

High Country

news

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A stripmine clashes with an ancient Anasazi ruin

U.S. Forest Service

Chimney Rock



A year ago, two men were apprehended in the Chimney Rock Archaeological Area in southwest Colorado digging up Anasazi Indian ruins with a backhoe. They were indicted by a grand jury. But in the end the case was dismissed because there were no regulations defining an archaeological site or how violators were to be punished.

The regulations have since been written, but now Chimney Rock faces another kind of digging -- coal mining. The Chimney Rock Coal Company is asking the U.S. Forest Service to let it expand its strip mine onto 80 acres of the 3160-acre preserve.

The Chimney Rock site is unique. It has been dubbed the Machu Picchu of the United States; its isolated location and advanced stone architecture are strikingly like that of the fabled Inca city. Moreover, at 7600 feet, the massive kivas and pueblos are the highest known pre-Columbian architecture in the country.

Janet Bailey of nearby Pagosa Springs, who helped organize the

"Friends of Chimney Rock" a few years ago, and who conducts tours of the area as a Forest Service volunteer, says:

"I tell my tours: '90 miles down that river is Chaco Canyon,' and as we stand on the mesa we can almost picture the people moving along the river valley." Bailey is not a fan of the mine. "A mine between the river and the mesa is going to make a definite impression aesthetically."

At a public meeting on the subject, she said, "The coal trucks are the worst thing about it. They come roaring down the highway 70 miles an hour, and their beeping sound when they back up is distracting. When blasting is done at the mine, it not only can be heard but seen from the mesa, and the big fireball is often visible."

She also says, "Archaeologists speculate that the ruins up there were religious shrines -- symbolic places to worship the Twin War Gods. With the solitude and beauty and isolation, you feel close to nature up there... I think that's going to change with the mine's

expansion; it will change the whole total feeling."

Bailey, a resident of the small, tourist-oriented town of Pagosa Springs, and other local opponents have been firm but not vocal in their opposition. The reason is jobs. Dave Smaldone, the mine manager, has repeatedly said that fifty jobs and a \$1 million a year payroll will be lost if the mine cannot expand onto the Chimney Rock site. With the county's unemployment rate averaging 13 percent, and with the coal company assuring residents that archaeological sites are not in danger, many in the area favor the expansion.

Smaldone argues that the mine won't touch the heart of the archaeological site, that his company will be gone in ten years, and that the mined-out tract will be reclaimed.

There has been strong support for the mine from the county commissioners, some local businesses, and the influential Citizens Bank of Pagosa Springs. The lineup, however, is not unanimous. One businessman report-

edly quit the Pagosa Chamber of Commerce because the group's president refused to sign a form letter written by mine manager Smaldone supporting the lease. Chamber manager Lyn DeLange explains:

"We recognize the mine's contribution to the economy of the area, but we also have to recognize Chimney Rock's potential contribution to the tourism business."

At first glance, Chimney Rock looks like a classic local development issue. But opponents of mine expansion say it goes beyond Pagosa Springs, the San Juan National Forest, and Colorado. They say it reaches ninety miles south and west to Chaco Canyon in New Mexico and back in time to the period from 500 A.D., when the Anasazi appeared, to about 1300 A.D., when they mysteriously vanished.

Archaeologists believe that the Anasazi culture which created the famous ruins in Chaco Canyon also created Chimney Rock. The evidence

(Continued on page 10)

WESTERN ROUNDUP



High Country News

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Archaeological amateurs find pros lacking

Since the Department of Energy announced that a salt dome area close to Canyonlands National Park was one of nine sites under consideration as a nuclear waste repository, most of Utah's congressional delegation has taken a wait and see attitude. But some conservation groups and concerned citizens, including Terri Martin from the Rocky Mountain Regional Office of the National Parks and Conservation Association, representatives of the Sierra Club and the state's river runners have formed a "Don't Waste Utah Committee."

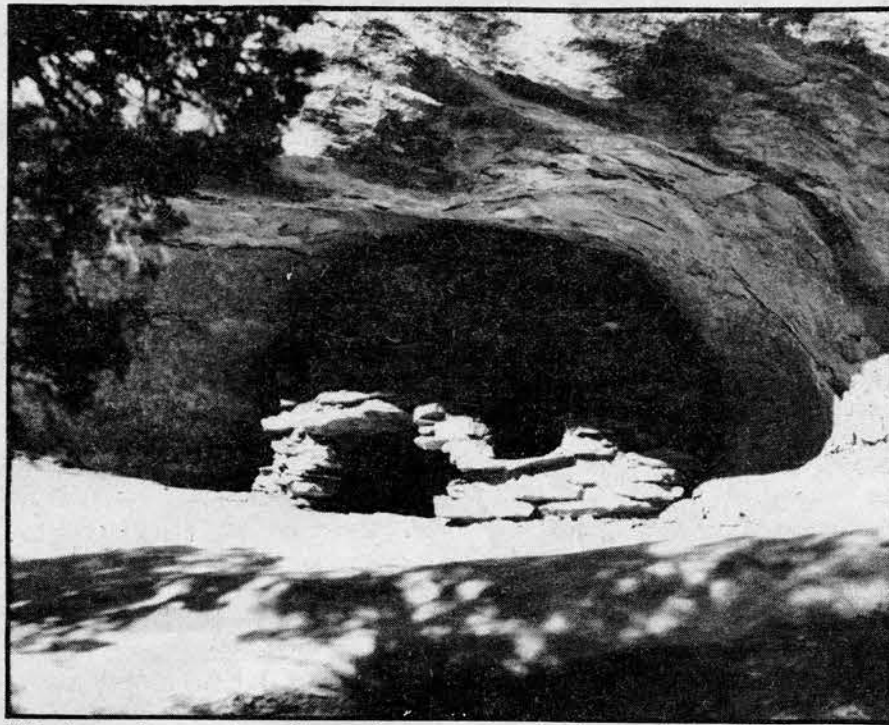
The committee's goal is to alert Utahns that the DOE seems to favor Utah for its proposed facility. In an open letter to the people of the state, the committee said, "Our seemingly remote location, our sparse population, federal land ownership and what is seen as a cooperative state government favor us. In short, while many other sites may be technically acceptable, Utah seems to offer the path of least political resistance."

Governor Scott Matheson has been the only Utah public official taking DOE to task. Although he has not come out against the repository, Matheson has been fighting to make sure DOE follows established procedures for making its selection. He also wants Utah involved in the selection process. To slow down DOE, five months ago Matheson imposed a second moratorium on nuclear waste studies in the state. In his four-page letter to Energy Secretary Donald Hodel, Matheson said state officials will no longer cooperate with DOE on site selection activities that would further the federal agency's existing schedule and approach. Matheson said the moratorium was the result of a year of "total frustration" trying to convince DOE to do a thorough study of the environment and geologic concerns at all nine sites. Since that letter, the DOE delayed its site selection process by three years, to 1990.

The governor also approved a "petition for rulemaking" which would force DOE to give greater consideration to possible adverse impacts on Canyonlands when considering the Utah site. The petition asked DOE to disqualify any site if it can be shown it causes any impairment of public enjoyment in a national or state park.

Lately, concern has focused on the archaeological impacts that would come from testing, evaluation and construction of a nuclear waste dump.

The concern comes from a small group of dedicated amateur archaeological researchers who have surveyed



This Anasazi granary located near the proposed waste site was located by Manning and Severance.

the area and are concerned about the accuracy of a survey completed for the DOE by Nickens and Associates of Montrose, Colorado. That survey was supposed to be a 100 percent sample of an area called The Island -- 640 acres where an exploratory shaft may be drilled for the repository -- and several 40-acre sample units in Indian Creek.

Two members of the group, Owen Severance and Steve Manning, retraced the steps of Nickens and Associates and came up with very different results. The amateur archaeologists detailed the discrepancies in letters to the governor, to Chas Cartwright, BLM archaeologist responsible for the area and to Utah State Archaeologist David Madsen. Severance said that in Indian Creek, Nickens and Associates only found three sites, while he and Manning recorded nine.

Severance also noted that the official map "is a little difficult to understand until you realize that the direction labeled 'north' is actually south."

These sites are neither small nor inconspicuous. They include an Indian pictograph panel six by eight feet, a group of five structures with walls 3.5 feet high near a rock-art panel, and three granaries.

Later Severance took BLM archaeologist Chas Cartwright to the sites. Severance said that Cartwright confirmed "that the six sites Nickens and Associates did not record should not have been missed."

Inadequacies of the Nickens survey were also observed by Utah's State

Archaeologist Madsen. In a memo to an aide of Gov. Matheson, Madsen said the studies done under direction of the DOE "are insufficient for predictive models that would give us a more exact idea of where specifically sites are to be found, what these sites consist of, and what their potential is for inclusion on the National Register of Historic places."

Madsen also expressed concern that the DOE was doing an environmental assessment and not an environmental impact statement. Madsen ended his memo by suggesting that the DOE had "preselected" a repository in Utah. He suggested that the state request documentation for studies of non-Utah locations to determine which sites would produce the least archaeological and historical disturbance.

Madsen also told a state committee that building a nuclear waste facility in Utah could obliterate 1,500 or more sites including ancient paintings and burial grounds. "I think that is probably a key issue," he said.

In the meantime, the two amateur archaeologists have worked for months to document areas that could be destroyed by the repository. Utah balked at accepting their reports at first but has now agreed to receive them. But the sites have not yet been entered in the state's computer as registered archaeological areas. Manning works in the security department at the University of Utah and Severance is a former backcountry employee of the National Parks Service.

--Layne Miller

Dear friends,

Often in the last year we have felt that the *Wet Country News* would be a more appropriate name than *High Country News*. For the third year in a row, nature is delivering to us a wet, stormy spring, and those who say we are in a wet cycle look more and more credible.

They're especially credible in Utah, where, as this issue shows, the Great Salt Lake rushes past one flood level after another, only inches of elevation from railroad tracks and highways, and often feet above structures whose owners' pockets weren't deep enough to protect them. One such structure, a now-drowned

amusement park, is pictured inside.

This issue also has two stories on Glen Canyon Dam. One talks about the race to fix the spillways before runoff -- a race which has apparently been lost. The other story is more technical -- it talks about cavitation, the phenomenon which did in the spillways.

Finally, we should mention for one last time the four-mile annual foot race to be held Saturday May 26, starting in the Paonia Town Park at 1 P.M. A potluck and volleyball in the park will follow the race, which is sponsored by HCN and Burrell's Market. We are hoping that the day will be clear, and



that mudders will have no advantage over those who enjoy running on dry trails. For those who have never been to Paonia, it is an easy five-hour drive from Colorado's Front Range. It is a nine-hour drive from Lander, Wyoming. Paonia has an airport and if you warn us in advance, we'll be glad to pick you up there.

--the staff

Compromise breaks wilderness log jam

A compromise hammered out by Sen. James McClure (R-Idaho) and House Democrats John Seiberling and Morris Udall over future wilderness consideration has broken a log-jam holding up wilderness bills in five states.

Wilderness bills for Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Arkansas and Idaho passed through McClure's Committee on Energy and Natural Resources May 2 following a compromise agreement on release language. Release language governs when and if areas not designated as wilderness can be reconsidered for wilderness protection. (The compromise does not address the acreage issue. That must be settled on a state by state basis.)

McClure had been holding out for "hard release," meaning that areas not designated as wilderness could not be reconsidered for wilderness until after the year 2000. Congressman Seiberling (D-Ohio), who as chairman of the Subcommittee on Public Lands holds the key to wilderness bills in the House, had refused to allow hard release language bills through his committee. And even McClure's fellow Republican senators from Oregon and Washington were in support of "soft release" language for wilderness bills in their states.

The compromise, which McClure called "a true compromise in every sense of the word," permits reconsideration of wilderness in roughly ten years -- when the next round of forest management plans comes around. The new, modified release language has been praised by conservationists and the Idaho Forest Industry Council called it "a very positive step." The new release language will be applied to all future wilderness legislation affecting some 28 states, and may be applied to the Wyoming wilderness bill in the House. The Wyoming bill currently bears hard release language.

Wilderness Society field representative Tom Robinson said "conservationists pretty much got what they wanted" on the release language, and termed McClure's turnabout more of a capitulation than a compromise. Robinson said McClure did not have the votes to back his hard release language and "he finally threw in the towel."

While conservationists say they have won the first round in the fight over Idaho wilderness, they still face a bill that they view as insultingly

inadequate. The McClure bill, which is backed by the entire all-Republican Idaho delegation, would protect 526,000 acres of wilderness out of 8.5 million acres of roadless Forest Service land. The proposal, termed by McClure "only a starting point," calls for less wilderness than even the Idaho Forest Industry Council proposed. It comes nowhere near the Idaho Wildlands Coalition wilderness proposal of 3.4 million acres, with additional land in further study. The Idaho Wildlife Federation and the Outfitters and Guides Association support a 4.9 million acre wilderness package.

McClure is still considering packaging his Idaho bill with wilderness bills from other states, a move seen by conservationists as an attempt to pass off an unpopular bill with the more acceptable proposals worked out elsewhere.

Barbara Wise, McClure's legislative assistant for natural resources, says, "I don't think that's the case." Packaging will simply expedite the passage of all wilderness bills, she adds.

With passage of the McClure bill virtually assured in the Senate, opponents of the bill are focusing on Rep. Seiberling, considered one of the strongest conservationists in the Congress. Both Idaho Gov. John Evans and the Idaho Fish and Game Commission have asked Seiberling to hold House hearings on the bill in Idaho, a move opposed by McClure and Rep. Larry Craig (R-Idaho) who is carrying the bill in the House. Craig's assistant Steve Buckner says the hearings would not "serve any benefit. Everybody has presented their proposals." Last summer, before any wilderness bill was proposed, McClure held four hearings in Idaho to gather opinion on the pending wilderness bill. Conservationists claim the majority of opinion at those hearings was in favor of the Wildlands Coalition wilderness proposal. However, McClure has said a survey conducted by his office shows the majority of Idahoans in favor of less wilderness.

Gov. Evans, who travelled to Washington, D.C. to lobby against the McClure Bill, has received assurance from Seiberling that he and other members of the Public Lands Subcommittee will personally visit Idaho's disputed wildlands before acting on any legislation. Seiberling

also reportedly told Evans that he would consider nothing less than the 1.2 million acre wilderness package proposed by the governor.

Seiberling's legislative assistant Andy Weissner says the Congressman has received 500 to 600 letters on the bill, "and only one in favor. All the rest were asking for improvements." Weissner says, "It's the highest volume of mail we've received on anything since the Alaska lands bill."

And conservationists are viewing recent actions by McClure and Craig as signs that the Idaho bill is in trouble. McClure was recently campaigning for his bill in Salmon, Idaho, pointing out the stiff opposition with which the proposal has been met. And Craig on April 12 wrote a letter published in a northern Idaho weekly stating that everything from campfires to trails would be prohibited in the wilderness. Craig's aide says the Congressman has since apologized for the letter, stating that these were only possibly restrictions which could be interpreted from the 1964 Wilderness Act. "There was no intent to mislead anyone," he says.

The letter read in part, "There will be no trail construction and maintenance in a wilderness area. Trails created by hikers will be destroyed so there is no visible sign of man in the wilderness area. Anyone who now owns a piece of land in a proposed wilderness area will either be bought out or their property will be condemned by the Federal government. Any roads now used by local population will be closed to everyone and the handicapped individual will virtually be unable to see a wilderness area. Campfires will be prohibited as well as the gathering of firewood... This is by no means a complete list of what is forbidden in a wilderness designated area."

Wendell Beardsley, acting director for recreation and wilderness at the Forest Service's Northern Region, says all of Craig's assertions are incorrect for wilderness management in this region. Beardsley notes it is "longstanding forest policy to maintain and rehabilitate the trail system." He adds he knew of no land condemned for wilderness, "In fact there is a substantial amount of private land in the wilderness and it has been there since 1964."

--Glenn Oakley

HOTLINE

A snowmobile lawsuit



The U.S. Forest Service has appealed a federal judge's closure of a 15-mile snowmobile trail in northwest Wyoming. This January, Judge Ewing T. Kerr in Cheyenne issued an injunction closing the trail until the Forest Service consulted with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the effect of the trail on grizzly bears in the area.

The case was brought to court by owners of the B-4 Ranch, which borders the snowmobile route. They said the trail had been built without an adequate assessment of impacts on wildlife. Judge Kerr agreed.

The Shoshone National Forest said it built the \$150,000 trail because it feared safety problems between snowmobiles and auto traffic on unplowed U.S. 212. But Judge Kerr noted, "there has been no evidence of death or injury from snowmobile use of U.S. 212." Kerr's injunction came four years after B-4 Ranch owners began fighting the snowmobilers' road. They first objected to the road in 1980 with the publication of the Forest Service's draft environmental impact statement for the Beartooth Plateau. They continued to object through Forest Service administrative channels until the chief of the Forest Service decided to build the trail in May 1983. Then the matter went to court.

After a hearing on the suit but before Kerr's ruling, Steve Mealey, supervisor of the Shoshone National Forest, limited trail use to Dec. 1 to March 1, when bears would still be hibernating.

Construction of the trail was completed shortly before Kerr's ruling and the trail has remained closed since the judge's action.

--Dennis Davis

Story Clark leaving

The Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning is losing its founding executive director. After five years as head of the Jackson, Wyoming group, Story Clark will leave in the beginning of 1985. She will be replaced by Holly Dill, who has a strong background in land use planning and public administration.

Under Clark, the Alliance grew to about 800 members, with an active volunteer group of 100. The work of keeping that many balls in the air has taken its toll, she told the *Jackson Hole Guide*: "Every time I drive home from work or to work or around the valley I see my projects out there, or I see my failures out there. Basically I see my job everywhere I go and so I can never leave it at" work. For the foreseeable future, she intends to concentrate on a garden and on starting a family.

--the staff

Oil shale negotiations are alive, but barely

The effort to negotiate a federal oil shale leasing bill may not be dead but it is bleeding. The attempt to negotiate a federal oil shale bill collapsed last month amidst charges of bad faith when local and state government, environmental and industry representatives couldn't reach agreement on the final project. (HCN, 4/2/84).

Now one member of the negotiating group says it was probably unrealistic to have expected all entities to reach agreement on the same bill. According to Jim Evans, who heads up an organization of local government in the three oil shale counties in Northwest Colorado, "There are some companies and some environmentalists who will never sign off, no matter how good the final product."

Rather than let the year's worth of negotiations go to waste, Evans said

his Associated Governments of Northwest Colorado has asked Congressman Ray Kogovsek (D-CO) to draft a bill based on the proposal which came out of the now dissolved Joint Working Group. But, Evans emphasized, the bill wouldn't be submitted to the Congress. It is intended to make the Joint Working Group's proposal more concrete.

In parallel with the drafting effort, he said he had met with eight or nine representatives of Colorado environmental groups. "They'd like to continue discussions," Evans said he hopes to schedule a two-day workshop early in the summer to thrash out the issues surrounding the oil shale bill, but without expecting anyone to sign off on a proposal.

While Evans is optimistic, a representative of the Natural Resources Defense Council, who was part of the group which met with

Evans is less so. Carolyn Johnson, who is based in Denver, said, "We advocate a delay until July 1 to reorganize. It's a cooling-off period, to pull ourselves together and to identify areas of need."

She continued, "The perception in the environmental community is that there was an attempt" to force us to sign off on the initial proposal. She also said, "The articles in *High Country News* were part of the manipulative process. The whole thing was meant to generate a fight between Washington and Colorado, and the fight was just not there."

"I think they (industry and state and local government) wanted desperately to believe that it was the Washington reps who pulled the Colorado environmental community around by the nose to dump the proposal. And that was not the case."

HOTLINE

**Governor vetoes
utility deregulation**

The United States Synthetic Fuels Corporation is a rich but helpless giant today, paralyzed by lack of a quorum on its board of directors. Moreover, a series of Congressional investigations into the board's ethics could delay appointment of new members.

The stalemate, or perhaps checkmate, comes just as the SFC after four years appeared close to authorizing billions in loan guarantees and price subsidies to Union Oil and Cathedral Bluffs Oil Shale Corporation (Oxy, Tenneco and Peter Kiewit) for two projects in Colorado, as well as to gasification, tar sands, peat and heavy oil projects elsewhere in the country.

The SFC's problem traces back to former SFC board president Victor Thompson. He was chairman of Utica Bankshares Corp., which violated securities laws. In addition, Mr. Thompson allegedly attempted to sell shares in Utica to a firm that is asking the Synfuels Corp for \$400 million in help.

According to the May 1 *Wall Street Journal*, Thompson concealed from his fellow board members the extent of his dealings with the oil company in a discussion three months ago. He resigned in late April as president of SFC and later as a director amidst charges that he had hung on long enough to vote for certain letters of intent.

On May 3, the SFC asked the Justice Department for a criminal investigation of Thompson's conduct.

President Ronald Reagan has said that he intends to appoint Eric Reichl of Conoco Coal to one of the several vacant board seats. But Congressional approval of the appointee may be hard to come by. Steam has been gathering in the Congress to take away the SFC's pot of \$12 billion. Congress could achieve the same end by preventing the SFC from having a quorum.

Hot wilderness issue

The wilderness issue has heated up in Colorado with the introduction of two separate bills in the House of Representatives. On April 10, Rep. Ray Kogovsek submitted his wilderness proposal of 380,772 acres to the Public Lands and National Parks Subcommittee. Two days later, fellow House Democrat Tim Wirth introduced a bill for 733,000 acres, identical to a companion bill in the Senate introduced by Senator Gary Hart.

Kogovsek's bill, which is well below the Forest Service's proposal of 437,000 acres, would add only 8 out of the 18 wilderness study areas and further planning areas left unresolved by the 1980 Colorado Wilderness Act. Wirth's bill would include all 18 areas. None of the proposed wilderness areas are within Wirth's district. Kogovsek left out many areas, including the Wheeler Geologic area and the South San Juan area, because there are questions of use conflicts, said Washington staffer Chris Mulick. She said access to federal lands for the elderly and economically depressed have not been resolved in Kogovsek's mind. Mulick added that the bill is "not set in concrete."

Larry Mehlhoff of the Colorado Open Space Council took a dim view of Kogovsek's bill. "When you start out so low," he said, "there is no way you can add enough areas to make an acceptable bill."

Idaho remains hospitable to toxic waste

In its closing days the Idaho Legislature passed a bill taxing transporters and disposers of hazardous wastes, but balked at allowing the state to set waste regulations broader in scope or stricter than federal regulations.

The \$20 per ton tax on hazardous wastes matches a use fee imposed by Owyhee County, which is the reluctant host to the state's only hazardous waste dump, run by Envirosafe Services, Inc. That dump is the impetus for hazardous waste legislation, following a year of revelations of illegal and unsafe disposal practices at the high desert dump site.

The tax is expected to bring \$200,000 or more each year to the state, said Hazardous Materials Bureau Chief Bob Olson. However, the Legislature allocated only \$75,000 to the Bureau this year. Olson said the money will be used to purchase some equipment such as safety inspection suits, conduct tests, and hire an additional inspector or a hydrogeologist. Olson said the state has two inspectors now. The hydrogeologist, if hired, would investigate potential groundwater contamination from hazardous wastes among other duties, according to Olson.

Olson said the Bureau made no specific budget request for the tax funds. He said unallocated funds would go into a special account.

Attempts to remove the "stringency clause" from the state's one-year-old hazardous waste law -- allowing the state to set regulations that may be more specific, broader or tougher than federal regulations -- failed. The main proponent of its removal, Sen. Terry Reilly, (D-Nampa), charged that "Owyhee County people have just been sold down the river."

Olson said the Bureau had identified seven areas where the state wanted to, but could not, impose

regulations because of the stringency clause. These include:

- A requirement that wastes be transported in Department of Transport approved drums. Many of the drums brought to Envirosafe are old and leaking.

- A requirement that the disposal site have a rain gauge. The Envirosafe controversy was unleashed by a flash flood that swept across the 117-acre site and out over fields of alfalfa and potatoes before disgorging into the Snake River.

- A requirement that the dump site have someone at the site at all times. No one was reportedly at Envirosafe at the time of the flood.

- A requirement that shippers of waste submit a manifest of their toxic cargo to state officials.

- Authority by the state to ban certain wastes, such as PCBs. Many other states, notably California, are outlawing the burial of PCBs and other pervasive poisons. As a result, the outlawed wastes are being sent to Idaho for cheap disposal.

Ironically, the Division of Environment did not support removal of the stringency clause. The reason, according to Olson, was a "gentlemen's agreement with industry that the state would not seek regulations stronger than those of the federal government."

Olson said the agreement was made the previous session in order to gain industry's support of the state's first hazardous waste bill. That bill sets a procedure for gradual transfer of control over toxic wastes from the federal EPA to the state.

State Sen. Reilly said, "Industry just rose up and the Republicans came right into line with them." Sen. Walt Yarbrough, a Republican from Owyhee County, countered that "anytime some Democrat doesn't get something through, then they say

you're bought off by big business." Yarbrough questioned the need for removal of the stringency clause, saying, "We've got all kinds of rules and regulations if they were properly enforced."

The Legislature also defeated a community right-to-know measure, which would allow the public access to more information about the toxic wastes transported or buried around them. The Legislature did authorize the formation of a committee to study hazardous waste legislation.

In other areas, the Legislature failed again to subordinate Idaho Power Company's water right to other uses, such as irrigation. A State Supreme Court decision in 1982 gave Idaho Power Co. essentially all unallocated water rights upstream of Swan Falls Dam, south of Boise. Democrat Gov. John Evans and Republican Attorney General Jim Jones early in the session joined forces to push for subordination, which is also strongly sought by the agricultural industry. The current water rights situation practically puts an end to additional irrigation withdrawal from the Snake River.

Subordination is opposed by most conservationists who fear additional irrigation withdrawal will be at the expense of fish and wildlife. Idaho Power Co.'s water right is for hydroelectric generation, and as such its water remains in the river.

The Legislature doubled the state mine inspection staff by approving the hiring of one additional inspector by the Department of State Lands. The Idaho Conservation League has pushed for seven more inspectors.

Finally, the Legislature again passed a bill making county land-use plans voluntary rather than mandatory. Once again, the measure was vetoed by the Governor.

--Glenn Oakley

The UP runs late on its toxic waste ponds

Four hazardous waste ponds may be inundated by the Laramie River's annual flooding later this month because Union Pacific has failed to meet a cleanup deadline at their tie plant just upstream from Laramie, Wyoming.

Chemicals used to treat railroad ties and then dumped at the plant have contaminated groundwater, soils and surface water in the area. The plant on the banks of the Laramie River closed last year after 97 years in operation, and the site is one of the most highly toxic and widely contaminated sites on the National Priority List of Superfund sites. But it is ranked lower on the list because of its lack of immediate impact on domestic water sources and relatively remote location. Laramie city water comes from higher springs and wells on the flanks of the Laramie Range east of town, although there are individual domestic water wells near the plant southwest of town.

In January the EPA rejected a plan submitted by UP for phase one of the cleanup of the site -- removal of the toxic liquids, sludges and soils of the four waste ponds. On April 12, EPA accepted a second version of the plan after adding several significant modifications. The deadline for the completion of the cleanup was set for April 30 in an attempt to prevent spreading of the contaminants during

this year's flooding of the Laramie River.

UP's second plan proposed to heat sludges from the waste ponds to recover usable chemicals. Leftover wastes and contaminated soils would be placed in a new storage pond at the site, and treated water from the process would be pumped into the soil near the plant.

Tom Hill, a member of the Laramie Toxic Waste Group which formed in response to the tie plant contamination, said that EPA's modifications of the plan assured that the new storage pond would be temporary by setting storage time limits of 90 days for contaminants pumped into the pond and 180 days for the pond structure itself. According to Hill, EPA added specifications for the pond, ensuring that the pond liner will be impervious to the wastes and that the bottom of the pond will be higher in elevation than the highest flood level of the river. EPA also vetoed plans for pumping treated water into the soils, a system that Jeff Stern of the Powder River Basin Resource Council said would have caused faster migration of contaminants already in the soil. Instead, the water will have to meet water quality standards before it is pumped directly into the Laramie River. Stern noted that the EPA vetoed UP's plans to backfill the excavated waste ponds with clean dirt,

a move that might have hampered future phases of the tie plant cleanup.

Stern said that the modified plan "plugs a lot of holes in what UP was proposing to do but there are still some problems. We want the wastes trucked off site once they are excavated; the plan still allows temporary on-site storage."

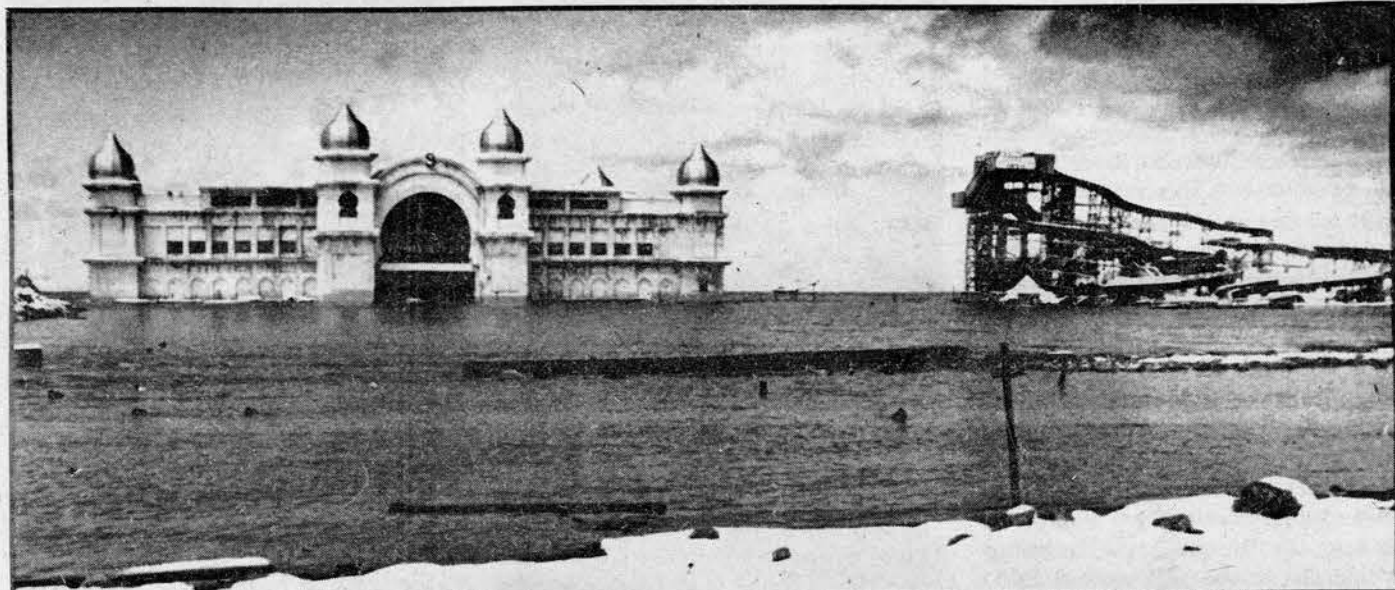
But debate over the pros and cons of the modified cleanup plan may be irrelevant. It is May now, the Laramie River will soon rise over its banks with snowmelt waters, and the cleanup has not started.

On April 27, Union Pacific asked EPA for a 120-day extension of the cleanup deadline. EPA project manager Judy Wong said a few days after the April 30 cleanup deadline that no decision had yet been made on the extension request. John Bromley, a UP spokesman in Omaha, said that EPA and UP officials will meet May 10 to discuss the deadline problem and company objections to EPA's modifications.

Cleanup advocates said they were concerned about UP's delays. "The ponds are only a small part of the contamination problem. We're talking about maybe 100 acres of contaminated soil and water down practically to bedrock," said Jeff Stern.

--Mary Moran

Salt Lake could pickle its surroundings



The flooded Saltair resort

The Great Salt Lake continues to rise inexorably, possibly to a new high in recorded history. The famous Utah lake, which has been officially above flood stage for over a year now, is predicted to reach at least 4209 to over 4211 feet for its 1984 crest. The historic high water mark was set 111 years ago when it hit 4211.6 feet above sea level.

Herculean efforts have spared most major businesses so far, as construction crews work around the clock building dikes to keep Interstate 80 west of Salt Lake City above water.

The Saltair Resort has not been as fortunate. Located on the southern shore, it appears to have lost its war against the lake. The resort's owners, unable to raise more money, can't erect higher dikes around the Saltair Pavilion building. Waves from storms are even now breaking through the pavilion's walls, undermining its foundation and washing over the first floor.

Costs from flooding and flood control have already climbed into the hundreds of millions of dollars. In the extremely unlikely event that a rampaging Great Salt Lake were to cover the runways at Salt Lake City International Airport, which is 4213 feet above sea level, the price tag would run well over \$1 billion.

So like the lake itself, the stakes are high and rising. Various projects (HCN, 1/23/84), some heroic and some not so heroic, have been proposed to control flooding. Last January Gov. Scott Matheson and the State of Utah announced an attack plan which was largely endorsed by the 1984 state legislature.

As a short-term "solution," the Southern Pacific Railroad Causeway will be breached as soon as practical. Built in 1959, the causeway creates an imbalance so that the southern side of the lake stands three feet higher than the northern third. The \$3.7 million opening will distribute the flooding more evenly between north and south.

Two other parts in the state's plan are intended to prevent any repetition of this year's events. An environmental impact statement is being written for an ambitious and highly publicized scheme to pump water out of the lake and onto the desert flats to the west. Actual construction could begin next year.

The West Desert Pumping Alternative was conceived and promoted by Peter Behrens, president of Great Salt Lake Minerals and Chemicals. His firm faces severe flooding this year. According to Behrens, pumping would get water out of the lake and evaporation in the desert would keep it out. The Utah Division of Water Resources (DWR) estimates the

pumping project would cost \$50 million to build and \$4 million annually to operate.

Less public attention has been given to a third move by the state to control flooding of the Great Salt Lake, even though it could have the greatest impact, both financially and environmentally. This third line of attack calls for impoundments in the Bear River drainage. The Utah Division of Water Resources (DWR) is studying 10 possible sites for dams: they range up to \$195 million in cost and 725,000 acre-feet in size.

Largely unimpounded at this time, the Bear River does contribute 57 percent of the inflow to the Great Salt Lake each year. But the dams will not reduce inflow by all that much. For example, the complex and expensive Cutler Reservoir Enlargement would yield the greatest long-term reduction in the high peak elevation of the Great Salt Lake -- just 9 inches total. Moreover, none of the dams can be constructed before 1986, long after climatic changes may have resolved the flooding crisis without man's intervention.

Conservationists smell a pig in a poke. Since the 1980 amendment of the Bear River Compact between Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming, interest has intensified to develop the drainage's water. Eugene Bigler, Chief River Basin Planner for Utah DWR, says, "It is not a matter of if, but when we will use the Bear River water."

When it happens for whatever reason, development of the Bear will not proceed without pain. The citizens of the Bear River Compact between Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming recently came out against the proposed dam that would carry the town's name. The Amalga dam would inundate some 10,000 acres of farmland, and turn the town into "a virtual peninsula."

Another major concern centers on the Bear River National Migratory Bird Refuge, located on the northeastern shore of the Great Salt Lake at the river's mouth. At present, the refuge's headquarters have been flooded and abandoned temporarily. But in years past U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials have sweated out each summer's dry season, wondering if the Bear would provide enough fresh water to sustain the refuge's wetlands. Taking more water out of the river through impoundments could be fatal to the refuge in future years when the climate returns to normal -- or worse -- turns to drought.

But DWR's Bigler says these conflicts can be mitigated or avoided altogether. "Believe it or not, we are trying to look at all possibilities: in-stream flow, agriculture, recrea-

tion, Bird Refuge, what have you," he says.

Besides dikes, the best short-term relief from the Great Salt Lake flood of 1984 may come from water diversion. This has two advantages. It can be started quickly, if not immediately, and, unlike dams, diversions need not be permanent; they can be turned on and off as circumstances warrant.

For example, the abandoned Last Chance irrigation canal near Alexander, Idaho could be reopened tomorrow, taking water out of the Bear River and the Great Salt Lake drainage, and putting it into the Portneuf River and the Snake-Columbia system. The canal's gates could be opened virtually for free and closed again when the crisis passes. It could trim perhaps four inches from the lake's crest.

The main obstacle here is politics. The State of Idaho must decide whether it gains or loses by helping to abate a flood in Utah.

It may also be possible to pump water out of swollen Utah Lake and into the Sevier River watershed. Located next to Provo and Orem and upstream from the Great Salt Lake, Utah Lake has also been out of its banks for well over a year.

Ultimate diversion of all of them would certainly cast an ironic shadow on the Central Utah Project (CUP). Millions of dollars have been spent over three decades on the still uncompleted CUP in order to bring water from the Colorado River drainage into the Great Salt Lake basin.

Prof. Carlton Infanger of Brigham Young University has now suggested that a CUP diversion tunnel between the Duchesne and Provo Rivers be backed up, thereby diverting water out of the Provo, which empties into Utah Lake. That diverted water would wind up in the Colorado River, precisely the opposite of what CUP is supposed to accomplish.

A former professor at the University of Utah has also come up with one final diversion, of sorts. He believes that the Great Salt Lake could be drained like a bathtub. Under his scheme, a hole would be drilled in the lake's bottom. When the drilling operation hit a layer of sufficiently porous rock, the lake or at least some portion of it would vanish down the hole, and spread out in that subterranean zone.

What if drillers never find the ideal layer of suitably porous stone? An underground cavern, which would be subsequently filled with excess lake water, could be hollowed out at the bottom of the drill shaft by exploding a nuclear device. Nobody is giving the good professor's plan any serious consideration at this time.

--James Baker

HOTLINE

Lamm vetoes deregulation

Governor Richard Lamm of Colorado vetoed on April 27 a bill which would have exempted Colorado-Ute Electric Association from regulation by the Public Utilities Commission. The generation and transmission REA, which supplies electric power to 14 retail REAs serving more than half the area of Colorado, sought deregulation for two reasons: to make it eligible for certain tax benefit savings through power plant leasing, and to avoid a PUC attempt to make it charge customers a demand/energy rate.

Lamm, in his veto message, said the deregulation bill was too sweeping. He said it gave consumers no way to appeal rate increases; it could allow Colorado-Ute to build power plants for out-of-state users; and it denied Colorado-Ute consumers the benefit of the recently created Office of Consumer Council. The over-ride vote in the state legislature will be close.

Report charges EPA is lax

A new government report shows wastewater dischargers that do comply with their EPA pollution control permits to be in a minority. The Clean Water Act places legal limits on the amount and type of pollution a facility can discharge into waterways. But the report concludes that 82 percent of 531 randomly selected major municipal and industrial pollution dischargers exceeded their permit limits at least once during an 18-month period; a third of these exceeded their pollution limits by 50 percent for at least four consecutive months. The report cites EPA's reliance on self-monitoring by dischargers as a cause of the low compliance rates. Information supplied by the dischargers to EPA is often missing or incomplete. To add to the problem, EPA and state enforcement policies often allow noncompliance to continue for long periods of time. The U.S. General Accounting Office report is free from Document Handling and Information Services Facility, P.O. Box 6015, Gaithersburg, MD 20877.

Antelope feeding effort failed

Attempts to feed more than 200 antelope stranded on a hill in Rock Springs, Wyoming failed this winter. The verdict came from a study conducted by ecology instructor Dee Forrest at Western Wyoming College. In January, the antelope became trapped in town after crossing Interstate 80 in search of food (HCN, 2/6/84). The Sweetwater County Wildlife Association then began feeding the antelope, even though the Wyoming Fish and Game Department said the animals needed sagebrush and could not properly digest alfalfa. Forrest and some of her students, who did necropsies on the antelope, found that 53 percent of the original 285 trapped animals starved despite the alfalfa feeding program, a rate well above the 25-30 percent natural winter mortality. Members of the Wildlife Association said there were some problems with the study, such as failure to fully consider the effects of stress from traffic and an attempted roundup, but agreed that feeding programs aren't the answer. What the antelope need, they said, was preservation of critical winter habitat.

HOTLINE

Getty loses on Little Granite

The controversial application by the Getty Oil Company to drill in the Little Granite Creek area in northwest Wyoming has been set back by a decision from the Department of Interior's Board of Land Appeals. The board on May 2 vacated Getty's permit to drill and sent the EIS back to the BLM's Wyoming state office.

Opinions differ as to the significance of the ruling. Getty says the ruling turned on a technicality -- the failure of the EIS to consider a "no action" alternative. A spokesman said there will be a delay, but that the firm will eventually drill in the area.

But those who have fought the Getty permit say the lack of a no action alternative in the EIS was not an oversight. The BLM left out no action because the agency believed it did not have the power to deny a drilling permit. Getty already held a lease on the Little Granite part of Bridger-Teton National Forest, and leases were believed to confer the right to drill, subject to environmental controls.

Story Clark of the Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning, which was part of a group of opponents including environmental groups and the state, said that the decision may mean that the granting of a lease does not carry an absolute right to drill. She also said that the Jackson area, which is near Yellowstone, had unified on the Little Granite question, with county commissioners, town councils and chambers of commerce all supporting inclusion of Little Granite in the proposed Gros Ventre (pronounced gro-vant) Wilderness Area.

Glen Canyon spillways won't be ready

As of late April, Bureau of Reclamation spokesmen say it will cost almost \$30 million, twice the original estimate, to repair the spillways at Glen Canyon Dam damaged in last year's record Colorado River runoff. Moreover, the spillways won't be ready for this year's peak runoff.

In addition, the Bureau says that worldwide there may be a few dozen dams which have the same spillway design flaw as those at Glen Canyon. What it would cost to repair those dams is, at this time, unknown. But the Bureau plans to let contracts for repairs on two dams -- Hoover and Blue Mesa -- in the near future.

According to engineers working at the dam, the Bureau knew, following its first test of the spillways in 1980, that "something had to be done to fix them." Nonetheless, due to the unexpected high runoff last year and what some observers believe was a failure to allow themselves adequate flood control space, the Bureau was forced to spill some 4 million acre-feet of water.

At the peak of the runoff the Bureau sent up to 32,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) down each spillway -- tunnels 41 feet in diameter pitched at 55 degrees. (A normal flow of the Colorado through the Grand Canyon is 12,000 cfs.) By the time the water reached the tunnel elbow it was travelling 120 miles an hour. (HCN, 12/12/83).

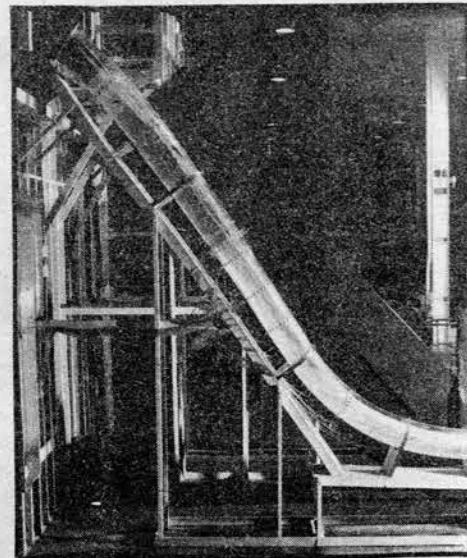
"The concrete lining in the spillway tunnels didn't have a chance," says a Bureau engineer who asked to remain unidentified. "We sacrificed the spillways at Glen to save the spillways at Hoover and all the

people downriver. We stressed the dam last summer. Blocks of it shifted, as they are designed to do. And the dam's margin of safety, which is usually 50:1, fell to 3:1 at the peak of the runoff."

In the left spillway the water first demolished 200 feet of the concrete lining -- scouring it from the tunnel floor, walls, and amazingly enough from much of the roof. Then it bored a series of immense potholes in the underlying Navaho sandstone. After the spill concluded the tunnel remained full of water and the Bureau dispatched scuba divers to survey the damage. The largest of the potholes measured 40' wide, 32' deep, and 50' long. When the tunnel was pumped dry, a sandstone block the size of a small cabin was found along with tons of lesser debris.

Since last August, 250 men, clad in yellow rain gear -- the Navajo sandstone leaks like the proverbial sieve -- have been working 20 hours a day to complete the repairs prior to this spring's runoff. The work has been wet... and hazardous. Controlled Demolition, Inc., which specializes in the delicate use of dynamite, was responsible for removing the damaged lining so that a new lining could be poured. Since only 200 feet of saturated sandstone separate the spillways and dam, "it's understandable that we didn't want to jar anything more than necessary," says a Bureau engineer.

The rush job is coming up short. The left spillway will not be finished until late July; the right at least a month later. Since the Bureau has twice as much flood storage space



This 20-foot-high scale model of Glen Canyon dam's spillways was used to develop the air slot which the Bureau hopes will prevent future damage.

available in Lake Powell as last year the spillways are not expected to be needed. Nonetheless, an unusually wet May could, once again, place the spillways, and therefore the dam, at risk.

To ensure that such extensive damage does not occur again, engineers at the Bureau's research laboratory in Denver have constructed a 20-foot-high scale model of the spillways. Their recommended cure? An "air slot" to aerate the rushing water and to prevent cavitation at the spillway elbow. The slots are being installed as part of the repair effort.

"All the empirical evidence suggests that we are putting the air slots in the right place," says a Bureau engineer. "But we won't know for sure until we test the spillways in late July with 50,000 cfs."

Colorado River water boils in Glen Canyon's spillways

When water really moves -- when it is rushing at speeds of over 100 miles per hour -- it can show some strange behavior. In the Glen Canyon spillways last spring, for example, the ice cold water literally boiled as it thundered over the concrete. Because of the boiling, it damaged the spillway walls, eventually threatening the dam itself. (See accompanying story).

The boiling, which is called cavitation, results in millions of small explosions in the water -- explosions which send shock waves pounding against the concrete walls. Dr. Henry Falvey, a research engineer with the Bureau of Reclamation in Denver, says the shock waves act like a ballpeen hammer pounded repeatedly against the concrete:

"The more you hit at it, the more concrete breaks off, and the easier it becomes to break off big chunks."

It is hard to imagine ice cold Colorado River water boiling in the 41-foot diameter spillways. But Falvey says that's exactly what happens when the rushing water hits irregularities in the walls of the spillway. The irregularities abruptly change the direction of the water, and the abrupt change results in a drastic reduction in the pressure of the water.

Falvey says it's a law of physics that water boils at lower temperatures under lower pressures. That's why it's hard to boil eggs or spaghetti in the mountains. So when the rushing water experiences a lowered pressure, it boils. The boiling causes cavities to appear in the water -- cavities made up of water vapor.

But, Falvey continues, the water's

pressure doesn't stay low very long. As the cavity is carried downward by the surrounding water, pressure rises and the cavity collapses. The sudden collapse sends out a shock wave. And the shock wave "can damage concrete or stainless steel -- it can damage anything man can make. I have a 1 1/4 inch thick piece of steel with a hole through it."

What is the wall roughness which causes the cavitation? Falvey speculates it consists of numerous calcite deposits, much like the stalagmites and stalagmites formed in caves by dripping water. But in the spillway, the calcite forms at cracks, where water oozing out of the concrete deposits limestone on the surface.

Falvey says steel walls wouldn't solve the problem. The roughness would then exist at the point where the lengths of tube were joined together. He says the problem occurs in all large dams when they spill, but the problem isn't widespread. "Dams don't spill very often. Hoover hadn't spilled for over 40 years until last year. I had to go to Turkey to see dams that spill regularly. And as Turkey's rivers get more and more developed, those dams will stop spilling."

Now that the danger of cavitation is recognized, the Bureau has come up with a cure. It consists of mixing air with the spillway water. Falvey says water is incompressible, like steel. Shock waves move easily through incompressible materials. "I compare it to sound waves moving down a railroad track."

But shock waves don't move through squishy soft compressible

materials like a mattress or air. Falvey says that when you mix about 7 percent air with the water, the resulting material becomes very compressible.

The hard question, says Falvey, is how to put the air into the water. You could pump it in "but it takes a lot of air, and the pumping costs would be prohibitive."

Instead, the Bureau is building a ramp and an air slot into the walls of each spillway. The ramp is 7 inches high. It sends the water shooting away from the spillway walls and over a 4-foot-deep, 4-foot-long slot that runs around the spillway just past the ramp. As a result, air mixes into the

water, creating the compressible brew. The compressible air-water mix provides a protective layer over the spillway surface, shielding it from the shock waves.

The game, says Falvey, is to place the ramp-slot duo far enough down in the spillway so that the water will remain aerated during the most damaging part of its trip. But the ramp-slot must be close enough to the intake for it to entrain sufficient air.

Because the spillways won't be completed at Glen Canyon at high water this season, they won't be tested immediately. But Falvey says he is confident the anti-shockwave measures will work. --the staff

The river is rising, again

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation is sure it can handle this year's spring runoff without using Glen Canyon Dam's still-damaged spillways. But the snowpack in the Upper Colorado River basin has risen dramatically in the last few weeks, and anything remains possible.

Due to heavy April snows, the spring runoff projection went from April 1's 11.5 million acre-feet to May 1's 13 million acre feet. And according to Dave Westledge of the Colorado River Forecast Center, that does not include the heavy snows of very early May. Last year's spring runoff was 14.5 maf.

John Newman of the Bureau's Salt Lake City office expressed confidence May 7 that Glen Canyon would handle the runoff without having to use the

dam's spillways. He said that as of May 1, there were 4 maf of storage in Lake Powell, behind Glen Canyon. Last year at this time there were 2.4 maf in Lake Powell. Moreover, he said, the 1.4 maf of storage in reservoirs upstream of Glen Canyon is appreciably higher than last year.

To keep up with accelerating inflow, the Bureau began using the steel River Outlet Works tubes in early May, in addition to the continuing power plant releases. This will take total flow out of Lake Powell up to 45,000 second-feet, which Newman said would be the maximum it would hit. Last year, another 47,000 acre-feet were released through the spillways, sending 92,000 acre-feet down the river to scour Grand Canyon beaches and cause flooding.

A coal miner takes on the safety bureaucracy

LETTERS

A former Paonia, Colorado coal miner has succeeded in forcing the Mine Safety and Health Administration to defend itself before the House Safety and Health Subcommittee.

On April 25 in Washington, D.C. in a room packed with more than 100 people, MSHA's technical support chief was grilled by subcommittee chairman Joseph Gaydos (D-PA). The question Gaydos hammered at was why the agency refused to mandate roof monitoring devices in underground coal mines.

Roof cave-ins kill more coal miners than any other accident, with 700 crushed since 1969 and 52 killed in 1982. MSHA says it refuses to make roof movement monitors mandatory on the grounds that they can't predict exactly when a cave-in will occur.

There are three roof monitors on the market, but the one that has aroused the greatest interest internationally and in this country is called the Guardian Angel, devised by Pat Conkle, 63. Conkle, who worked in Colorado mines for 22 years, began inventing the monitor back in 1968 after four of his co-workers were killed in a roof fall.

"I'd been under that roof just hours before," he recalls. "Then they came in the next shift and were buried under tons of rock."

A dropout from Paonia high school at age 14, Conkle is a self-taught mechanic. He learned how to redesign machinery "and 90 percent of all mechanical principles" during a seven year stint with Continental Can in California, his first job. He then moved back to Paonia while still a young man and took the only job available. "That was coal mining by the pick and shovel method." Eventually he became a shop foreman, and while at the Bear Coal Company built 42 machines from scratch using parts of used equipment.

After the mine accident that killed his friends, Conkle says he devoted all his spare time to developing a roof monitor, working two jobs for three years so he could spend \$165,000 of his own money on the monitor. There was a lot of trial and error during the first ten years, he says, until he developed a simpler and cheaper version six years ago.

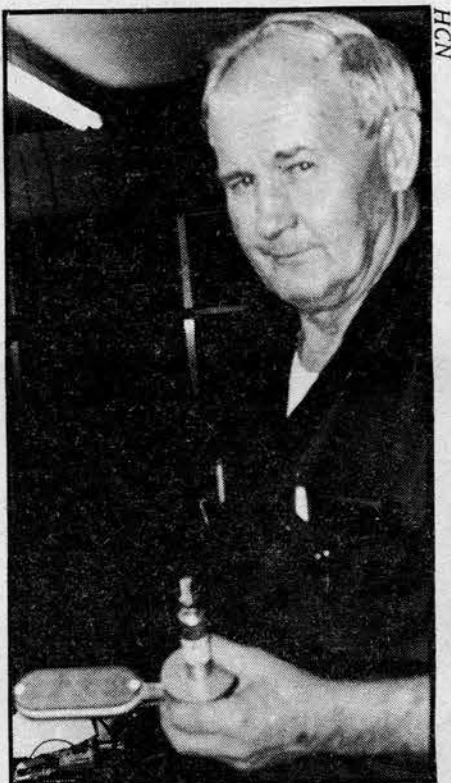
Conkle's device screws into the end of a rod that a roof-bolter drills seven or more feet up into a mine roof above the roof bolts. A spring-loaded barrel at the lip of the rod is adjusted to measure as little as .008 inch of roof fall, and when that occurs, a red reflector trips down to warn miners below. The device costs \$27.50.

"It's simple to install, it works, and it can save lives," says Conkle. "The Bureau of Mines uses them and so does Exxon at its closed oil shale mine."

At the hearing in Washington, MSHA's technical support chief, Madison McCulloch, said it is "impossible" to predict when and where a roof fall will occur. And Frank O'Gorman, a MSHA public information specialist, said later in an interview that the agency would never make a roof monitor mandatory "unless it predicts exactly when the roof caves in."

Conkle, who testified at the hearing along with a United Mine Workers union official, charges that MSHA "wants perfection and only God has that. MSHA is a foot-dragging bureaucracy that deserves to be sweating blood."

Conkle says he sent MSHA monitors five and a half years ago and



Pat Conkle, holding his Guardian Angel

"a lot of lives could have been saved since then if they'd made a monitor mandatory. No, it won't tell you the minute the roof will fall, but when the flag trips, you know you have to shore that roof up with timber or get out quick."

A few years ago, Conkle says mine operators told him that they were worried about their liability if a monitor were not placed in part of a mine where a fall occurred, killing miners. Conkle says he doesn't know if the liability issue carried weight with MSHA.

But Rep. Ray Kogovsek (D-CO), who went to bat for Conkle's device with the Health and Safety Committee nine months ago, said in his statement April 25 that liability was not a matter for MSHA to address. The only business of the agency is safety, Kogovsek said.

MSHA's O'Gorman says the problem with Conkle's monitor does involve safety. Since the Guardian Angel indicates roof sag, which is bound to occur in every mine, nothing significant is being conveyed, he says. "It gives a false sense of security. We want miners to be cautious, and the most important thing they can do is to listen to the roof."

Conkle says miners can't listen to the roof in a modern mine -- they're too noisy. And he says that the Angel

does not record sag, which is the overall settling of the mine. What it does, he says, is tell miners when a chunk of rock has begun to work its way loose from the rest of the roof.

In the old days, miners supported the roof with mine props, or timbers. Today, they drill roof bolts into the roof. The idea of the bolts, which are generally six feet long, is to bond together the layers of rock in the roof.

The bolts work. They make the roof solid for six feet up. But they can't guard against rock separations that take place above the bolts. Conkle says, "Of the 100 rock falls I've seen, every one took the six-foot bolt out with it."

The bolt comes down with the rock because the rock generally separates just above the layers held together by the roof bolt. So Conkle's Angel sits on the end of a 7 or 8-foot-long steel bolt anchored into rock above the roof bolts. If a chunk of rock separates above the roof bolt and drops down a bit, it will trip the Angel and let the miners know movement is occurring.

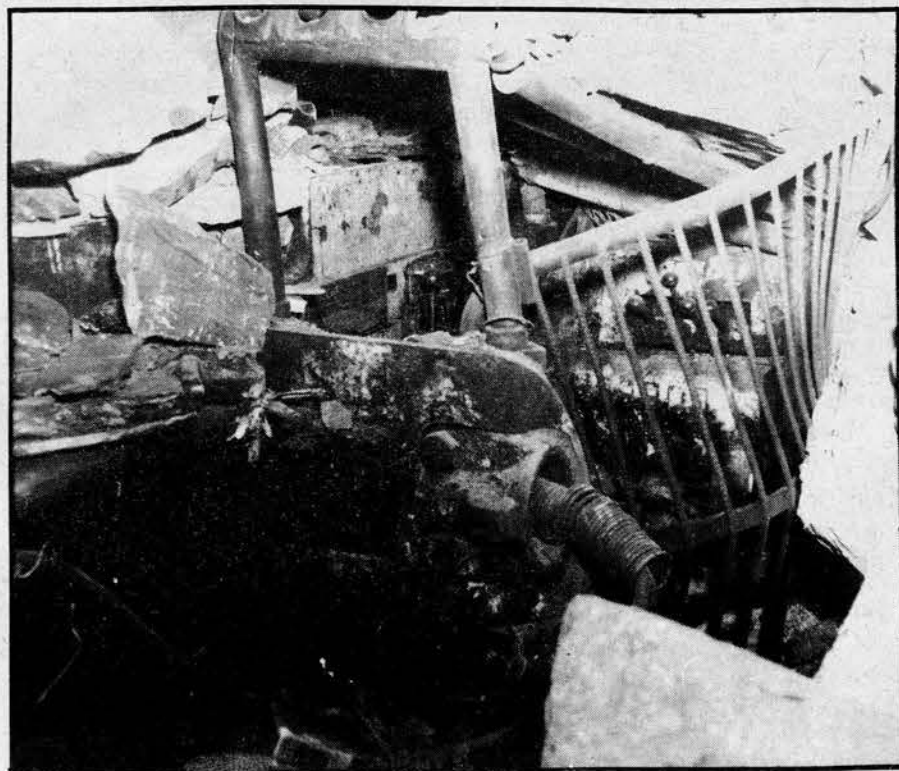
Working out of his backyard shop-garage, Conkle says he has sold about 1000 Guardian Angels and given away 1100, including some to MSHA for testing. Free publicity did come to Conkle six months ago, however, thanks to his marketing partner, Ed Rozman. Rozman interested some 25 technical magazines in doing features on the device, and since then queries and orders have flooded in from 36 countries around the world. What has surprised him lately, Conkle adds, are orders from hard rock mines in Wyoming and California.

Because of the boom in interest, Conkle says he could have sold more than a million dollars of stock this year in his family-held corporation. "But I won't sell stock unless there's a factory to build," he says.

For the inventor and his wife, Zona, the 16-year struggle has been worth it, even though money has been tight. "I never forget why I began this," he says. "It started with the death of four friends. And a lot of my friends are still underground." His wife adds, "We have two sons in the mines, too."

Rep. Gaydos said at the subcommittee hearing last month that he would continue questioning MSHA about its refusal to mandate a roof movement monitor.

--Betsy Marston



A roof fall mangled this mining machine, Conkle says, but in this accident the operator escaped harm.

A RADICAL PROPOSAL

Dear HCN,

I was gratified to see your inquiry into the National Park Service's implementation of Circular A-76. Everyone wants to see government be more efficient, but few knowledgeable persons would concur that A-76 as it is being implemented in the Park Service will further that goal.

It is particularly disturbing that park superintendents, who are statutorily obligated to consider every aspect of park welfare in the implementation of any policy, are being so timid in the acceptance of this, the most radical proposal in the history of the Service. They are responsible for the parks' welfare, but they are being directed (and pressured) to implement A-76 by far-off professional administrators who have no real appreciation for the flexibility and integration needed to maintain pristine resources. Too many of them are saying, "Okay, if you say so."

NPS Director Dickinson has been the only voice in the Administration for a slower, more thoughtful approach. He was retained in the Watt hierarchy to provide the appearance of continuity, and I doubt that he will be there if another term is in order. Then we can only weep for our park system; a last refuge from commercialism, a haven from development. Instead of a natural endowment for our children's children, we will be stewarding lasting monuments to the weaknesses of our time.

Sarah Grant
Coram, MT.

FOREST SERVICE IS SUCCESSFUL

Dear HCN,

Your blistering attack on the Forest Service is, in my view, unfounded and in poor taste for a paper of such high calibre. Contrary to your view, an analysis by Pennsylvania State University and the Federal Office of Personnel rated the Forest Service among the ten most successful organizations in the country.

John M. Herbert
Darby, MT

REMEDY FOR SKUNKS

Dear HCN,

Edward Abbey's solution for dealing with Oracle's sneaky slimey skunk (HCN, 4/2/84) stinks. You have for many years now informed your readers on how to mitigate problems caused by those creatures, and somehow Abbey and his cohorts in Oracle have missed the message. Like cockroaches, society hasn't figured out a way to eradicate the world of sneaky slimey skunks. But, those unfortunate souls who keep coming across them like Abbey need only to obtain their own HCN subscription to stop the damage caused by the lowly beasts. When enough people like Abbey and friends subscribe to HCN, the skunks' population will hopefully decline to the point of being only minor nuisances.

Chuck Sheketoff
Makanda, IL



THE SAGA OF MAC

by Janet Robertson

In 1970, when Muriel Lurilla MacGregor died, she left a will establishing a trust to insure that the 2000-acre MacGregor Ranch right next to Estes Park would continue raising cattle as an "educational and charitable institution."

What Ms. MacGregor didn't know was that her will would unleash a legal potboiler which one observer likens to "the Perils of Pauline."

At the time of her death, she was a reclusive "land poor" spinster who had struggled for 20 years to maintain the ranch her grandfather had homesteaded in 1872. The site of the ranch is recognized as one of the most beautiful pieces of real estate in northern Colorado and the property was appraised at over \$4 million.

In short order 32 distant relatives of Muriel's hired a lawyer and contested the will, the IRS denied that the ranch was a "charitable estate" and sent an estate tax bill of \$1.75 million, and a Larimer County District Court Judge "fired" the executor of the estate, William Albion Carlson, for what he termed "numerous breaches of fiduciary duties."

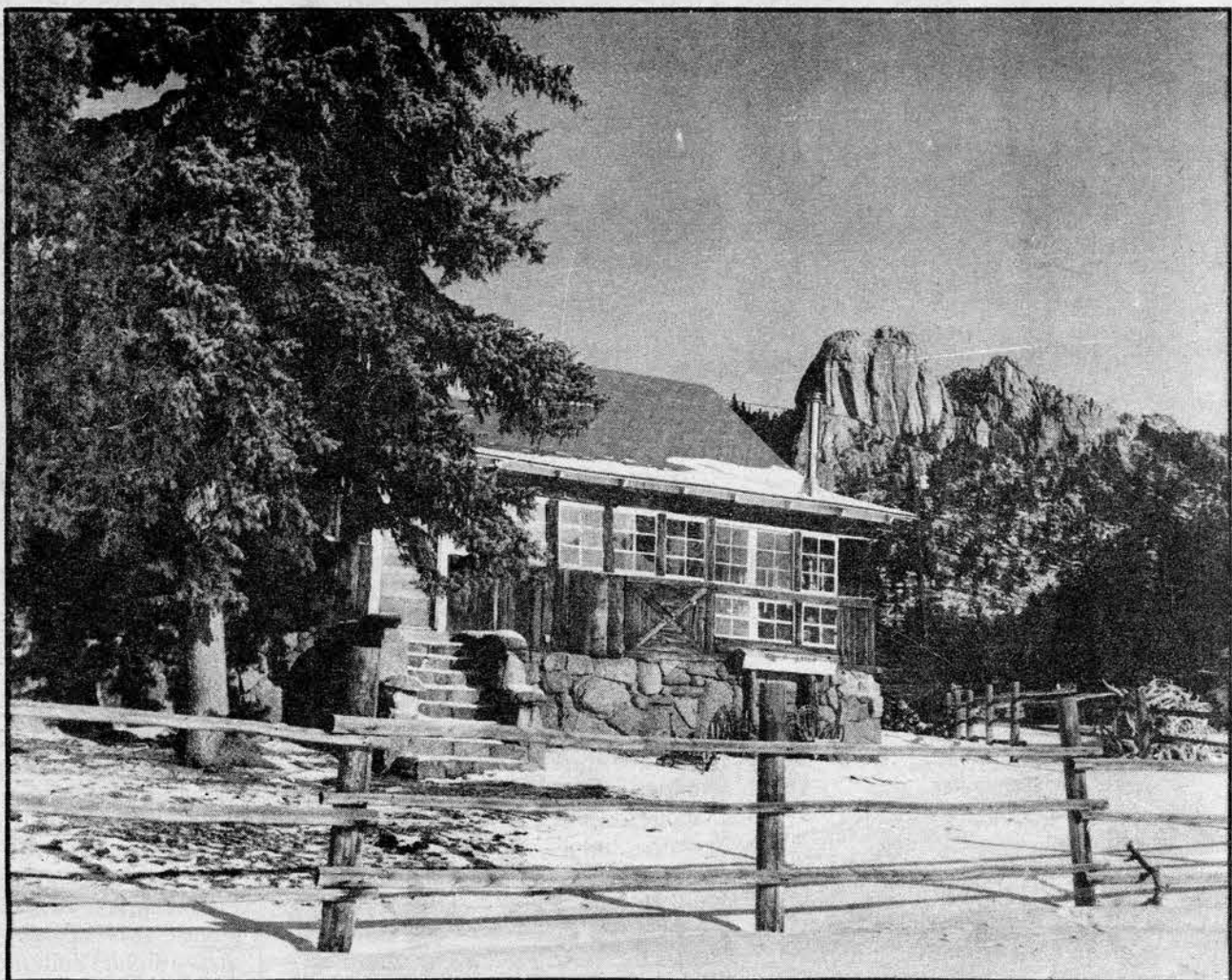
Despite the litigations and accusations, an extraordinary group of volunteers from Estes Park kept the Old MacGregor Ranch going as the educational cattle ranch Ms. MacGregor wanted. Two grandmothers, Orpha Kendall and Gladys Thomson, learned the cattle business and ran the ranch. Volunteers mended fences, baled hay, delivered calves, repaired roofs and then opened the family home as a museum. They converted some old buildings to overnight facilities for school children and conducted tours.

Muriel MacGregor had named three trustees in her will and it fell to them to try to come up with money to pay the ever-increasing debts. But the truth was becoming painfully obvious. A mountain cattle ranch, especially one that has been badly neglected for years, does not make money; it costs money. The MacGregor Ranch Estate was saddled with attorneys' fees to fight the Internal Revenue Service's interpretation and claims of distant relatives. To raise money, the trustees sold 400 acres of the Ranch to Rocky Mountain National Park in 1976.

In 1973, the 32 distant relatives agreed to a settlement of a quarter section on Fish Creek and 55 acres near the Stanley Hotel, valuable property that was not part of the "core" ranch. The heirs also agreed to let the probate of the estate continue and reinstated William Albion Carlson as executor of the MacGregor Estate. (He had been replaced for 17 months.)

Carlson would become increasingly controversial in the MacGregor saga, but Dr. William Morgan, who served as a trustee of the MacGregor Ranch for ten years, gives Carlson credit for "playing a crucially important role in preserving the estate" when the distant heirs contested the will. After the settlement Carlson again wore two hats: he was executor of the estate as well as one of its three trustees. The other two were his wife, Jane, an attorney, and William Morgan who replaced original trustee Victoria Gross, who was a longtime friend of Muriel MacGregor. Both women attended law school at the University of Denver where Muriel received her law degree in 1934.

The financial woes of the MacGregor Estate finally came to the attention of the state attorney general's office, which took the position that the public interest (the educational and charitable use of the MacGregor Ranch) was being threatened by the IRS's stand. The attorney general's office added two more court-appointed trustees to the



MacGregor Ranch with the prominent formation, Twin Owls, in the background. Photo by Janet Robertson.

board. The two new trustees were Orpha Kendall and Eldon Fruedenburg of Estes Park.

Finally, in 1979, the IRS agreed that the MacGregor Ranch was indeed a "charitable trust," not subject to an estate tax. Had they not, the trust would have had to pay \$3 million in estate tax and interest. That would have meant selling off at least some of the "core" ranch and in effect destroying it.

Still, the Ranch was in financial trouble, due mostly to lawyers' fees, some of which the attorney general's office contested as being excessive. After prolonged litigation, an out-of-court settlement was reached in 1982. Part of the agreement was that William Carlson would accept only \$50,000 for his work as executor; he had requested \$127,524. He and his wife, Jane, also agreed to resign as trustees.

With the IRS's favorable decision, the trustees were finally free to pursue a solution other than selling off land to raise money. This they did with the full cooperation of Rocky Mountain National Park Superintendent Chester Brooks. As part of the 1980 Wilderness Act, they redrew the borders of Rocky Mountain National Park to include the 1200 plus acres of the magnificent "core" ranch. The agreement stated that the Park had until the end of Fiscal Year 1983, which was October 1, to come up with the money to purchase a conservation easement. A conservation easement, later determined to be about \$4 million, would cost roughly half as much as an outright purchase, and would insure that the land would not be developed. Also the Old MacGregor Ranch, as it was now called, would still be run by the trustees, not by the Park.

The Park Service eventually approved \$4 million for the conservation easement price tag. Congressman Hank Brown (D-Colo.) steered the

appropriation through the House. Then a new obstacle surfaced: Senator McClure (R-Idaho) failed to support the appropriation in the Senate Appropriations Committee which he headed. Apparently this was a betrayal of a promise he'd made to Senator William Armstrong (R) from Colorado, who went to work to get the appropriation reinstated. Armstrong had wide support back home to save the Old MacGregor Ranch. Almost everyone it seemed, from the Estes Park Chamber of Commerce to the Colorado Mountain Club, favored the conservation easement.

Supporters were beginning to be optimistic as October 1 neared. Then, two weeks before the deadline, the Interior Department suddenly withdrew its offer of \$4 million and offered \$3.8 million, based on an earlier Park Service appraisal. The trustees refused the offer. Pressure was applied on Interior to go through with the deal. Just under the deadline, the deal was consummated and the "perils" were over. Ten days later James Watt resigned as Secretary of the Interior.

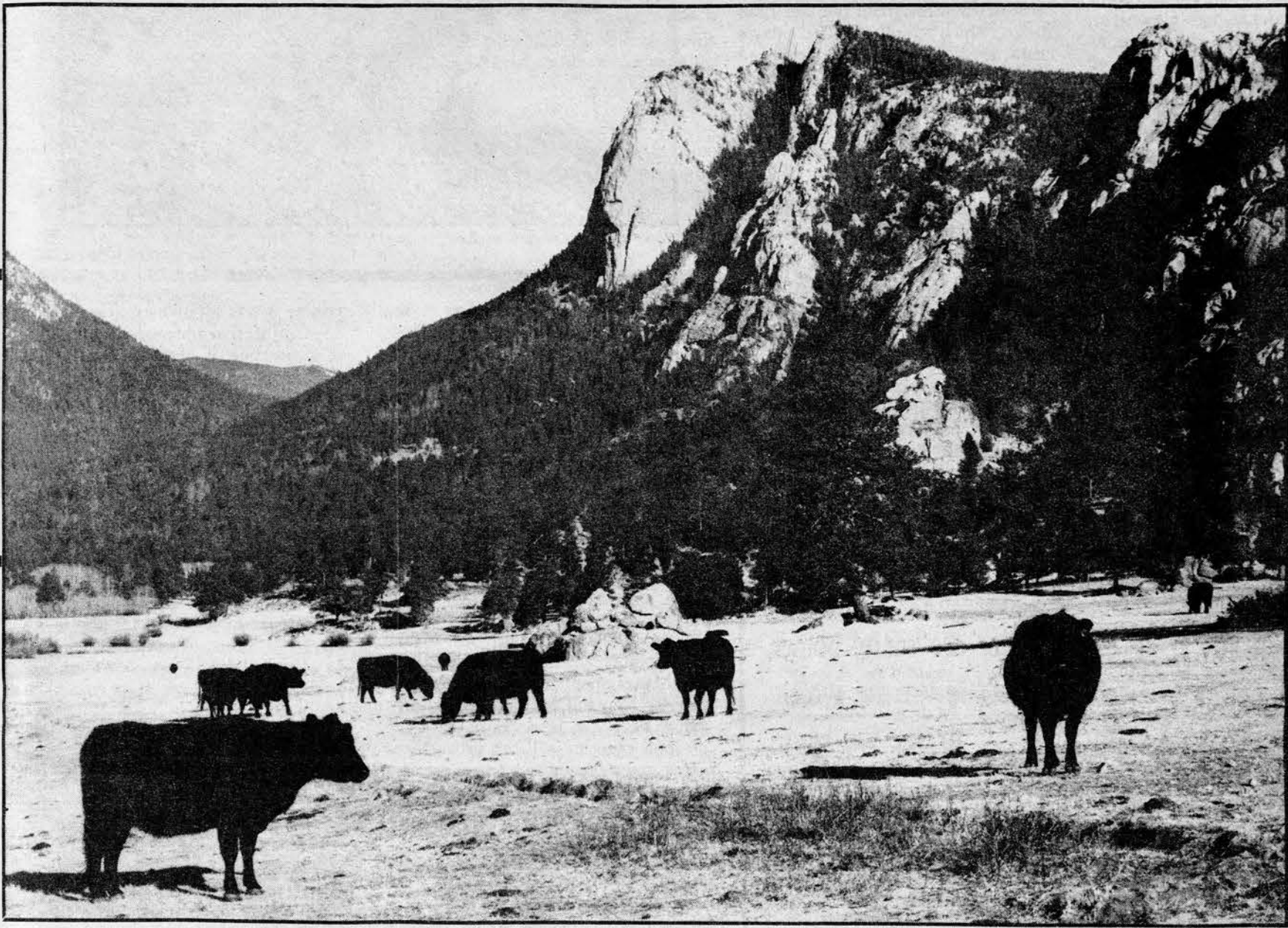
The trustees were then able to pay remaining debts and invest money in government bonds. The interest will be used to run the ranch and to make necessary improvements and the Ranch will continue to serve school children from Northern Colorado and students from the University of Northern Colorado as it has for many years.

In short, the money will be used for what Muriel MacGregor wanted in the first place.

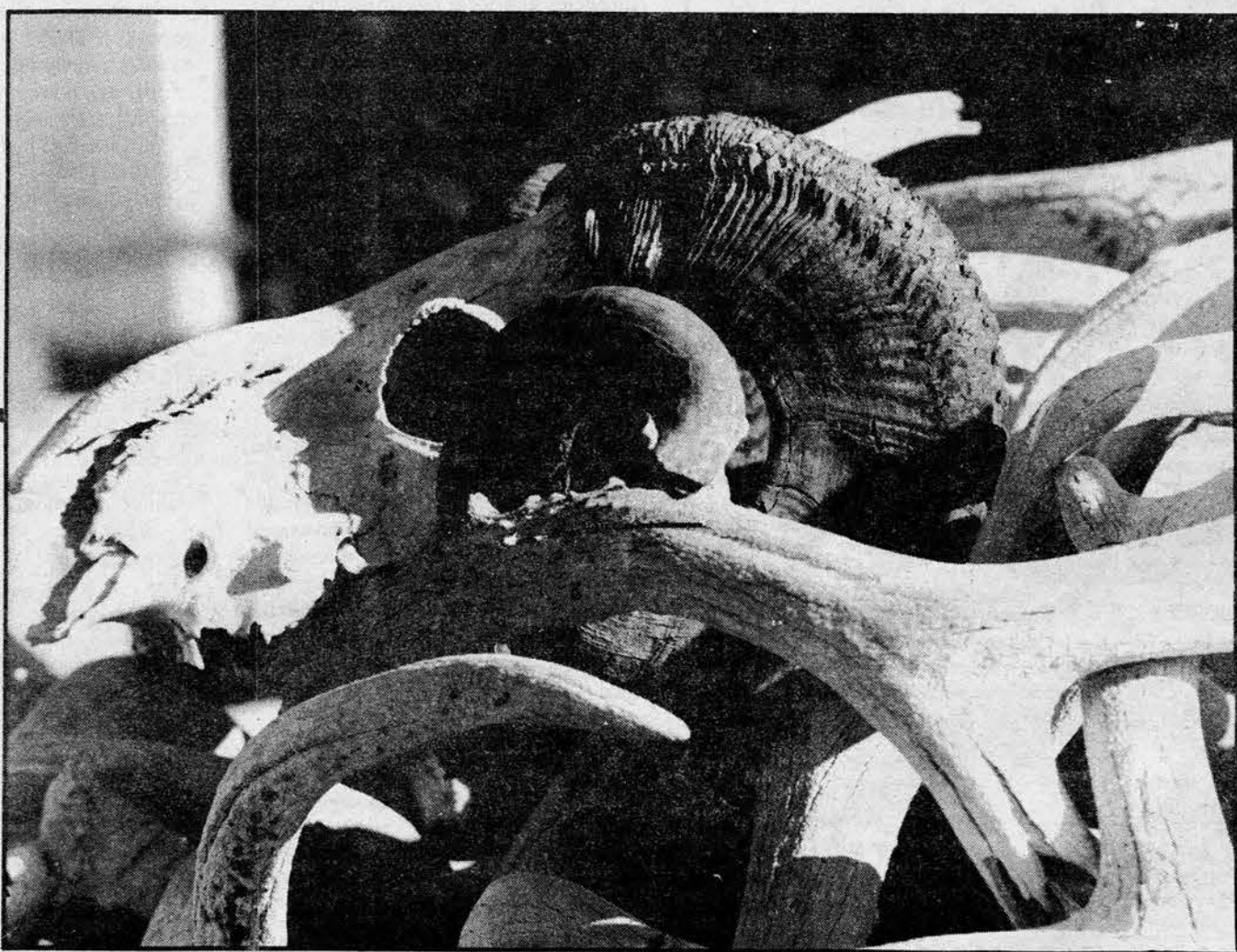
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Janet Robertson is a writer-photographer from Boulder, Colorado.

MACGREGOR RANCH



Black Angus cattle graze in a mountain meadow on MacGregor Ranch. Mummy Mountain is in the distance. Photo by Kent and Donna Dannen.



Elk antlers and a bighorn skull gathered at MacGregor Ranch. Photo by Kent and Donna Dannen.

Chimney Rock...

[Continued from page 1]

is that Chimney Rock and scores of other settlements throughout the San Juan Basin in New Mexico, Arizona and Colorado were tied together. Chimney Rock stands out among the so-called Chaco Canyon satellites, or 'outliers.' San Juan National Forest archaeologist Bob York says the ruins at Chimney Rock are a mystery because of the site's remoteness from Chaco Canyon and its high elevation.

"Heck, it's higher than Machu Picchu. There is a panoramic view of the Piedra River and of the San Juan Mountains. Then there is the architecture. The advanced Chacoan stone architecture on top of the ridge is totally different from the Mesa Verde architecture found elsewhere in the area."

According to National Park Service employee Joan Mathien, the Chaco culture is most easily recognized by its architecture. The building walls have a rubble core covered by an outside veneer, whereas surrounding but more primitive cultures built stone walls. The Chaco buildings are also multi-story while others built one-story dwellings.

Perhaps most interesting, the Chacoan culture was apparently knit together. Aerial photography shows that the many

settlements in the San Juan Basin are linked by prehistoric roads, with Chaco Canyon apparently at the heart of the network.

The existence of this network has been verified by archaeologists and validated by the U.S. Congress. Congress took that step in December 1980, when, as part of the New Mexico Wilderness Act, it changed the status of Chaco Canyon National Monument to Chaco Culture National Historic Park.

The law did more than create an isolated preserve. It recognized the existence of 33 Chaco outliers -- settlements throughout the San Juan Basin which had Chaco culture characteristics and which are believed linked to the culture's center in Chaco Canyon.

The 33 sites are found in National Forests, on Navajo land, on BLM land, and on private land. To deal with the dispersed sites as well as with possible future discoveries, Congress instructed the National Park Service to lead a cooperative effort to determine how the Chaco outliers can be linked together and preserved.

So almost three years ago, the Park Service, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the U.S. Forest Service, the BLM, the Navajo tribe and the state of New Mexico set to work. The result was the "Joint Management Plan for the Chaco Culture Archaeological Protection Site System."

The cooperative effort which produced the plan studied the 33 sites as well as a score or so of new sites. A few of the original 33 sites were



Aerial view of Chaco Canyon

National Park Service

recommended dropped. And a few new ones -- including Chimney Rock, --were recommended for protection. The joint management plan, now wending its way through the Department of Interior hierarchy, may be presented to the U.S. Congress this summer. If it is approved, it will offer protection, although not absolute protection, to outlier sites it names.

The outliers won't become National Parks. According to Doug Faris of the National Park Service in Santa Fe, they will continue to be managed by the agencies on whose land they are found, although within an overall framework.

Management of sites on private or Navajo land will be more tricky than those on public land. Faris says the federal agencies will try to work out joint management agreements with owners of the private sites. He says the goal will be at least to preserve the sites, even if they aren't open to the public.

But if Chimney Rock is an example, the fate of many outlier sites will not be decided by an interagency plan or by the Congress. Their fates will be decided by land management agencies and local communities.

The importance of Chimney Rock as an archaeological site was recognized by the San Juan National Forest back in 1970, when it set the 3,160 acres aside as an archaeological preserve. The recently released Fifty Year Forest Plan followed up this action by apparently withdrawing the area from any future surface occupancy leasing or mining.

The coal company is now asking that the withdrawal be removed for 80 of the acres. The protection on the 3,160-acre site is complex, with part on the National Register of Historic Places and the part containing two giant kivas and several pueblos absolutely protected by law. They are perched on a narrow rock ridge near the twin rock pinnacles for which the area is named. Finally, the Forest Service has invested in the site. The agency built an access road and parking lot, and spent money stabilizing the ruins.

But National Forest archaeologist York says that when the San Juan National Forest began looking into the matter in response to the coal company application, it found that the protection was less than strong. "It's a nightmare, frankly. And as we get deeper into the history of how the area evolved, it gets more confusing. We thought the archaeological area was inviolable, but we have come to

realize it was set up on quicksand."

Against that ambiguous patchwork of protection is the push for coal. Chimney Rock Coal Company, a division of Perma Resources, Inc. of Pueblo, Colorado, now produces 30,000 tons of coal a month with 50 miners and office employees. Most goes to cement companies in the Southwest. With the construction industry recovering, the firm has contracts to fill, but not enough coal to mine.

So manager Smaldone has asked for a lease modification. Without the extra 80 acres, he says, Archuleta County could lose up to \$7 million annually in revenue, and see unemployment rise.

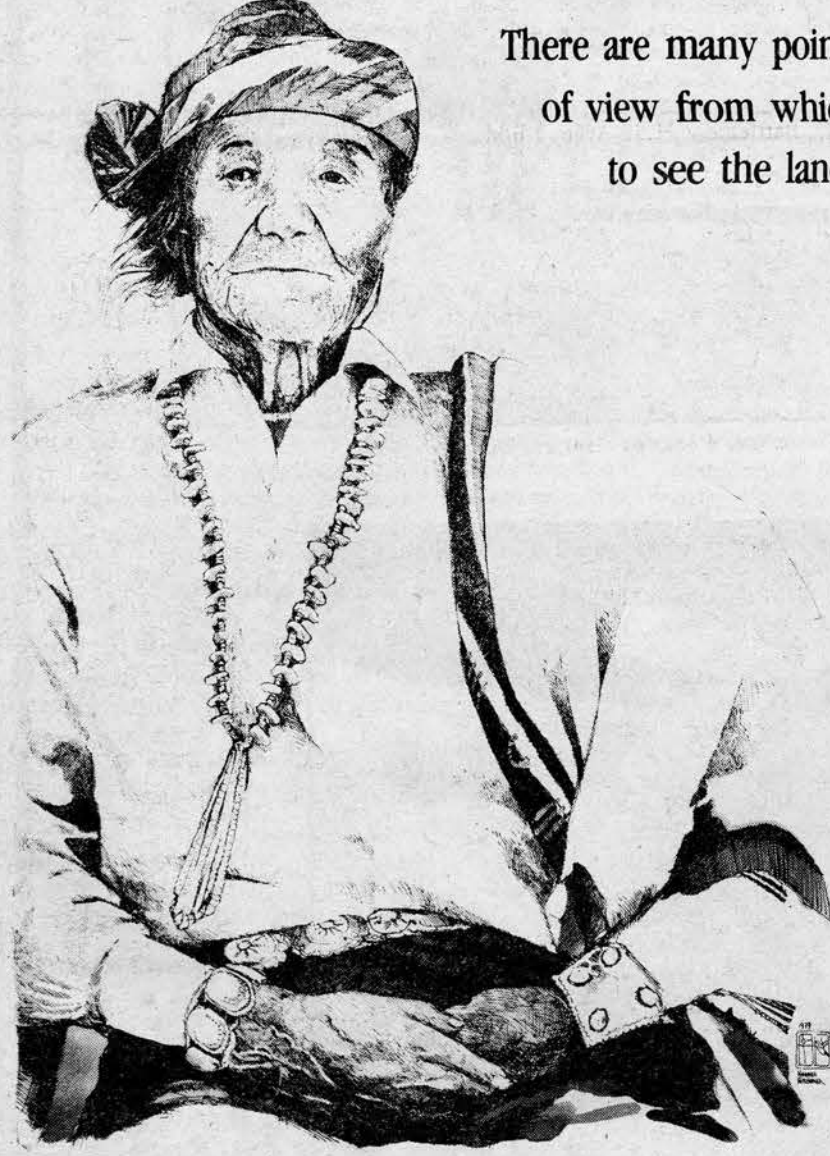
The company has not ignored the archaeological question. As part of its application for 80 acres of now preserved land, it hired La Plata Archaeology of Dolores, Colorado to study the area. The firm found six prehistoric sites and several isolated artifacts within the 80 acres, and an unexcavated pueblo and kiva near where the coal would be extracted.

"No treasures were found," emphasizes Smaldone. However, the archaeological firm advised in its report: "The sites should either be avoided, excluded from the lease area, or full excavations conducted in order to mitigate impact to the resource."

Smaldone has offered to mine around ruins and to put an archaeologist on the site full-time during mining. Some say that misses the point. Frank Eddy is an associate professor of anthropology at the University of Colorado who conducted the surveys and restoration work at the ruins in the early 1970s. He disagrees with Smaldone's use of the word "treasure," or with the idea that by plucking pottery or even whole buildings away from a bulldozer, science is served.

Eddy sees the entire area as a treasure. He told the Forest Service, "Even if these sites could be avoided, which I consider out of the question, the visual impact created by blasting away part of the Chimney Rock mesa would so damage the integrity of the public display as to destroy the future of any outdoor ruins exhibit." He says he would like to see the site become a tourist stop on the way from Wolf Creek Pass to Mesa Verde.

A possible compromise is being sought by Mark Welsh of the Colorado Open Space Council (COSC), a group contacted by Janet Bailey. Welsh says he will try to point out to the BLM and Forest Service ways in which they can avoid leasing within the archaeological



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area while at the same time leasing Perma the coal it needs.

He says there is a danger that the firm's economic and political pressure will convince the agencies to issue a lease for the 80 acres. But, he continues, "there is coal certainly readily available on both Forest Service and Southern Ute Indian land, and we think these alternatives should be examined first."

Why didn't Perma go after the nearby coal and ignore the archaeological site? Welsh speculates that it's economics. The Chimney Rock tract, he says, has relatively little overburden and would be cheap to strip. "It's a miner's dream." The other property Perma now controls or could go after, Welsh contends, is still mineable, but would be more expensive.

"Basically, they want to high grade," to take the easily mined coal and leave the rest. "The impression we get is that they're not looking at a long-term mining effort. So we're not looking for a long-term economic base for Archuleta County."

Although Welsh is suggesting something of a compromise, he is angry that the San Juan National Forest is even considering allowing the mine to expand onto the archaeological tract. Because the Fifty Year Plan sets the tract aside as an archaeological preserve, Welsh says consideration of expansion "makes a mockery of land use planning when the Forest Service considers reversing itself soon after the plan is released."

The San Juan National Forest is in the midst of applying the so-called unsuitability criteria to the coal application. A decision on unsuitability is expected this month, followed by public meetings and preparation of an Environmental Analysis. Although the BLM controls the coal, the Forest Service has the right to block a permit, unlike the situation with oil and gas leasing.

The application for 80 acres of the archaeological site comes two years after Perma received what was thought to be an eight-year emergency coal lease from the BLM on nearby land. That land was estimated to contain 2.1 million tons of mineable coal, however Smaldone said that due to a high water table and thinner than expected seams, there is less coal to mine than estimated.

Mine manager Smaldone, in a May 4 interview, says he faces two problems in expanding his mine. First, opponents apparently don't realize how important the mine is economically. He says it's not just 50 mining jobs, but also 70 trucking jobs. The coal is hauled 200 miles south to a railroad at Gallup New Mexico. The mines also purchase supplies in the area. According to Smaldone, the high heat value of the coal (12,700 BTU per pound) makes it economic to haul the coal a long distance by truck.

His second problem, the engineer says, is separating emotion from fact. "The emotionalism is that we're going to destroy Chimney Rock and maybe Chaco Canyon." In reality, he continues, the mining would affect a tiny part of the site and after ten years the entire area would be reclaimed and the mine gone.

Smaldone says he agrees with archaeologist Eddy -- "You can't chop off a piece of the tract." But, "that whole area is covered with archaeological remains. And there are highways, houses, a restaurant, and everything else spread over it." The present archaeological boundary, Smaldone says, was drawn in an arbitrary way, and allowing the mine to intrude onto "only 3 percent" of the

site wouldn't hurt the overall area any more than it is hurt now.

Smaldone also says that his proposed 80-acre intrusion won't mean that next year he will be seeking another 80 acres of the tract. "There isn't any economic coal beyond the 80 acres." With regard to the 'high-grading' charge, Smaldone says that with the 80 acres the firm will have enough coal for 10 years. "I don't see that as high grading. And we should be out of here, with the land reclaimed, just as this area's tourism begins to grow."

While Smaldone is looking at his proposed small chunk of the existing tract, opponents of the mine expansion are looking at the precedent it sets for other Chaco outliers and the general difficulty of preserving ruins on Forest Service land. Archaeologist Bob York of the San Juan National Forest says, "We're a multiple-use agency. It's hard for us to set aside something for just one use."

He also says, "The area wasn't set aside per se to protect the major sites. It was set aside as a reserve for further

study. I don't care if all they (La Plata Archaeology) found was one damn arrowhead; when you set something aside as special, it should stay that way. We really shouldn't destroy a non-renewable resource -- we don't know what we're losing."

As the Four Corners area experiences increasing development, York adds, "We're being forced to salvage sites before they're blown up. The Dolores Project, for example. We excavated and catalogued, and then the dam construction came in and destroyed what was left."

"I don't advocate that society come to a grinding halt, but I do think we should be able to preserve small areas intact -- and 3200 acres seems like a small area."

York says that promises of reclamation miss the point: "We might as well write off any further research because we need to study the whole environment -- the soils, the pollen, the context of the entire picture."

"All the bonds and fines in the world won't replace a site, and at Chimney Rock there is no room for



Northwestern New Mexico and adjoining states showing Chaco Canyon National Historic Park, recognized Anasazi roads [lines], and outliers [small dots], including Chimney Rock Archaeological Area [star].

error -- there are ruins as close as 200 feet from where they'll be blasting and digging." The major ruins themselves are about 1.6 miles away from the proposed lease expansion.

"If there's a legacy left by the Anasazis, it's that they failed. They're not here anymore. Before we get too smug about the way we bend our environment to fit our needs, we ought to find out what happened to them."

--Staff and Tamara Wiggins

BULLETIN BOARD

TRANSPORTING DENVER'S AIR

Denverites concerned about the city's brown cloud, take note of an upcoming forum on local transportation planning and pollution. Sponsored by the Colorado Open Space Council, the forum will feature Denver Mayor Federico Pena and other representatives from state and local governments and the Regional Transportation District. The setting is May 16 at 7 P.M. in Mitchell Hall at the Denver Botanic Gardens, 909 York Street.

WILDERNESS WEATHER STATIONS

A new human intrusion -- automated weather stations -- has been proposed for wilderness areas. The Forest Service has formed a committee with representatives from the Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Geological Survey, Soil Conservation Service and National Weather Service to study the need for more weather data from wilderness in the Upper Colorado River Basin. Forest Service Chief R. Max Peterson says about 20 percent of water runoff in the Colorado, Wyoming and Utah Upper Colorado River Basin comes from National Forest wilderness areas. More data would improve the accuracy of flood forecasting and water-supply predictions, a need brought to light by last year's flooding, he adds. The committee seeks public comments addressing appropriate types of weather stations and access to stations, as well as alternatives to the stations. Send comments to H.L. Buchanan, USDA-Forest Service, P.O. Box 25127 Lakewood, CO 80225 (303/234-5961) by May 20.

FORESTERS MEETING

Colorado and Wyoming members of the Society of American Foresters will hold their annual meeting in Mt. Crested Butte, Colorado this May. The theme of the meeting is vegetation management. Five workshops on Friday, May 18 will address timber and vegetation treatments on recreation corridors and ski areas, wildlife habitat management and management of aspens and diseased lodgepole pines. A field trip the next day to nearby Taylor River Canyon and the Taylor Park area will demonstrate vegetation management techniques. The meeting is open to the public for a fee of \$10; call Jim Krugman (303/249-3711) for more details.

NUCLEAR-FREE FUTURE

A national group pushing for an end to nuclear power and weapons has published a guide to organizing a local Nuclear Free Zone campaign. The cost of *Toward a Nuclear Free Future* is \$5. Mobilization for Survival has also published *Uncovering the Nuclear Industry*, a research guide to finding out which local institutions hold nuclear contracts (\$2) and a *Nuclear Free Zone Information Packet* (\$3). Order from Mobilization for Survival, 853 Broadway, Suite 2109C, New York, NY 10003 (212/533-0008).

RESCOPING

The Army Corps of Engineers will hold meetings in late May to 'rescope' its Systemwide Environmental Impact Statement. The EIS is designed to describe the need for and effects of water diversions to the Denver area from the Western Slope of Colorado. At present, the EIS is general. The rescoping will allow the \$6 million-plus study to examine specific projects, such as the proposed Two Forks project.

Meetings will be held Monday, May 21 at Middle Park H.S., Granby, 7 P.M.; May 22, Battlement H.S., Avon, 7 P.M.; May 23, Best Western, Frisco, 7 P.M.; May 24, City County Auditorium, Grand Junction, 7 P.M.; May 29, Denver Botanic Gardens, 2 P.M.; May 29, Broomfield H.S., 7 P.M.; May 30, Platte Canyon H.S., Bailey, 7 P.M.; May 31, S. Suburban Rec. Center, Littleton, 7 P.M.; and May 31, Fort Lupton H.S., 7 P.M.

UTAH'S UNIQUE BASIN AND RANGE

The Utah Audubon Society holds their second Basin and Range Seminar June 2-3 close to Simpson Springs Campground in the Simpson Mountains. The seminar consists of classes designed to provide an understanding and appreciation of the unique basin and range ecology in Western Utah. Classes range from Mammal ecology of the Great Basin and Nature Photography to Ice Age Lakes and Glaciers in Utah. Registration is \$20 for both days; children and senior citizens pay \$10. For more information and a brochure contact Rick Van Wagenen (801/467-5758), or Clyde Morris (801/533-0610), or the Utah Audubon Society, P.O. Box 9419, Salt Lake City 84109.

AIR POLLUTION AND PARKS

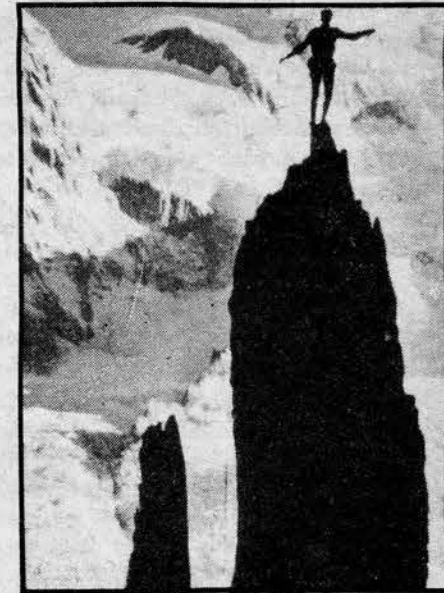
The effects of air pollution on parks and wilderness will be examined in a conference May 20-23 at Mesa Verde National Park. Sponsors are the National Park Service, Mesa Verde Museum Association and the University of Colorado at Denver, and their goal is to better understand the effects of energy development on natural and cultural resources. Individuals or organizational representatives wishing to attend and exchange information and views on research, management or regulatory issues should contact the Center for the Improvement of Public Management at the University of Colorado at Denver, 511 16 H Street, Suite 420, Denver CO 80202, telephone (303/629-5276.)

CLUB 20

Western Colorado's coalition of counties, towns and businesses will hold its three spring meetings May 18 and 19 and June 1 in Montrose, Pagosa Springs and Glenwood Springs. The all-day meetings will cover economic development, Army Corps 404 permits, water, land trusts, exports, and political races. For information, contact Club 20 at Box 550 Grand Junction, CO 81502, or call 303/242-3264.

MOUNTAINFILM FESTIVAL

The sixth annual Mountainfilm festival will be held in Telluride, Colorado, May 25-28. The festival is devoted to films about mountain sports or mountain life and features some never shown before in public. Other activities include climbing excursions and ski tours in the Telluride area. Cost of an evening ticket, which includes 6 film sessions, special presentations by honored guests, and related activities is \$50. Daytime tickets for films alone are \$25. For more information contact Mountainfilm, P.O. Box 1088, Telluride, CO 81435, (303/728-4123.)



Gaston Rebuffat

MANAGING THE CURECANTI

Western Colorado's Curecanti National Recreation Area has a new Natural Resource Management Plan. The plan addresses wildlife interests, grazing, fire and visitor impacts in the 42,000-acre area along three Gunnison River reservoirs west of Gunnison. Flexibility in the plan will be provided by planned annual reviews and updates. Written comments will be accepted until June 1. To submit comments or obtain copies of the plan write to the Superintendent, Curecanti NRA, P.O. Box 1040, Gunnison, CO 81230. Copies of the plan may also be obtained at the National Park Service's Regional Office in Denver.

STUDY PRE-HISTORIC INDIANS

Explore the life of pre-historic Indians of Montana in a course to be taught at the University of Montana June 18-21 by Carling Malouf, professor of anthropology. The course will be taught through displays of artifacts and stone tools, slides and movies, and short field trips to pictograph and occupation sites. Archaeological dating and excavation techniques will also be presented. Families, including children over 12, are encouraged to participate. A catalogue containing summer session and registration information can be obtained from the Center for Continuing Education, 125 Main Hall, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812; phone 406/243-2900.

12-high Country News -- May 14, 1984

Q. What brings experts and citizens together for a lengthy symposium?

by Staci Hobbet

Dick Randall, a Defenders of Wildlife representative, skirted roadblocks and fought 40 mile per hour winds during one of Wyoming's worst spring blizzards in history to reach Casper, Wyoming, by the evening of April 27th. The reason was a symposium featuring the nation's top grizzly bear experts in their first public meeting of the minds.

Despite the blizzard, all but one of the planned speakers arrived in Casper where they were joined by more than 200 citizens who grittily stuck with a program which began Friday and lasted well into Saturday night.

Their concern was for grizzly bears, particularly those of Yellowstone National Park in northwestern Wyoming. Over the past decade, said researchers, the population has been dwindling and there may now be fewer than 250 bears in the "Yellowstone ecosystem," an area including the Park and the several national forests which surround it. The reasons for the population decline are many and have been the subject of sometimes acrimonious debate among many of the symposium's participants.

Disagreements among experts and the increasing importance of making effective decisions about grizzly management inspired Casper's Murie Audubon Society to sponsor the event. Walt Mersch, president of the chapter, said, "We thought we should get them (the experts) together -- for the bears first of all, for the experts themselves, and for the rest of us."

Researchers said at the Symposium that grizzly bears aren't the problem; people are. This was not a surprising conclusion for anyone. The hard part for the 11 speakers was coming up with a workable solution. Speakers included long-term grizzly researchers Frank and John Craighead, author Tom McNamee, grizzly photographer Doug Peacock, National Audubon representative Amos Eno, and a trio of bear experts from various government agencies, among others.

Participants agreed that the grizzly bear population is dwindling because of increased bear-human contact. Bear mortality rates have become alarmingly high over the past decade since the closing of the Park's garbage dumps, which acted as cafeterias for generations of bears extending back to the 1890s. But bears aren't dying of starvation, the experts also agreed.

Grizzlies are being shot accidentally by hunters looking for black bears, and on purpose by poachers out for the dollars a prime coat will bring. They are killed when they become "garbage bears" and relocation fails. They are losing critical habitat to energy and real estate development, logging and livestock.

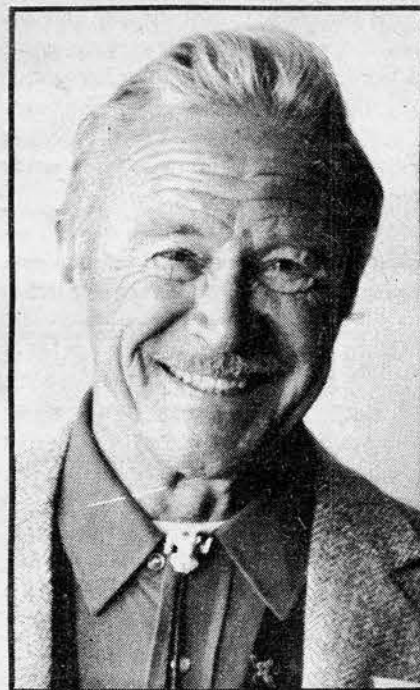
The problem may well be that humans and bears have too much in

common for both species to exist peacefully together. But while bears are easily conditioned to people, it is a rare person who feels at ease in the presence of a 600-pound grizzly.

The conflicts which have arisen between bear researchers center on what steps to take down which paths to grizzly recovery. Philosophies behind the varying opinions point to questions more basic than the 'how' of grizzly bear survival and urge a clearer answer to the question: "What is a national park?" Should it be an entire ecosystem where the bear is allowed to roam freely, or a place with definite, human-made boundaries and uses, where the bear is baited away from places where people want to be? Who should get out of the way of whom? Should the bears be allowed, in the words of Tom McNamee, "to make their own living in an ecosystem," or should they be supplied with supplemental food, as some symposium participants believe the Craighead research suggests?

The Craigheads, twins who pioneered Yellowstone grizzly research and many field techniques, share a soft-spoken determination to see the grizzly saved. They reviewed their years of study for the audience.

Beginning in 1959, the Craigheads spent more than ten years trapping, marking, tracking and counting bears in and around a grizzly-favored garbage dump at Trout Creek, near the geographical center of Yellowstone. They also studied other grizzly populations feasting on more 'natural' accumulations of food. In Alaska, where grizzlies group in large numbers to fish for spawning salmon, the Craigheads saw social behavior identical to that they witnessed at Trout Creek. In both populations, they said, bears were coming together to feed in areas where, in John Craighead's words, "concentrated



Frank Craighead

food supplies seasonally attract large aggregates of bears and hold them for a long while."

The Craigheads documented a social hierarchy which developed and strengthened during the period the bears were grouped, which served to keep interactions between the bears peaceful and useful. The brothers suggested the gatherings also made it easier for bears to locate mates. From these observations at food concentrations, the Craigheads formulated the idea of bear "ecocenters" from which well-fed, socially interactive bears radiated out into the surrounding ecosystem.

Because the garbage dumps of Yellowstone acted as the nucleus of the bear ecosystem for nearly 80 years said the Craigheads, grizzlies were concentrated toward the center of the Yellowstone ecosystem -- the Park itself. Without the magnet of the dumps to attract them, the bears have dispersed into surrounding national forest lands where a multiple use mandate makes bear-human conflict inevitable.

The brothers refuse to put a 'good' or 'bad' label on the dumps but sought to establish the fact of their importance in the past performance of the grizzly population. "My brother Frank and I never opposed the closing of the dumps," said John Craighead. "We said they should be phased out very slowly over a ten-year period."

But the Park Service closed the dumps suddenly and absolutely. The Craigheads worry that the bears, without the support of the ecocenters, may not only be less well-fed, but also are so widely distributed that mating may occur less frequently. Female grizzlies at best reproduce only every two to three years, and there are fewer cubs now, either because of lowered fertility or increasing cub mortality. The age at which breeding first occurs has increased from 5.5 to 7 years since the closing of the dumps. All these statistics mean fewer bears.

And female grizzlies are disappearing faster than males. "This

decline," said John Craighead, "can be attributed largely to the destruction of ecocenters."

Yet the Craigheads did not support reopening garbage dumps or the institution of a supplemental feeding program -- unless management efforts fail to rally flagging bear numbers. Present policy is spearheaded by the Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee (IGBC), comprised of representatives from both state and federal agencies. John Craighead said he is optimistic the current management plan will help the bears, and that "...agencies are getting together on the recovery plan..." A look at the ingredients of the IGBC, however, reveals a mixture of philosophies.

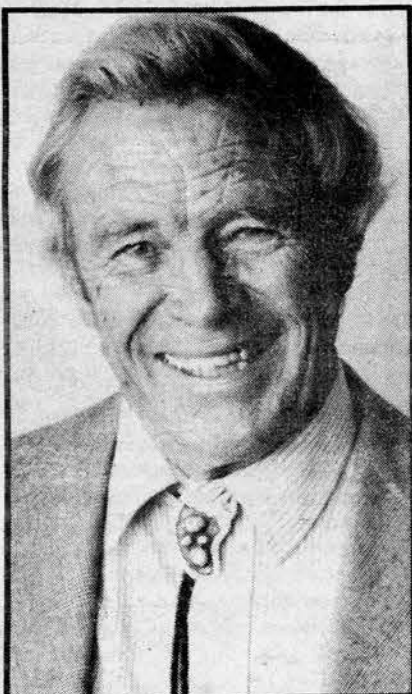
The U.S. Forest Service, for instance, which controls much of the ecosystem outside of the park boundaries, has a multiple-use mandate. Traditionally, the 'uses' have been human ones such as logging, mining and recreation. Steve Mealey, the Forest Service representative at the symposium, is charged with the duty of balancing human interests and bear necessities in his District. He said he's "...quite confident that recovery of grizzly bears will occur," with the reduction of man-caused bear mortalities. In 1982, he reported, 41 percent of grizzly bear deaths in the Yellowstone ecosystem were caused by outfitters and hunters on national forest land. In view of this statistic, Mealey said, when uses of the national forest can't be made compatible, the bear must reign.

The test to see whether uses of the forest can "be made compatible" as Mealey said, suggests scores may be tallied by summing up bear mortalities where bears and humans intermingle. "We will tolerate no more preventable (bear) mortalities," said Mealey.

The National Park Service, represented at the symposium by Gary Brown, an assistant chief Yellowstone ranger, has 'natural management' as its mission. Staunchly against supplemental feeding, the Park Service would like to see the entire Yellowstone ecosystem, including the national forests, developed into unmanipulated bear habitat. Brown said the Park Service's goal is to manage the people, not the bears.

IGBC members have agreed that the grizzly can probably survive without a supplemental feeding program, but only if man-caused mortalities are cut almost to zero. Most also agree that such a reduction will be extremely difficult.

A much-debated solution has been 'baiting' bears with dead elk or other game. Frank Craighead said baiting "...is a technique which should definitely be tried in management of the grizzlies..." He said it would draw bears from human habitations into less vulnerable areas and lessen the bears' temptation to prey on sheep grazing on national forest lands.



John Craighead

A. Grizzly bears



A system of baiting is a smaller step than instituting a comprehensive supplemental feeding program, and, according to Gary Brown, a special IGBC task force has begun to "determine whether or not baiting will help." The idea seems most attractive to some IGBC members as a short-term way to draw hungry bears away from "conflict areas" during years when natural bear food is scarce.

But Steve Mealey also said he believes the bear "is a species which can take care of itself," and Tom McNamee, author of an Audubon magazine feature on the grizzly, said he sees the park as a "natural laboratory." "What's hardest of all is to decide when to do nothing," McNamee said.

Hope for the grizzly bears' survival ran from the confidence of Steve Mealey to the cautious optimism of the Craigheads to the desperation of Tony Povilitis, a Colorado biologist who has formed a citizen's group called "Campaign for Yellowstone's Bears." A proposal written by the group has been sent to Secretary of the Interior William Clark.

Povilitis said survival of the

grizzlies will take stringent habitat protection, elimination of all human activity which might threaten critical habitat, extensive research to expand the data on bears, and improvements in the "overall health and security of the grizzly."

Povilitis said the bear population has dropped so low that any new development or human intrusion gambles with the bears' slim chance of survival. "How can we expect to end man-caused mortalities when we continue to cause situations which kill bears?" he asked.

Real estate developments planned inside the Park were a target of Povilitis' criticism. "The burden of proof is on us, not the bear," he said. "If you say something won't hurt the bear -- then prove it."

Inevitably, with state and federal lands involved, the grizzly issue has been politicized, adding to the stew of opinions simmering around the researchers.

Amos Eno, National Audubon's representative at the symposium and a lobbyist for the bears in Washington, D.C., told the audience that "in grizzly bear politics it's very

'The burden of proof is on us...

If you say it won't hurt the bear

-- then prove it.'

easy to forget about the bears." Wyoming's two senators, he reported, have both inserted themselves into the fray. He said Senator Alan Simpson supports supplemental feeding in the Park with the goal of "holding the bears captive" to reduce man-bear competition in national forests. Senator Malcolm Wallop, he reported, has proposed changes to the Endangered Species Act which "hold the potential to re-order the entire Act" and allow only "relic populations" of endangered animals to exist.

As the symposium concluded, some participants said they hoped a movement to save the grizzly would emerge from this first gathering. But as the National Park Service's Gary Brown put it, "Government agencies alone won't save the grizzlies. It will take the understanding and concern of the public as a whole."

□

Staci Hobbet is a free-lance writer based in Casper, Wyoming.

What does it mean when a grizzly eats 'Hayduke's' t-shirt

Doug Peacock looks a little like the grizzlies he films. Bearded and sturdy, he is known for standing his ground, whether in a discussion testing his philosophy of wildlife conservation or in the field facing a charging bear.

A self-described desert-rat and anarchist who served as model for the incorrigible Hayduke in Edward Abbey's book, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, Peacock is an outspoken critic of practices which have led to the bear's scarcity.

The grizzly Peacock credits with inspiring him to his career as film maker and bear advocate ran him up a tree in Yellowstone. "I was having a malaria attack after Vietnam," he says, "and was sitting in a hot creek at Yellowstone one October day. I didn't know anything about bears."

He started learning fast. At the approach of a sow bear and her two cubs, he scrambled from the water too quickly, blacked out and ran head-first into a tree. Coming to, he clawed his way up the tree "leaving flesh and blood on the trunk. I spent the next hour and twenty minutes," he says, "blue, naked and bleeding, while the sow ignored me and grazed on the grass below."

Peacock now has 20,000 feet of grizzly film and an education in grizzly bear behavior few can equal. His films are in demand and he has reluctantly "gone public." "I'd rather be on a

ridge watching grizzlies," he says during the Casper, Wyoming grizzly symposium where he shared some of his films.

Peacock takes his advocacy seriously. Asked if he will film more bears in the future, he replies he won't unless very special footage were required. "I don't feel I should subject them to the stress of being filmed," he says, even though many of his subjects do not realize his presence. He says any bear-human contact may result in the bear becoming "man-conditioned" -- unafraid of humans. Such conditioning has proven to be deadly to the bear. The majority of man-killed bears are those which, through an association of people with food, seek meals in campgrounds and have to be shot as a method of "control."

Peacock's philosophy for preservation of the bear parallels that of the Plains Indians who considered the bear "to be a god sent down to make us humble." Peacock struggles against the sentiment that animals must adjust to human presence. "Despite our modern technology and thought," he says, "we are still a Pleistocene critter just like the grizzly. We sprang from the same environment... and saving the bears will require a lot of reverence and a lot of humility."

Peacock's films are a series of sometimes uncomfortably close-up

shots of grizzlies eating, strolling, playing -- and occasionally approaching the camera with speed and purpose. "I've been charged over twenty times," says Peacock, who has resorted to rolling in woodsmoke and ashes to disguise his scent. It doesn't always hide him. "Once a bear challenges you, you have to assert your dominance." Peacock does it by standing up to the bear and talking to it. What do you say to an irate grizzly bear? "Come on, griz, give me a break."

Peacock says bears react to him the way they do to other, dominant bears -- they tolerate his presence and respect his territory, which is usually a ridge from which he films.

But he has had some terrifying experiences. "One night," he recalls, "an old, mean boar kept me awake all night blundering around in the brush near my tent." Although the night passed without incident, later the same grizzly ate Peacock's sleeping bag and "an old, dirty tee-shirt. I think he was trying to tell me something."

Of the 200 grizzlies Peacock has filmed in Wyoming and Montana, a favorite is "an old guy" he calls "the Happy Bear." A star performer in Peacock's films, the boar is a loner, but a particularly content one. Gamboling along the edge of a thawing pond, he breaks through the ice and plunges, head-first into the

frigid water. Unperturbed, he sits up and begins shattering the ice with long sweeps of his powerful paws. He picks up a piece of the ice and chews it, then tosses it back into the pool. "This is the guy I've seen blow bubbles in water and then bite them," narrates Peacock. "He can play for hours by himself."

Recognizing that the bear has been the loser in a competition with man for much of North America, Peacock says the bear's entrenched position demands respect. Alluding to the areas in the lower 48 states where bears have been extirpated, he says, "We decided, consciously or unconsciously, we didn't want bears there." He believes that if Americans don't decide consciously to save the bear "microbes and insects and the products of human design will be all that's left."

For most people, the loss of the grizzly would mean little and change less. But to Peacock the loss would confirm his suspicion that he is out of synch with a nation of people who do not recognize what he terms the "linkages connecting man with animals."

On the screen, two bear cubs mock-wrestle and leap at one another like cumbersome puppies, rolling in the grass. "I love to watch these guys play," says Peacock. "It's the peak of my life."

--Staci Hobbet

OPINION

A backhanded compliment from James McClure

by Lill Erickson

On April 16th conservationists received a compliment. It came from an unlikely source, Senator James McClure. Surprised? So was I. It was not intended as a compliment, and at first I was offended. But upon consideration, the compliment appeared.

The backhanded compliment came during his Salmon, Idaho public meeting before 150 conservative supporters. He was discussing the subject of wilderness. After an impassioned description of his efforts to resolve the "cursed" roadless issue, he was asked by the crowd: in what way could they help? To which he replied: organize. He went on to solicit letters of support, letters to the editor and organizational endorsements for his proposal.

To justify the endorsements, he described the efforts of the conservationist and sportsmen opposition. He described their ability to mobilize support, generate letters and turn out pro-wilderness testimony at the hearings. He described the "powerful" national environmental organizations who lobby eastern congressmen to influence "Idaho" wilderness legislation. The mill workers described their "dilemma." He repeated his plea for "Idahoan" support.

The crowd was his. The Chamber of Commerce and livestock associations publicly endorsed his bill without even considering the conservationists and sportsmen's proposal. One by one, community leaders added their support. A petition circulated and was filled.

It was grim. It reminded me of those days during RARE II when we were labled "communist" for having a different point of view. Conservationists in the audience were silent. No one wanted to be branded.

It was so discouraging. Discouraging on several levels. For five years the Idaho Conservation League (ICL) has existed in Salmon. For five years the chapter, comprised of folks who work and raise their families in Salmon, have worked diligently to heal the wounds of RARE II. For five years the chapter studied the issues and developed thoughtful, responsible positions on conservation problems and shared them with the community. It was discouraging to watch five years evaporated in the space of two hours by a



Senator James McClure

skillful politician pursuing votes and political support for a vulnerable piece of legislation.

It was discouraging to see local conservationists, who had worked in good faith with the mill workers and Champion International to ensure timber supplies for the mill, be accused of communism, collecting welfare and "locking up" the land for their personal use. Is it any wonder no one spoke up?

It was further discouraging to watch the skillful politician abuse his power and manipulate the emotions of a rural town to support his political ambitions.

I was angry. It seemed such a waste of the possibility of finding a reasonable, rational, fair resolution of the issue. But Senator McClure did not want to play it that way. He declared war and targeted us as the enemy.

But as the anger smoldered, and defeat almost seemed easy to accept, the compliment emerged. All of a sudden it was clear. Senator McClure's tactics were a reaction of fear, a fear of our power. He admitted to the crowd after being questioned

that letters were running 10 to 1 in support of additional wilderness. Instead of interpreting the input as legitimate, Idaho concern, he used it merely as an example of our strength. He decried the intervention of Congressman Seiberling on an Idaho issue even though McClure himself is stalling the passage of wilderness bills in Washington and Oregon. He went as far as to "tip his hat to our effectiveness." And, as insulting as it was intended, the compliment was there.

Senator McClure is vulnerable on this issue, and much is at risk. If he loses once again in the committee he chairs, he will be disgraced. He fears the power of Congressman Seiberling in the House of Representative and so must build his own block of support for his bill. To accomplish that, we are once again used as the scapegoat responsible for economic woes which plague industries made soft and complacent by years of government subsidies.

So once again we must stand together. If the wild land and the people and creatures dependent upon it are to be protected, we must not be afraid to voice our concern. There is nothing evil, or selfish or communistic about believing there is value in wild places, in believing wildlife has a right to live free from man's constant pressure, in believing that not every place on this earth must be roaded for easy access for those incapable or unwilling to walk.

There is value in wilderness. It represents the future. It protects watersheds, calving grounds and spawning gravels, and it is also a place for humans to renew their souls.

Senator McClure must be made to understand that people concerned with wilderness protection are also Idahoans. He must be told over and over in a thousand different ways that he represents us, too. We cannot allow this political game to continue.

So please stand up for what you believe to be right. For if Senator McClure is successful, this will be the last opportunity. Areas left unprotected will be developed. He must receive letters and calls with your support for wilderness. We must earn the compliment.

Lill Erickson is the Central Idaho Field Representative for the Idaho Conservation League.

Thank you, HCN Research Fund contributors!

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OPINION

Poachers are getting away with murder

by Carol Jones

There is a poaching case currently on appeal in Fremont County Court in Wyoming. It is not a case of big-time commercial operators who commit felonies in the act of their wasteful killings. This case is a story of small-time poaching, possibly a one-time occurrence. But nonetheless, a blatant case of poaching.

The case is worthy of note because for the first time in Wyoming history a judge fined the convicted poachers the maximum amount allowed by law. The two men were convicted on two counts and fined \$900 each. They were both given 30-day suspended jail sentences.

One man, Jim Beyer, had his guiding license revoked for two years. The other, Roger Penney, had his guiding and outfitting license revoked for 1985, with the possibility of an amended sentence if he has a good record in 1984. The judge had the power to revoke the license for up to two years only, an action usually reserved for the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission.

This county court sentencing is considered a precedent by wildlife advocates, mainly because of the maximum fines. But while praising the judge for hitting in the pocket, the proponents failed to notice that the real deterrent was passed up for the outfitter Penney. Despite the fact that he openly took two or more elk illegally, he is free to continue outfitting this year and probably next year.

Last November, Penney, an outfitter from Dubois, Wyoming, and his two guides took two clients from Wisconsin to a hunting cabin north of town. These guys got pretty excited the morning they woke up and saw a meadow full of elk. Kent Schmidlin, Game and Fish warden from Jeffery City, was pretty interested in the sight also. He was just down the road, out of sight to the hunters, viewing the scene with binoculars from his pickup.

Penney and Beyer came out shooting and downed two elk apiece. Neither one had valid permits. According to Dubois game warden Kay Bowles, two other elk were seriously if not fatally wounded. Bowles said the blood trail of the two was tracked, but they were never found.

This case couldn't have been more clear. The poachers were caught in the act, dead elk and all. County Judge Robert Denhardt's sentencing is a step in the right direction, but it does not go far enough. Denhardt did almost as much as he could. Currently in Wyoming a judge is limited to the amount he can fine for poaching, depending upon

the degree of misdemeanor. But most important, a judge has the right to revoke a guiding and outfitting license for up to two years. A revocation for longer than that must come from the Game and Fish Commission.

Unfortunately, Denhardt let this deterrent slip by with Penney and in the process contradicted himself.

According to the *Dubois Frontier*, during the sentencing Judge Denhardt described himself as a hunter of 30 years. He said: "I have come upon animals susceptible of being taken and have talked over how it would be done, like 'You take the first one, and I'll take the second one.'"

But what Beyer and Penney did is "totally irresponsible activity and I seriously question why you should have a guide and outfitter's license. There are two reasons (for the killings) I come up with. You guys lost your head, and that's inexcusable, or you didn't give a damn," said the judge.

Yet, after fining the man, he faltered. Although he did revoke Beyer's guiding license for 1984-85, he said he was "troubled" about taking away Penney's livelihood. Beyer apparently has another job besides guiding.

The judge decided to revoke Penney's 1985 guiding and outfitting license, but not for 1984. If Penney is "good" this year, his sentence can be amended for 1985.

So Penney pays \$900 and gets another chance. Nine hundred dollars is nothing to laugh at -- but the real deterrent would have been to take away that privilege which Penney abused. Denhardt was afraid of taking away that livelihood.

If a bank teller embezzles funds, do we fine him, then let him go back to his job on probation so as not to take away his livelihood? At the very least the guy will lose his job. But more likely, he will spend some time in prison. Punishment for the crime of poaching indicates the value we place on wildlife.

Another example of lax poaching penalties arose at a recent Game and Fish Commission meeting in Jackson. An outfitter from Cody was accused of killing a cougar without a permit and not reporting it. He also killed it within Yellowstone National Park, which is illegal. The outfitter's excuse was that he had a whole pile of permits and thought one was a current cougar permit. After killing the animal, he discovered the permit was for 1982 instead of 1983. He didn't report it, because, of course, it was illegal.

However, a local game warden testified for the man's good nature -- explaining that this was his first offense and a simple mistake. The outfitter was a "good ole boy" who always helped the warden when in need. The Commission went on the warden's judgment and put the man on probation for two years.

Maybe it was a mistake. Maybe he is a nice guy. But he still committed a crime and he should be penalized.

Poaching is a crime -- from the highly-organized, highly-profitable commercial operator to the Penneys and Beyers. The penalty for the big-time operation should put the person or persons in jail and out of business completely. But the penalty for the taking of one or two extras should also be strong.

Probation is little penalty for an outfitter or hunter. It is common knowledge that state and federal game wardens are few and far between. The chances of being caught are slim and for most, when a good opportunity comes along, it's worth the risk. It's even more worth the risk when they know that the penalty for taking one or two animals illegally is a slap on the wrist. A fine, even a stiff fine, can be considered a business expense. If, once caught, the penalty was loss of livelihood, perhaps they would think longer and harder about committing the crime.

Wyoming lawmakers have stiffened the penalties for poaching over the last six to eight years. As warden Bowles said, he remembers when the maximum fine for any poaching crime was \$100, period. And the Game and Fish Commission has a long set of regulations which guides and outfitters must follow in order to remain in good standing for licenses. But despite these improvements, there seems to be a reluctance to use the stiffer penalties.

Denhardt should have revoked Penney's license for the two years. And regardless of the outcome of the appeal, the Game and Fish Commission should support a two-year revocation and step in if Penney wins the appeal. Perhaps then Penney would have a proper perspective of his profession.

Some places it can be worse. As Bowles said: "In Russia, shooting a snow leopard results in a mandatory death sentence."

Carol Jones is a writer well known to long-time *High Country News* readers. She now lives with her husband, a rancher, in Dubois, Wyoming.

HIGH COUNTRY

By Tom Bell

Taking the broad geographic view

Several friends and acquaintances have hit me recently with "Gee, I wish *High Country News* hadn't moved from Wyoming to Colorado. It was like losing an old friend."

Yes, I did hate to see *HCN* move, for several reasons. But they were all for wrong, selfish reasons and not for the good of the paper.

Maybe I am different from most people. But I look on resource problems as having more than just a local impact. The latest *U.S. News & World Report* tells of "The Plague That's Killing America's Trees." Who's to blame? We all are.

What we see happening in the national forests at our back door is also happening in Idaho, Oregon, Alaska, Thailand, and Brazil. Yet we are all affected by what goes on in every one of those places. Exploitation without conservation will eventually ruin our forest resources and have serious side effects for all mankind. We are already seeing it happen.

I guess what I am saying is that I tend toward the broad outlook rather than the narrow one. I try not to be parochial.

I have explained to others on occasion that when I went off to war to lay my life on the line, there were 48 stars in that flag which meant so much to me. But there was more than the fact that I came from just one state -- Wyoming. Those stars and stripes stand for much more than just individual states.

So, too, does *High Country News* stand for more than the individual, localized problems of just one state, whether it be Wyoming or Colorado. That is not to say that local or in-state problems cannot be important ones. They are to me and I know they are to you. Issues close to home have a way of getting our attention.

But the mission of *High Country News* is to analyze news into a clear, coherent picture of what's happening across a whole region. Water (what there is of it), how it is used, what happens to it, is of common interest to the Rocky Mountain states and beyond. Public lands in vast tracts are a property unique to the western states and Alaska, and their management, or mismanagement, concerns every citizen. The lands belong to us all.

As national leadership changes so does the emphasis on administration and management of natural resources. Witness the first four years of the Reagan administration and the complete reversal of some policies going back to Teddy Roosevelt. By informing readers and fostering an awareness of such changes, *High Country News* has an impact far beyond its slight stature in the world of journalism. Its effectiveness cannot be underestimated.

The *High Country News* is a useful voice, still needed, whether situated in Wyoming or

Colorado. And, yes, it was like an old friend moving away. But the bonds of friendship are no less strong and dear.

Meanwhile back at the ranch... Friend Dave Olson of Portland, Oregon sent me some information on the Columbia Gorge. He is a member of Friends of the Columbia Gorge, an organization dedicated to saving what's left of the Gorge for posterity.

For anyone who has not been through the Gorge which follows the mighty Columbia down to the sea, it is an experience worth going to the Northwest to view. There is much of it, of course, that is just as it was when first seen by Lewis and Clark. But white men have done much to mar its beauty and magnificence.

The late Governor Tom McCall of Oregon was one of the original Friends of the Columbia Gorge; working for its preservation was one of his last endeavors. Now both of Oregon's United States Senators, Mark Hatfield and Bob Packwood, have introduced legislation for its protection. Companion legislation has also been introduced in the House.

Senate Bill 627 and House Bill 1747 would establish a partnership between the federal government and the states of Washington and Oregon to protect the Gorge. And it would provide local and state residents with significant say-so in the management of the area.

Tom Bell is the founder of *High Country News* and a Lander, Wyoming newsman.

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OFF THE WALL

'People kill ducks'

The Irrational Rifle Association has renewed its opposition to the banning of lead shot for waterfowl hunting, saying, "Lead shot doesn't kill ducks, people kill ducks."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has pushed for a ban on the use of lead shot during the waterfowl season. Thousands of ducks, geese and swans die from lead poisoning each year because they ingest spent lead pellets from the bottoms of marshes and ponds, according to the federal agency.

But IRA President Ted "Howie" Howitzer said steel shot -- the proposed replacement for lead shot -- is "worse than fluoridated water" and is an "attempt by the eastern, one-world government forces to disarm the American Duckhunter." Howitzer said even if the use of steel shot did

prevent the needless deaths of waterfowl, "that steel shot sure does scratch up a gun barrel."

Nature's way is best

Washington, D.C. -- The Department of Energy today said a private firm has been contracted to develop Mount St. Helens into a national radioactive waste treatment site. A department spokesman said Nuke-A-Regulatory, Inc. would start immediately on plans to develop the active volcano into a toxic waste incinerator.

Carson Gomeray, president of Nuke-A-Regulatory, said high level radioactive wastes, as well as carcinogens, PCBs and other toxins, would be pushed over the lip of the crater where they would be "cooked to entirely safe levels."

Sen. James McMoney, chairman of the Committee on Natural Wastelands and Energy,

said the project "is a glowing example of multiple-use conservation: the greatest good for the greatest number at the best price."

But conservationists are charging the project would contaminate the area and say the company's plan to haul the wastes to the crater in backpacks would endanger the lives of the employees. Gomeray said because Mount St. Helens is still an active volcano "it would not be cost-effective to build roads to the crater, which may soon be buried under lava and ash." He added that the employees hired to haul the radioactive wastes would be "almost entirely migrant laborers." He said "those people have shown a tremendous resistance to the insecticides and herbicides sprayed on them for years. I don't see that a little radiation would hurt."

--Glenn Oakley

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STAFF POSITIONS, ILLINOIS SOUTH PROJECT. Collectively run public interest group. Organizing, research, advocacy on coal development and agricultural issues. One year public interest experience necessary. \$13,500 plus benefits. For application, write ISP, 116½ West Cherry, Herrin, IL 62948.

COMMUNITY ORGANIZER WANTED: The Dakota Resource Council, a citizen's organization concerned about the impacts of energy development on agriculture, has a position open for a community organizer. DRC strives to promote economic and social justice among rural North Dakotans. Responsibilities include organizing, research, and issue campaign development. Starting salary \$700 a month. 20 days paid vacation plus holidays, health insurance, mileage. Send resume and writing sample to Dakota Resource Council, Box 254, Dickenson, ND 58601. Phone (701) 227-1851.

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