

High Country

news

March 4, 1985

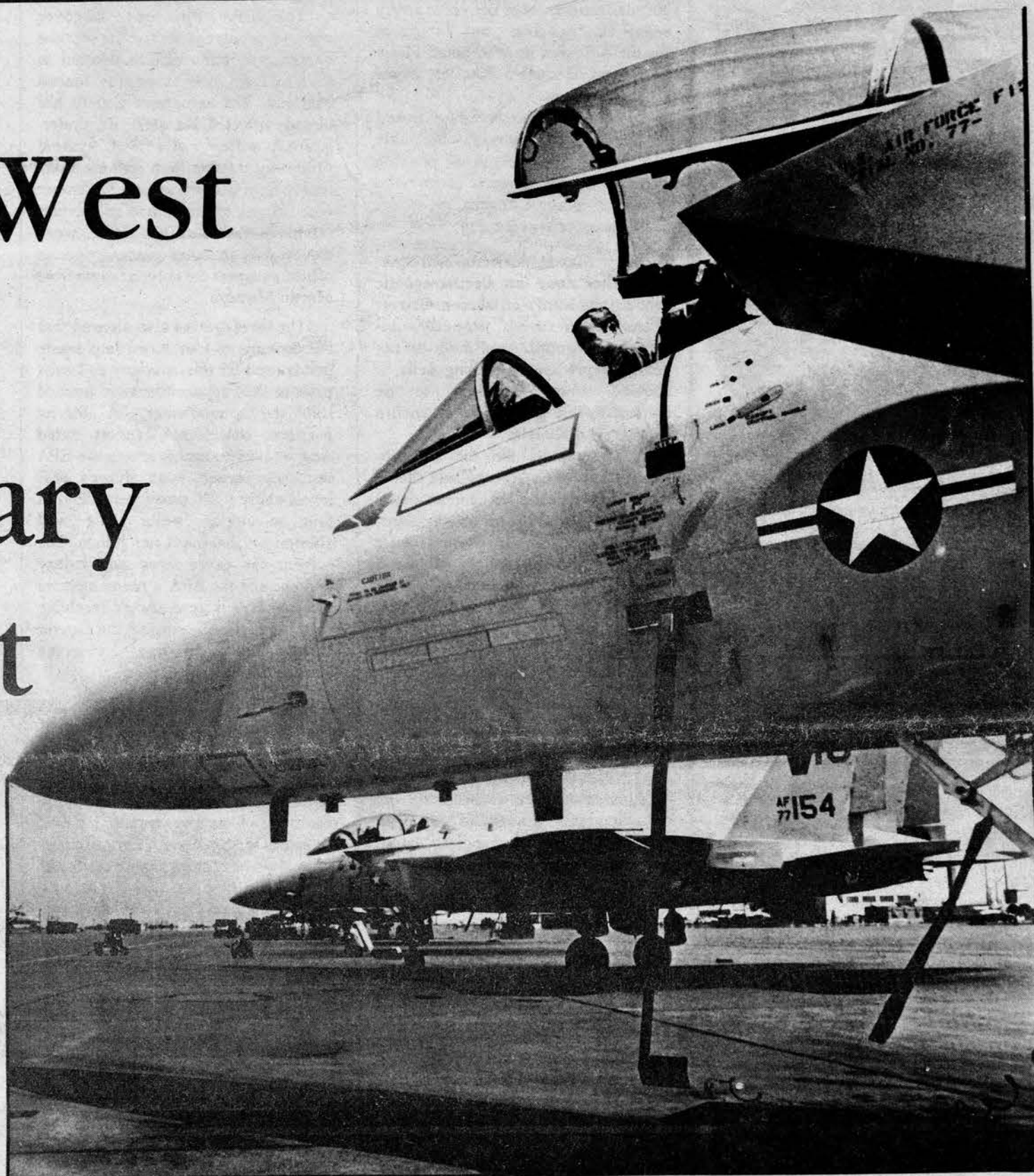
Vol. 17 No. 4

A Paper for People who Care about the West

\$1.00

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WESTERN ROUNDUP

Poisoned water threatens Denver's supply



High Country News

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Tom Bell
Editor Emeritus

Ed Marston
Publisher

Betsy Marston
Editor

Judy Moffatt
Promotion

Marjane Ambler
Carol Jones

Glenn Oakley
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C.L. Rawlins
Peter Wild

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Mary Moran
Editorial

Lynda Alfred
Bruce Farling

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Linda Bilheimer

Darkroom
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Production
Judy Heideman

Typesetting

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Michael Clark, *Boulder CO*

Lynn Dickey, *Sheridan WY*

Adam McLane, *Helena, MT*

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Garrett Ray, *Littleton CO*

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A federal and state investigation has turned up serious groundwater contamination problems at the sprawling 5,200-acre Martin Marietta aerospace facility. The plant is located 20 miles southwest of Denver in a very sensitive location: not far from Chatfield Reservoir, the South Platte River and Denver's Kassler Water Treatment Plant.

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A spokesman for the Environmental Protection Agency said that if there is a plume of contaminated groundwater moving toward the plant, it might have to be shut down. Kassler supplies seven percent, or 40 million gallons, of metro Denver's daily water.

Although the company has reported some of its environmental problems to state and federal authorities during

the past year, the latest concerns came up during a survey by the EPA of a south Jefferson County neighborhood where some residents had reported unusual health problems.

The EPA did not discover environmental reasons for the unusual cancer rate, but officials decided to take a closer look at nearby Martin Marietta. The aerospace facility has already affected Kassler. An underground water collection system producing three million gallons a day had to be shut down in late December when traces of an industrial solvent, trichloroethylene, or TCE, were discovered in the water. Health officials suspect the solvent came from Martin Marietta.

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Then came a second consultant's report, also dated August 1984 but given to the Colorado Department of Health in February 1985, showing water contamination under the plant's manufacturing areas. Among the 30 wells drilled, one had high concentrations of cancer-causing benzene and other chemicals found in gasoline, suggesting an underground fuel tank leak. Two other wells had high levels of TCE and another solvent, 1,1,1-trichloroethane, which the consultants said may come from a leak in the manufacturing building.

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Martin Marietta has pledged cooperation and undertook the drilling at the Kassler plant on its own.

--Sandy Graham

Sandy Graham is science/energy writer at the *Rocky Mountain News* in Denver.

Dear friends,

Although we are still receiving and compiling our survey of 120 new subscribers, one thing is clear: many, if not most, of you come to us through recommendations from friends, co-workers and relatives. That finding coincides with a truly staggering postal rate increase: one that is making the large-scale mailing of samples to potential new subscribers less attractive than previously.

So we want to reduce our dependence on sampling, and increase our already strong dependence on present subscribers. We can't think of a better, more stable basket to put our eggs in.

To do this, starting with this issue we ask you to provide us with the names and addresses of people who you think might be interested in HCN. Especially bright prospects would be friends or co-workers who are already reading your copy, people who belong to an organization relevant to HCN's natural resource concerns, or even someone so bullheaded they disagree with you and need a third party like HCN to straighten them out.

As an incentive, we will reward you with a credit of \$4.50 toward your next renewal for each person you submit who actually subscribes. If you bring us four new subs, it means a free year of HCN to you. We will keep the records, although feel free to check up on us. You might also mention whether we can use your name in sending the samples. We have a substantial file of recent back issues, and if you think one of them might be of interest to a potential reader, let us know.

Originally, this issue was going to be the Bust part of our Boom-Bust special issue. But we've interrupted it

instead to run intern Bruce Farling's treatment of the burgeoning military presence in the West. This military issue could have been part of the boom and bust series, as the Pentagon's mega-billions spill out over this land, much like a reservoir bursting through a dam.

But we have emphasized instead

the on-the-ground effects of the military expansion -- the locking up of public lands, the effect of sonic booms on people and wildlife, the exclusion of commercial flights from large chunks of Nevada and the trashing of land by targets and rockets.

--the staff

BARBED WIRE

A U.S. Senator just can't get out in the bustings too often.

Montana Senator John Melcher, accompanied by three aides, has just made his second trip to the Philippines in two years. The latest trip was a seven-day unannounced visit to discuss food aid and military needs. It was facilitated by Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos, whose troops drove away 2,000 Filipino farmers gathered to protest the visit.

Did an elected official really say that?

A nine-year veteran of the Montrose, Colorado, school board named Don Wicburg is not running again because, "I think it's time for some new blood and some new ideas. My ideas seem old and stagnant," according to the *Grand Junction Daily Sentinel*.

Montana legislators show off their ability to reason abstractly.

In a debate over a bill to allow seaplanes to land on lakes, Rep. Loren Jenkins of Big Sandy said: It would "open a can of worms." But Bob Gilbert of Sidney countered: It would "close a can of worms."

How yuckie.

A resident of Glenwood Springs, Colorado, applauded the city for cutting down a tree along her street: "It's rotted clear through, and the bees and everything build their nests in it."

Ingenious revenge.

Sinclair Lewis, who wrote scathing portraits of boosterism and Midwest life in *Babbalanza* and *Main Street*, was honored recently by his hometown of Sauk Centre, Minnesota, on his 100th birthday. According to the *New York Times*, the honors included mugs, centennial t-shirts, crystal balls and a bake-caking contest.

Dogs like to eat out occasionally, too.

An employee of the Kalispell Meat Company in Montana said he became suspicious of the company when it sold dog-food meat to a restaurant chain.

Biting the hand that...

A mink rancher who expects to raise and slaughter 32,000 of the animals this year says of the species: "They're so mean. You give them one quarter of a chance and they'll bite your hand."

Colorado Superfund sites are a mixed lot

Colorado gained five more Superfund sites late last year, bringing its total to 14. Controversy accompanies each site, from the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, called by some the most contaminated piece of real estate in the "free world," to the Smuggler Mountain tailings site in Aspen, where critics question if health risks warrant Superfund designation at all.

If it ever gets off the ground, the Army, the EPA, and the Colorado Department of Health will conduct the largest cleanup in Colorado's history. The project is a 15-year effort at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal near Denver, with the price tag estimated between \$350 and \$700 million. In a press conference last fall, Assistant Secretary of the Army Pat Hillier promised that when remedial action was complete, the Arsenal would be "so clean you could build a nursery on it." But EPA regional administrator John Welles says he is not convinced the water leaving the Arsenal can ever be free of contaminants.

The Arsenal has been releasing toxic pollutants for over 40 years. The Department of Defense manufactured mustard gas and other chemical weapons at the 27-acre facility during World War II and nerve gas during the Korean War. Keeping the plant in a state of readiness even after the war, the government has leased its facility to various private companies since the mid-1940s. The last tenant was the Shell Chemical Company, which produced pesticides and fungicides at the Arsenal until mid-1982.

Although both Shell and the Army are considered responsible for the hazardous wastes generated at the Arsenal, they have been involved in

Ron Marcoux, Associate Director of the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, agrees that his agency does not have much information to go on to set grizzly bear management policy. The grizzly is an elusive creature, he

Aspen Historical Society



Smuggler Mine, 1890

Post," says Pitkin County Commissioner Michael Kinsley. In the summer of 1983, the county told the EPA about heavy metals in the soil around the Smuggler Mountain mine site. The old silver mine is in the resort town of Aspen. In fall 1984, Smuggler appeared on the updated Superfund national priorities list.

County officials say that the publicity may hurt the local economy, as Centennial Properties is in the midst of building employee housing on part of the contaminated area. EPA regional administrator John Welles says that the site was listed in direct response to the county's plea for help. County Commissioner Bob Child disagrees. "We were looking for advice and legislation, not financial aid," he says.

The county courthouse offers a good view of the 75-acre site. A trailer park, condominiums, and several employee housing complexes now as to re-evaluate management practices and plan ahead.

The only modification in grizzly bear hunting regulations the state is considering is reducing the hunting area to comply with boundaries the

Their results produced a score of 12.96, well below the 28.5 base for national priority status.

In recent months, the EPA has been flooded with technical comments questioning the Smuggler designation. Critics challenged the EPA's scoring system and suggested that Superfund resources be directed to more severely contaminated sites. EPA site project officer Tom Staible says that the EPA investigated the site by its standard approach and objective scoring system. But Ron Skoggerboe, chairman of the chemistry department at Colorado State University, reviewed the EPA's findings and concluded that the EPA based its ranking on questionable data and assumptions.

Even before the EPA stepped in, Centennial had covered exposed tailings with 18 inches of topsoil in a 14-acre area that is to be developed into a community park. Centennial's

Appeals upheld a lower court ruling that blocked a proposed sport-trapping season on the "threatened" eastern timber wolf of Minnesota.

--Lynda Alfred

Wyoming mill tailings cleanup is delayed

Work on cleaning up the abandoned uranium mill tailings near Riverton, Wyoming, will be delayed until 1986. Although the site is considered a high priority by the Department of Energy because of its closeness to water and people, both the state of Wyoming and tribes of the Wind River Reservation are pleased with the delay.

The old Susquehanna-Western mill site is one of 25 across the country set for cleanup by the Department of Energy under a 1978 congressional mandate. DOE is asking Congress to increase funding for the program this year, but Nancy Freudenthal, an aide to Gov. Ed Herschler, said Congress may decide not to support the program as strongly as it has before. While that means there is some risk to delaying action at Riverton, the state believes DOE rushed its plans for the tailings too much with too little information.

The tailings lie on private land within the Wind River Reservation and both the Shoshone and Arapahoe tribes want the tailings removed. Because the tailings lie on private land, however, DOE has not included the tribes in the cooperative agreement between the state and the federal agency.

"The delay gives us more time to

get our ducks in line," said Gary Collins, a tribal geologist. The tribes have hired their own engineers to evaluate the hydrology at the site and to respond to DOE's environmental assessment draft. They are exploring their options for encouraging removal of the tailings.

Collins said he doesn't trust DOE's figures, which estimate the cost of removing the tailings to a site 15 miles away at \$20 million. Stabilizing the tailings in place would cost \$13 million. He points out that in Salt Lake City, the construction company bid for moving the Vitro tailings was 44 percent less than DOE had estimated. DOE reluctantly agreed to move those tailings out of Salt Lake City to a site 85 miles away after political pressure was exerted by the Utah governor and congressional delegation.

Both the tribes and Wyoming officials say more information is needed about hydrology and geomorphology to determine the risk of further groundwater contamination and flooding. The tailings lie within the floodplain of the Big and Little Wind Rivers. Contaminants from the tailings, including molybdenum, uranium, and sulfates, are leaching into groundwater, and some have reached the Little Wind River, according to

DOE's draft environmental assessment. The site tailings would be trucked to is dry, according to the EA.

Members of a local task force asked whether action now is like closing the barn door after all the horses are out. But Lyle Randen of the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality said contaminants continue to leach into groundwater and task force members said it is still possible for people to drive up to the Susquehanna site and remove tailings. DOE representative Mark Matthews said DOE has no legal authority to require strict security measures until the site is purchased.

Despite the delay, the Wyoming DEQ is asking the state legislature to appropriate \$95,000 for the coming year as part of its commitment to pay 10 percent of the cost of the project. Part of that money will be used to clean up residential and commercial properties contaminated by uranium ore when the mill was operating in the 1950s and early 1960s.

DOE now plans to release the environmental assessment for public comment in July 1985 instead of March 1985.

--Marjane Ambler

HOTLINE

Bighorn forest plan attacked

The Wyoming Game and Fish Department has voiced strong opposition to the draft Bighorn Forest plan (HCN, 2/18/85). In 18 pages of comment, Game and Fish said that the Forest Service's logging plans must be cut by one-third to protect wildlife habitat, particularly for elk. Dick Hartman, the agency's assistant director, challenged the Forest Service's assertion that detrimental effects of logging are only temporary, and said the proposed harvest areas are near old cuts that have not regrown enough to provide adequate shelter. Hartman added that logging has already reduced big game herds on the Bighorn and that the Forest Service has consistently lost money on its timber sales.

Spuds and kids

Idaho's population is expected to boom in the next 15 years. According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, the state's population will mushroom to 1.5 million -- a 60 percent increase -- by the end of the century. The growth is an in-state phenomenon, fueled by a low death rate combined with a high birth rate. The Bureau says that an influx of people from more populous states and economic expansion will play secondary roles in making Idaho the country's seventh fastest growing state.

LUST and the EPA

LUST is a new area of interest for the EPA as a result of recent congressional action. This peculiar acronym stands for the Leaking Underground Storage Tanks program. As mandated by law, the EPA will test storage tanks owned by gas stations, truck fleet operators, chemical companies and anyone else with underground chemical storage. The agency hopes the program will cut down on the escape of hazardous materials from defective storage tanks. Of especial interest are older containers because they have the highest probability of leaks. Tanks under 1,100 gallons will be exempt from testing.

The beaver may be innocent



The beaver may be innocent of introducing anxiety into high country camping experiences. According to a scientific study, water voles and other small mammals, and not beaver or muskrat, may be the cause of giardia, an intestinal disease contracted by drinking untreated water. In an *Associated Press* story, Central Washington University researchers Glen Clark and Robert Pacha say their work in the Cascade Mountains discovered a large percentage of the mouse-like voles infected with giardia. They also found that the disease stayed with the voles through the winter. They were unable to discover whether the disease is native to the area or has been introduced by humans or livestock. "The incidence is high whether or not a stream is used by humans." The study was funded by a \$159,000 grant from the EPA.

HOTLINE

OMB at the wrong fishing hole



Sen. Malcolm Wallop

Leaving no stone unturned in its search for revenue to help offset the federal deficit, the Office of Management and Budget has come up with \$100 million that Sen. Malcolm Wallop, R-Wy., says is not available for the agency's discretionary use. The money was raised through user fees in the form of excise taxes on fishing gear and boating fuel. Wallop, a co-sponsor of the legislation that enacted the fees, says the intent was to use the money to enhance recreation opportunities for the sportsmen who are taxed. By withholding the money, the OMB is circumventing the law, Wallop charges. Citing \$1.24 million the fund brings into Wyoming, Wallop told Interior Secretary designate Donald Hodel that OMB will "have a hell of a fight on their hands" if it attempts to divert the money.

Riley Ridge reaches out



Spinoffs continue from Exxon's gas projects in southwest Wyoming. (HCN, 2/18/85). The BLM recently approved a route for a 40-mile-long pipeline to transport gas containing hydrogen sulfide from the company's Riley Ridge gas fields to its processing plants at Shute Creek. The Bureau of Land Management has also released an environmental impact statement for a pipeline to move the processing plants' product, carbon dioxide, to an oil field near Rangely, Colo. There the gas will be used in oil recovery. Searching for new markets for its CO₂, Exxon has asked the BLM to prepare an EIS on yet another pipeline -- a \$300 million, 642-mile line from Shute Creek to a number of Wyoming oil fields on the way to wells in North Dakota's Williston Basin.

N ROUNDUP

Poisoned water threatens Denver's supply

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Although we are still receiving and compiling our survey of 120 new

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Superfund is still in hazardous health

The EPA's list of hazardous waste sites is expanding fast, but critics charge a greater commitment is needed to make Superfund more than a list.

The situation is in "terminal gridlock," says David Baker, Superfund lobbyist for the League of Women Voters. "The money has not been spent wisely, and the job is not getting done," he says. "A credible plan in a reasonable time frame does not exist."

Last month the Reagan administration proposed to reauthorize Superfund with \$1 billion a year for the next five years. That is a 61 percent increase over the current year's \$620 million, but still short of the \$11.7 billion the EPA estimates it needs over the next five years.

Decontamination of all the national priority sites can be a realistic goal, says Janet Hathaway. She is staff attorney for Congresswatch, a Washington, D.C., coalition on Superfund. But she calls the Reagan proposal "minimalistic."

Congress created Superfund in 1980 and charged the EPA with managing a trust fund from a tax on chemical raw materials. The EPA says although there are as many as 22,000 sites that need cleaning up, an inventory now lists 19,187.

From this inventory, the EPA lists both emergency and national priority sites. The EPA takes immediate action on emergency sites, and so far, 403

sites are now no longer dangerous and temporary measures have been taken at 442, says Carol Lawson, an EPA press officer.

To determine if a site should be on the national priorities list, the EPA conducts engineering studies to determine cleanup alternatives and then estimates length and cost of a project. This first step costs \$5,000 and takes an average of 18 months to complete, says Lawson. If risk factors exceed 28.5 in the EPA's Hazardous Ranking System, a site is added to the national priorities list. An average site takes four years to clean and costs about \$8 million, Lawson says.

So far, the EPA has begun cleanup projects at only 29 sites nationwide, and completed none.

And these figures include sites at which responsible parties are conducting cleanup projects, Hathaway of Congresswatch points out. In the Rocky Mountain region (Montana, Wyoming, Utah, Colorado and North and South Dakota), cleanup has been initiated at only four of 24 sites, and three are federal facilities listed last fall.

The law requires that each year the EPA issue a proposed national priorities list and, after public comment, a final list, to be updated within a year.

The 1984 list was actually leaked by Rep. Jim Florio, D-N.J., an active proponent of Superfund legislation. Florio charged that the EPA hoped to withhold its list until

the on-the-ground effects of the military expansion -- the locking up of

after the election even though its September deadline had already passed. Hathaway speculates that the EPA and the administration feared that if the list were released in early fall, people concerned about the added sites would pressure Congress to reauthorize an expanded Superfund or vote for candidates who supported such a measure.

Yet last month the agency released proposed changes that would expedite cleanup action. In the proposal, the EPA calls for bypassing costly and time-consuming engineering studies where possible, assigning a site to the priorities list if health circumstances warrant regardless of its hazardous ranking score, and eliminating the states' 10 percent share of cleanup costs. The new rules, apparently, would mean getting the money out and getting the job done.

Another proposed change is the addition of federal facilities to the Superfund list. Cleanup costs of these sites would not come from the trust fund, but from special congressional authorization.

The proposed addition of federal facilities to the Superfund list was explained by Superfund administrator Lou Johnson: "Federal facilities should be under the same scrutiny as private facilities when it comes to Superfund cleanup." Johnson adds that listing federal facilities will create pressure to make more funds available.

--Lynda Alfred

Colorado Superfund sites are a mixed lot

Colorado gained five more Superfund sites late last year, bringing its total to 14. Controversy accompanies each site, from the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, called by some the most contaminated piece of real estate in the "free world," to the Smuggler Mountain tailings site in Aspen, where critics question if health risks warrant Superfund designation at all.

If it ever gets off the ground, the Army, the EPA, and the Colorado Department of Health will conduct the largest cleanup in Colorado's history. The project is a 15-year effort at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal near Denver, with the price tag estimated between \$350 and \$700 million. In a press conference last fall, Assistant Secretary of the Army Pat Hillier promised that when remedial action was complete, the Arsenal would be "so clean you could build a nursery on it." But EPA regional administrator John Welles says he is not convinced the water leaving the Arsenal can ever be free of contaminants.

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Although both Shell and the Army are considered responsible for the hazardous wastes generated at the Arsenal, they have been involved in two lawsuits since October 1983 to determine their portion of the cleanup costs. The court must determine the extent to which each contaminated the soil and groundwater, and these cases, which depend on technical studies, will not be decided for two more years.

The Army released its remedial action proposal in mid-1983 (HCN, 6/10/83). But the Colorado Department of Health would not accept it, as the plan called for containment rather than cleanup. The state demanded that the Arsenal present a permanent solution.

The Arsenal released its revised plan last November. Roger Korman, legal counsel for the Army, said that Basin A, a major source of seepage, would be lined with asphalt to seal the pit that was used until 1956. The liquid wastes in Basin F, a lined pit used since, would be solidified and then moved to a new impermeable landfill at the Arsenal. The Army would also continue the current carbon absorption systems to treat the groundwater at the Arsenal boundaries. Korman says that since the water percolates slowly through that area, treatment will be a long process.

At the rate they are going now, says Nat Miullo, EPA site project officer, remedial action will not begin until well into the 1990s. But with the Arsenal now on the proposed national priorities list, he says, the EPA is putting on the pressure for cleaning up the "staggering amount of contamination."

Over on Colorado's Western Slope, the EPA faces a different problem. "When we went to the EPA, we didn't think we'd make the *Washington*

Aspen Historical Society



Smuggler Mine, 1890

Post," says Pitkin County Commissioner Michael Kinsley. In the summer of 1983, the county told the EPA about heavy metals in the soil around the Smuggler Mountain mine site. The old silver mine is in the resort town of Aspen. In fall 1984, Smuggler appeared on the updated Superfund national priorities list.

County officials say that the publicity may hurt the local economy, as Centennial Properties is in the midst of building employee housing on part of the contaminated area. EPA regional administrator John Welles says that the site was listed in direct response to the county's plea for help. County Commissioner Bob Child disagrees. "We were looking for advice and legislation, not financial aid," he says.

The county courthouse offers a good view of the 75-acre site. A trailer park, condominiums, and several employee housing complexes now stand on or near the tailings, the debris from silver mining that boomed from 1879-1920. Routine samples in 1981 revealed heavy metals in the soil at the base of Smuggler Mountain.

David Boon, a soil scientist who had been studying the area for three years as part of his graduate research, alerted the county that he had discovered zinc, lead, and cadmium. The county health department then advised nearby residents not to eat home-grown vegetables.

After the EPA listed the site, based on its studies that revealed soil, air, and water contamination and a hazardous ranking score of 44.78, Centennial arranged for its own study.

Their results produced a score of 12.96, well below the 28.5 base for national priority status.

In recent months, the EPA has been flooded with technical comments questioning the Smuggler designation. Critics challenged the EPA's scoring system and suggested that Superfund resources be directed to more severely contaminated sites. EPA site project officer Tom Staible says that the EPA investigated the site by its standard approach and objective scoring system. But Ron Skoggerboe, chairman of the chemistry department at Colorado State University, reviewed the EPA's findings and concluded that the EPA based its ranking on questionable data and assumptions.

Even before the EPA stepped in, Centennial had covered exposed tailings with 18 inches of topsoil in a 14-acre area that is to be developed into a community park. Centennial's reclamation efforts were in compliance with the Colorado Department of Health's recommendations, says Tom Dunlop, Pitkin County Environmental Health Director. Boon says these measures were adequate and that there is "no significant aerial contamination."

Although county officials originally brought the tailings site to the EPA's attention, they are now eager to take matters back into their own hands. Staible estimates that testing and decision-making could take up to two years. Commissioner Kinsley says the county does not need federal help and will take comparable remedial action on its own.

--Lynda Alfred

HOTLINE

New radionuclide standards

The EPA issued its final radionuclide standards on Jan. 16, barely beating a deadline to avoid penalties of a contempt citation. The standards are so weak that nearly all of the affected facilities are already in compliance, the Sierra Club says. The standards were released only after former EPA administrator William Ruckelshaus was held in contempt of court last December for failing to comply with the Clean Air Act. The suit was brought by the Sierra Club last fall. The court ordered Ruckelshaus to issue regulations within 30 days for nuclear weapons facilities run by the Department of Energy, elemental phosphorus mills, and licensed plants involved in radiation research. The final standards, however, are weaker than those proposed in April 1983. For instance, the regulations allow 21 times more radiation to be emitted from mills that extract phosphorus from phosphate-rich rocks than originally proposed. Yet a recent analysis by the Environmental Protection Agency revealed that these emissions are 10 times more hazardous than scientists believed two years ago. The Sierra Club plans to continue its legal battle for stronger standards.

Forest Service seeks to charge admission

Arnor Larson



National Forest visitors may pay a general use fee if a current Reagan administration proposal survives congressional and public scrutiny. The Forest Service says the fee, which would raise \$25 million next year, would be similar to the Park Service's Golden Eagle Passport. It would be collected from hunters, hikers and other visitors who now enjoy free access to the lands. Opponents ranging from sportsmen to environmentalists and some members of Congress have called the notion everything from "loony" to "off the wall." They say commercial interests, such as timber, mining and grazing industries are reaping benefits from the public forests without paying their fair share. A major rallying point for the critics is the Forest Service policy of selling timber at prices below cost to the government. The fee comes at a time when the Forest Service is making sharp reductions in its management of developed and primitive recreation areas.

BARBED WIRE

Wanted: Energy Secretary. No experience necessary.

Newly-confirmed Energy Secretary John Herrington said that he lacks expertise in many energy matters, but that he's willing to learn. On acid rain, he told *Coal News*: "I don't know what causes it. I don't know what it does, and I don't know how to fix it."

Lewis Carroll would have loved the way this guy reasons.

Montana Supreme Court Justice Frank Morrison, Jr. told a Great Falls Kiwanis Club: Some high court justices who are considered conservatives are actually liberals because "they do as they darn well please to make the case come out the way they want to."

Dining out, military style.

The U.S. Army will soon test the use of camouflaged paper plates in a "simulated wartime environment," reports the *Idaho Statesman*. There is one problem to overcome: disposing of the dirty dishes. If the paper plates don't self-destruct, the enemy will find them. If burned, "that would create smoke, which also sends a lot of important signals to the enemy," says a captain at the Training and Doctrine Command in Virginia.

What about relieving the poor?

Roosevelt, Utah, will gain a new sewer for a new school, reports the *Utah Basin Standard*. Thanks to a grant, "the funding will be used to relieve the affluent coming from the new middle school."

BULLETIN BOARD

MONTANA WILDERNESS STUDY GRANTS

Proposals are being accepted for grants from the Matthew Hansen Endowment for Wilderness Studies. The Endowment, which is administered by the University of Montana Foundation, provides stipends to independent scholars, writers and students for research and writing on Montana's wildlands. Applicants should submit eight copies of their 1985-86 proposal by March 15 to Robert Ream, Director, Wilderness Institute, School of Forestry, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59812. Questions should be directed to the Institute's Assistant Director, Ken Wall, at 406/243-5631.

PRESERVATION

A non-profit Colorado group is working to identify and preserve historically important mining sites and structures. The first project of the Mining History Preservation Fund, Inc. has been work on the old Crystal Mill near Marble. This much photographed structure had been in danger of collapse until several local groups and the Fund took a hand. The Fund can be reached at 515 N. Boulevard St., Gunnison, CO 81230, (303/641-9151).

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT

The first congressional hearing on reauthorizing the Endangered Species Act is set for March 14 before the Subcommittee on Fisheries and Wildlife Conservation and the Environment of the House Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee. The 1973 act, under which the Fish and Wildlife Service manages its national endangered species program, expires on Oct. 12, 1985.

OIL GLUTTONS

The U.S. net oil imports could be between 5 and 7.6 million barrels per day by 1990, compared to the 4.8 million barrels per day imported last year. Statistics and projections of energy prices, supply, and demand for the next decade are compiled in a newly released report from the Energy Information Administration, *Annual Energy Outlook, 1984*. Copies are available from the U.S. Government Printing Office or through the National Energy Information Center, Room 1F-048, Forrestal Building, Washington, D.C. 20585 (202/252-8800).

COAL LEASING

In yet another attempt to put in place a federal coal leasing program, the Bureau of Land Management has released a draft Environmental Impact Statement which predicts greatly reduced coal production from federal lands through the year 2000. The subdued approach is in contrast to the policy under former Interior Secretary James Watt, which aimed at the leasing of many billions of tons of federal coal. His policy led to bargain sales of the coal, a leasing moratorium imposed by Congress, an investigation by the Linowes Commission and others, and now this draft EIS. It is a revision of a 1979 EIS that analyzed coal programs in six federal coal regions. The document projects lessened environmental and socio-economic impacts from future leasing. Comments on the draft will be accepted through April 9 by: Jack Edwards, Division of Environmental Impact Services, BLM, 555 Zang St., First Floor East, Denver, CO 80228. Copies of the EIS can be obtained from the same address and from BLM state offices.



COURSES FOR WILDLIFE MANAGERS

Wildlife managers can catch up on the latest management techniques by attending two courses at the University of Montana March 18-22. Running concurrently will be a class on evaluation and management of wildlife habitat and another on the biology and management of wildlife populations. Both courses are appropriate for professional managers and biologists and no special technical training is required for the habitat class. Sponsored by the University of Montana's Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit and Center for Continuing Education, the fee for each course is \$250. For more information, contact Dr. Joe Ball or Dr. Lee Metzgar at 406/243-5272.

HOW TO MANAGE THE FORESTS

The University of Colorado's Natural Resources Law Center will sponsor a symposium March 28 called "Management of national forests in the Rocky Mountains." Topics include forest planning, aspen management, water issues, recreation and the legal aspects of federal forest management. Among the speakers are Charles Wilkinson, law professor; Jim Torrence, Rocky Mountain Regional Forester; DeWitt John, aide to Colorado Governor Richard Lamm; and Michael Scott from the Wilderness Society. The program starts at 8 A.M. in the Fleming Law Building at the University of Colorado. Registration fee is \$45 and includes presentation outlines as well as a wine and cheese reception. A limited number of scholarships are available. For more information, contact the Natural Resources Law Center, School of Law, Campus Box 401, Boulder, CO 80309, (303/492-1286 or 492-8047).

GRIM WARNINGS

There are grim warnings in the Worldwatch Institute's latest report on the *State of the World 1985*. The effects of a world population approaching five billion may be more threatening than conflicts among nations, concludes the study. One sign is that 50 percent of Germany's forests now show damage from air pollution, and *Waldsterben*, which means forest death, has become a household word in West Germany. But there is some good news about population reductions in China and other countries in the report, which is published by the Worldwatch Institute, 1776 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, (202/452-1999).

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A court tells the Forest Service:

Look at the forest as well as the trees

by Pat Ford

A decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco on a 41,000-acre roadless area in Idaho could affect every national forest in the Rocky Mountains. If it is not appealed up to the U.S. Supreme Court, the Feb. 11 ruling could force the Forest Service to do comprehensive, cumulative studies on the effects of roads built into roadless areas.

At present, the agency usually does an environmental analysis of the direct impacts of a proposed road; then over the next several years it analyzes the effect of each timber sale as it comes up. Critics say this "piecemeal" approach allows the agency to avoid evaluating the total effect of its road-building and logging programs.

Like other precedent-setting rulings, this decision has its roots in an on-the-ground case -- the proposed Jersey-Jack timber access road in Idaho's Salmon River Breaks. The court ordered the Nezperce National Forest to analyze the overall effects of the proposed 17-mile road and of the 20-year timber logging plan which depends on the road.

The Idaho residents who brought the case against the agency say the Environmental Impact Statement that now must be done will enable the public to compare the economic benefits logging will bring with possible damage to such industries as outfitting and sport fishing, and with environmental impacts such as stream siltation.

The proposed road is designed to open up 41,000 acres of land north of the Salmon River. It is set neatly between the Gospel-Hump Wilderness to the west and the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness to the east.

The ruling is another chapter in a battle which began in 1979 and 1980, when Jersey-Jack was considered for inclusion in the River of No Return Wilderness. But the Bennett Lumber Company and employees at its nearby Elk City sawmill persuaded then Senator Frank Church, D-Id., to leave most of Jersey-Jack out of wilderness, and also to have the law specifically release it for "multiple use management, including appropriate timber development."

The firm was interested in the area not because of the dominant lodgepole pine, but because of substantial pockets of large old-growth Douglas fir and ponderosa pine. The Forest Service and industry argue that those trees are needed to keep local mills operating.

But Jersey-Jack is in the Idaho Batholith -- a highly erodible granitic formation underlying much of central Idaho. Damage to water quality and fisheries from sediment caused by road building is well documented.

The Nezperce National Forest approved the road into Jersey-Jack in February 1981 based on an environmental analysis which examined only the impacts of the road itself. An eclectic group of conservationists and many local landowners attacked the EA. Their opposition was fueled by a

map they obtained which was not included in the EA. The map showed a dense network of over 70 miles of road coming off the Jersey-Jack road and going down the steep Salmon River Breaks. About 88 million board feet were projected for harvest over 20 years.

After administrative appeals, the case went to court in 1982, with 35 individual and corporate plaintiffs fighting the road, including ranchers, outfitters and conservation groups. The chief plaintiff was ranch owner Harold Thomas, chairman of the board of Trus Joist Corp., a Boise wood products firm.

The first round went to the agency when U.S. District Court Judge Marion Callister in Boise ruled for the agency in May 1984. Now, less than a year later, the Ninth Circuit Court has substantially reversed Judge Callister.

Both sides found something to like in the decision. Mike Axline, attorney for the plaintiffs, says, "We claimed the Forest Service violated the National Environmental Policy Act by not considering the cumulative impacts of developing the area. The circuit court has agreed. The Forest Service must now do an EIS on the cumulative impacts of the entire Jersey-Jack timber plan. I think there are other current cases and many proposed actions that will be affected. I've had calls already from attorneys in Idaho, Montana and Washington."

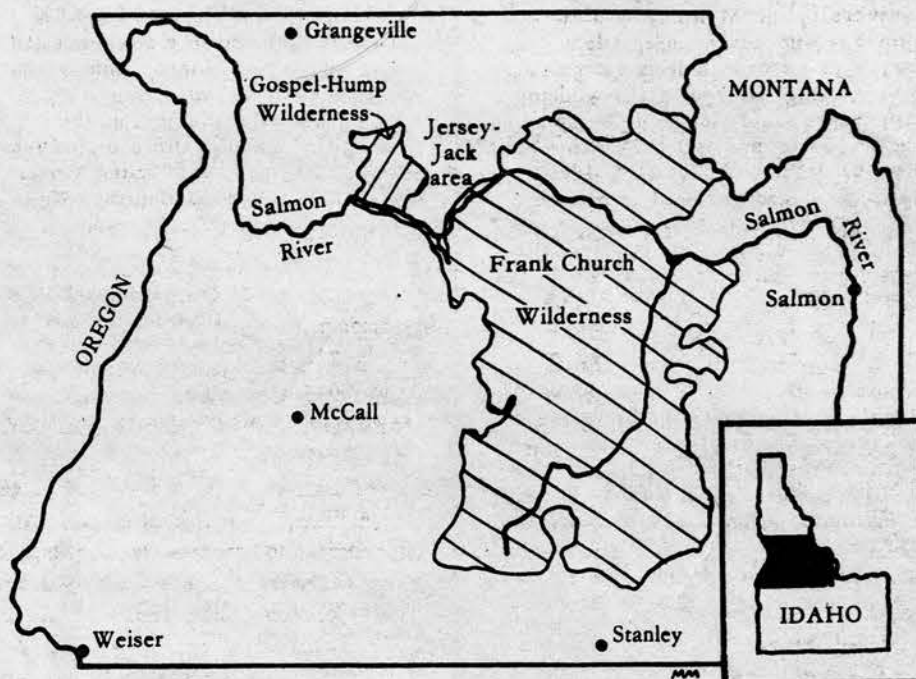
Axline is co-director of the Pacific Northwest Resources Clinic at the University of Oregon Law School. He and law student interns handled the case for expenses only, and one of the three judges on the panel complimented the students on their work.

D.J. Grim, who owns property within 200 feet of the proposed road, was the original appellant in 1981. In response to Jersey-Jack and other road plans in the area, he and others formed the Salmon River Breaks Association in 1982. It argues that recreation is the highest and best economic use of the Breaks and that extensive road and timber plans can't pay their way. Grim says, "I'm very pleased with the decision," but he doesn't expect Forest Service plans for Jersey-Jack to change.

Bill Meiners, past president of the Idaho Wildlife Federation and a veteran of many forest struggles, says, "We have been trying for years to get the Forest Service to stop" approving projects piecemeal. "Jersey-Jack is just one example. If this decision establishes that they have to analyze the cumulative impacts of a total development plan for an area, then my reaction is: Hallelujah."

Bennett Lumber Co. joined the lawsuit on the agency's side. Owner Frank Bennett sees something to like in another part of the decision. The circuit court ruled against the plaintiff's second claim -- that the road violates Section 12 of the National Forest Management Act. That section says Forest Service roads should be built in "an economically sound" manner.

Attorney Axline submitted a brief from National Wildlife Federation forester Andy Stahl stating: "Even using optimistic figures and assump-



tions, the proposal will result in a net loss to the federal government of at least \$4.5 million."

But the court ruled that the act only counsels economic prudence, and does not require it. "I think that's favorable," says Bennett. "That's been the biggest argument used against the road all along."

U.S. Attorney Jeff Ring, who argued the case for the agency in district court, agrees: "The court said the Forest Service can build uneconomic roads if it chooses to."

What will the effect of the case be in the Rockies? National Wildlife Federation attorney Tom France in Missoula, Montana, predicts it will force the agency to drop some roading and logging plans, while other cases will go to court. He also says that the Forest Service sees the current 50-year forest management plans as removing the need for further environmental analysis of projects approved in the plans. He says, "The Jersey-Jack ruling ought to give them pause on that score."

U.S. Attorney Ring disagrees. "I characterize the opinion as applying to the facts of this case. It's up to the Forest Service and the courts to determine how broadly it applies. I expect to be arguing for the government in the future that it doesn't apply broadly."

Regarding Jersey-Jack itself, Nezperce Forest Supervisor Tom Kovalicky says, "This ruling has no effect on activities and timber sales we are proposing in our

forest plan." The forest's just released forest plan contains the Jersey-Jack road and ten associated timber sales over the next ten years.

The four-year delay in building the road has not affected the forest's timber program. "Other sales have been moved up," says Kovalicky, "and with the market downturn, I think we have about 400 million board feet sold but uncut. That's about three years cut on this forest." Bennett says his Elk City sawmill is "in a good timber position right now."

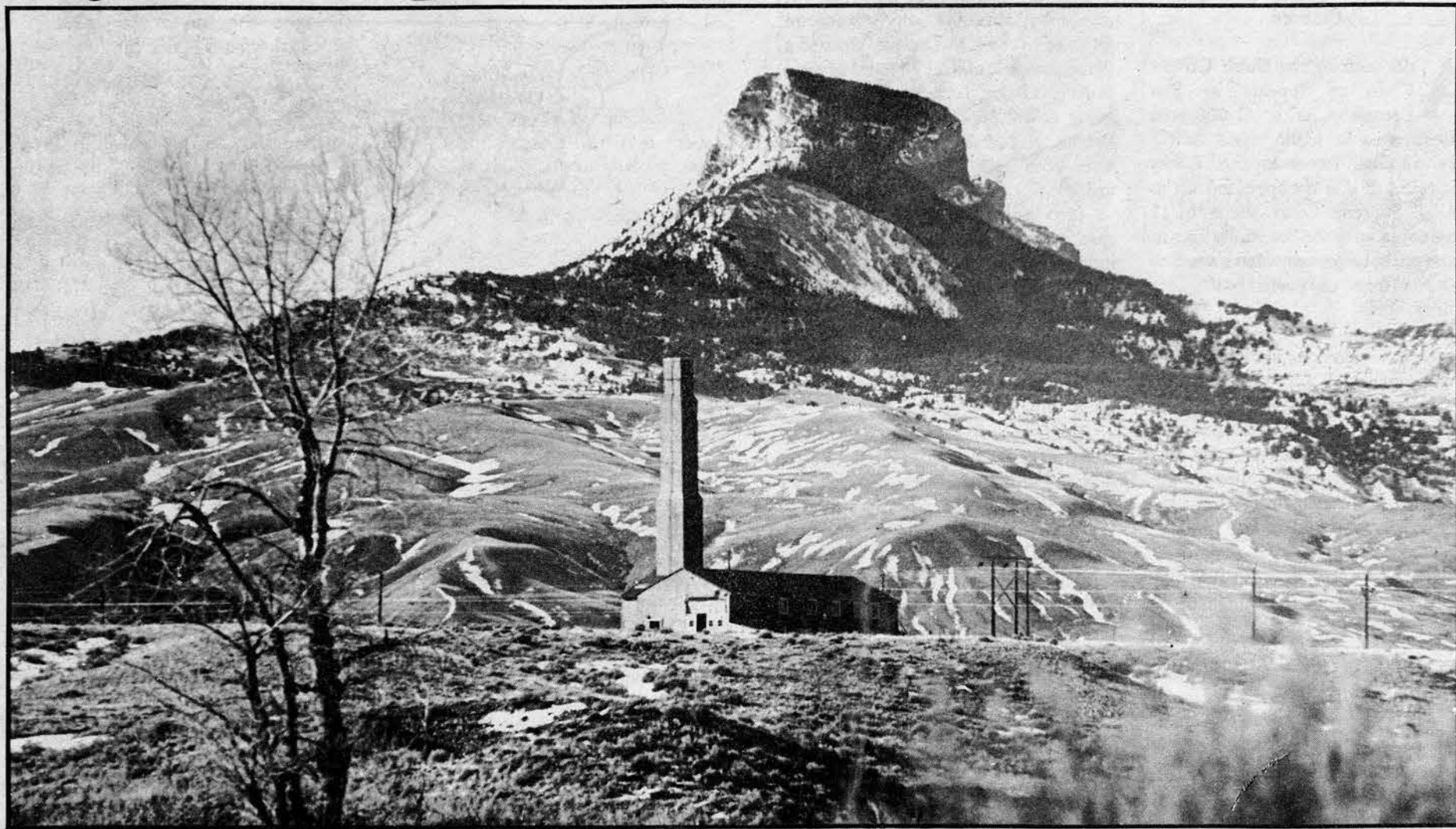
The combatants differ on what ought to happen next. Bennett says the agency has all the information it needs and should be able to write an EIS quickly.

Bill Meiners disagrees. "If we can force them to do a comprehensive EIS that honestly addresses all the values that are there," he says, the economics "will keep most of those trees from leaving that country." He also says, "Logging on the batholith is a one-shot thing. Maybe some small areas can be logged, but it's got to be done without damaging water quality, fisheries and wildlife. I haven't seen it done that way yet in this kind of country."

B.J. Grim remembers four years ago when he first saw a map showing the full 20-year road plan for Jersey-Jack. "When I saw all those secondary roads, and the rock quarries (for road fill), I couldn't believe it. This country is 35 percent grade and it's unstable. If they slice it up like that, it's going to run like mad."

'If this decision establishes that they have to analyze the cumulative impacts, then my reaction is Hallelujah.'

A concentration camp was Wyoming's third largest city



The 11,000 American and Japanese-born men, women and children detained at Heart Mountain lived behind barbed wire and guard towers because the West, not the federal government, wanted it that way.

After Pearl Harbor, the Roosevelt administration, responding to Californians' prejudice against people of Japanese descent, decided to evacuate all 112,000 of them, ostensibly to get them away from the coast where they might help Japan by sabotaging America's war effort.

The western states were not pleased with the solution. Wyoming Republican party spokesman J.B. Griffith said: "My fear is that if the government sends these Japs now, we will have them on our hands after the war is over and Wyoming instead of California will have a Japanese problem."

Griffith spoke for Wyoming. The state was willing to accept 11,000 of the Japanese at Heart Mountain near Cody, but only if they were kept under guard behind barbed wire, and on the further condition that they leave the state at the end of the war. The Roosevelt administration had wanted to set up a place where the displaced Japanese could live, either until they found another home elsewhere in the nation, or until the war ended. But Wyoming, backed by the other Rocky Mountain states, demanded a concentration camp.

The region's fear that the Japanese would remain in Wyoming after the war was justified. So traumatized were the camp inmates by the loss of their homes and jobs in California, and by the three years they'd spent behind barbed wire, that the end of the war left them immobile. There were 8,400 people at the

Heart Mountain Center in January 1945, when the ban on their return to the West Coast was lifted. But six months later, in July 1945, over 6,000 people were still voluntarily living in the camp. The War Relocation Authority, which ran the camp, finally had to shut off utilities to force them out.

Although Wyoming had been generally hostile to its guests -- even passing a law denying American citizens at the camp the right to vote -- it made use of them. The rush to build barricades for 11,000 people created a boom in Cody, and even led to charges of war profiteering. And the inmates themselves were to prove invaluable in the labor-short region when it came time to plant, irrigate and harvest sugar beets and other crops.

Especially in the first year or so, according to Douglas Nelson's *Heart Mountain: The History of an American Concentration Camp* (University of Wisconsin, 1976), the camp inmates experienced some genuine hospitality. Their high school basketball team was invited to play against other schools, there was some formal visiting back and forth, and students at the University of Wyoming at Laramie invited college-age men and women from the camp to attend the college.

The students wrote: "We feel that some of these people from the coast have been mistreated and that such action is far from being conducive to building up Americanism."

Self-interest also occasionally worked in favor of the inmates. When the nearby town of Powell tried to keep the evacuees out of the town, local druggist A.A. Fryer wrote to Wyoming Gov. Lester C. Hunt, a Democrat:

"Neither the mayor nor any of his councilmen are in the retail business

...[and] therefore do not realize the amount of extra money that has been and can be spent here by these Japanese... [The merchants] have no objection to waiting on Japanese trade; in fact, most of us would rather wait on them than on these Mexican nationals... that can't even talk United States, then steal you blind the minute they are in the store."

But for the most part, even enlightened self-interest was overwhelmed by what Professor Nelson calls a rebirth of nativism. That nativism was strongly fanned by the region's leading newspaper, the *Denver Post*. In one piece of investigative journalism, reporter Jack Carberry's story appeared under the headline: "Food is Hoarded for Japs in U.S. while Americans in Nippon are Tortured."

In case that didn't get the juices running, another story in the series was headlined: "America's Jap 'Guests' Refuse to Work But Nips Enslave Yankees."

According to Nelson's book, the series mainly embellished the camp administration's error in ordering too many rations. The *Post* inflated that mistake into: "Luxury fruits and rare vegetables [which] cannot be purchased for love or money ... by the American men and women who founded and peopled these American hills" is freely available to the camp inmates.

Inevitably, some of those who founded the Wyoming hills were inflamed, and there was angry rhetoric, laws forbidding the inmates from buying fishing or hunting licenses, hostility in Laramie in the form of "White Only" signs and at least one attempted murder.

Despite the *Post's* journalism,

much of which was based on information from a disgruntled camp employee, the inmates were not living in the lap of luxury. But neither were they bursting with patriotism, as the camp administration would have preferred.

About 800 of the 11,000 Japanese asked to be repatriated to Japan. And even among the American-born Nisei, as opposed to the Japanese-born Issei, there was little desire to join the Army and fight Germany. Few volunteered and many actively resisted the draft, with 63 tried as draft evaders after the camp administration instituted its policy of actively recruiting inmates for the armed forces.

Those who joined didn't escape their status as camp inmates. When soldiers who had come out of the camp asked Wyoming for absentee ballots so they could vote in a general election, the state refused. Officials stuck by the state law which denied the vote to the evacuees, even if those evacuees were preparing to land at Normandy.

Although Americans of Japanese descent are famous for their green thumbs, the camp inmates didn't succeed in making the harsh land bloom. But they did raise hogs, chickens for eggs and meat, and vegetables. To do this, they finished an irrigation canal and put 2,400 acres under production. They also had a good fire department and a good school.

In a statistical sense, the population thrived: there were 550 births and only 128 deaths. But the camp births irritated two letter writers from Buffalo: "There should be separate camps for men and women. We don't need more little Japs."

--Ed Marston

The Heart Mountain camp once held 11,000 prisoners

A concentration camp near Cody, Wyoming, that was the state's third largest city during World War II will not be made a National Historic Landmark by the U.S. Department of Interior.

Wyoming officials, however, are about to nominate the camp for the National Register of Historic Places -- a listing which will provide the camp with a lesser amount of protection.

Not that there is much left to protect. The Heart Mountain camp was almost entirely demolished after World War II. It had originally spread over 4,600 acres and at its peak housed about 11,000 people of Japanese descent. But now the 450 barracks are gone, along with the guard towers and all but a handful of the other buildings. The hospital, with its lone chimney mimicking nearby Heart Mountain, is the most conspicuous remnant.

The 8,113-foot peak was a metaphor for camp residents. Both the mountain and the Japanese were conspicuously different from the landscape. And both were forcibly evicted from their place of origin. The oldest rocks on Heart Mountain -- those at the top -- were shoved from several miles away along a fault.

In the same way, the oldest of the ten camps the U.S. built to house 112,000 Californians of Japanese descent is also on top. After a two-year study, the U.S. Park Service has chosen the Manzanar, California, relocation camp as the only one to be made a National Historic Landmark. Secretary of Interior William Clark

made the decision Feb. 5, just before leaving office.

Erwin Thompson of Denver, who studied the camps for the Park Service, says of Manzanar: "It was the first of the 10 camps and pretty representative." Like Heart Mountain, the Manzanar camp retains only a fraction of its original buildings. "Once the war was over, the camps were torn down," Thompson said. "There is very little integrity of the property."

While Thompson was performing his study of the 10 camps, the Wyoming Recreation Commission was coincidentally looking at Heart Mountain. The commission was ready to nominate it for the National Register of Historic Places when it learned of the Park Service study. So they've held onto the 21-page report nominating the site.

Neither historic landmark status nor a listing on the National Register would protect the camp from private owners who homesteaded most of the camp after the war. But it would give the remnants some protection from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, which still owns the land containing the surviving structures.

Sheila Bricher-Wade, National Register historian at the Wyoming Recreation Commission, said that with Manzanar chosen, her office is preparing to send the nomination for National Register status for Heart Mountain to Washington. "I don't think there's any question it is eligible. It's one of our favorite sites and we're really excited about it."

--Frank Boyett



Photos clockwise from left: the hospital and Heart Mountain, Carl Bechtold; vents for a large root cellar at the camp, W.F. Boyett; the camp during World War II, Jack Richards.



The Pentagon procures chunks of Nevada

The West is being drafted

by Bruce Farling

Overlooked in the national debate over MX funding, Star Wars systems and \$900 wrenches, is the military's need for someplace to try out its latest hardware. That someplace, it turns out, is the wide open spaces of the West, and especially of Nevada.

Right now the Navy and Air Force are planning to convert 8,500 square miles of public air space in Nevada into a supersonic jet training area. That's in addition to a planned withdrawal of 300,000 acres or 470 square miles of ground now controlled by the BLM.

Nevada residents ranging from physicians and stockmen to environmentalists and the governor are working to halt the takeovers. The Nevadans think their battle has national implications, but the rest of the nation seems oblivious to what is happening.

The amount of space involved is large. The air space to be appropriated is as large as New Jersey with Rhode Island thrown in. The on-the-ground appropriation means a closure to the public of an area two-thirds the size of Long Island.

These additional air space and land appropriations will happen in a state that is already the most militarized in the country. On the ground, over four million acres are devoted to bombing ranges, nuclear testing and weapons storage. Up above, over 40 percent of the state's air space is the turf of military planes. Imagine all the air space over Pennsylvania buzzed on a daily basis by Navy F-15s and Air Force B-52s. Welcome to Nevada.

To many Easterners, Nevada is "just someplace out west" -- the large, strangely shaped state east, or maybe west, of Utah. It's not unusual for people's knowledge of Nevada to begin and end with the glitter of Las Vegas, "God-forsaken desert," Howard Hughes and Ben Cartwright's Bonanza boys.

Given this perspective, it's easy to see why the rest of the nation isn't taking a second look at the military's plans. Surely, they think, it won't hurt to bomb a few rattlesnakes and shake up some high desert with a few dozen sonic booms every day.

Many Nevadans vehemently disagree. They say it is going to hurt a lot. At stake, they claim, is the integrity of vast expanses of wild country, the welfare of wildlife and archaeological resources, the health of thousands of residents, and the survival of the independent rural lifestyle characteristic of the region. They also say the land and air space withdrawals go beyond Nevada and are part of a large military program to militarize large sections of air space and land in the West.

Charles Watson, a Nevadan for 26 years and co-founder of the Nevada Outdoor Recreation Association, says, "The Defense Department is approaching these proposals on a piecemeal basis to hide what the

withdrawals really represent -- a large-scale military plan to take over large chunks of public land and air space in this region. I call it the 'Afghanization' of the West."

Watson cites air space takeovers similar to those proposed in Nevada being looked at or implemented in New Mexico, Arizona, Texas and Utah. Collectively, these represent almost 10,000 square miles of air space that will be restricted to the public and used for supersonic and subsonic aircraft maneuvers. Like Nevada, these states have already lost millions of acres of land and thousands of square miles of airspace to exclusive military use.

Fellow Nevadan and conservationist Dave Hornbeck, a Reno attorney, suggests, "If you put some of these proposals together, you're looking at something on the scale of the MX Racetrack Mode." That would have created 4,600 shelters connected by tracks along which MX missiles would have been shuttled. The proposal involved 46,000 square miles of Utah and Nevada, but was scrapped by President Reagan in 1982 in the wake of national opposition.

Watson believes the western air and land withdrawals are bigger than the MX. He suspects they are related to a mid-1970s military proposal called the "Continental Operations Range," which called for vast withdrawals and military operations in the West. Congress vetoed the idea, saying it was too grandiose.

Bill Vincent, the Las Vegas staff member for Citizen Alert, a public interest group formed to stop the MX, concurs with Watson. He cites an Air Force map he has seen that shows southern Nevada's Nellis Air Force Base, Fallon Naval Air Station in western Nevada and Utah's Hill/Wendover Air Force/complex linked by appropriated air space.

The discarded Continental Operations Range proposal does at least resemble current military plans for Nevada and Utah. It called for upgrading military operations at Nellis, Fallon and Hill/Wendover by enlarging bases and using more land and air space, which is exactly what is proposed now for Fallon and Hill/Wendover. In addition, a recent 89,000-acre public land takeover by the Air Force near Nellis enlarges the sphere of influence of that military facility (see accompanying story).

The military adamantly denies any master plan or link to the Continental Operations Range. The Air Force, for example, was questioned on the subject last August at a hearing by a congressional subcommittee, and its witness strongly denied any connection.

High Country News received the same answer last month when it asked the Air Force if the recent land withdrawal in the Groom Range was a partial implementation of the 1973 proposal. Lieutenant Jerome Reed, Chief of Media Relations at Nellis,

said the official Air Force position is:

"The Continental Operations Range Environmental Impact Statement of 1974 dealt with a Department of Defense proposal that was disapproved by Congress... there is no relationship between the Continental Operations Range and the Nellis withdrawal."

Nevada's congressional delegation agrees. "No, it is not part of a bigger program" says Tom Loranger, a spokesman for Nevada Sen. Paul Laxalt. Republican Laxalt is one of President Reagan's closest advisors and a member of subcommittees on defense and military construction. Loranger adds that Laxalt supports the Fallon proposal and cites the \$10 million the plan is projected to bring into the area "as being an obvious boost to the economy."

An aide to Congresswoman Barbara Vucanovich, R, says the representative "has no information" linking three withdrawals in her district with anything like the Continental Operations Range. Vucanovich's constituents will be affected by the Fallon and Gandy Range supersonic areas, as well as the recent takeover of land in the Groom Mountain area, Vucanovich is neutral on the controversial Fallon proposal.

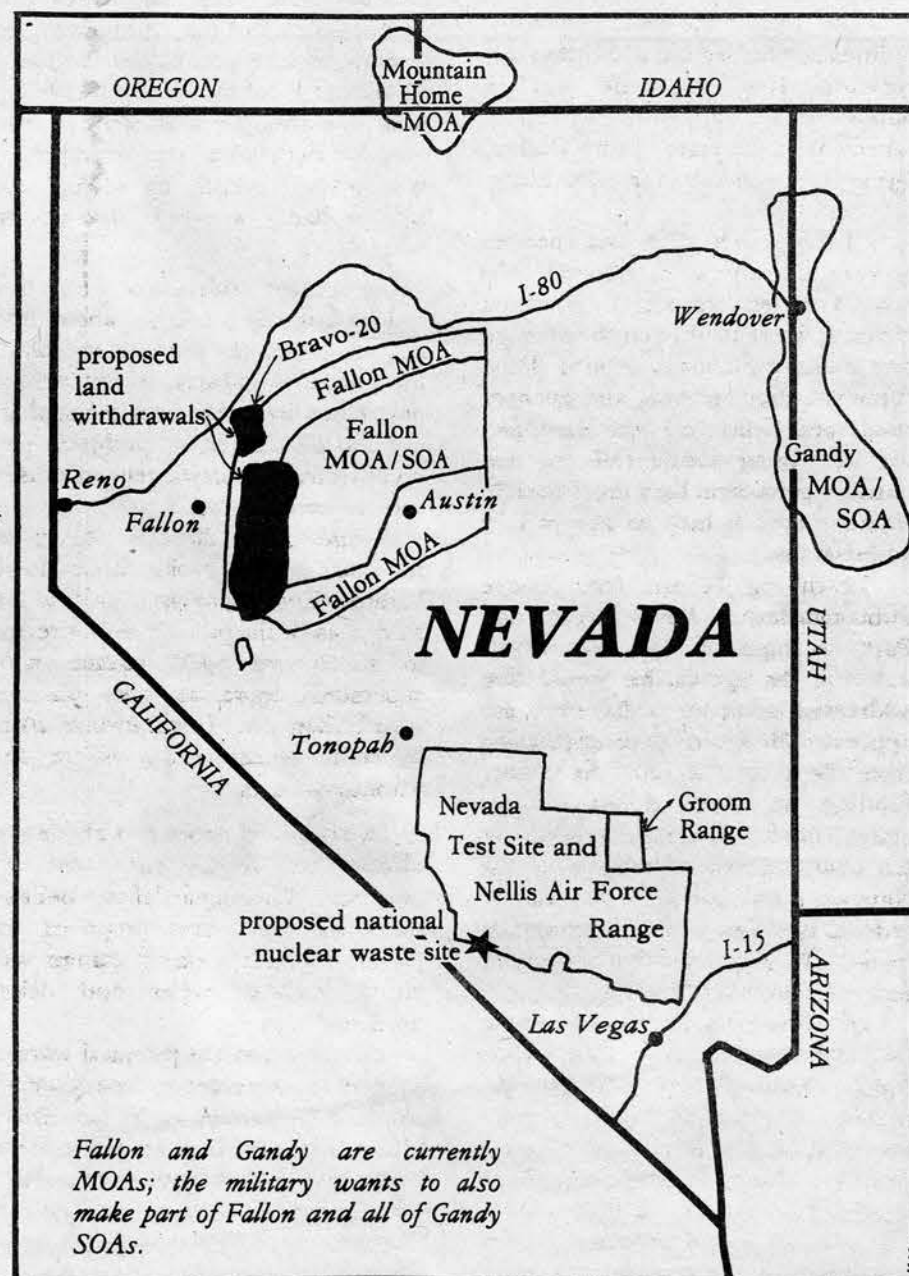
The opposition to the land and airspace takeovers is purely local, with ranchers, state environmental organizations, physicians and a few state

and local politicians leading the way. Contacts in the national Sierra Club, Friends of the Earth, Natural Resources Defense Council, Environmental Action and the Wilderness Society say that their groups are not working on the issue.

The Center for Defense Information has also declined to enter the fray. The Center, a non-profit, public interest organization that watchdogs Defense Department programs, is headed by retired military officers. One of its staff members says they have heard a few complaints about military land and airspace takeovers, but are not actively working on the issue.

The lack of national attention puzzles the Nevada critics. They wonder if the military is too big an opponent for the national environmental groups, which, because of their limited resources, often pick battles based on the odds of winning. For example, though the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund has been in court for four years seeking to stop Boeing 747s from landing in Teton National Park on the basis of noise impact, they have not taken up any cases involving citizens being bombarded by sonic booms from military jets.

One critic of the military, Fallon physician Dr. Richard Borgen, suggests that the noninvolvement of the national groups may have an



obvious explanation: local groups "have been unable to convince them of the national implications of the withdrawals." According to Charles Watson, this is exactly how the military planned it. "They learned their lesson with the MX."

In Nevada, as in other western states, it is only sniping by locals such as Bargaen, Watson and Gov. Richard Bryan that keeps the military from quietly implementing its plans.

Bargaen has been part of four lawsuits aimed at halting the Fallon proposal. Two have been dismissed. However, he claims his opposition to the military has cost him more than money. Until this fall, the doctor operated a flying medical service. But he is now grounded; his pilot's license was suspended by the Federal Aviation Authority for allegedly flying too low over a Navy installation. He claims he was set up by the Navy, which lodged the complaint against him, because of his lawsuits and testimony to Congress opposing Fallon.

After being granted access to the Navy's flight control tapes, which would have confirmed the violation, Bargaen was told the tapes had been inadvertently erased. Without the time and money to fight the suspension, Bargaen says he had to terminate the flying service, leaving many rural Nevadans hours away from medical help.

Gov. Bryan is the most prominent politician criticizing the withdrawals in Nevada. He has come out in opposition to any more air space takeovers in his state. John Walker, Bryan's spokesman for community affairs, says:

"Forty percent of the air space in Nevada already is militarized. We have a nuclear test site in southern Nevada, where there is on the average one major explosion a month. Plus, there is a large bombing and gunnery range near Nellis Air Force Base, and we are being considered for the nation's permanent high level nuclear waste site. It is hard to accept new withdrawals."

Testifying before the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and Parks in August of 1984, Gov. Bryan outlined the agenda he would like addressed before any withdrawals are approved. He asked for compensation from the military in acres or money, funding for environmental impact statements for all federal projects in his state, careful adherence to the National Environmental Policy Act by federal agencies, and full mitigation by the U.S. government for all adverse federal actions in Nevada.

But Bryan has no way to enforce his agenda. And with the Groom Range takeover now history, the military is going full force to gain approval for its Fallon and Gandy projects. The Navy has produced a Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Fallon proposal, but it does not appear to provide compensation to Nevada or mitigation for the impacts of a withdrawal.



Yucca Mountain area, Nevada Test Site

Activist Dave Hornbeck says the DEIS is a farce and doesn't come close to complying with the law. He says the review of alternatives in the document is woefully inadequate and that the Navy devotes most of the plan to justifying what it wants. He calls some of the specifics in the plan "pure sophistry," and echoes Bargaen by saying the EIS probably wouldn't hold up in court.

To better understand why Nevadans are up in arms about the military proposals, you have to look at the potential impacts. A number of physicians believe serious psychological and physical health problems can be attributed to startle-related noises such as sonic booms.

Bargaen says there is plenty of research on the books about these hazards. Enough, he says, to show the Navy it is in the public's best interest to scrap the 5,600 square mile supersonic operations area planned near Fallon since it will involve 20 to 40 sonic booms a day inside the withdrawal area.

Ranchers are concerned about the effects the booms will have on livestock. Environmentalists believe the sonic boom area proposed for eastern Nevada's Gandy Range will stress nesting eagles and other wildlife.

There is also the potential impact on human settlements. Residents of small communities such as Dixie Valley, a town of 60 in the heart of the Fallon proposal, worry about the effect sonic booms will have on private property. They have already complained about building damage and dwindling property values -- products, they say, of present military flights.

In addition to the sonic boom effects, pilots claim the increased military air presence poses additional air hazards for private and commercial pilots. The land withdrawals also restrict public access, and ranchers, miners, hunters and other recreationists lose the privileges they historically had in those areas.

The air-space and land withdrawals are related. The military says it needs chunks of public land for radar installations, target ranges and locations for equipment that simulates enemy tracking capabilities to support the flights. In the Fallon proposal, the withdrawn land will have new roads, bombing targets and radar facilities.

In addition to impacts from construction of roads and facilities, the withdrawn land will, of course, be bombed. Bravo-20 is an existing target range north of the town of Fallon in an alkaline valley called the Carson Sink. Sixty-four square miles of it has been irreparably altered by target practice. Human activity in the area is prohibited, so that on most roadmaps Bravo-20, like many areas in the Southwest, is labeled a "Danger Area." As part of its overall plan to increase activities in this part of Nevada, the Navy proposes expanding Bravo-20.

[Continued on page 12]

Locking up the public's land

Current Defense Department withdrawal proposals call for placing public air space into two categories: Military Operation Areas and Supersonic Operation Areas.

Generally, the MOAs are areas where flights by non-supersonic aircraft will operate, although a portion might be reserved for supersonic jets; SOAs are specifically reserved for supersonic jets. Both operation areas may involve the withdrawal of land for use as target ranges and electronic surveillance sites.

Presently there are withdrawals proposed in the five Western states of Nevada, Texas, New Mexico, Utah and Arizona. Additionally, the military is said to be drawing up plans for an SOA in southern Idaho, south of Mountain Home Air Force Base.

The withdrawals include: a 5,600 square mile SOA and supporting Strike Warfare Center near Fallon, Nevada; a 3,000 square mile SOA near the Gandy Range on the Utah/Nevada border and centering around the Goshute Indian Reservation; a 600 square mile MOA/SOA near Valentine in West Texas; a 500 square mile SOA around Reserve, New Mexico, and adjacent to the Gila and Aldo Leopold Wildernesses; and a 4,500 square mile SOA near Sells, in southern Arizona on the Papago Indian Reservation.

The military says that the withdrawals are necessary "to provide specialized training to achieve and maintain a high degree of readiness for its forces, including tactical aircraft and associated crews."

12-High Country News -- March 4, 1985

The U.S. Air Force appropriates 89,000 acres of Nevada

In the spring of 1984, Pat Sheahan was driving to his Groom Range mine in Nevada when he was stopped on his own road by armed Air Force security guards. He was told the Groom Range was being closed to the public for "national security reasons."

What the Air Force neglected to tell him was that the takeover was done without prior consultation with the state, local residents or Congress and was in effect illegal.

Any withdrawal of public land of over 5,000 acres for military use has to be approved by an act of Congress. Bypassing this requirement, the Air Force moved into the 89,000-acre southern Nevada area and staked its claim. Like Sheahan, stockmen and recreationists were also barred from the area. They got the same terse explanation from the Air Force about national security.

Asked by *High Country News* to elaborate on the takeover, an Air Force spokesman at Nellis Air Force base responded: "The Air Force acted to prevent intrusion into a national security area. Now, for the next question..."

Incensed that the Air Force had grabbed 89,000 acres of BLM land that they had always had access to, Sheahan and others went to the press. Their story was told on CBS News and articles appeared in the Las Vegas papers. Still, the issue somehow stayed low key, and the Air Force remained adamant.

Bill Vincent is a former newspaperman and now the Las Vegas representative for Citizen Alert, an organization originally formed to halt the MX Racetrack proposal. He says due to its proximity to high-security military test areas, the Groom Range is a sensitive area to the Air Force.

With the exception of Sheahan's silver and lead mine, the Groom Range is public land administered by the Bureau of Land Management. Adjoining the area are several million acres of military reserves, including the Nevada Test Site, where the Defense Department has been testing nuclear weapons since the 1940s, and the Nellis Air Force Range, a proving

ground for new aircraft and a bombing and gunnery range. All of the area is off-limits to the public.

Activist Vincent knew Sheahan's parents, Dan and Martha, who ran the Groom mine during the 1940s-50s, when activity at the Nellis Range involved atmospheric nuclear testing. Vincent says the Air Force was not a good neighbor to the Sheahans.

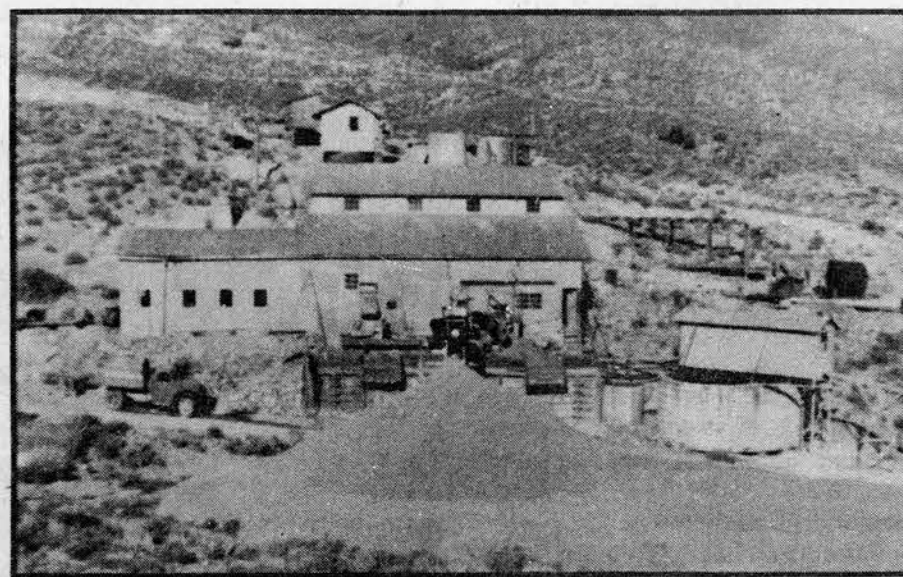
Downwind from the testing, the Sheahans claimed they were never warned of radioactivity and received severe burns from fallout dust. They also blamed the Air Force for strafing their mines and destroying their new \$100,000 concentration mill with a high explosive-incendiary bomb. The Air Force has never answered the charges.

"They told me the stories years ago, but asked me not to write them," says Vincent. "They didn't want more trouble from the military. Finally, both Dan and Martha died of cancer."

Vincent claims the Air Force tried to force the Sheahans to move out because their mine overlooked Area 51 of the Nellis Range, a high-security testing zone where aircraft such as the U-2 and SR-71 have been tested. He is going public with the stories now, as Pat Sheahan did last summer, because the Groom Range takeover "was the last straw."

On the heels of the illegal takeover this past spring, the Air Force went to Congress in August to get official approval, after the fact, for the Groom takeover. After the House Subcommittee on Public Lands and Parks scrutinized the proposal, Congress chastised the Air Force for their illegal action but authorized the Groom withdrawal until 1987. The lawmakers mandated that long-term occupancy will be based on an environmental impact statement prepared by the Air Force.

Though the Defense Department got what it wanted from Congress, the Air Force was roughed up a little in hearings before the Public Lands and Parks Subcommittee. Present at the hearings were Nevada Gov. Richard Bryan, his state's Department of Wildlife head, William Molini, and



The Groom Mine before and after the 1954 bombing. Photos courtesy of Citizen Alert.



several Nevada conservationists. The congressmen were taken aback when the Air Force's illegal activity was revealed. One of the conservationists testifying said subcommittee chair, Ohio Democrat John Seiberling, "was madder than hell." A subcommittee staffer was more reserved in his judgment of the collective response. "Let's just say the subcommittee's reaction was not terribly favorable."

Governor Bryan told the gathering he is opposed to more military withdrawals in his state unless proper compensation is arranged. In addition, the subcommittee was shown photographs of the Sheahan's bombed-out concentration mill.

When pressed by subcommittee members on the need for the takeover, the Air Force responded with, "for national defense." A deputy in the Air Force's Installations Section was grilled on who authorized the illegal takeover. His answer: "The decision was made at the Secretary of Air Force level or higher." Seiberling and the other House members didn't miss the point that "higher" meant Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger or President Reagan.

Though the withdrawal involves BLM land, the agency did not protest the action. Nevada BLM spokesman Bob Stewart says there will be

restrictions in the Groom area, but adds, "There is very little resource use to consider. It will affect maybe one cattle permittee, and mining could be out."

No one knows for sure why the Air Force took such dramatic measures to secure the Groom Range last spring. There is speculation that it is related to a 1982 incident at the Nevada Nuclear Test Site. Several people identifying themselves as members of the Greenpeace organization skirted security and entered the site's sensitive Yucca Flat section. Before they left, the intruders took videotapes of the area, which were later played on a Nevada television station. Although no high-level security activities were revealed, the Air Force may have decided a bigger buffer zone was needed around the Test Site.

Pat Sheahan is reluctant to talk about the Groom withdrawal now, because he is negotiating to lease some of his land to the Air Force. He is allowed access to his mine, provided he calls the Air Force in advance. A lone rancher is also allowed limited access to the area. Aside from these two, the 89,000-acre chunk of public land is now closed to everyone but the Air Force.

--Bruce Farling

Drafted...

[Continued from page 11]

Conservationists charge that the sonic boom and bombing activity will eliminate some BLM wilderness study areas from consideration for permanent wilderness designation. Rob Smith, associate Southwest Representative for the Sierra Club, says the BLM is already on record in Utah using the "sights and sounds from

military overflights as an excuse for non-wilderness recommendations."

Wilderness proponents are also concerned about recent BLM decisions allowing military radar installations in wilderness study areas before final land use recommendations have been made. These sites are tied to the plans for the large air-space withdrawals. Critics claim the radar installations encourage increased air activity over the areas, thus giving the BLM an opportunity to make non-wilderness

recommendations. There are four such wilderness areas near Fallon.

BLM spokesman Bob Stewart says the decision to allow radar installations in the study areas was based on careful environmental reviews. He says the facilities were judged "insignificant as interim placements," and adds that the Navy installed the equipment using helicopters to keep surface disturbance at a minimum.

Dr. Barga is critical of that response. "The BLM and the military say the increased sonic jet activity will not affect the wilderness because there will be insignificant surface impacts. They seem to miss the point that there is no escape from this kind of noise. These areas are the very places people go to for solitude."

□

Bruce Farling is an intern at *High Country News*.

March 4, 1985 -- High Country News-13

GUEST ESSAY

Good dog, bad dog

by C.L. Rawlins

I ride alone, in human terms. In broader ones, I have three companions: Goldie, Major and The Varmint. Two geldings and a dog. I ride one, pack one and the third follows, sniffing each coyote scrape and badger hole. Goldie and Major are Forest Service horses. In a sense, The Varmint is a Forest Service dog, a ward of the state. Someone lost her in the mountains and, despite posters and ads, never reclaimed her.

She was the guard station mascot, everyone's pet. I was the last to leave and she was mine. The following year, regulations were invoked and I taught her to lie low on the floor of a pickup, so as not to offend the powers that be. She lived with me on a ranch and learned to work cattle in the mountains. She learned when to chase and when to keep still. One winter she shared the run of my back pasture with a moose and a small band of deer. She would sniff and watch the deer as they watched her, but never tried to chase them, though she looked at me for the command.

The Varmint knows the Wind Rivers and the Gros Ventre. She's been to the City of Rocks and Joshua Tree, forded the East Fork and the Escalante. At home, she watches me type from her burrow under the bed, slim, elegant head resting on her paws, hoping dinnertime is soon.

In some places, dogs are Not Allowed. They pee on flowers and leave stinkwads neatly centered in the trail. They may harass wildlife or bite children. Their tendencies are well known and must be regulated. The Varmint saw Zion from the open window of the camper-shell, long snout questing for evidence. She was, to the Park Service, an illegal alien, an unjustified presence.

Just as there are good and bad people, there are Good Dogs and Bad Dogs. People in parks and wilderness have been known to do damage, but it is hard to make a rule against allowing Bad People into parks. They file suit and write letters to their congressmen. Dogs are as complex, in terms of good-and-bad, as people, but lack legal recourse and representation.

They are also unlikely to propose strip mines in wilderness study areas, though that will be left beside the point.

Some years past, a dog was shot on the trail to Big Sandy Lake by a shepherd. The dog, a city dog, had decided that sheep were its prey and then acted on that decision. Blam. Bad Dog.

Whether sheep are more desirable than dogs in a wilderness is another question I shall skirt. Sheep enjoy grazing rights under law.

The owner of the Bad Dog was horrified. He complained bitterly to the local authorities and wrote incendiary letters to his lawyer and congressman. There was no action, since the shepherd was within his rights and acted to protect his flock. In any case, the Bad Dog was dead, though he was, perhaps, to his master a Good Dog misled, a martyr to grazing.

The moral character of one's dog can be difficult to determine. Like

State Department spokesmen, dogs are creatures of situational ethics. What is Good Dog in Nicaragua may be Bad Dog in North Dakota. There are variables in all complex events, both canine and human.

Spot or Poopsie or Nanook may endure cross-country travel without outraging the upholstery, but be transformed by the sight of a chipmunk into a ravaging beast. The Hound of the Baskervilles. Grendel. It is possible for Good Dogs, given the opportunity, to become Bad Dogs very suddenly.

A cowdog in Manhattan may earn a fine for his owner by unauthorized excretion. A cowdog, if he could lift his leg high enough, would pee on the Empire State Building. Bad Dog.

A city dog, who understands the niceties of urban custom insofar as need allows, may regard elk, moose, cow, calf, sheep, mouse and skunk as members of a single class: prey. Bad, Bad Dogs. Maybe even blam.

I sometimes wonder how many city dogs become country dogs by virtue of being skunked. Dear God, Louise, we can't let the little monster in the Buick! It happens more often than we suppose, I think.

Dogs are as much products of civilization as are citizens and taxpayers. That the basset and the chihuahua belong to the same species taxes imagination, but such is man's whim. Don't take *The Call of the Wild* too seriously. Your dog is product of his or her environment. Your dog may smell better (using smell as an active verb) and run faster than you, but your dog neither reads signs nor understands that there are distinctions to be drawn between backyard and wilderness. And that there are significant differences among stray cat, bobcat and polecat. A dog may learn such things, given time, but a vacation may not be long enough to teach such judgment and restraint.

It takes time to develop the skill of a working dog, but sheepdogs and cowdogs can be worth their weight in whiskey when there are jobs to be done. Working dogs which do not learn their trade can end up a short life on the wrong end of a gun. Cattle and sheep outfits may not cut much slack for dogs as pets or nuisances, but a good stockdog is an honored employee and an asset to the ranch. Dogs must earn their place on the range.

The Varmint has earned her keep. More than once I've followed her white flag of a tail on poor trails in the dark. Where's camp? Her nose knows. She's helped gather cattle and sheep, though her German shepherd-collie blood is a bit diluted and she lacks the stock sense of a border collie or blue heeler. She's scared of lightning and her nervous behavior has warned me of thunderstorms still brewing below the ridgeline. She's warned me of bears, saving me a backcountry rodeo.

She's an attentive listener to the kind of aimless talk that makes solitary weeks in a cowcamp or patrol cabin tolerable. If you've never been alone for two or three weeks, you may not understand what it means to have a listener, even if that listener is a dog or a horse. It means a lot.

The Varmint has learned to be a good wilderness user, a class-A boonie



Sheep camp in Wind River Mountains

pup. Her only weakness, prey-wise, is meadow voles and there she eats what she kills, like a coyote. She goes off the trail to do her business, unlike some hikers, and if she occasionally squats too close to water, she will never dig a pit latrine on the shore of Raid Lake, as some Boy Scouts did recently. Diseases? She may roll in dead critters, but you could catch a lot more from a Boy Scout.

If dogs were totally incompatible with wilderness living, our ancestors wouldn't have bothered having them around back in the days before concrete and the Gross National Product, when wilderness acreage was

somewhat larger than at present. But don't assume that your dog belongs "out there" with you. Read the regs, carry a rope or leash and keep your pride and joy in sight. Don't make a Good Dog go bad. There may be a herd of sheep or a skunk around that next bend in the trail.

I could finish up with a commandment -- Know Thy Dog -- but it might be too tough, like that other one, Know Thyself.

C.L. Rawlins lives in Boulder, Wyoming, and likes to climb frozen waterfalls to relax.

LETTERS

THE YELLOW PRESS

Dear HCN,

I am ashamed of the *High Country News*. How can the environmental movement be best served by innuendo and scare words? I am referring to your headline and barb titled "The National Paranoia Association." I had thought the *High Country News* above the level of yellow press! Why not print the whole story and let your readers make their own judgments? Indeed when Bagge's entire speech is consulted, he raises some interesting issues. Why is the Canadian electric power tied to the price of oil? The electricity is generated from hydropower and its production costs have nothing to do with the world price of crude oil.

Having met more than one Canadian who refused to respect the flag of the United States, I have to find the power contracts suspect. The Canadians are wonderful neighbors, but the ones I have known will be the first to say that their nation does things for Canada's benefit, not for the benefit of big brother to the south. The contracts are interruptible, which is not unusual, but could cause New England some problems if they and Eastern Canada need the power for some emergency at the same time.

Isn't it also convenient that while they are telling us to stop using coal, the one abundant energy source within the United States that is readily

available to generate electricity, that they are willing to sell us surplus electricity? The price of which is tied to the cost of that energy source most susceptible to the vagaries of the world situation. I wonder just how high oil prices would rise if Saudi Arabia were attacked or the present government subverted? Why not tie the price of the electricity to the price of the Canadian natural gas now being sold to California? Why not tie it to the price of the potash they export into our midwest farmbelt?

Yes, it is wonderful to get electricity from clean renewable hydropower; but it would be even better to get this electricity at fixed rates on noninterruptible contracts!

Dean Nyffeler
Roswell, New Mexico

QUERY FROM AUSTRIA

Dear HCN,

I am studying English and Italian at Innsbruck University and for my MA thesis I would like to do a glossary on "Forest Death."

At the moment I am trying to collect as much information as possible on acid rain and everything else connected with "Forest Death." I therefore wanted to ask you if you were so kind to send me your September 3, 1984 issue, which has been recommended to me as a useful source of information.

Veronika Obojes
Hall in Tirol, Austria

14-High Country News -- March 4, 1985

OPINION

Must wildlife movies distort reality to entertain?

by Charles Jonkel

Human and animal ecology are inextricably bound together. But we alone among earth's creatures can massively change, exterminate or create new life forms. Whether or not we should is moot. But how we do it, to what extent we change things, and how we perceive what we do is extremely crucial to wildlife and to ourselves. Relative to wildlife species, we are gods, so we must take great care in our responsibilities.

A look at literature, science, films, and cultural values may help us to be responsible.

Scene One: A deer leaps over a windfall, then lopes and bounds sidehill down the talus slope toward a rocky outcrop. Caribou wend their way over the arctic plains, across a violent, plunging, ice-filled river, then fight their way up an overhanging bank, bones and muscles strained beyond the limits of man-made fiber or steel cable.

Scene Two: A fawn mule deer, stretched flat next to a clump of sagebrush, bleats and screams as a bobcat closes its teeth on the spotted neck. A caribou calf slips beneath the waves as blocks of ice crash against it in the water; the large brown eyes take one last look at the sky and its mother's rump fading in the distance.

Scene Three: Shots ring out. The bobcat leaps high in the air above the fawn mule deer, falling over backward to the red-splattered snow. Strong arms reach into the water to grasp the choking caribou calf, and heave it into the back of a boat.

Scene Four: Elsewhere in the scenario of which the above are part, high adventure reigns: heroine and hero alternate between danger and romance, frontiers are opened, mountain ranges are explored, cities are built, wars are fought, empires are won, and governments fall. Sometimes there are scenes of a scientific discovery, agency incompetence toward wildlife, a climatic or man-caused disaster, a spectacular waterfall, a charismatic voice, or a symphonic interlude. Familiar places are visited, well-known mountain ranges are crossed, and the history of nations or regions become part of the film.

These four film scenarios could as well appear in a novel, nature magazine article, poem, short story, or even a news report. The result of this mix becomes either journalistic pulp, superior literature, good or bad entertainment, or perhaps the inspiration for an Academy Award, an Emmy or Pulitzer prize. Example: The Farley Mowat novel, *Never Cry Wolf*, and the film of the same name by Carroll Ballard, took liberties in telling the tale of wolves and wolf research. By straddling the line between fact and fiction, they managed to excite the thrill-seeker but alarm the purist. Such artistic portrayals, even if borderline, raise ethical questions about the relationships between science, literature and film.

Biologists have long deplored anthropomorphic approaches to wildlife, distortions of fact, and the open exploitation of wildlife. Writers and filmmakers, like anyone else, are quick to capitalize on the human interest aspects of the wild world, and have every right to their views and to use words, scenes, and



facts as they interpret things. Sometimes, however, just as poachers and vandals cruelly use wildlife for short-term, monetary gain or gratification, cheap or poorly written films, books, and stories exploit wildlife in a manner described as "wildlife pornography" by writer Peter Steinhart of Stanford University.

Legitimate hunters, fishermen, trappers, and even commercial enterprises such as fishing companies, use wildlife in the normal and proper pursuit of recreation, food, and income. Their impacts are usually balanced through wildlife management and research.

Likewise, most filmmakers and writers "use" wildlife in ways that enhance their work or product, ways that create or become art and entertainment, but also which provide new understandings between man and the wild world -- animal bridges, so to speak, to the very roots of human societies. The artist, poet, filmmaker, and writer capture and explain truths uncomprehended by the biologist. By skillfully mixing the realities of human society with the truisms of the natural, organized, but non-human world of wildlife, special understandings of ourselves, our past, and our possible future are clarified. Moreover, we thereby consciously share space with wildlife species and learn, without additional effort, to accommodate or even tolerate ourselves better.

But just where do we draw the practical lines between poaching, removal, and hunting; between agricultural needs and habitat preser-

vation; or between protecting campers and protecting grizzly bears? And where do we draw the line on exploitive journalism, wildlife sensationalism, rigged photos and film, wildlife "movie stars" versus biological professionalism, the "good animal/bad animal" Disney depictions versus the tell-it-like-it-is shows on *Nova*, or a pulp romance versus classical literature? Or should we draw such lines? If so, who should draw them?

Some extremists would forbid all killing of animals, would protect a killer bear whose behavior has been thoroughly and unalterably corrupted by man, would allow cities to be overrun by disease-ridden pigeons, and would allow an animal species whose numbers are out of control to destroy their habitat. Others would cut funds to save the condor ("Do we feed vultures while people starve?"), or would allow Colorado's last grizzly bear to be shot as a trophy.

Reasonable people reject the extremes. The professionalism of wildlife biologists, writers, and filmmakers helps us avoid polarized views. Still, there are strong, primitive urges which draw us to extremes and attract us to gruesome films like *Jaws* or *Grizzly*, to exploitive, low-budget TV series, *True* magazine wildlife adventure creations, the "mamas and papas" in a Disney film, and to "Save the..." organizations.

But some distinctions are harder to make than that between *Jaws* and *Nova*. Farley Mowat, for example, writes novels with a mix of wildlife

ecology and human culture which has worldwide appeal. He is not careful with his facts or sources on biology and history, but he captures the essence of wildlife and man, together, in a past or changing world. Although he stomps on biology and omits fine points of history, the end result is a marvelously entertaining book, approximately accurate. Should we complain?

I will admit that, as a biologist, I may be prejudiced against Farley Mowat, partly because of his unjust remarks against the Canadian Wildlife Service in *Never Cry Wolf* (when I worked for the CWS, we used to call him Hardly Knowit), and I was not pleased when I found that Mowat had carved his name in a boulder above Samuel Hearne's exquisite inscription, where Hearne had anchored his ships in Churchill harbor during his 1767 exploration of the Northwest Territories. But mostly I am suspicious of Mowat because I have a copy of his official report to the Canadian Wildlife Service and it doesn't contain much of *Never Cry Wolf*. Inuits who visited Mowat's camp claim that he never left the place where he was dumped out, and certain wolf researchers say that Mowat's wolf information sounds too much like Adolf Murie's in *The Wolves of Mount McKinley*. On the other hand, Mowat's descriptions in *Never Cry Wolf* of some of the "old arctic hands," or of Brits and ex-Brits who could not leave their military and social rank at home when they worked in the arctic, are excellent, as is his account of the humanism and humor of Big John Ingebritson, a Churchill native I have known well.

Altogether, I must question the direction of any film or literature which distorts wildlife, wildlife principles, human/wildlife relationships, and the economic and cultural costs which must be borne in maintaining a natural world or ecosystem. Is the approach in *Never Cry Wolf* really much different than the early Disney distortions where wildlife was made to "dance" with trick photography or perform as part of a cast? Is it worth it to raise people's consciousness of wildlife at the expense of instilling untrue concepts and images in millions of minds?

As a scientist, I can only cringe as I think of the decades we must spend undoing some of the misconceptions created by scenes such as a monster, snarling bear standing upright to attack (they only stand to see better, not to attack), or a shark crawling onto a boat to "get its enemy," or flocks of birds going berserk and killing people. How different is such wildlife pornography from the film sequence in *Never Cry Wolf* where wolves, caribou, and a naked man all run around together on the tundra when the caribou were obviously hazed by off-screen helicopters? Contrary to depictions in *Never Cry Wolf*, biologists are not all goofy people who go off to study wildlife without any knowledge of their work or even of where they are going. Pilots simply do not dump you out on the ice two miles from shore, lemmings do not run when they see you cooking a stew, and wolves in a hunted area don't let themselves be seen.

Ballard succeeded in capturing on film the immense beauty of the North, the stoic disbelief of native peoples

The plot of *Never Cry Wolf*

Farley Mowat, self-described story-teller and "reincarnation of the Norse saga men," wrote the best-selling novel from which the film of the same name was adapted. It is the tale of a young Canadian biologist assigned the task of collecting proof that wolf predation was indeed wreaking havoc on the northern caribou herds. Unceremoniously dumped in the Canadian outback by a crazed bushpilot, he survives a series of misadventures that in Disney-fashion stretch credulity. Locating a family of wolves to study, the biologist's research includes gorging himself on stewed mice-like lemmings, "marking his territory" like the wolves by drinking 27 cups of tea, and getting naked while beating on a caribou-skin drum

to bring on the herds. Through his communal relationship with the wolves, and caribou he eventually comes to reject his own species.

Filmed in Nome, Alaska, and near Atlin Lake on the Yukon-British Columbia border, the movie's producers provide a spectacular backdrop for the story that is said to be based on Mowat's own experiences. According to the public relations package for the film, sent out by Walt Disney Pictures, the wolves on screen are domestic and were obtained from a guard dog and kennel service. The caribou in the film are actually reindeer, or "domestic caribou." Mowat was a consultant on the film, as was another author of note, Peter Mathiesson, who was called the "wildlife consultant."

--Bruce Farling

[Continued on page 15]

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Treed in Denver

I spent a day in Denver February 21 getting the other side of the story. The occasion was a most-of-the-day panel discussion on below-cost timber sales at the Rocky Mountain Forest Industries Conference. As a member of the panel, I got to hear Brian Crowley, the man who directed the U.S. Government Accounting Office study on below-cost sales, and David Hall, editor of the *Denver Post*, in telling the mostly small loggers from the Rockies a few things they weren't eager to hear.

But they also got to say some things back. From a Washington-based lobbyist to small loggers in the audience, they were unanimous on the subject of negotiating with environmentalists: It can't be done, they said. Environmentalists don't keep agreements, don't play by the rules and are generally untrustworthy.

My talk focused on the deterioration of national forest trails and campgrounds -- an area where the Forest Service seems clearly to be the villain. But Mark Rey of the National Forest Products Association in Washington, D.C., had a different point of view. If recreation facilities are deteriorating, he argued, it's because environmentalists have chosen to play a spoiling role in Congress. The timber industry, he said, like other commodity groups, lobbies in its own interests and

doesn't fight other groups. But environmental groups in Congress, he said, spend their time fighting timber appropriations and don't push for recreation appropriations. Trails and campgrounds are deteriorating, he said, because they have no constituency in Congress.

But that was a sidebar. The real rubbing point to those in the audience was the wilderness question. So far as they were concerned, the passage of a wilderness bill meant release for logging of the remaining areas: tit for tat. But the treacherous environmentalists, having accepted the legislated wilderness, now have turned to appeals, lawsuits and the appropriations process to stop logging on present roadless areas. There is no "closure," said Rey, and therefore no basis for future negotiations. Someone else mentioned their horror at seeing another Colorado wilderness bill surface so soon after the first one had passed.

But at lunch we heard that while there may be no basis for dealing with the large timber companies, the small operators are a different matter. Environmentalists are aggrieved because they are not at the table helping the Forest Service to make decisions. The small loggers are at the table, but many think the agency is snaking food off their plates. Their major complaint was that the Forest Service

cares more about building a general use road system than about getting logs out of the forests at a reasonable cost. Some weren't surprised there are lots of below-cost sales, but they blame it on extravagant roading and high Forest Service overhead.

They agreed that the agency lacks the political will to close roads, and that it seems intent on building roads ostensibly for logging that eventually become public highways. In many cases, they say, they want only a two-rut trail through the forest that could be closed once the cut was over. Instead, they get a road almost large enough for logging trucks and cars, which creates conflict with the public and creates pressure for continual improvements.

It is not clear that this provides basis for agreement between environmentalists and small loggers. But communication wouldn't hurt. When we criticized the group for not attending the Forest Service Mission Conference in San Francisco in December, they asked how many environmentalists we think show up at timber industry meetings. It's not the same thing, of course, because the Mission conference was an attempt at outreach. But maybe the place to start reaching loggers is at logging conferences.

It would be understandable if the environmental movement didn't choose this moment to seek compromise. At least on the below-cost timber issue, which appears to be the

Achilles heel in the Forest Service's apparent plan to road much of the surviving roadless land, the tide is running against the agency. Both the GAO and the *Denver Post* representatives on this panel were strong on the question, with the GAO defending its analysis of the losses and *Denver Post* editor Hall strong on his paper's aggressive coverage of the issue. One story by *Post* reporter Dan Jones brought a high-ranking Forest Service delegation to Denver to talk to the paper.

The Jersey-Jack decision, reported elsewhere in this paper, is likely to strengthen the fight against roading the Rockies. The decision tells the Forest Service it must follow the spirit as well as the letter of the National Environmental Policy Act. It can no longer break a major roading-logging program down into a dozen or more discrete steps and do individual quick and dirty analyses of each mile of road built and million board feet of timber logged. If that decision by the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals is implemented, the agency will have to approach roading and logging in a cumulative way.

The Forest Service can look at this suit as another roadblock to carrying out its mission. Or it can see it as an opportunity to break old patterns by analyzing the cumulative, multiple resource consequences of its actions. We expect the former but hope for the latter.

--Ed Marston

Wildlife films...

(Continued from page 14)

toward white men or "Kabloonas," the solitude, the possessiveness that isolated people get towards the land, and the casual competence of people who work in the arctic. He caught the majesty of the tundra, the mountains, and the wildlife on his reels of film. He showed the elements of agency incompetence recounted in the novel, and he had the local history, scientific discovery, and animal/man interactions from which to weave an excellent story. Why then did he include somewhat cheap entertainment, such as the lemming scene or the caribou/man scene, which ul-

timately exploit wildlife? I expected more.

If you look at wildlife-based films as a spectrum, you find an entertainment approach on one end, and pure science on the other. Shallow or cheap shots and wildlife pornography obviously lie at the far end of the entertainment side, but poorly produced or exploitative efforts pollute both sides of the spectrum. Tarzan movies used wildlife as props or backdrops to an adventure. But except for an occasional (but obviously rigged) trained animal shot, wildlife was used merely to add drama or a sense of place, and films generally were not exploitative of wildlife.

Some films, however, have made animals part of the cast, with or without exploitation. The typical Walt

Disney films, for example, used animals as part or all of the cast, with a narrator providing human thoughts and dialogue for the animals. Wildlife was, in effect, used as the actors or as puppets. That was exploitation. The exploitation was ultimately harmful to animals. People learned untrue things which confounded wildlife management, wildlife legislation, and people/animal contacts. Native peoples' cultures and religions too, are corrupted when their children watch untrue wildlife films. These films often make public acceptance of professional wildlife management impossible to achieve, and people go into the wild and do dumb things which hurt wildlife.

They feed "Gentle Ben" or wild polar bears, and get an arm pulled off. They campaign to save Bambi when deer habitat is being destroyed by too many Bambis. They convince the government to protect every last wolf when the wolves are eating every last moose or are coming into people's yards to attack the family dog. And

they feed pigeons and starlings by the millions, filling the buildings and parks with bird droppings and spreading diseases.

The world is shrinking as people increase by the millions each year. Tens of millions of people starve annually, while greedy politicians and soldiers make bombs from plowshares and wildlife habitat, or turn gene pools into Krugerands, Swiss bank accounts, and Miami condos.

Something is wrong. Holding companies and whole flocks of corporate and tin-horn Big Brothers rule the world, turning it gradually into one giant Banana Republic. People like Ballard and Mowat should help save us by teaching us the truth about the natural world and how to live in it, or go back to it. Wildlife is our tie to the real world, to evolution, to our future. The Indians were right all along. Just as the sun is the ultimate god, wild species are indeed our brothers. Certainly there is a money-making film or novel in all that, just showing it the way it is.

A multi-hatted biologist

Charles Jonkel wears many hats as an internationally known wildlife biologist. As professor of research in the University of Montana's Department of Wildlife Biology, Jonkel also advises the school's wildlife club and directs the annual International Wildlife Film Festival in Missoula.

He is perhaps best known in the West for his work as director of the Border Grizzly Project, a research offshoot of the University of Montana School of Forestry that works toward establishment of viable grizzly populations in the Northern Rockies.

Shucking his Midwestern roots, Jonkel attended undergraduate and graduate programs at the University of Montana, eventually completing a doctorate at the University of British Columbia. His academic research on pine martens and black bears led to a position with the Canadian Wildlife Service's Polar Bear Research Center.

In eight years at the Center, Jonkel, 54, had the opportunity to aid wildlife filmmakers.

Sizing up today's films, he says, "Internationally, wildlife filmmaking is improving greatly, while agency films are also much better than in the past." Jonkel points to the eclectic work done by the BBC and public television's "NOVA" as examples of quality wildlife filmwork. He says commercial offerings found in mainstream television and in Hollywood continue to be "dismal."

The Montana biologist points to the success his annual film festival, now in its eighth year, has had in educating the public about wildlife. Last year the festival attracted 3,500 people. The theme for this year's festival is oceans; the event takes place April 1-7 in Missoula.

--Bruce Farling

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16-High Country News -- March 4, 1985

LETTERS

SOME PEOPLE CHEAT

Dear HCN,

I believe that each of us who enjoys our national forests should be concerned and speak out when we know about an illegal use of its lands. One reason that our federal government has been trying to sell some of its lands is that they are so costly to administer, yet still are not always handled with care or honesty.

The federal income from cattle permits (only \$1.37 per head per month as opposed to about a \$10 or \$12 fee on private land) does not justify much expense for supervision. Someone who, through negligence and/or dishonesty, overuses his permit for private gain further jeopardizes the whole system and troubles those of us who care about the welfare of our rangelands and of our wildlife.

Furthermore, I do not want the Forest Service (us taxpayers) to be subsidizing deceitfulness or an infringement of the public trust. If we private citizens do not stand by our commitments to the F.S., why should it pay heed to complaints against what some of us claim to be their excessive

road building, destructive clear-cuts, or whatever else?

The pressures of too many people trying to squeeze their incomes and recreation out of our over-exploited natural resources is a worldwide problem demanding immediate attention. I hope that the U.S. federal system can continue to harmonize private enterprise with multiple use of public lands. To help, we should do our best to ensure that no one, neither private user nor federal employee, crowds into or ignores the legal domain of the general public.

Louise Bowman
Livingston, Montana

UNION CARBIDE'S CREDIT

Dear HCN,

In the article on the Uravan uranium mill (Feb. 4, 1985), you state that "Umetco's Frost says Union Carbide's credit rating never slipped." The enclosed items document that the Standard & Poor's credit rating of Union Carbide did indeed drop from "single A" (their top rating is "triple A") in April 1984 to "B" in June 1984 some five months before the Bhopal disaster.

Also of interest is a memo (copy enclosed) from Albert J. Hazle to Ken

Weaver, both of the Colorado Department of Health, which reads in part, "On July 12, 1984, Adonis Neblett (Attorney General's office) called me regarding the information that you had sent to him (provided by Umetco) which contained their new Standard & Poor's rating. Their new rating is 'B' which doesn't meet the RCD financial surety guidance... It is now our action to require Umetco to post the appropriate sureties."

Thus, it is plain that Umetco knew of the drop in credit rating of its parent company at the time and that the state considered the new rating inadequate for Union Carbide's self-assured warranty on Uravan.

Union Carbide's financial situation is of major concern, for if the company is unable adequately to clean up its existing facilities at Uravan, we the taxpayers will ultimately have to pay for it.

Margaret Puls
Denver, Colorado

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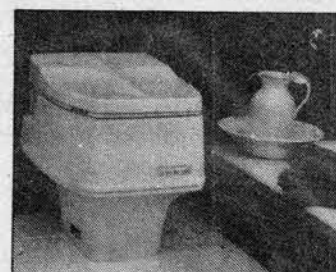
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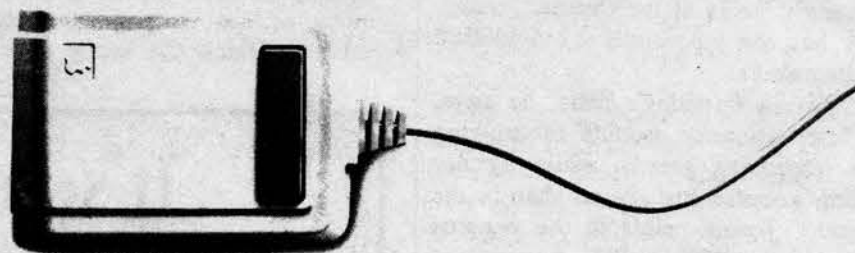


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