Fleece Award."

When I worked at Natural Bridges in 1974, the average power consumption was about 5000 watts. By the time the photovoltaic system was being installed, the average power consumption had increased to about 15,000 watts. This was accomplished primarily by installing electric clothes dryers and using electric space heaters. No attempt was made to reduce the use of electricity so that a smaller photovoltaic installation could be used. Without any sacrifice in "quality of life," the power consumption could easily have been reduced to the 5000-watt level again; however, the Department of Energy wanted to make a 100,000-watt photovoltaic installation. The actual needs of Natural Bridges National Monument were ignored. (Only a small percentage of the power consumption can be attributed to visitor use. The majority of the power is used by Park Service personnel living at the Monument and for heating and lighting in the Visitor Center.)

The bureaucratic mentality that inflicted this oversize project on Natural Bridges National Monument is the same mentality that wants to guarantee the Cathedral Bluffs Oil Shale Project \$60 per barrel of shale oil (HCN 8/5/83). Energy at any cost is not the answer to our energy problems. Energy conservation will be the answer, not mindless energy consumption as practiced by the National Park Service. This is something that Park Service personnel can't seem to understand. For several years I have been living in a solar-powered home that uses *one* 25-watt photovoltaic panel to supply my electrical needs. I too have solar TV, solar stereo, solar lights and a solar water pump. I don't have an electric clothes dryer, electric toaster or electric space heaters because they are an extremely inefficient use of electrical energy. The Natural Bridges photovoltaic installation cost over \$4 million. By contrast, mine cost \$400.

I'm sure the Park Service response to this letter will be as it has been in the past - ignore the fact that a 100,000-watt photovoltaic installation should not have been put in at Natural Bridges and instead make vague comments about "pioneering" a new technology.

A more positive approach would be for the Park Service to reduce energy consumption at Natural Bridges so that about 10,000 watts of photovoltaic capacity could be dismantled and reinstalled in Arches National Park to pump water at Devils Garden Campground - a perfect application for photovoltaics. More sections of the system could be transferred to other remote Park Service areas if the energy consumption at Natural Bridges is reduced. A reasonable size system for Natural Bridges would be about 25,000 watts, so 75% of the present installation could be available for use elsewhere.

Owen Severance
Monticello, Utah

WILL THE REAL SENATOR MCCLURE...

Dear HCN,

How can the James McClure being severely chastised in *OPINION* (HCN, 2/20/84) be the same James McClure who was lauded as being the best in the Senate (HCN, 10/15/82)? Did he have us all bamboozled with his talk of austerity and sensible spending, or is the best in the Senate, as well as the rest, really that bad?

Robert T. Mohler
Ord, NE

ABOUT CHAMPION'S MILL

Dear HCN,

Don Snow's article on Missoula's Champion International pulp mill (Dec. 26) touches an issue -- clean water -- that unites a broad range of interest groups. Water quality in North Idaho is very important, especially as it concerns Lake Pend Oreille. As well as being just downright beautiful, the lake is vital to tourism and recreation, a major base of the local economy.

At the Nov. 10 hearing on Champion's application to double their discharge of mill effluents into the Clark Fork River, the testimony given opposing Champion's permit was little short of inspiring to a conservationist. I began my activism in college in the '60's and early '70's and saw mostly students involved in environmental issues; a large part of the "older generation" stood in opposition. This hearing showed a distinct change: college students are still involved, but so are the students of my day -- now representing agencies involved in the controversy or as trained biologists. And more encouraging yet were the testimonies of the old timers who grew up in this area and knew a clean Clark Fork. Many of these are people who would in the past have considered "environmentalists" synonymous with "Communists."

Most all governmental agencies involved with the river opposed granting Champion a permit without a full EIS being prepared. These included commissioners from all four Montana and Idaho counties on the Clark Fork below the mill, both the Idaho and Montana Fish and Game Departments, the Lolo National Forest, the Missoula Board of Health, the Panhandle Health Board, and the Idaho Governor's Office. Also prominent in opposition were the Lake Pend Oreille Idaho Club, a sportsman's group; the Libertarian Party; and the Lakeshore Owners Property Assn., a very conservative group that has *never* opposed a development action before.

A very important piece of testimony given by the representative of the Five Valleys Audubon Society seemed generally overlooked by the press. He quoted from the EIS prepared by Hoerner-Waldorf for their proposed expansion which stated that if the rapid infiltration system did not work, other means would be applied *without* increase in effluents. The company seems to have forgotten this... I have one geographic point of correction: Don Snow states that water flowing out of Lake Pend Oreille enters the Spokane River. More accurately, ground water percolating from the south end of the lake supplies Spokane's aquifer.

John Harbuck
Sandpoint, Idaho

LETTERS

INCORRIGIBLE FOREST SERVICE

Dear HCN,

You're right. The Forest Service is incorrigible. And nobody knows it better than some of us folks who work for the outfit in wilderness management. While John Crowell and Doug MacCleery play out their lifelong fantasies of turning our National Forests into Louisiana-Pacific tree farms, Regional Foresters, Forest Supervisors and District Rangers go about their business of nullifying all the gains of the last 5 to 10 years we have made in maintaining our wildland resources.

Besides the allocation issue, which any informed observer could see that the Forest Service has botched, we are now seeing the feeble gains made recently in managing wilderness areas being thrown away. The alleged culprit, according to upper level Forest Service people is "budgetary constraints." The budget, however, is actually a handy excuse for the real reason -- lack of commitment.

Lack of commitment stems from the classic industrial forester attitude that wilderness is a worthless, illegitimate resource. However, just as important is the makeup of most of our Forest Service managers. They are often not innovators and are afraid to make waves because it could jeopardize their next promotion. Thus, held captive by a ridiculously stringent personnel policy that encourages passive attitudes towards changing in order to get "that next promotion," we have few Forest Service employees in decision-making positions who want to encourage commitment to "non-commodity" resources such as wilderness, wildlife or cultural resources.

What we have is a "me" agency. Many decisions, beyond the ones coming from the "get the cut out at all costs" mentality, stem from some individual's timidity to make a tough decision because it could affect his/her professional standing within the agency or not do enough to increase prestige. The facts speak for themselves. District Rangers and District staff people are constantly moving, rarely staying more than a few years with any particular district. In the Forest Service, you gotta' move to move up. So the results are decisions that often reflect someone's personal goals. The tragedy is that programs implemented by one Ranger are often overturned several years later when the next one comes in. What this constant juggling does to management efficiency and relations with local communities is quite predictable -- it screws the works up.

Realistically, to move upward in the Forest Service, one has to be a professionally trained forester or engineer. Thus we usually have decisions regarding wildlife, water, soil, recreation or any of the other myriad resources on the National Forests being made by someone whose only real area of expertise is tree farming. When a resource specific specialist is brought in to provide input on a decision, that person's expertise and recommendations are usually always subordinate to the designs of the timber, range or engineering staff. This is quite evident in what is happening in the forest planning process.

Your analogy with the Forest Service resembling an army is fairly accurate. With a few exceptions, such as seasonals, lower level permanents and a few upper level professionals,

we are talking about a group of people who are incredibly defensive of their employer. Because movers and shakers (those who buck the traditional timber/road bias) are constantly discouraged within the agency, we end up with a bunch of mediocre people making decisions. People with radically different views either quit, change to reflect their peers' views or are intimidated into just "doing their jobs." Mediocre people making mediocre decisions resembles what the Forest Service is doing to its timber resource; that is, giving us genetically identical monocultures. The majority of the people making decisions in the Forest Service are products of a boring yet damaging monoculture.

I didn't start this letter out with the idea of going on a diatribe about the shortcomings of the internal workings of the Forest Service, but rather just wanted to let you know about an attempt to correct some of these problems. I'm sending along information about a workshop being held in April in Lolo, Montana, that, hopefully, will be a start at correcting some of the shortcomings currently found in the Forest Service's management of wilderness areas. [See HCN's Bulletin Board.]

Bruce Farling
Missoula, MT

A GROUND-LEVEL RESPONSE

Dear HCN,

Your Opinion/Editorial "Can the Forest Service be Reformed" in the March 19, 1984 edition of the *High Country News* has generated much discussion here on the Taylor River Ranger District and we agree with many of your points. At the same time, we have concerns that some of the rhetoric may be overstated and some of the analogies misleading in an "opinion" article which may well be taken as fact by the general public. We cannot agree with your "doomsday" forecast and would like to present our side as a district or "ground level" response.

Ed, we take as a compliment your statements that there are good people on the ground and that *here* constructive things happen. There are also lots and lots of good people and good things up above but, you must keep in mind that the Forest Service is a bureaucracy, and as such, moves slowly with regard to sweeping change. This lack of immediate change service-wide is both good and bad, but it is not unique to federal agencies. We "ground pounders" are distressed that budgets and manpower are in a downward trend while requirements to produce reports and plans are increasing.

The Forest Service as an agency has taken more than a century to mature, beginning with Dr. Franklin Hough's Division of Forestry in the Department of Interior in 1878 which gathered only facts and figures on our nation's forested wildlands. The Forest Service as we know it today began in 1905 with Teddy Roosevelt's signing of the Transfer Act, which removed the Forest Reserves from control by the Department of Interior and placed them under the Department of Agriculture with a far-sighted Gifford Pinchot as the first Chief. A letter from James Wilson, Secretary of Agriculture to Chief Pinchot states very plainly our mission and objective. Rather than replicate the entire letter, here are two excerpts that are pertinent:

"...all land is to be devoted to its most productive use for the permanent

good of the whole people...All the resources of the forest reserves are for use..." and,

"...where conflicting interests must be reconciled, the question will always be decided from the standpoint of the *greatest good of the greatest number in the long run.*"

That holds as true today as it did 79 years ago. Most of the National Forests in the west were set aside by Presidential proclamation in order to protect them from big moneyed special interests and the "rape, pillage, and plunder" ethics of the lumbering, mining and cattle interests of that era. One thing that is so often overlooked is that Chief Pinchot's most basic philosophy was that protection could *only* be achieved by wise management.

By analogy, our 191 million acres of National Forests are the assets of a natural resource corporation. The American people, all 230 million of them, are the stockholders, Congress is the Board of Directors, and we, the Forest Service, are the managers. Congress has exercised its responsibility by giving us direction throughout the years by passing laws.

Congress has always had this control by legislation as the "Forest's Board of Directors" to dictate their desires to us as the managers. Recently, their direction has been more numerous and also very explicit, which has been in direct response to the desires of the stockholders, the American people.

In the early days, the Forest Service was an "advocate agency," one that pioneered conservation practices and ethics. Congress gave us the latitude to manage by enabling types of legislation such as the Organic Act, the Weeks Law, the K-V Act, etc... These acts were general but gave us authority to make active on-the-ground changes. A large segment of the public viewed the forested lands and other federal properties as waste lands or knew very little about them. The early mission of the Forest Service was to provide raw materials to raise red meat, build homes, schools and churches, extract needed minerals and otherwise assist in making our nation strong. At that time we fought to change tradition with new ideas and new ways of doing business so that the resources would be ever-producing. In fact the Forest Service championed Wilderness in Aldo Leopold with the Gila Wild Area in New Mexico in 1924 against awesome opposition from the public.

We all agree that you couldn't have hit the nail more squarely on the head when you talk of us being defensive and "report, plan and Environmental Impact Statement oriented." The public is now very aware of "their lands" and wants to be involved in the management of them. Congress has directed us by "process legislation" to be very explicit in our management plans to the extent of crystal ball, computer projections of fifty years into the future. I have personally worked on our forest's land management plan for three years and I find it difficult to read myself. I understand your frustration in trying to make heads or tails of it. Yet, Congress didn't ask us if we wanted to build a plan -- they mandated that we do it and have it done by 1985 so that the public could see how we intend to manage their lands. Pogo's truism about the enemy often being us is appropriate in this instance.

Isn't it a simple "cause-effect" relationship that more demands for reports, studies, plans, etc. mean less time spent on the ground managing

the resources? Much of the "paper shuffling" you refer to is a result of the stockholders' and board of directors' wishes and mandates. In order to accomplish all of the data gathering and generation of plans and reports, Supervisor's and Regional offices have grown with many specialists. We have gone through a period of a decade of reduced productivity in order to wade through RARE I and RARE II, the Resource Planning Act assessment and now the forest planning process. We are soliciting your help and that of the public to get us away from justification of what we have done and permission for what we might do in future back to *active on-the-ground accomplishment!*

Ed, you state that because the Chief of the Forest Service has come up through the ranks means little, except to us in the Forest Service. That may be true, but it is myopic to say the least! In that all of the Chiefs have been on the ground at the district and forest levels as well as having come up through regional offices and the various Washington offices levels has given them a direct tie to what happens at the ground level. Their insight into "ground" needs and problems has kept us a "doing agency" instead of becoming a bungling bureaucracy. That quality of leadership and rapport with all levels of management would not be as likely with political appointees at the top.

Ed, you asked for examples of where the Forest Service "has fought the good fight" -- use of prescribed fire is a prime example. A few short years ago, *all* fire was bad. A swell from the ground observers that small fires under stringently controlled circumstances are very beneficial and emulate nature on a small scale went to the top and came back down as policy. Now we burn planned areas when conditions are right to regenerate grassy areas, release aspen for wildlife, kill pine-killing mistletoe stands, reduce brush and other fire hazard, even clear travelways for Bighorn sheep. We have had an active program to inform the ranchers, permittees and general public what specific burns are for and our philosophy on prescribed burning. This has been an uphill battle because smoke in the woods causes uninformed people to imagine the worst.

Foresters and the professionals in this outfit have one goal in management -- the long-term productivity and protection of our National Forests.

Our primary job is *not* "to present you with policy questions in a clear and understandable way" as you purport, although an attempt was made in the forest planning process to analyze issues and concerns and display a range of alternatives in the E.I.S. Our job is to manage these 191 million acres for the greatest long-term benefit of the stockholders, the American people. I agree that we should not force you to wade through voluminous, obscure documents to find out what we are doing either. We at the ground level are very desirous of showing you, up front and openly, what's going on with your lands whether you are "Editor Marston" or "private citizen Ed." Come see us with your hiking boots on and your camera and notepad in hand; we will communicate openly and in plain English.

James E. Paxson, Jr.
District Ranger
Gunnison, CO



April 16, 1984-High Country News-15

BULLETIN BOARD

COLORADO SPRINGS FORUM

Colorado College of Colorado Springs is sponsoring an Environmental Issues Forum April 16-26. Speakers will address topics including agriculture, water growth and the future of urban areas such as Colorado Springs and conversation of military economies. A theater group presentation and a showing of the video *Wendell Berry: The Unsettling of America* will round out the program. Call 303/473-2233, exchange 606, for a schedule of events.

OWENS VALLEY REVISITED

If you've seen the film *Chinatown* and read popular accounts of the Owens Valley-Los Angeles-Mono Lake water war, you may wish to also read a scholarly treatment by William L. Kahrl titled *Water and Power* (University of California Press, 1982). The introduction especially is interesting because of its description of how California went from riparian doctrine to the appropriation doctrine and how the cattle ranchers tried to prevent "grubby" irrigation agriculture from developing. The Owens Valley saga is more than dead history. Inyo County continues to struggle to control its own destiny and the fight over Mono Lake, north of Owens Valley, has emerged as a dramatic environmental issue -- one which has obtained court decisions which could change the face of water doctrines in the West.

DEERLODGE NATIONAL FOREST

Everything from a proposed gold mine to a 2 million board foot timber cut in 1986 is in the works for Deerlodge National Forest in Montana. To submit comments or obtain information on proposed activities write Deerlodge National Forest, Supervisor's Office, PO Box 400, Federal Building, Corner Main and Copper Streets, Butte, MT 59701.

VOLUNTEER WORK IN THE WILDERNESS

The American Hiking Society is looking for volunteers to help build and maintain trails in the Bridger Wilderness in the Bridger-Teton National Forest of Wyoming. The Society says volunteers should be between seventeen and seventy years old, in good physical shape, and eager to work hard.

Volunteers are expected to work for ten days of their two-week stay and will be expected to provide personal equipment. This year, the Society plans to complete a trail rehabilitation project they began two years ago in the Horseshoe Lake-Lake George area. There will also be volunteer teams in ten other states. For more information, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to American Hiking Society Volunteer Vacations, P.O. Box 86, Scituate, Maine 02060.

WATER '84

A day-long citizens' conference on Colorado River water will be held Saturday, May 12 at the Inn in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. The conference, titled "The Future of Western Slope Water: Whose Decision?" will feature a keynote address by Denver water attorney Gregory Hobbs, Jr.; a panel of pro and anti-water development officials and citizens; a luncheon addressed by congressional candidates; and afternoon panels on transmountain diversions, groundwater and salinity, energy development impacts on agriculture and endangered species, decision makers in water matters, and water-based recreation. The conference, which has over two dozen sponsors, is being organized by Connie Albrecht. The \$20 cost includes lunch. A raft trip is scheduled for the next day. For information, call 303/464-5329 or write: Box 728, Palisade, CO 81526.

BENEFIT RIVER TRIPS

The American Rivers Conservation Council is offering a series of benefit river trips conducted by professional outfitters between now and October. Trips range from four to fourteen days on rivers including Idaho's Salmon and Snake, Utah's Green, Texas' Rio Grande and Arizona's Colorado. Vehicles on various trips include rafts, kayaks, canoes, dories and double kleppers, and some trips are designed to teach whitewater skills. The river outfitters donate the proceeds of trips to the conservation council. To obtain a schedule of trips send a stamped self-addressed envelope to ARCC, 323 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.



AUDUBON CONFERENCE

May in Boise, Idaho will be the setting of the Audubon Society's 1984 Rocky Mountain Regional Conference. Workshops and speakers will concentrate on topics of wildlife, public lands and Audubon education programs. Improved chapter operations will be addressed in training sessions. Field trips are planned, including an all-day float trip on the Snake River. Raptors at the nearby Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area will be at the peak of nesting activity.

Dates for the conference are May 15-21. For more information contact the Rocky Mountain Regional Office, 4150 Darley, Suite 5, Boulder, CO 80303.

MONTANA FOREST TRAVEL PLAN

Vehicle restrictions would change in some areas of the Helena National Forest if a proposed new travel plan is implemented. The new plan is available for review at Forest Service offices, Helena's public library, and Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks field offices. Meetings to gather public comments on the plan will be held April 24 in Townsend, Montana, April 26 in Helena and a yet unannounced date in White Sulphur Springs, Montana. The written comment period ends June 6. Address comments or queries about the plan or public meetings to the Helena Forest Supervisor's Office, Room 389, Federal Building, Helena, MT 59626 or contact one of the forest district offices in Helena, Townsend and Lincoln.

OIL SHALE ACTIVITIES

Another oil shale draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been released by the Bureau of Land Management for two private projects at the southern edge of the Piceance Creek Basin in Garfield County, Colorado.

The two projects, Mobil Oil's Parachute Shale Oil Project and the Pacific Shale Project proposed by Sohio Shale Oil, Superior Oil, and Cliffs Oil Shale, would both produce 100,000 barrels of oil a day and would involve underground mining, surface retorting, surface disposal of processed shale, and transfer of shale oil to regional pipelines. For a copy of the draft EIS, write to BLM, 764 Horizon Drive, Grand Junction, Colorado. Public comments, which are due by May 4, should also be mailed to this address.

GRIZZLY SYMPOSIUM

An upcoming symposium in Casper, Wyoming will feature some of the greats in grizzly bear research. Among the speakers planned for the Murie Audubon Society-sponsored Grizzly Bear Symposium are John and Frank Craighead and representatives from the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee. The dates are Friday evening, April 27, and Saturday, April 28. The registration fee is only \$7.50, or \$10 for a family. For more info, call Walt Merschat after 5 P.M. at 307/265-6942, or write to the Murie Audubon Society, P.O. Box 2112, Casper, WY 82602.

BACKCOUNTRY WORKERS' MEETING

An upcoming workshop may be the first step towards upgrading the positions of field workers in the Forest Service and getting the agency to recognize the legitimacy of resources such as wilderness. Sponsored by the University of Montana's Wilderness Institute and a steering committee of backcountry workers, the workshop is planned to bring together field workers from various government agencies and other interested people to exchange ideas and expertise and identify common concerns. An organizational meeting for a backcountry workers' association will wrap up the workshop. The dates are April 28 and 29 and the place is the Lolo Work Center 20 miles west of Lolo, Montana.

Beer, volleyball and hot springs will intervene between the two day-long sessions. The cost is "a few bucks to help cover expenses." If you plan to attend or need more information call the Wilderness Institute at 406/243-5361.

FAST FOOD AND BIG CARS

People who drink in taverns and eat in fast food restaurants drive larger cars than those who live in apartments or work in factories. A study shows that 58 percent of the cars in factory parking lots are compact while only 40 percent of those in office building parking spaces are compact. And while drinkers are fans of full-sized cars -- 55 percent of the cars in tavern lots are big -- eaters like full-sized cars even more -- 71 percent of the cars in those lots are big.

Those results are summarized in a report called the "Tempe (AZ) parking Study" directed by Don Hull with project leader Ed Del Duca.

The report shows that if you want to minimize door damage in parking lots, design small stalls. If cars are squeezed in fender by bumper, drivers open doors carefully. But if enough space is left, they open doors thoughtlessly, often causing damage.

The report was produced by the City of Tempe, Box 5002, Tempe, AZ 85281.

MEIC RENDEZVOUS

Spring gets to Montana a little late, which means it gets celebrated with all the more intensity, as at the Montana Environmental Information Center's June 2 Rendezvous at Boulder Hot Springs. The Saturday event will include entertainment, informative talks, swimming in the hot springs, a potluck, and dancing to Cheap Cologne. Call 406/443-2520 for information.

NO WILDERNESS FOR BITTER CREEK?

The BLM wants to axe the Bitter Creek Wilderness Study Area of western Montana. A recently released draft EIS recommends that none of the 60,000-acre study area be designated as wilderness. Hearings on the EIS will be held in Glasgow, Montana at the Valley County Courthouse on May 15 at 7:30 P.M., and in Helena at Jorgenson's Holiday Motel on May 17 at 7:30 P.M. A written comment period lasts until June 30. Send comments to the Lewistown District Manager, Airport Road, Lewistown, MT 59457.

OUTDOOR SEMINARS

Seminars emphasizing outdoor exploration of the environment will be held in Colorado's Rocky Mountain National Park this summer. Topics of the 14 seminars include geology, plant identification, archaeology above treeline, and low-impact camping. The National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Nature Association, Colorado State University and the University of Northern Colorado sponsor the seminars, which include both week-long and weekend sessions. University credit is offered for the longer sessions. To get a list of courses and dates contact Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, CO 80517 (303/586-2371).

INDIAN WILDLIFE

Native Americans interested in learning about wildlife management should plan to attend a workshop in Logan, Utah this May. Basic techniques for managing wildlife on reservation lands will be taught in classroom, laboratory and field sessions. The workshop will be hosted by the Native American Fish and Wildlife Society and the Utah Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit on May 8-10 at Utah State University. Contact the Wildlife Workshop, Utah Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit, Utah State University, UMC 52, Logan, UT 84322.



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