

High Country News

April 29, 1985

Vol. 17 No. 8

One Dollar

A Paper for People who Care about the West

A financial buccaneer and his resort come to Idaho's Priest Lake

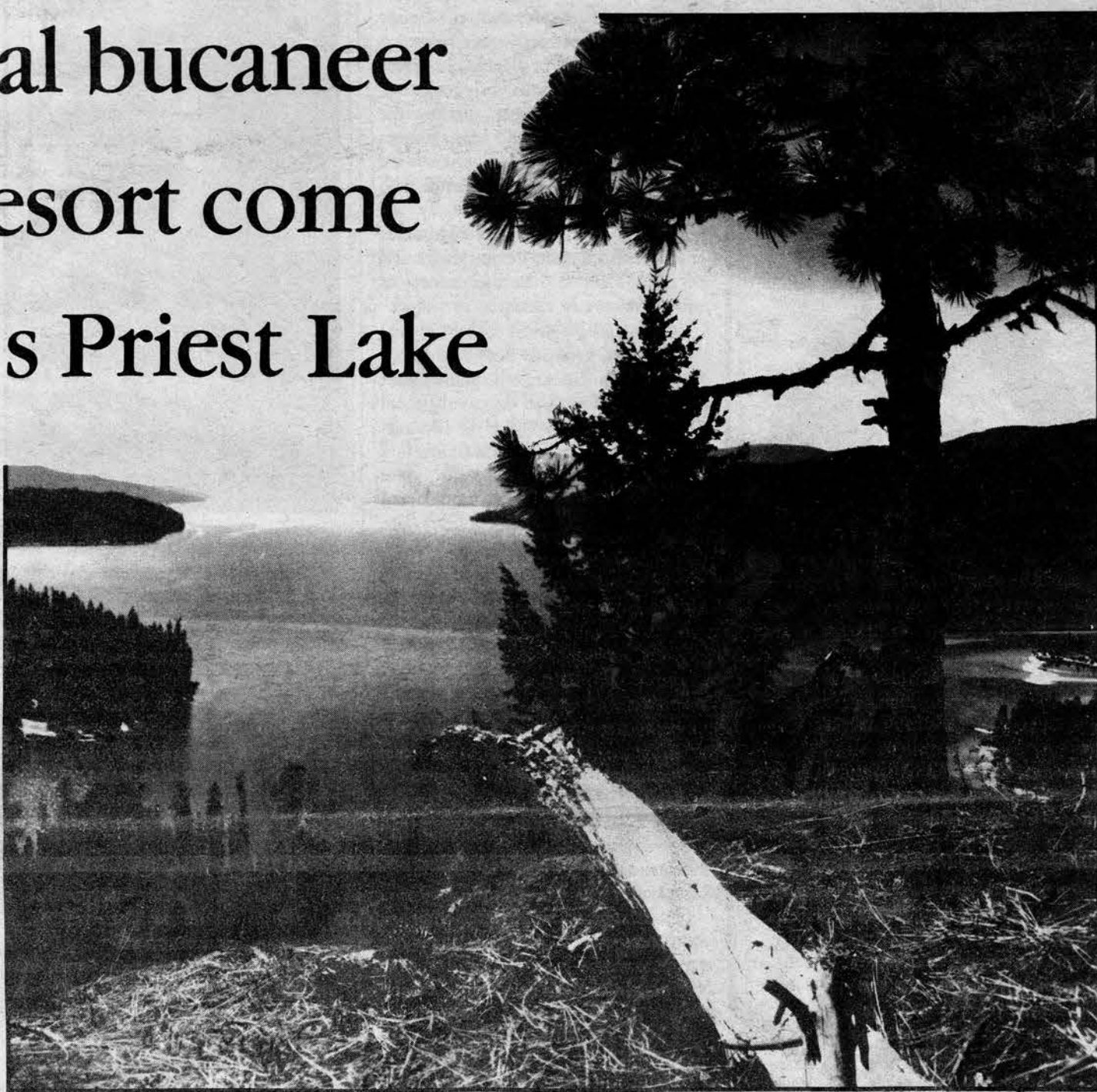
by Pat Ford

Priest Lake lies where Idaho's Panhandle meets Washington and Canada. Forty miles around, wonderfully carved with points, bays, beaches, cliffs and islands, ringed by thick forest rising to rocky peaks and alive with animal life, Priest Lake is hard to describe and harder to resist.

Today, Priest Lake's future is tangled in a web of money-making through the doings and undoings of British financier Sir James Goldsmith. About all that now remains of the Diamond International Corporation, which Goldsmith bought in 1982 and is quickly liquidating, is five miles of Priest Lake's eastern shoreline and some 15,000 scattered acres behind it. Idaho's Priest Lake State Forest surrounds that acreage.

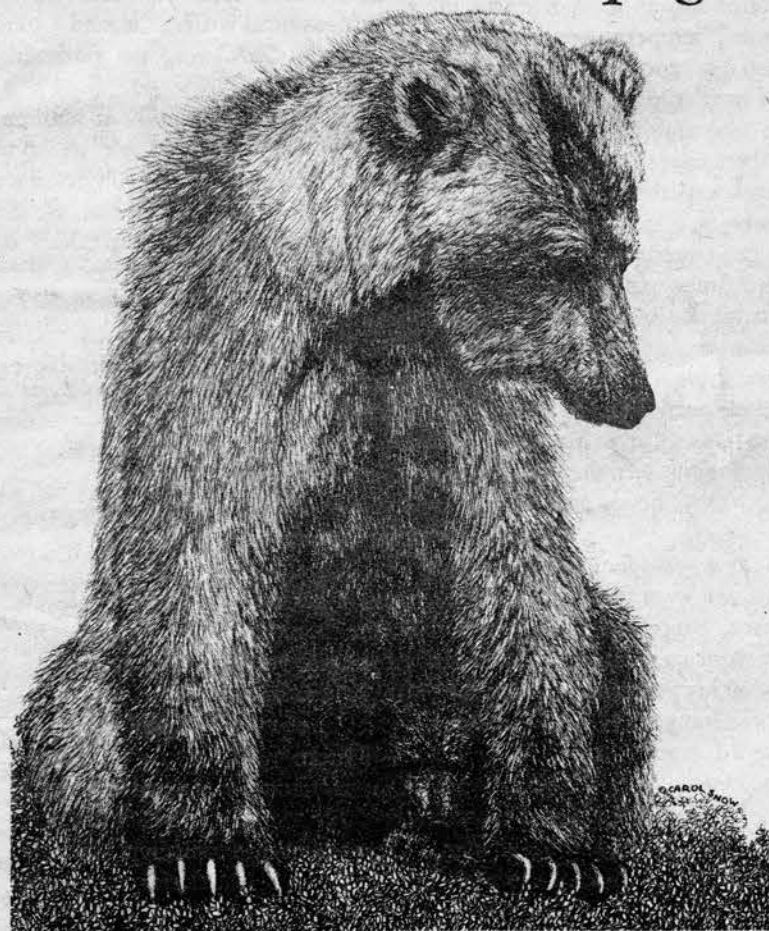
Against almost total local opposi-

(Continued on page 10)



Idaho Dept. of Commerce and Development

Book reviews inside ✓ pages 15, 16



The grizzly bear



Poetry by rural writers

2-High Country News--April 29, 1985

WESTERN ROUNDUP

Judge reinstates lands axed by Watt

One and a half million acres of dropped BLM wilderness study areas were reinstated April 19 when a U.S. District Court reversed a 1982 ruling by former Interior Secretary James Watt.

Watt had disallowed the study areas in 11 Western states, after an Interior Board of Land Appeals decision that certain categories of lands were ineligible under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). The categories were split estate lands -- public lands with subsurface rights not held by the federal government -- and BLM areas of less than 5,000 acres that might also be contiguous to other wilderness or wilderness study areas.

Ruling in favor of several conservation groups, Judge Laurence Karlton said: "In large measure, Watt failed to follow the law." Michael Scott, lobbyist for the Wilderness Society, called the decision "a complete vindication and a great victory. But it points out that some of Watt's anti-wilderness policies are still in place. It's up to Interior



James Watt

Secretary Hodel to ferret out the rest."

When Watt dropped the wilderness study areas for consideration during the 1982 Christmas holidays, he said his decision was "not really a big deal." A half-dozen conservation groups, however, immediately called the move illegal. Bruce Hamilton of the Sierra Club said then, "FLPMA requires the Interior Secretary to evaluate and protect all lands the government has interest in for wilderness protection. These areas were already on the inventory."

The suit against the Interior Department was brought by the Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, Environmental Defense Fund, National Wildlife Fund, Natural Resources Defense Council and National Audubon. The suit was joined later by the late California Congressman Philip Burton and the state of California.

Scott said the "big winners" in terms of regained wilderness study areas were New Mexico and Nevada.

--Betsy Marston



High Country News

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Dear friends,

City people, if they happen to visit the country during the winter, wonder how their friends stay sane without urban distractions: six-plex movie houses, museums, croissants and French bread from small bakeries and hundreds of thousands of 'neighbors' to provide the sense that there might be new and interesting people they have not yet met.

Rural residents ask the same thing, even those whose yards are graced by that newest, ugliest status symbol of the boondocks -- the satellite dish. With winter comes wonderment that we have chosen, for inexplicable and forgotten reasons, to live at the end of the world. The feeling is strongest in March, after you've gone, in one week, to two potlucks, one political dinner, one public hearing and one school play (*Guys and Dolls*, spoken and sung with western drawls), and been with exactly the same people.

But spring in a mountain town below 7,000 feet of elevation (ski towns are at their worst in the spring, which they call mud time) makes up for the winter's sufferings, or at least heals the scars inflicted by that endless string of short days. In spring you're disbelieving when told that a neighbor has chosen April or early May for a trip.

Part of the relief and joy of spring is the chance for physical activity without strapping boards to your feet -- rototilling, spading, cutting of wild asparagus, tugging to see whether a rhubarb stalk is ready for the pot.

More important is the drama that comes with April -- drama that uplifts and inspires because it is free of tension and anxiety. You know that, however hard winter may counter-attack, it will be repelled; however much it may settle in, it intends to soon give way.

But between today and eventual victory, there is tingling uncertainty. Hot, bright sunshine and greening vegetation go on for five, six, even seven days, as happened in early April. Then, on April 20, the sun

weakened, the wind freshened and finally really blew, and winter was back, dumping snow on buds and leaves that seemed too delicate, too new-born for such harsh treatment.

The buds and leaves, of course, cope easily with wet snow. They may droop and seem dead under the weight, but they stand back up when the snow melts later in the morning. The real danger lies not in the snow, dampness and wind. In this valley, it lies more in the warm days of April, which encourage the fruit buds to swell or open more than they should, just as it encourages us to shut down our coal furnace, put up the screens and pack away gloves and hats earlier than we should.

So it is the aftermath of the snow that is dangerous. The clearing away of clouds in the wake of stormy weather often means temperatures in the twenties; temperatures that low can mean a partially or totally destroyed fruit crop.

Those who aren't fruitgrowers try to shield themselves from the tensions fruitgrowers experience in spring. A favorite joke is that, "This year, my neighbor got frozen out twice, hailed out three times and didn't have enough irrigation water. Now he's complaining he can't find pickers." The growers joke that, in an area where people turn to Las Vegas the way Moslems turn to Mecca, fruitgrowers find all the gambling excitement they need among their trees.

Given the way we feel about winter and spring, we were pleased that our winter intern, Bruce Farling, was able to stay on with us into spring. He is gone now, on his way back to his job as a wilderness ranger with the Forest Service in Montana. His place has been taken by Lisa McKhann, a senior at Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona.

Lisa, a native of Minnesota, spent two years at the New School for Social Research in New York City before transferring to Prescott. Despite her experience here, she remains inter-



Lisa McKhann

ested in environmental matters (her major is in environmental and political writing), and is seeking work in the field in the Pacific Northwest. Even before Lisa came to HCN, she was a professional writer: she sold a piece to *Organic Gardening* on gardening in arid Arizona.

We recently did a mailing of sample copies to people we thought were ex-subscribers, only to discover that a few were not ex at all. Some responses were sympathetic: "Mailing lists are a... Don't let it distract you too much from continuing to publish the finest tabloid I see." Others, more in sorrow than anger, expressed doubts about our computer and bookkeeping system.

We have discovered that our readers include experts of every stripe. In an article on Yellowstone National Park's Fishing Bridge, we wrote of "vegetative diversity." So Dr. H. William Gabriel of Missoula, Montana, sent us his "Glossary of Landscape and Vegetation Ecology for Alaska," published by the BLM, which showed that the correct term is "vegetational diversity." Even knowing that, we're unlikely to use "vegetational" in future articles; it may be right, but it doesn't sound right. Instead, we will probably skirt the issue with "diversity of vegetation."

--the staff

Smelter may have left poisonous legacy

Residents of Anaconda, Montana, are waiting to see whether arsenic is still contaminating their children 4½ years after the town's copper smelter shut down.

In late March, urine samples were taken from about 100 preschool children. The national Center for Disease Control will compare these samples with the same number taken from children in Livingston, Montana. Mike Bishop, a project officer for the federal Environmental Protection Agency in Helena, says results of the test should be in by June.

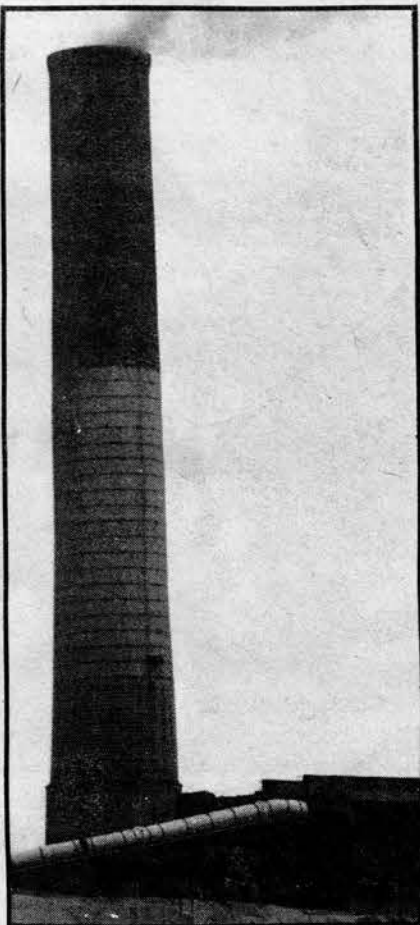
"The doctors in Anaconda will then be briefed, and people can go to them to have their questions answered," he says. The purpose of the study is to tell whether exposure to arsenic is still happening, and if it is, how kids can avoid it.

During most of its 97 years of operation, the smelter and its 530-foot-high smokestack discharged arsenic, lead, zinc, copper, cadmium, manganese and other heavy metals into the air and surrounding countryside. Researchers suspect one way local kids ingest these metals is simply by playing in the dirt, Bishop says.

Heavy metals are probably also in the huge slag heaps just north of the smelter, as well as in tailings along Warm Springs Creek, which runs from near Anaconda to the Clark Fork River.

Another test for arsenic levels in Anaconda-area children is scheduled

David Spear



Anaconda smelter

for this summer, Bishop says. The arsenic testing is one of seven on-going environmental studies of the defunct smelter, which is one of five Superfund hazardous waste sites in Montana. Once the studies are completed, their results will help the Environmental Protection Agency decide how the site should be cleaned

up. Most of the tests are being funded and operated by the smelter's owner, the Anaconda Minerals Co., under supervision of the EPA.

The current arsenic testing is the first such study of Anaconda-area children since the smelter shut down in September 1980. Similar tests in 1975 showed preschool-age kids in Anaconda had five times the amount of arsenic in their urine than kids in the Livingston "control group." Another study in 1978-79 showed "markedly higher" arsenic levels among Anaconda children, according to the Center for Disease Control.

The studies centered on arsenic because it is a known cancer-causing agent, Bishop says.

While townspeople still tend to view the Anaconda Minerals Co. with suspicion because of its abrupt and economically devastating pull-out in 1980, some say it appears to be conducting the tests in good faith.

"I was really impressed with the amount of thought and the amount of money (the company) has put in," says Tom Crnich, a high school teacher who recently served on a citizens' group acting as liaison between the community and those doing the testing.

"Not that Anaconda Minerals doesn't have an obligation," he adds. "There's a lot of concern and there's a certain amount of distress... When a company pulls out on you, you don't forget it."

--Mike Dennison

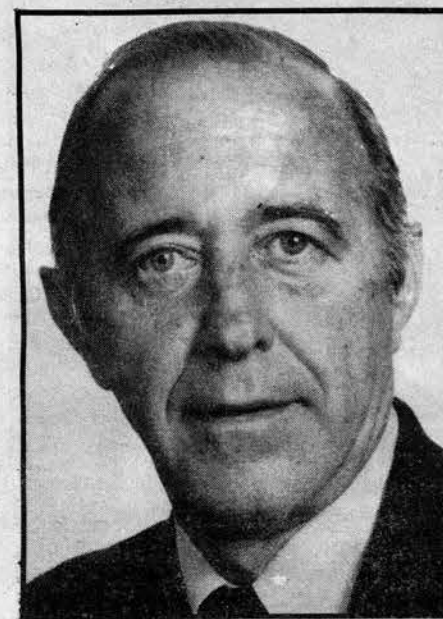
HOTLINE

A major legal decision



A subtle change in the interpretation of mining law that could have opened up 3.7 million acres of land to strip mining in national parks, forests and wildlife refuges was struck down as illegal in late March. An expanded definition of "valid existing rights" was issued under Interior Secretary James Watt without adequate notice and public comment, ruled U.S. District Judge Thomas A. Flannery. Coincidentally, on the same day as the court decision, the Interior Department withdrew a planned regulatory change that would have made it easier to mine on public land. The existing rule requires miners to prove the deposit is valuable enough to repay the cost of mining. The change would have allowed claimants to mine if a mineral deposit had been "exposed" to the surface.

A bearing a week



John Ward

The Office of Surface Mining was rapped at a recent subcommittee hearing for its failure to collect an estimated \$200 million in fines from violators of mining laws, and for its refusal to revoke permits of companies known to be repeat offenders. OSM's director, John D. Ward, appeared before the House Subcommittee on Environment, Energy and Natural Resources in mid-March. *The New York Times* reports that in a last-minute attempt to enforce regulations, the OSM ordered coal-producing states to begin penalizing companies that violate reclamation laws -- the first use of this authority since 1978 when OSM was established. The subcommittee chairman told Ward, "It's beginning to look like the only way we can get anything done down there (at OSM) is to hold a hearing a week." Ward recently resigned his post.

New BLM coal plan brings new attacks

With a sense of déjà vu and pledges to do better this time, the federal Bureau of Land Management has revamped its plans for large-scale competitive coal leasing across the West.

After a two-year freeze on the program, the BLM has scaled back its projected demand for coal -- projections which once drove the agency to propose leasing up to 12 billion tons of Western coal. The moratorium was imposed after Congress found evidence of bid rigging in Wyoming's 1982 Powder River Basin federal coal sale.

The new projections show that leasing would boost national coal production to just 1.8 billion tons annually by the year 2000, compared to 1.77 billion tons without any new leasing. But leasing in the same time frame would boost Western annual production from 550 million tons with no leasing to 615 million tons, according to the BLM.

The BLM's new report considers three major options: moving ahead with the old program, leasing no coal at all, or leasing only enough coal to prevent the closing and disruption of existing mines. BLM officials will pass on to Interior Secretary Donald Hodel recommendations on final leasing levels this fall.

Four of the five Western hearings in late March were relatively sedate. But Navajos turned out in force in Albuquerque to protest proposed leasing in New Mexico's San Juan Basin. The Albuquerque hearing underscored the potential split between Navajos who live outside the Navajo reservation but within the lease area and the Navajo Tribe itself.

Tribal officials are negotiating with a New Mexico electric utility over joint

construction of a new coal-fired power plant in the basin (HCN, 4/1/85). Tribal Chairman Peterson Zah has stressed that the plant will be built only if it provides jobs for local Navajos. But Navajos living in the basin said they fear the power plant and large-scale coal leasing will go hand in hand. Frank Sandoval warned that at least 125 Navajo families will have to move if the BLM's leasing plan is approved. Another 20,000 Navajos spread across 30 chapters will be directly or indirectly affected by the leasing. Chapters are the Navajo equivalent of counties.

"Where are we going to put our traditional Navajos who depend on grazing?" Sandoval asked, making it clear that the basin has no extra grazing areas. "The older people know no other way of life."

"This will raise billions of dollars, but the Navajos won't get a cent of it," complained Bert Mescal. "We beg you, leave us alone. We like the way we live out there."

While praising the BLM for scaling back its earlier coal demand forecasts, environmentalists added that the program still contains serious flaws since it fails to consider new mining's impact on the Navajos or ancient Anasazi Indian ruins in the basin.

Noticeable by their absence were coal industry executives, a common sight at past hearings. Citing the leasing program's many delays, one official from the Salt River Project, an Arizona utility, said privately that Southwestern utilities are looking elsewhere for coal or turning to nuclear power. With Arizona's Palo Verde nuclear station coming on line with nearly 4,000 megawatts this year, the SRP official said Southwest coal

demand would remain relatively flat.

Former BLM employee Jeff Radford, who is writing a book on alleged corruption inside the agency, said the new report is simple "window dressing" for the original program. "The official line is supposed to be that perhaps Watt was a little too zealous but that (former Interior Secretary) William Clark straightened everything out and now the federal coal program is on the up and up," Radford said. "We'd have to be fools to accept this program on good faith."

Radford said the only solution to the program's problems is for Congress to shut it down until the Reagan administration makes a real commitment to enforcing environmental and strip-mine reclamation rules.

David Marcus, an energy analyst for the Environmental Defense Fund, said the BLM's new projections show that new leasing won't boost production by much. But the leasing would turn major portions of the basin over to private coal companies to hold for future speculation, he said. "Leasing does not create production and therefore leasing does not create jobs," Marcus said. Instead, new mines would simply replace existing mines. "All it does is move jobs around."

Paul Robinson, research director for Southwest Research and Information Center, noted that the BLM's reclamation data in the report is seven years old, even though reclamation success is a major criterion of whether to mine at all. Because the San Juan Basin receives less than eight inches of rain a year, Robinson said, reclamation is unlikely.

--Nolan Hester

HOTLINE

Adam's Rib ski area survives legal challenge

A federal district court judge in Denver has rejected a legal attack on the proposed Adam's Rib ski area by three environmental groups. Judge John Kane, Jr., ruled that the White River National Forest acted properly in giving a special use permit on approximately 2,500 acres of land to a subsidiary of the Hospital Building Equipment Corp. in St. Louis. The area, located 15 miles south of Eagle, Colorado, near Vail and Beaver Creek, will accommodate 9,000 skiers. A resort city is planned for 2,600 acres of base land owned by HBE. The corporation must still obtain numerous permits, and HBE president Fred Kumner warned residents against speculating on development of the area. The lawsuit was brought by Concerned Citizens of Eagle County, the Colorado Wildlife Federation and the Sierra Club.

Aspen agreement reached

Two Western Colorado conservation groups and the Forest Service have come to agreement on a new environmental assessment for aspen clearcuts. Instead of one sale of 1,562 acres from Red Canyon on the Uncompahgre Plateau, there will be four sales over a 10-year period for a total of 1,166 acres. The groups which negotiated with the Forest Service after appealing the first EA are Western Colorado Congress and the Western Slope Energy Research Center. WCC member Dick Wingeron says there still remain some unresolved questions, but a major change resulting from the six-month negotiations is that the Forest Service has agreed to designate the aspen cuts as a demonstration project.

More Western clout

Census projections show that the Rocky Mountain region will gain 11 seats in Congress as a result of the 1990 census. The big winner will be Arizona, with four extra seats, followed by Colorado and Utah with two each, and Idaho, Nevada and Wyoming with one each.

Llamas step softly and carry big packs

The Forest Service district office in Boulder, Colorado, has invited back one of its most productive summer employees. Julio, a five-year-old, chocolate brown llama is actually a two-season veteran in the high country of the Indian Peaks Wilderness, a 34,000-acre area straddling the continental divide. During the off-season, Julio belongs to Boulder llama enthusiast Bobra Goldsmith, who leases the animal to the Forest Service to accompany its trail crews.

Like other llamas who have served Forest Service districts in Colorado, Montana and Wyoming, Julio is not your typical GS-3 employee. Although llamas have been domesticated for over 4,000 years and have become increasingly visible in western wilderness areas, only in the last few years have llamas been used as pack animals on public lands.

"There are so many reasons for using llamas in the backcountry," observes Forester Bob Allison of the Indian Peaks district office. As the overseer of trail crews, he has been pleased with how quickly llamas blend in with the trail crews and how well they work. Llamas are easily transported to trail heads in the back of a pickup, and they can carry 80-90 pounds of equipment, he says. "But safety is also a big factor -- llamas don't kick or bite, so people feel comfortable working with them."

Allison notes that backcountry rangers normally tour wilderness areas for several days at a time. In addition to carrying their food and personal gear, rangers often haul out trash, maintain trails and perform other tidying-up functions. By hiking with llamas, rangers are able to share the burden with these sure-footed beasts.

"One of the more tiring aspects of the ranger's job is carrying a 50-pound pack, and taking it off and putting it back on 20 times a day," he says. "With llamas, the ranger can take the tools that he needs from the animal, perform the job, and continue on to the next work site."

Llamas are also appealing backcountry pack animals because of their minimal impact on the fragile alpine ecology. "With their padded feet, they don't tear up trails as much as horses do," says Allison. "Since they are browsers, their eating habits are more like deer. They don't graze the way horses do."



Llama

Unlike horses, llamas are led rather than ridden. Weighing 350 pounds or more when fully grown, llamas are also shorter than horses and can be easily reached for loading gear. They are generally calm, tolerant creatures. For the novice Forest Service seasonal employees who have never worked with animals, Allison notes, llamas are easy. "After 30 minutes of instruction, our people can work with the llama and I certainly feel comfortable sending them into the backcountry together."

Goldsmith, Julio's owner, applauds the Forest Service for its willingness to use llamas in the backcountry. "Indian Peaks is a high-use wilderness area, and the llamas are helping them to maintain it."

Charging \$10 a day, Goldsmith leases the llama for the ranger's backcountry tour. Between outings, Julio is returned to Goldsmith for pasturing. She also keeps the llama during winter months with the rest of her herd. "It's a little like sending your kid to summer camp," Goldsmith says. "You just hope he'll be safe and happy."

The Forest Service first allowed llamas into Indian Peaks in 1982 when Goldsmith worked on a volunteer revegetation project. The llamas brought in seed, mulch hay, tools and signposts for marking trails. On another occasion, Goldsmith's llamas



Llama pack string

performed the thankless job of hauling trash from several lakes in Indian Peaks. "In two days, two llamas carried out over 200 pounds of trash," Goldsmith recalls.

Impressed with this demonstration, the Boulder Ranger District leased a llama the past two summers. Julio spent nearly 30 days touring Indian Peaks last season -- carrying equipment, hauling out other people's garbage, and keeping rangers company in his typically silent way.

Across the divide, the Hot Sulphur Springs Ranger District has used llamas since 1979 in the Indian Peaks Wilderness and the Never Summer Wilderness, adjacent to Rocky Mountain National Park. "Our llamas have mostly been used to haul equipment for our crews. If we're building a new bridge, the llama would carry mallets, nails, winches and saws," says Greg Assmus, who supervises the backcountry rangers in the Hot Sulphur Springs district. "We used one llama, Juan, for five consecutive summers. People really enjoyed working with him."

Lease prices usually include all llama packs and related equipment. "We estimate that we spent \$600 to lease a llama for the season, and spent an additional \$5 on grain. They are very economical animals to keep," says Assmus.

Elsewhere, llamas are gradually catching the eye of Forest Service personnel. In Montana's Gallatin National Forest, one district is considering leasing a llama for its backcountry rangers. Last summer, several Forest Service officials hiked with borrowed llamas to observe their packing ability, temperament, and impact on trails. "We were very impressed with them," says Chuck Harris, resource assistant at the Livingston, Montana, district office.

"Our rangers hike backcountry trails, carry out litter and clean campsites. They also come into contact with the public using the wilderness. The llamas seemed to work well in all of these situations," notes Harris.

In Wyoming, the trail crew for the Lander Ranger District of the Shoshone National Forest worked with Pablo and Darwin last summer, and the Forest Service is eager to repeat the experiment. The two llamas were leased from Anne Johnson of Wind River Llamas, who also trained the trail crew to handle the animals.

Each llama carried up to 70 pounds," says Anne Allen, a Forest Service supervisor who initiated the llama experiment. "Each llama spent 20 days in the backcountry and they performed very well." So well, in fact, that Allen purchased a llama for her family's hiking and mountaineering trips.

Allen adds that the few times that the llamas encountered horses along the trail, there were no problems. "The rangers and llamas would step off the trail, yielding the right-of-way to the horses. The llamas were very calm and simply waited for the next instructions."

--Renee Wyman

Renee Wyman is a freelance writer in Bozeman, Montana. During the summer she and her husband operate a llama packing service.

Montana rail workers want ARCO to pay up

HOTLINE

ANACONDA, Mt., -- Last month a steam engine rolled along the Butte, Anaconda & Pacific Railroad tracks for the first time in years, giving about two dozen men at least a temporary respite from the boredom and frustration of unemployment.

The work is going to be short-lived. The train is running only for so long as it takes to make the movie "Runaway," being filmed along the 27-mile right-of-way which was the link between the huge copper mines in Butte and the smelter in Anaconda.

The mines began shutting down in 1974, and by 1980, when the smelter was closed, thousands of men had been laid off. The final layoff was the railroad men of the BA&P, and that has had the most lasting repercussions.

More than 100 workers have the feeling that the parent company of the BA&P, Atlantic Richfield, is railroad-ing them out of their layoff benefits.

The workers, through attorneys for the United Transportation Union Local #887, have gone to federal court to collect claims of more than \$20 million which they say were promised by ARCO when it applied for merger with the Anaconda Company, which owned the railroad.

U.S. District Judge Paul Hatfield ruled last year in Butte's federal court that the case should go to binding arbitration and appointed Jack Castles of Cheyenne, Wyoming, to the post of arbitrator. He ruled in favor of the unions.

That should have ended the case, but in January the company filed a case in federal court in Wyoming, challenging the arbitrator's findings.

"The company is going to try everything it can to avoid paying these benefits," said Ray Dayton, an attorney working with Dave McLean in representing the union. "Somewhere,

though, ARCO is going to have to come to grips with this. The decision has been made in the appropriate forum and the benefits are due."

For Gene Miller, a BA&P engineer who was president of the local when he was laid off, the issues go deeper. He sees the company's actions in a personal light. Miller has had family difficulties, nearly lost his home, and has undergone analysis because of the strains due to waiting for benefits that never seem to come. With each favorable decision, he and his co-workers have had their hopes raised, then dashed with the next legal roadblock.

"All we've ever asked is what ARCO promised us in the first place," Miller said recently in his UTU office. He pushed a stack of paper forward on his desk. "It's all in there. ARCO agreed to employee protection clauses when it argued for merger with Anaconda back in 1977. The Interstate Commerce Commission became involved, and ARCO made the same guarantees to them. Now, they're taking every legal move they can make to avoid payments."

Involved are claims from 67 members of the UTU, 37 section hands and a small number of machinists and electricians. Claims are based on length of service with BA&P, but for many it would mean full pay for up to six years as a package settlement for layoff.

Miller cites divorces, home foreclosures, family breakups as youngsters emigrate from the state to find work, and even suicides as the results of the layoffs and the delay over payment of the benefits.

"It's hard to prove," Miller said, "but at least two men that I worked with killed themselves in severe depression over financial worries. That's the top end, the visible thing.



Anaconda, Montana

Beneath it, you see a lot of guys who are feeling as low as you can get."

John Holmlund, now a bar manager in Anaconda, agrees. "You bet I'm bitter," he said, pounding his finger on the polished bar for emphasis. "I went to work for the railroad thinking it would be a good career. I built my life around it. I skipped college. I married, had kids, and then all of a sudden, I was out there on the street with a couple of hundred other guys, looking for any work I could get."

The work he found was for minimum wage as a bartender and through patience and a "couple of breaks," he became bar manager. Even that's a tough business. With the closures, Anaconda has lost half of its population and now has the highest number of bars per capita in the state.

"I feel they told us they were going to do something, and then they didn't do it," Holmlund said. "Anyway you slice it, that's cruel and unfair, and we deserved a hell of a lot more than that."

--Les Rickey

Quicksilver outruns Idaho regulators

Idaho's snow-bound winters and a legal struggle with gold mining companies have blocked the cleanup of a mercury spill that happened almost two years ago.

George Gray, site operator for Powell Mining's gold mining operation, admitted to spilling at least 12 pounds of mercury during the summer of 1983. Soil tests the state conducted that September found levels of the toxic metal 2,000 times above normal background. The gold mine is in the Nezperce National Forest in the Idaho Panhandle.

The Division of Environment for Idaho's Health and Welfare Department says it was assured that the owner and operator would take responsibility for cleaning up the liquid poison. But Idaho's snowstorms soon set in, postponing any action until summer of 1984.

Soil samples taken last July found much lower levels of mercury, about 200-300 times the normal level. John Moeller, a field officer for the health department, says the difference in sample findings is not due to faulty data. "We did not test extensively, and probably missed areas with the highest mercury concentrations," says Moeller.

The health department needed to prove that the spill caused a health hazard, and they have. According to Moeller, only 50 parts per billion is the

limit for mercury in freshwater, and there is enough mercury in the soil to enter streams through runoff and percolate into groundwater.

But after the testing last summer, the operating company, Micro Gold II, backed out of its promise to clean up the mercury spill. "When they found out the cost of the cleanup, they balked," Moeller says. An estimate by Powell Mining predicts it could cost over \$200,000.

"If the groundwater is contaminated," explains Moeller, "then they're in big trouble." He says contaminated soil can either be removed and taken to a toxic waste dump or decontaminated by heating. But decontaminating water is difficult because it requires altering the pH of the water to remove mercury and then re-adjusting it back to its normal acidity.

Last year's three dry months were spent battling the two companies to force them to decontaminate the site. Then on October 15, Idaho's deputy attorney general filed an administrative complaint against the companies, and won. Again, before any action could be taken, the site was buried under three feet of snow.

Now, facing the second spring runoff and increasing risk of mercury poisoning in the Wind and Salmon Rivers, the health department says it is determined to force the companies to act. The companies are required to contain the area with earth berms to avoid toxic runoff, thoroughly test the mercury levels of soil and water and begin cleanup in mid-June. The companies must submit a complete procedural plan to the department by April 15.

--Lisa McKhann

BARBED WIRE

And here we thought they were turkeys.

A speaker at a public meeting on growth policies at the Snowmass, Colorado, ski resort urged the town council to remember: "The skier himself is the goose that makes this golden egg."

The last true believer.

Neo-Nazi David Lane was disillusioned by the help fellow racists gave the law enforcement officials who captured him. He told the *Rocky Mountain News*: "If I knew what an absolute lack of racial pride there is in the remainder of the white race, I would never have gotten involved" in the white supremacist movement.

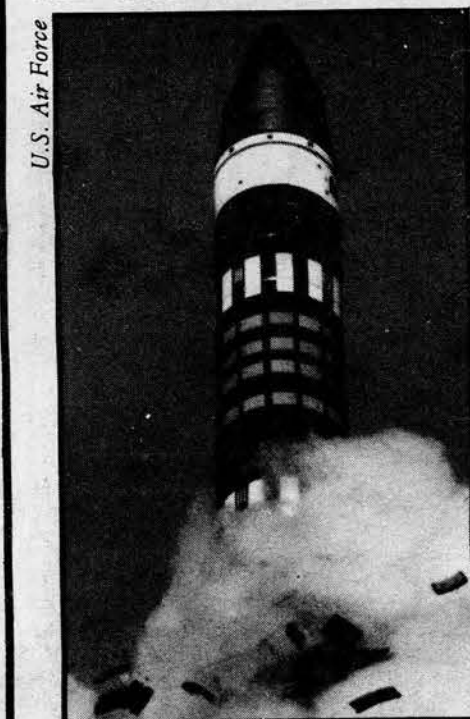
Indians win right to tax

In a ruling that will bring in millions of dollars per year to American Indians, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld an Appeals Court decision which allows Indians to tax companies for mining leases on their lands without approval of the Interior Secretary. The Navajo tribe had been challenged by the Kerr-McGee Corp. for charging taxes on uranium, oil and gas leases. The court voted unanimously to let Indians tax companies as a measure toward achieving self-government.

UP&L shareholders will pay for mistake

Ratepayers in Utah, Idaho and western Wyoming won't have to foot a \$55 million bill for Utah Power and Light Co.'s cancelled power plant. UP&L president James C. Taylor said in March that the company will take the loss from their Hunter IV power plant, which was halted in November because of declining demand for electricity. The company had considered tacking a \$1 monthly fee to residential bills for five years to cover the design and preparation costs.

MX battle continues



A legal battle continues over basing MX missiles in Wyoming. In 1983, Western Solidarity, 14 other organizations and 25 individuals filed suit against the Department of Defense, charging there was insufficient research into the impacts of the missiles on that region. They said the DOE's environmental impact statement illegally failed to consider alternative sites and strategies for basing the MX, the hazards of transporting nuclear weapons through the Rocky Mountain region, or the chances of nuclear war or accidental detonation of a nuclear warhead. The state of Colorado also sued DOE on grounds that impacts to the state were not considered. The Defense Department's position has been that since the MX is crucial to national security, all requirements mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act cannot be met. Recently, Andrew Reid, the Nebraska attorney who represents Western Solidarity, said Defense Department attorneys asked U.S. District Court Judge Warren Urbom to dismiss Western Solidarity's case. Reid said the plaintiffs' response will be a motion asking the court to order DOD to prepare a supplemental environmental impact statement.

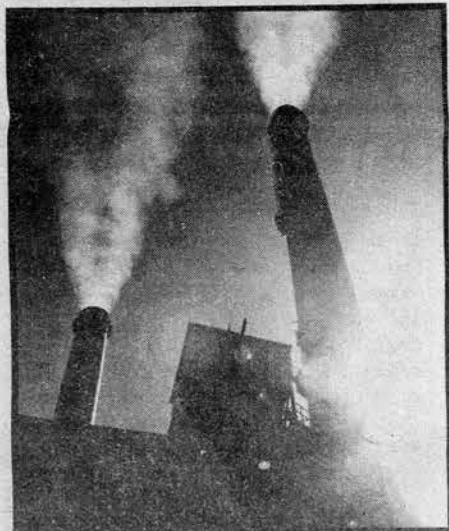
HOTLINE

Ferrets at stud



Twelve of the nation's 128 black-footed ferrets may be captured this fall and bred in captivity to insure that the only known population does not become extinct. The survivors of these mink-like animals, which once lived throughout the Great Plains from Texas to Canada, are holed-up with prairie dogs in grasslands near Meeteetse, Wyoming. Ferrets died off from the poisoning of prairie dogs, their main food source, and from the conversion of grasslands to plowed fields. The state's Game and Fish Department hopes for some \$250,000 from federal, state and private sources to build a ferret-breeding facility near Laramie.

A \$565-million miscalculation



Colstrip

The Montana Power Company recently conceded in its annual report that it may be forced to write off a \$565 million investment in the Colstrip coal-fired power plant. So far, Montana's Public Service Commission has prohibited the utility from charging customers for the costs of construction. The company estimates the plant's electricity won't be needed until the 1990s, and it is now trying to sell its 210,000-kilowatt share of Colstrip Unit 4.

An important decision

The Montana and National Wildlife Federations recently won a legal battle in which they charged that oil and gas leases had been illegally granted for drilling on the Flathead and Gallatin National Forests. Federal District Judge Paul Hatfield ruled that the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management violated both the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act by failing to conduct a thorough analysis on the impacts of drilling. The impacts on grizzly bear and grey wolf populations should have been addressed in an environmental impact statement, Hatfield ruled. Numerous oil and gas companies have since petitioned to intervene in the case and to have the decision reconsidered.

BLM wild horse plan stirs a hornet's nest

An unexpected public outcry may save some of two wild horse herds which had been slated for removal. The herds roam near Naturita, in western Colorado.

The public concern is new. A lack of such concern last year prompted the Bureau of Land Management to revise a draft plan which would have left 50 horses in the area. The lack of reaction to the reduction led the BLM to propose removing all 125 horses in its final draft of the San Juan/San Miguel Resource Management Plan.

The plan's impact on wild horses was "right up front as an issue from the start," says Dave Miller, the area manager for BLM's Durango office. He says some of the recent protest stemmed from stories in the Grand Junction *Daily Sentinel*, which roused public concern for the horses.

More interest came last month when the *Daily Sentinel* mistakenly reported that the horses would be killed. The headline "Flood of letters opposes plans to kill wild horses" is wrong, assures Miller. No horses will be killed and protests have been against removal only. Horses will be put up for adoption in BLM's "Adopt-A-Horse" program.

"It would be illegal to kill them," Miller points out, referring to the 1971 Wild Horse and Burro Act which

Dick Randall, Defenders of Wildlife



prohibits the sale of wild horses to slaughterhouses.

But the plan for removing the herds may be illegal in itself. Russell Gaspar is general counsel for the American Horse Protection Agency, based in Washington, D.C. He says the 1971 Act specifies that all wild horse herds must be maintained in areas where they now exist. Thus, elimination of any herd violates the law.

The local BLM office is reviewing Gaspar's protest and all other public comment and will send its analysis to

the state BLM office in Denver. State BLM director Kannon Richards is expected to make a decision on whether to amend the plan by June.

According to BLM's Miller, wild horses pose two problems for rangeland. Unlike the cattle they compete with, the horses graze year-round and their population has grown from about 25 in the early 1970s to 125 today. Needing more forage and water, the wild horses now move onto private land, he says.

--Lisa McKhann

Uranium mining companies want help

The country's biggest uranium mining firms want Eastern utility customers to help pay for reclaiming the nearly 200 million tons of radioactive uranium mill tailings scattered across the intermountain West.

With the cleanup carrying a price tag of \$600 million to \$800 million, the firms say they can't afford to pay for reclaiming the sites, most of which now lie exposed to wind and water erosion. So under a proposal now being drafted, customers of utilities with nuclear power plants would shoulder 55 percent of the cost. Reflecting its share of the tailings from past weapons production, the federal government would pay 30 percent of the cleanup costs and the uranium firms 15 percent. The necessary legislation was introduced by New Mexico's Republican Sen. Pete Domenici and Democratic Rep. Bill Richardson. New Mexico Gov. Toney Anaya endorsed the proposal April 1.

New Mexico, with five of the nation's 25 commercial tailings sites, has 80 million tons of tailings -- half of all tailings. Wyoming ranks second. Stanley Crout, a Santa Fe attorney, is pushing the idea on behalf of United Nuclear Corp. and Homestake Mining. If mining firms were forced to assume the full cleanup costs, "You would finish off all but a small part of the domestic industry," said Crout. He said the fee is similar to one already imposed on nuclear power plants to pay the eventual cost of disposing of spent nuclear fuel rods.

Since milling extracts only a small percent of the mined uranium, most of the radioactive material remains in the tailings. At least two New Mexico tailings dumps -- United Nuclear's Church Rock and Homestake's mill near Grants -- have contaminated the groundwater.

Uranium mining took a dive five years ago as power-plant demand

sagged and foreign imports rose. At the time, most firms resisted reclamation efforts, citing hard times. But with all but Homestake's mill shutdown in New Mexico, Congressman Richardson says the only uranium jobs for the near future will be in reclamation. Ken Hargis of New Mexico's Radiation Protection Bureau estimates that reclaiming a single site could take five to six years and create several hundred jobs.

Environmental officials in New Mexico also are pushing for reclamation. They privately warn that several firms could fold before cleanup begins, leaving the state alone with the costly job.

Crout said the tax's biggest hurdle remains gaining the support of the utility industry, already saddled with

rising nuclear-related costs. But he said at least a few utility executives favor the tax since it would address cleanup of the last nuclear waste source not covered by any law.

Crout expects environmentalists to support the fee since "it gets the job done." Indeed, Chris Shuey of Southwest Research and Information Center, a private group monitoring the uranium industry, supports the tax. But he said it remains an open question whether mining firms will drop their legal fight against proposed federal reclamation regulations. Replied Crout: "If there was a method for financing it, there'd be less incentive to fight the regulations."

--Nolan Hester

Forest delays oil leasing

Public comment has been almost unanimous against re-issuing 31 oil and gas leases in the Mt. Leidy Highlands of Wyoming's Bridger-Teton National Forest. The area between the Gros Ventre and Absaroka Mountains is prime grizzly bear habitat, a major elk migration route and a popular recreation spot (*HCN*, 3/18/85).

Only 15 of the 134 letters sent to Forest Supervisor Reid Jackson supported leasing, and 14 of these were from oil companies. Opposition to the leasing came from the Sierra Club, Jackson Hole Alliance, ranchers and county commissioners. Local businesses said they feared drilling in the Mt. Leidy Highlands would jeopardize tourism at Grand Teton National Park, which borders the highlands.

The 31 initial leases are part of a package of 350 leases proposed for issuance or renewal on 435,000 acres of the Bridger-Teton. With the

outpouring of public opposition, Forest Service officials have now postponed an immediate decision on whether to recommend re-issuing the leases. Minerals Manager Al Reuter said, "We decided the issue deserved further evaluation." The Forest Service will also try to make their decision compatible with a 50-year Forest Plan.

Another reason for delay stems from a recent court ruling in Montana. U.S. District Court Judge Paul Hatfield ruled that the Flathead and Gallatin National Forests should have prepared full environmental impact statements before leasing large areas of national forest land. The Bridger-Teton leases were being analyzed under a 1974 regional environmental assessment. Supervisor Jackson said he will wait to learn more about the ramifications of the Montana ruling before deciding whether to do a complete EIS.

--Meredith Taylor, Lisa McKhann

BULLETIN BOARD

STAR WARS PREVENTION

A national convention called *Stop the Arms Race in Space* has chosen Colorado Springs, a rapidly growing center for space weapon research, as its site. California Congressman George Brown, D., will be keynote speaker; other speakers include former Deputy Director of the CIA Herbert Scoville, Colorado Congresswoman Patricia Schroeder, D., and experts on space weaponry. Convention participants can learn about space weapon issues, and help develop a strategy and form a coalition to stop space weapons buildup. The dates are May 3-5 at Colorado Springs' Mitchell High School; registration is \$20. Contact the Stars Convention, P.O. Box 915, Colorado Springs, CO 80901 (303/471-1077 or in Denver, 303/832-4508).



BIRDING CLASS

Those who attend three bird-identification sessions in Montana this May at the height of migration will see about 100 species of birds clad in their most brilliant plumage. Bebe Fitzgerald, president of the Yellowstone Valley Audubon Society, is the teacher, and outings near Billings will be from 9 a.m. - 3 p.m. Thursday or Friday, May 9-10, 16-17, and 23-24. The cost for the three sessions is \$25. For more information contact the Rocky Mountain College's New Horizon Program at 406/245-6151.

MONTANA AUDUBON WORKSHOP

A three-day workshop of morning birding sessions and talks on the geology, history and wildlife of Montana will be held May 3-5. The Rocky Front Workshop, which is sponsored by the Montana Audubon Council, will meet on a 3,000-acre dude ranch near Choteau, Montana. A fee of \$45 includes a cabin for Friday and Saturday nights plus meals for Saturday and Sunday. Dinner Friday night costs an additional \$5 and requires advance reservations. To reserve a place -- there are only a few left -- call Margaret Adams at 406/761-8329 at home, or her office at 406/791-2208.

A SATELLITE VIEW OF THE GREAT SALT LAKE

A new and colorful map of the ever-rising Great Salt Lake of Utah is available from the U.S. Geological Survey. The map, produced from four Landsat images taken when the lake was at maximum elevation in summer 1984, will let lake buffs follow Utah's efforts to deal with flooding in the Salt Lake City area. The map includes contour lines to help users visualize the effect of further rises on such areas as Salt Lake International Airport and Interstate 80. The 40- by 51-inch map covers 5,800 square miles of Salt Lake City, Ogden, Brigham City, Bountiful, Hill Air Force Base and parts of Logan and Tooele Army Depot. It can be ordered for \$5.50 under the title, "Great Salt Lake and Vicinity, Utah, Satellite Image Map," from the USGS Public Inquiries Office, Room 8105, Federal Bldg., 125 S. State, Salt Lake City, UT 84111.

A WIDER PATH TO THE SUN

The National Park Service is considering widening and straightening a 10-mile segment of Glacier National Park's Going-To-The-Sun Road. The segment runs from just east of the Camas Road intersection to Lake McDonald Ranger Station Road. Widening could improve views and safety, and accommodate bicycles and larger vehicles. An environmental assessment is available by calling 406/888-5441, Ext. 213, or from Glacier N.P., Box 128, W. Glacier, MT 59936. Comments are due by May 9.

THE GREAT LAND EXCHANGE

The April 18 issue of *Public Lands News* says opposition to the proposed 35-million acre BLM-FS land swap centers in Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Oregon and Wyoming, with Idaho, Utah and Washington calm. Generally, grazing and other permittees oppose a swap, fearing new regulations. Other concerns are the loss of all or part of a national forest to the BLM, as with the Prescott N.F. in Arizona, the Big Horn N.F. in Wyoming, and part of the Lewis and Clark N.F. in Montana. Among congressmen, Sen. James McClure, R-Id., backs the swap; Sen. Pete Domenici, R-N.M., strongly opposes it; Rep. Les AuCoin, D-Or., says the chances of an appropriations bill rider stopping the exchange are not good and Sen. John Melcher, D-Mt., won't comment because "he has wasted enough time talking about it in years gone by," says an aide.

Public Lands News is published every other week at 1010 Vermont Ave. NW, #708, Washington, D.C. 20005. A one-year subscription is \$140.

BIGHORN CAVE STUDY

Cave explorers and scientists will volunteer their time to study the resources and protection alternatives for the Bighorn Cave near Lovell, Wyoming. With about 10 miles of passages, the Bighorn is one of the largest cave systems in the western United States. Spelunkers will convene in May for the two-year study, which is being conducted by the Northwest Cave Research Institute for the National Park Service and the Crow Tribe. People interested in supporting the volunteer research effort should contact the Park Service at 406/666-2412 in Montana, or 307/548-2251 in Wyoming.

LECTURES ON ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS

During the month of May Montanans can attend a series of free lectures at the University of Montana in Missoula on environmental problems throughout the world. Representatives of foreign embassies and other authorities on the ecology of other countries will discuss the problems facing Canada, England, Brazil, France and Mexico. They will also explore how different cultures influence environmental perceptions. The class meets each Wednesday from May 1-29, 7-10 p.m. at the University's underground lecture hall.



THE GREEN WORLD

In the preface to *Botany in the Field*, author Jane Scott explains that the book is not a field guide full of plant descriptions but rather "an attempt to put plants in context." Descriptions of plant communities emphasize the eastern United States, but much of the book explores more general topics such as plant succession, provinces, names, and observation projects. Scott also looks at the historical effects of European settlers, as well as American Indians, on U.S. plant life, and fills the book with her own attractive line drawings. Geared for the amateur naturalist, the book is written in a brief and concise, but readable form.

Prentice-Hall, Inc. Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632. Paper: \$8.95. 165 pages.

BLM WILDERNESS TRIPS

To help Coloradans become familiar with the state's wilderness study areas on Bureau of Land Management land, the Sierra Club and Colorado Open Space Council are sponsoring seven weekend outings this spring. Beginning with a trip to the isolated Sewemup Mesa on May 4-5, trips will go out each weekend until June 16. Destinations include the adobe badlands near Delta, Cross Mountain's 800-foot-deep gorge, McKenna Peak and the sculptured sandstone of Little Dominguez Canyon. All trips are free. For information on meeting locations and times, contact Sharyl Kinnear at P.O. Box 204, Grand Junction, CO 81502, or call her at 303/245-1191.

WILDERNESS NEWSLETTER DEBUTS

The Moose Creek Ranger District on Idaho's Nezperce National Forest has released a sample publication called *Wilderness*, a newsletter dedicated to information exchange for the field-going wilderness manager. If approved by the Forest Service as an official publication, it will provide a forum for wilderness managers on concepts and methods of wilderness management. The sample edition includes articles on the use of llamas for trailwork, an outline of a successful wilderness ranger program, an explanation of the Limits of Acceptable Change program and a brief summary of computer use to obtain useful data from visitor registration cards. The Moose Creek District welcomes comments about the newsletter before it is submitted to the Forest Service as an official publication. For a copy of *Wilderness*, write Moose Creek Ranger District, Box 464, Grangeville, ID 83530 (208/983-2712).

WILDERNESS SOCIETY CHANGES

Two mainstays at the Wilderness Society office in Denver are moving to new jobs. Regional director Michael Scott has already begun working as a wilderness lobbyist for the Society in Washington, D.C., and administrative assistant Chris Sanborn plans to leave soon to work with Tom Glass' land-trading firm. Scott will be replaced in May by Darrell Kanuffky, currently public affairs director for the Colorado Office of Energy Conservation, but Sanborn says they're still looking for someone to fill her shoes. Call the Wilderness Society at 303/388-5801 for more information about the position.

ENERGY MEETING

Energy conservation officials, researchers and activists of the Northwest will meet in Butte, Montana, this May for a four-day conference called "Conservation in Buildings: Northwest Perspective." On the agenda are issues such as the economics of conservation construction techniques, plus tours of energy-efficient homes in Butte. The conference is sponsored by the National Center for Appropriate Technology along with many regional energy groups; folks will meet at the Montana College of Mineral Science and Technology from May 19-22. Contact NCAT, P.O. Box 3838, Butte, MT 59702 (406/494-4572).

WATER LAW CONFERENCE

In an intensive three-day meeting of water watchers representing government, academe and environmental groups, water law of the West will be analyzed down to the last drop. Topics for "Western Water Law in Transition" include the history of water law, groundwater law, interstate water transporting, water quality, inefficient water use, future supply and how the Endangered Species Act affects water projects. The June 3-5 conference is sponsored by the Natural Resources Law Center at the University of Colorado in Boulder. If paid before May 17, registration is \$480, and \$530 thereafter. Write to the Natural Resources Law Center, Campus Box 401, Boulder, CO 80309.

COLORADO WATER QUALITY MEETING

Professional consultants, academics and state and federal government employees involved with water quality monitoring in Colorado will speak at a workshop on monitoring practices in the state. The workshop is sponsored by Colorado State University and Colorado's Water Resources Research Institute and will be held in Fort Collins on May 16. For more information call the Institute at 303/491-6308.



WILDERNESS GUARDS NEEDED

To protect the delicate ecosystem of Utah's High Uintas Wilderness and Lakes Backcountry Area, the Forest Service is seeking volunteers to work as "wilderness guards." Volunteers work a regular schedule, either full or part-time, and are provided with housing, subsistence pay and some backpacking equipment. Help is needed from July 1 through Labor Day. For information and applications, write Frank Erickson, Kamas Ranger District, P.O. Box 68, Kamas, UT 84036.

FOREST SERVICE VOLUNTEERS

People of all ages can help maintain Colorado's wildlands by volunteering to work in the White River, Grand Mesa, Gunnison or Uncompahgre National Forests this summer. The Forest Service has positions open for wilderness aides, campground hosts, trail maintainers and much more. There is free housing and subsistence pay for part-time, full-time and one-time volunteers in exchange for the opportunity to learn about backcountry management. Contact the Forest Service at 2250 Highway 50, Delta, CO 81416, or call 303/874-7691.

WCC MEETING

With a talk by Gov. Richard Lamm and panel discussions on eminent domain and the interplay between air quality and economic development, Western Colorado Congress' 5th Annual Meeting promises to be of interest. The events are scheduled for Saturday, May 11, in Montrose, Colorado. There will also be a review of WCC's work in the past year and a business meeting on that day, as well as a Mexican dinner and country swing/bluegrass dance. Outgoing and incoming WCC officers will meet Sunday morning and there's an opening wine and cheese party planned for Friday night. The pre-registration fee is \$10; registration at the door is \$15. Meals are additional and also at a discount if you pre-register. Write to WCC, P.O. Box 472, Montrose, CO 81402 (303/249-1978).

CONTROVERSIAL SOHIO DRILLING

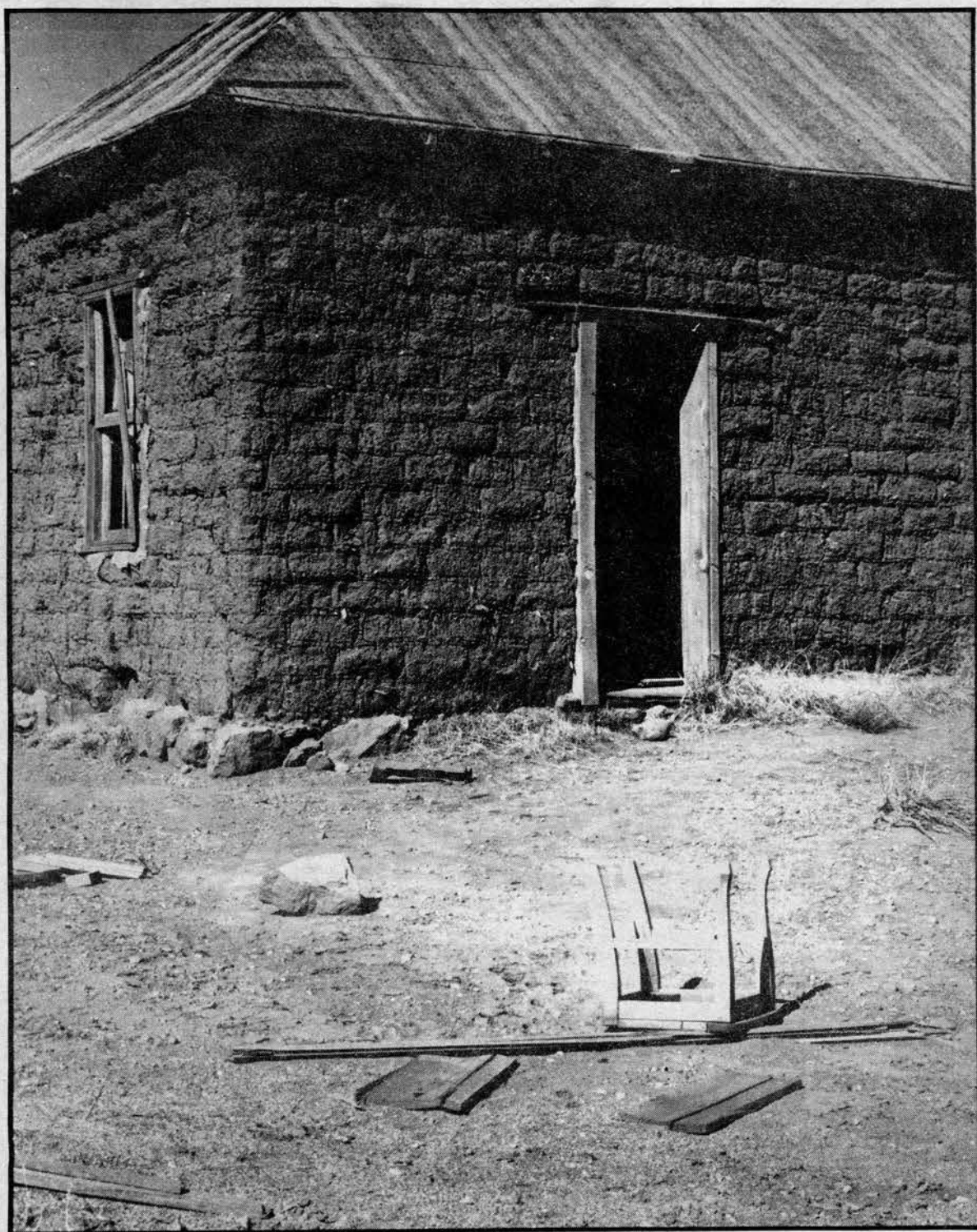
The Wyoming Game and Fish Department, wildlife groups and sportsmen have criticized an oil and gas drilling proposal for national forest land north of Kemmerer, Wyoming. They say Sohio Petroleum's exploratory operation will disrupt the elk and moose calving season, threatening those populations as well as many non-game species of the Hams Fork drainage. The Forest Service is seeking public comment on the drilling schedule proposed for this fall. Write to Robert Riddle, District Ranger, Kemmerer Ranger District, Bridger-Teton National Forest, P.O. Box 31, Kemmerer, WY 83101. Copies of the scoping statement are also available at this address.

DRILLING ON TARGHEE

The Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management have given the thumbs up to a proposed 17,000-foot exploratory well in Idaho's Targhee National Forest near West Indian Creek. A new environmental assessment recommends permitting the Shell Oil Company to drill the well while requiring "extensive mitigation measures." Copies of the EA are available from the forest supervisor at P.O. Box 208, St. Anthony, ID 83445 (208/624-3151).

NORTH FORK WELL

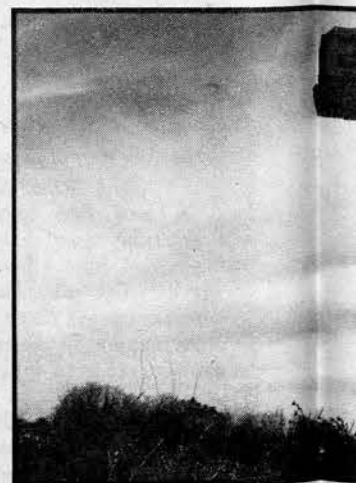
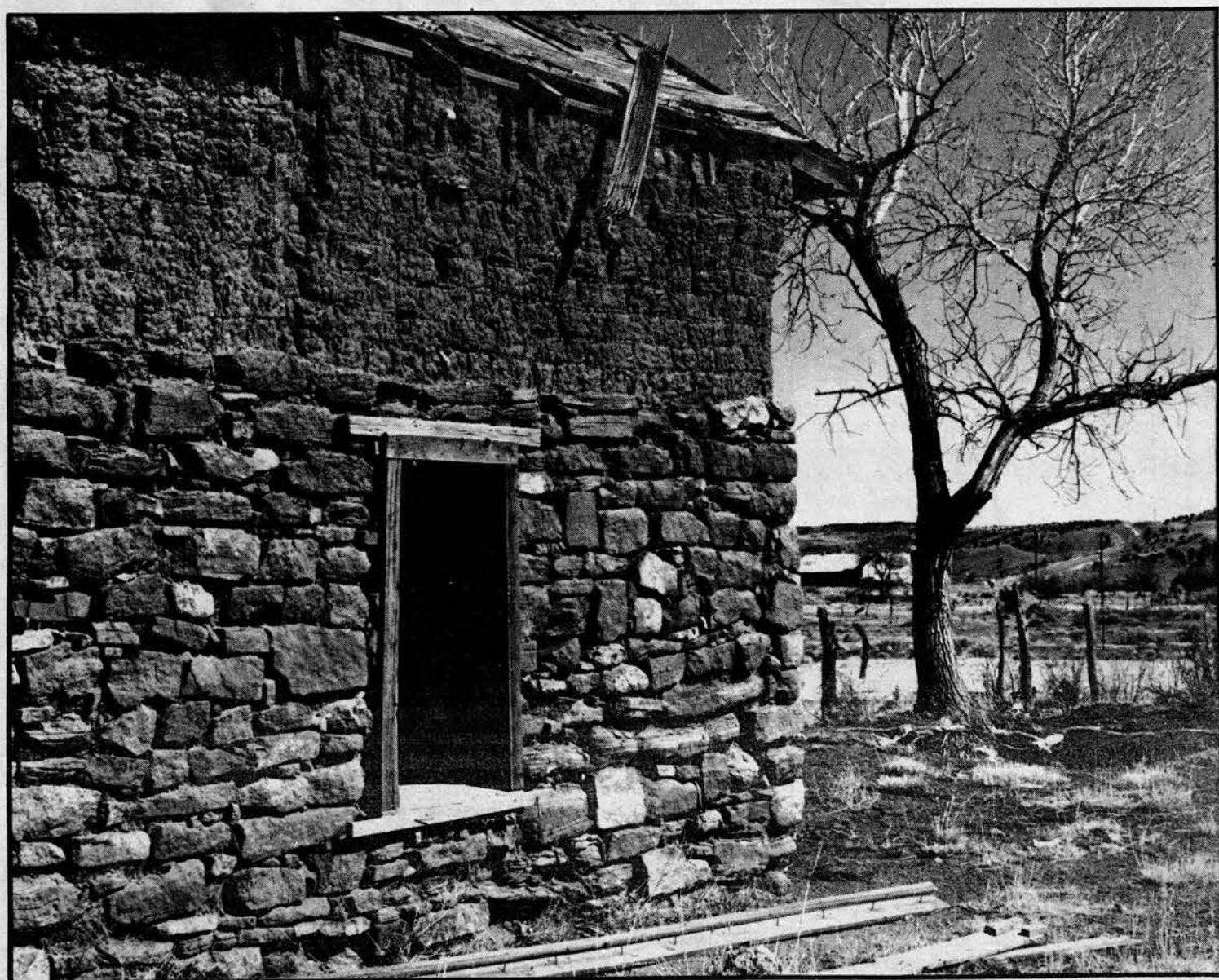
Marathon Oil Company will be allowed to drill a 5,000-foot exploratory oil and gas well in Wyoming's Shoshone National Forest, according to a final environmental impact statement issued in late March. Construction of the North Fork Well will be accomplished by flying about 900 helicopter loads of materials along Clocktower Creek to the drill site. Copies of the EIS are available from BLM's Cody Resource Area Office, 1714 Stampede Ave., Cody, WY 82414.



CONCHO

Settling to

photographs by DALE



Photographer Dale Schicketa
remnants of the past. Recently
Concho, Arizona, settled by
early Spanish *conquistadores*
Their names can be found among
buried in the cemetery -- name
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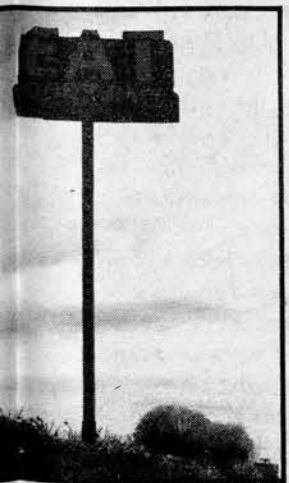
Source: *Concho The Enchanted*
Concho, Arizona, compiled by



HO

to Dust

ALE SCHICKETANZ



Schicketz is fascinated by recently, he spent time in d by descendants of the adores in the early 1860s. d among the 1,000 people names such as Ortigas, s and Martinez. Many of me ranchers, and it is as 100,000 sheep grazed the site of the Petrified the early years there was nd an abundance of shells nks. Thus the settlement Spanish for shell. The the life of the town; its Concho is now settling to zona's Apache County.

hunted Pearl: A History of led by E.M. DeGlance.



Priest Lake...

(Continued from page 1)

tion, Goldsmith is seeking a land trade with the state so the third largest city in the Panhandle can be built on Priest Lake's primitive east shore. Despite that opposition, he may succeed.

Dean Stevens is one of those who could not resist Priest Lake. His family opened the Granite Creek Marina on Priest Lake's west side in 1931. He has lived at Priest Lake for 35 years, is one of 800 year-round residents, and runs the marina from April through December. From Granite Creek, you look east across the clear lake to the Selkirk Crest.

"This is the most unspoiled place in the Inland Empire" (the Panhandle and eastern Washington), he says. "People here love it as it is. I'm 55; Goldsmith's plans won't make much difference to me, and I don't think it will affect my business much. But I want people not born yet to see and enjoy Priest Lake as it is today."

Randy McNeice is an investment counselor in Spokane who has spent nearly every summer of his life at a family cabin on Priest Lake. What draws him back is the wildlife.

"Few people are aware of the truly unique ecosystem that exists in northern Bonner and Boundary Counties," he wrote in 1984. "Nowhere else I know of in the lower 48 states can you find living in the same habitat mule deer, whitetail deer, black bear, elk, moose, grizzlies, caribou, mountain goat, bighorn sheep, cougar, bobcat, and a host of smaller mammal and bird life. The addition of Goldsmith's 5,000 new lake and hillside residences will end this balance forever."

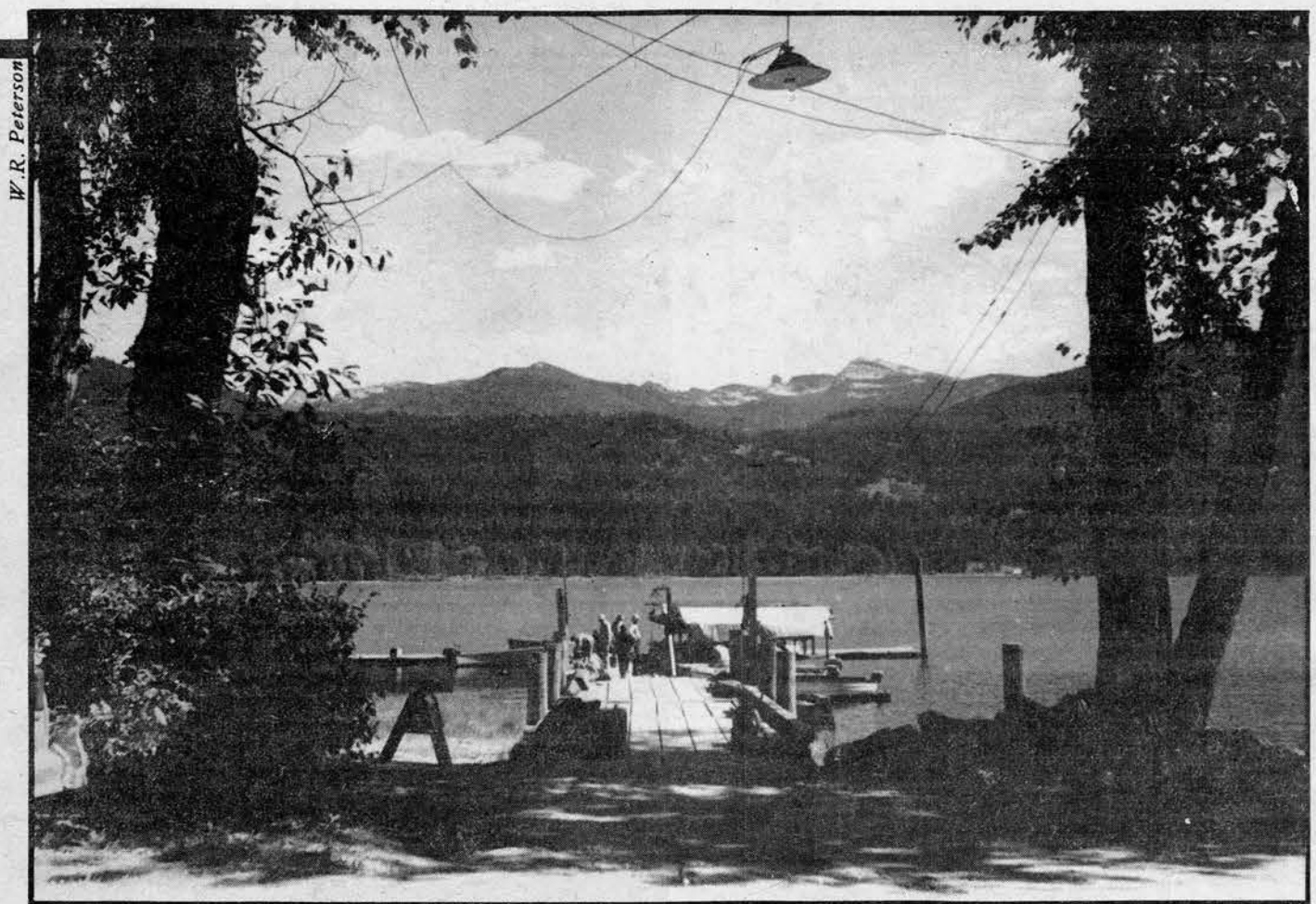
Art Manley comes to Priest Lake just to pick huckleberries. A realtor who spent 14 years in the Idaho state Senate, he lives 50 miles south in Coeur d'Alene. Twenty years ago Upper Priest Lake, a smaller lake just north of the big one, was threatened with subdivision on its shores. Manley helped convince Idaho Sen. Frank Church that the threatened lands should be bought by the Forest Service, and they were.

Manley, an active conservationist who helped found the Kootenai Environmental Alliance in 1978, is one of thousands who own no property at Priest Lake but who visit every year. The Forest Service campgrounds on the west side are nearly always full; the two state campgrounds on the more primitive east side now turn away as many people every summer as they accommodate.

Why do they come? "It's the best big lake I know," says Manley. "I don't know of any lake I've seen anywhere that compares. The water is crystal clear, the Selkirks rise up from the water picture-perfect, beautiful sandy beaches, virgin white pine, cedar, and hemlock. And so few people live there, it almost takes you back to pioneer days. It's the only lake we have left that's really unspoiled."

These three and hundreds more have a deeply felt cause: opposition to James Goldsmith's plans for a lake he has never seen, and a community of residents and visitors he has never met.

GOLDSMITH'S PLAN FOR PRIEST LAKE



Priest Lake's Granite Creek Marina, 1946, is not much different today

After five years of trying, Goldsmith acquired full ownership of the timber giant Diamond International in December 1982 (see related article). About a month later, Coleman Consultants, a San Francisco-Tahoe planning firm hired by Goldsmith, released an "options report" on his Priest Lake properties. Goldsmith personally has had no public involvement in Priest Lake, leaving that to planners, attorneys or his spokesmen. They continue to use Diamond's name, but in this article "Diamond" refers only to the old timber company. "Goldsmith" refers to the new company, whose representatives refused to be interviewed for this article.

The report investigated four options for the property, ranging from Diamond's traditional management to an extensive land exchange and development program. Over the next 14 months, the latter option was progressively refined in engineering and environmental feasibility studies, in discussions with Idaho's Land Board who are elected state officials serving as custodians of Idaho state lands, and in private meetings with selected community and business leaders at and around Priest Lake.

On April 17, 1984, at a Land Board meeting in Boise, Goldsmith representatives formally proposed to exchange 10,000 acres of his land for 8,000 acres of state land. That would make possible a year-round residential resort community in five separate "enclaves" along some seven miles of the lake's eastern shoreline.

The resort would include single-family units, condominiums, a major ski area up toward the Selkirks, three golf courses, swimming and tennis facilities, shops and restaurants, marinas, schools, an industrial park, 1,000 recreational vehicle campsites, and "wilderness-oriented resort facilities." An aerial tramway was to connect the ski area to the main village center at Huckleberry Bay. Goldsmith's consultants promised a "state-of-the-art resort development."

Full development was projected to take 20 years. Goldsmith promised zero discharge to Priest Lake, a complete sewer system, preservation of public access to all beaches, availability of "project features" to

existing residents, preservation of open space, and "animal walks" through the project to lakeshore winter range. The number of residential units was pegged at between 3,500 and 5,000.

Goldsmith estimated that 1,400 permanent jobs would be created and revenues of over \$1.5 million in local taxes collected from the project. An appraisal of lands proposed for exchange estimated Idaho would receive lands worth \$1 million more than what it traded to Goldsmith. Since this amount would accrue to the state's Endowment Fund, whose interest is part of Idaho's public school budget, Goldsmith argued the project would benefit Idaho education. The company said it hoped to provide funds for construction of necessary local schools.

Goldsmith's final argument was the state's chance to consolidate its productive Priest Lake forestlands by acquiring scattered Goldsmith sections around the proposed resort. The company said it did not intend to develop itself; it would sell the package to an experienced developer when the trade was approved. If the Land Board rejected the proposal, the company said its lakefront land would be developed into some 250 "high-value lakefront lots" and its non-lakefront property would continue in timber management.

Individual Land Board members were either interested or sceptical, and the board unanimously decided to take no action until the public had a chance to comment. Public hearings in Priest River and Sandpoint were set for May 30 and 31, 1984.

LOCAL OPINION

The first organized sense of local feeling had already come on June 2, 1983. After a look at Coleman Consultants' preliminary report, where the exchange was still one of four alternatives, 11 Priest Lake organizations -- including the Chamber of Commerce and a long list of homeowner/leaseholder associations -- wrote Gov. John Evans, chairman of the Land Board. That particular alternative, they said, "is a matter of deep concern and is not considered to be in the public interest."

Local opposition from residents, businesses and visitors has from the beginning been overwhelming, informed, organized, and an intractable obstacle to Goldsmith and Land Board members sympathetic to him.

A new group called the Priest Lake Coalition formed in late 1983, and it was composed of lake groups and residents, Idaho Conservation League chapters, Idaho Wildlife Federation affiliates from nearby towns, and individuals all over eastern Washington and northern Idaho. The Coalition has raised some \$26,000 for printing, postage, phone expenses and the low-budget fees of their Sandpoint attorney Paul Vogel and, later, Sandpoint activist Mike Proctor. Proctor worked full time organizing for the Land Board's 1984 public hearings.

The Coalition's most-repeated point is that the resort would substantially destroy the primitive character of Priest Lake, and with it a way of life highly valued by Panhandle residents. Priest Lake is very clean; many residents take their drinking water directly from it. They say water quality degradation would be inevitable, whatever the sophistication of water and sewer systems.

"This thing would just wreck Two Mouth Creek, which runs into the lake right through the proposed city at Huckleberry Bay," says marina operator Dean Stevens.

Idaho's Department of Fish and Game is also stoutly opposed. Idaho's best whitetail deer herd, which winters on the east shore, would be destroyed, they say. Grizzly bear habitat in the Selkirk Crest and potential mountain caribou habitat would also be affected, and both are endangered species.

Local government and school officials agree with the Coalition that "local property taxpayers would face the additional burden of providing new school buildings and other public facilities" and services. Goldsmith's hope to help fund schools is no longer being expressed by company representatives.

Opposition to Goldsmith's resort has not been the Coalition's only task. "I'm sure most everyone realizes that Diamond is determined to dispose of its lands in some manner and that there will be some kind of

April 29, 1985--High Country News-11

*At a public hearing in 1984,
600 people attended. Of the 80
who spoke, 75 opposed the project
and were loudly applauded.
Letters ran 9 to 1 against...*

development," Art Manley testified to the Land Board. "We know we can't have forever and for free the 'Eden' that we've virtually taken for granted all these years."

So the Coalition has pursued options for public acquisition of part or all of Goldsmith's lands, particularly on the lakeshore. There is interest. "The Idaho Fish and Game Commission is willing to consider utilizing interest in Department-held property valued at \$1 million for such a purchase," the Department wrote to the Land Board. The Nature Conservancy has volunteered its expertise and is willing to consider a loan to help forge a purchase.

"In a talk with them last year, Goldsmith's spokesmen did not close the door on something like this if the exchange is refused," says Manley. The Coalition has agreed to lead a private fundraising effort if a purchase plan can be worked out.

THE FIRST VOTE

In its April 1984 presentation to the Land Board, Goldsmith spokesman Bowman Gray listed three requirements for the project. One was if "the venture is looked upon with favor by the local citizenry." The May 1984 public hearings were the official test of that proposition.

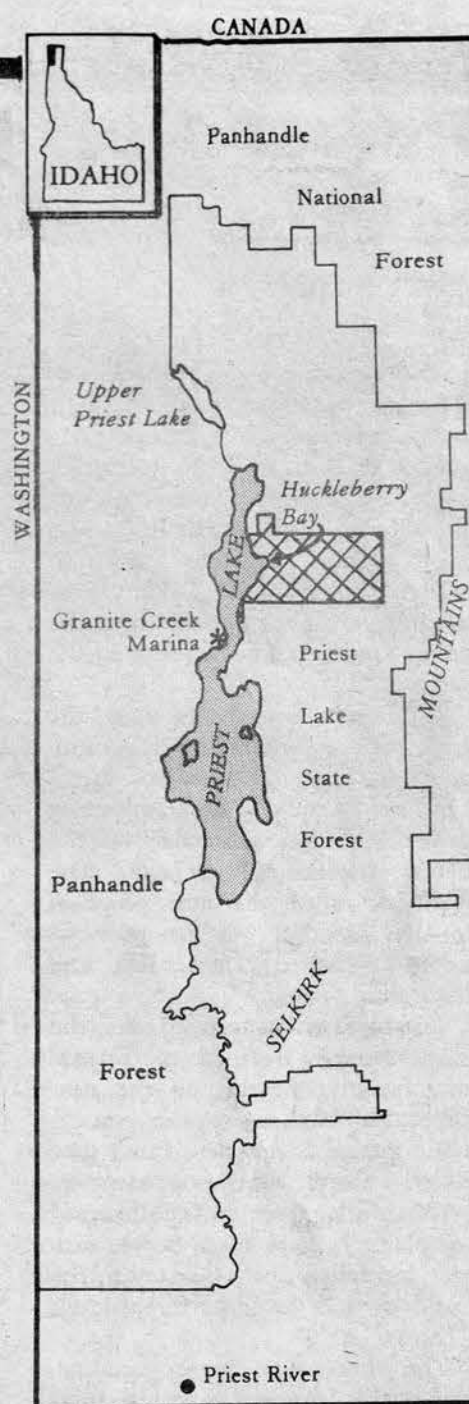
Six hundred people attended the hearings. Of the 80 who spoke, 75 opposed the project and were loudly applauded. The Coalition presented a petition against the project signed by 4,000 people; it was gathered in three weeks. Idaho's attorney general and Land Board member Jim Jones said letters ran 9 to 1 against the exchange. Among those opposed were the Idaho Education Association, the International Woodworkers Union local, the Bonner County Republic Central Committee, the entire state legislative

delegation from the area and two of three local county commissioners.

Gov. John Evans put it bluntly to Goldsmith's people at the next Land Board meeting: "You don't have the people with you. You have failed."

But the full Land Board did not see it that way. At their July meeting the Board adopted a two-part motion from attorney general Jones. The Board disapproved the exchange proposal, but authorized its staff to negotiate with Goldsmith "to develop an alternate proposal" within specified guidelines concerning location and public access.

Gov. Evans did not like the motion, but voted for it when the Board also established a citizen-agency task force to consider other alternatives, such as public acquisition. Superintendent of Public Instruction Jerry Evans (no relation to Gov. Evans) made it clear how much work project opponents still faced.



The Priest Lake area, showing approximate boundaries of the Priest Lake State Forest, Panhandle National Forest and Goldsmith's proposed development area on Huckleberry Bay (cross-hatched).

"The only alternative people from the region have mentioned is leaving it just like it is," said Supt. Evans, "and that is the only alternative that is not available to this Board."

(Continued on page 12)

Northern Idaho is chilly to the state Land Board

The Idaho Land Board has not been very popular in northern Idaho. Its members, who are the top five elected officials in state government, are nearly always from southern Idaho. Its ad hoc and lackluster administration (to northern eyes) of Idaho's Lake Protection Act has been resented in the Panhandle, a land of lakes.

Just before the Priest Lake exchange controversy, lake residents were angered by the Land Department's handling of a small hydroelectric developer, whose trenching damaged several east side creeks. One creek provided municipal water for the small town of Coolin. Local people felt ignored and evaded.

Idaho's Priest Lake State Forest is an excellent timber producer, and among the state's most valuable properties. It and most other state lands are "school lands" because revenues from them accrue to the state Endowment Fund. The interest helps support Idaho's public schools. By Article 9, Section 8 of the Idaho Constitution, the Land Board must manage school lands "in such manner

as will secure the maximum possible amount therefor." Goldsmith has made much of that mandate in promoting the exchange proposal.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Jerry Evans, a Land Board member for six years, confesses he's a little frustrated by Priest Lake. "I've gotten hundreds of letters from north Idaho saying 'these are our public lands,'" he says. "But they are public school endowment lands. People have used them as public lands, but they were set aside at statehood for support of the public schools. The Land Board is in a bind. We are elected officials; obviously we have to be sensitive to people's wishes. But that constitutional requirement is our guiding star."

Art Manley, a seven-term Idaho state senator, was disturbed by that requirement for many years. "In terms of total public school funds, the Endowment income is not significant, probably around 5 percent," he says. "But the mandate to secure maximum revenue often prevents sound multiple-use, sustained-yield management of state lands." Several times in

the 1970s, he sought to place a constitutional amendment on the ballot replacing the existing language with a multiple-use mandate. He never got it through the Legislature.

Manley also joined a Boise Republican in the 1970s to seek abolition of the Land Board entirely. "It's getting better now," he says, "but over the years it's been the least effective and responsive board in state government. All its members have tough full-time jobs, all hold political offices, and none are there because of land management knowledge." Manley believes a citizen commission appointed by the governor would work better. Fish and Game, Health and Welfare, Water Resources, Transportation and most other state boards work that way.

Jerry Evans thinks the present system works. "So-called 'independent' boards aren't free of politics either. And if we don't do our job, there's a self-correcting mechanism called an election we have to face." When Manley's proposal did reach the ballot in the mid-1970s it was defeated. "We didn't have any money

to make our case, and we made a mistake by not specifying that the Superintendent of Public Instruction should remain on any Land Board," he says today. "The Endowment Fund gives him a legitimate interest in state lands which the voters recognized."

Professional management of state lands has come slowly in Idaho. Until 1967, the Land Board's top staffperson was usually the state chairman of the Board's dominant political party. Gordon Trombley, the first professional director of the Department of Lands, generally continued an ad hoc tradition of resolving management disputes. Priest Lake is a case in point. Procedures for review of Goldsmith's proposal have been established as consideration progressed. No established procedure existed at the start to make it clear what the process would be or how long it would take.

The current director, Stan Hamilton, is changing this ad hoc approach. He began the job in February 1984, in the middle of the Priest Lake controversy.

--Pat Ford

Priest Lake...

(Continued from page 11)

ANOTHER HEARING

In September, Goldsmith returned with an amended proposal. The company proposed to exchange 6,818 acres of its lands for 3,724 state acres appraised at equal value around Huckleberry Bay. Goldsmith would give the state 3,132 acres, worth \$2 million, and retain about 1,300 acres for future exchange with the state, but the ski area would be leased from the state.

Goldsmith consultants said the new proposal "represents the minimum land area necessary to plan a year-round state-of-the-art recreation residential/resort community on the eastern shoreline of Priest Lake." The Coalition called the new proposal "nearly identical" to the previous one in its impacts on the lake and community.

Led by attorney general Jones, the Land Board decided a formal administrative hearing on the new proposal's impacts to the state's public school Endowment Fund (see related story) was necessary to establish a legal record. The hearing took place January 7-9 in Boise, with three formal parties -- Goldsmith, the Coalition, and the Idaho Department of Lands.

The arguments were familiar. Goldsmith's experts projected total state tax revenue over 20 years at \$46 million; Coalition witnesses estimated local tax liabilities for existing residents. A Goldsmith consultant said the ski area could succeed economically; a Coalition witness said it could not.

The hearing was contentious and at times bitter. During the Coalition's aggressive cross-examination of Gold-

smith's ski consultant, Goldsmith's attorney asked the hearing officer: "How long do we have to put up with this bullshit?" The hearing officer later summed it up: "I received conflicting testimony on virtually every point."

The state Department of Lands then made its first public analysis of Goldsmith's proposal, concluding in a benefit-cost comparison that the project was almost a wash for the Endowment Fund. Goldsmith's attorney and attorney general Jones questioned many specifics in the comparison; Lands Department Stan Hamilton admitted there was much uncertainty but stuck by his conclusions.

Goldsmith revealed one new wrinkle. If the exchange were refused, the company said it would subdivide its scattered non-lakefront sections,

rather than leave them in timber harvest. Hamilton, who said he had two days' notice of the change, expressed serious concern about the impacts of such "woodland subdivisions" on the state's management of its surrounding timber lands. Mike Proctor of the Coalition later called the new position "totally deceitful," and suggested there had really never been any other intention. Spokesman Bruce Colwell said the company's mind had changed because "it is no longer a timber company."

The Department of Lands summarized its conclusion after the hearing: "Here we have a proposed land exchange which the testimony and evidence at the hearing clearly indicates is subject to speculation, estimation, and outright guessing as to its economic impact... the Board should reject the exchange if there is any doubt in their minds about

whether the exchange will benefit the public school endowment, or the Board should require more gift lands be donated so as to swing the balance unquestionably in favor of the endowment."

WHERE NOW?

But Mark Thompson, the Land Board Hearing Officer, recommended approval in his report released on April 12. He said the School Endowment Fund could gain approximately \$500,000 from the proposed development. There would also be additional timber sale receipts and cottage lease receipts, although the actual amount gained for public schools would only be the interest on annual revenues -- perhaps \$5,000 to \$10,000 a year.

Thompson's principal findings of

(Continued on page 13)

A logging firm is chopped into pieces

Just five years ago, Diamond International owned 190,000 acres of Idaho forestland and operated four sawmills with 560 employees. Diamond had been operating in northern Idaho for over 40 years. The firm considered itself a good corporate citizen, and north Idahoans agreed.

"We always supported the communities as best we could under the market conditions," remembers Bob Bemis, former vice president of Diamond's Northwest lumber division. At Priest Lake, Diamond had left its five miles of very valuable shoreline undeveloped and access to it unrestricted. Its nearby timberlands were managed cooperatively with surrounding state lands, and were logged selectively, and profitably, to protect recreational value at the lake.

Sir James Goldsmith began to acquire Diamond stock in 1977. An October 17, 1983, *Fortune* profile describes him as eccentric, colorful and very conservative. His business strategy is to purchase undervalued companies and then liquidate their pieces for as much profit as possible. Knowing this, Diamond resisted his take-over bid. But in 1982 Diamond gave in and Goldsmith bought the company for \$661 million.

"In complexity and risk the Diamond deal ranks as one of the financial events of the 1980s," said *Fortune*. When the article was written, Goldsmith had sold six of Diamond's major divisions, and his potential profit when all were sold was estimated at \$503 million. Today more divisions are gone, but

Goldsmith spokesmen refused to be interviewed about this or any other matter. DAW Forest Products of Portland purchased Diamond's Idaho sawmills. All mills are in operation, but on a day-to-day basis due to low demand and low prices.

San Francisco newspapers have recently reported that Goldsmith is now engaged in a similar effort to take control of another timber firm, Crown-Zellerbach. He reportedly owns about 9 percent of that company's stock and is seeking more.

The *Fortune* article contained a chart of Goldsmith's "financial empire." Of 20 companies he owns, only four produce any product. The remaining 16 are holding companies.

--Pat Ford

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April 29, 1985--High Country News-13

Priest Lake...

(Continued from page 12)

law were that "the board should fulfill its fiduciary obligation as trustee of those lands by taking such action that will maximize the long-term economic benefit to the school endowment fund... The Board should concern itself only with the financial impact the proposed exchange may have on the School Endowment Fund... the present exchange would produce a long-term financial benefit." Thompson added that "local opposition factors" have no legal standing in the Board's decision.

"I'm not surprised," says Art Manley. "It's something for the board to lean on if they choose to approve the exchange. It sounds like (attorney general) Jim Jones is raring to go. Our only hope is that Governor Evans holds firm."

New Coalition attorney Scott Reed adds, "Is the responsibility of the Land Board to be confined solely to toting up dollars and dimes? Their trust responsibility in fact and in law is far larger and far longer term. The hearing officer is not the decision maker; his report doesn't take the elected leaders off the hook."

The Land Board is expected to schedule a special meeting soon to vote on the proposed exchange. If the exchange is approved, the Coalition intends to sue. If the Board rejects the exchange, they may make a counter-proposal. Or Goldsmith may begin subdivision or sale of his existing lands, thus moving action to the local planning and zoning arena.

The Coalition will continue to pursue public acquisition.

The Land Board is split. Its chairman, Gov. Evans, and state auditor Joe Williams oppose the exchange. Attorney General Jones and Secretary of State Pete Cenarrusa seem to be for some version of Goldsmith's proposal. Jones argued at the hearing that the Land Board is considering a land exchange only, and that the resort development is a separate, local issue to be decided by local officials later. "That's hogwash," counters Manley. "Without Land Board approval they don't have a project; with it they have a tremendous leverage to push the project locally."

State School Superintendent Jerry Evans is the man in the middle. "I'm undecided," he says. "I can't decide the exact weights of the issues. We have a public responsibility, and we have a trust responsibility for the Endowment. None of us are anxious to destroy Priest Lake, but we have to look at the other issues."

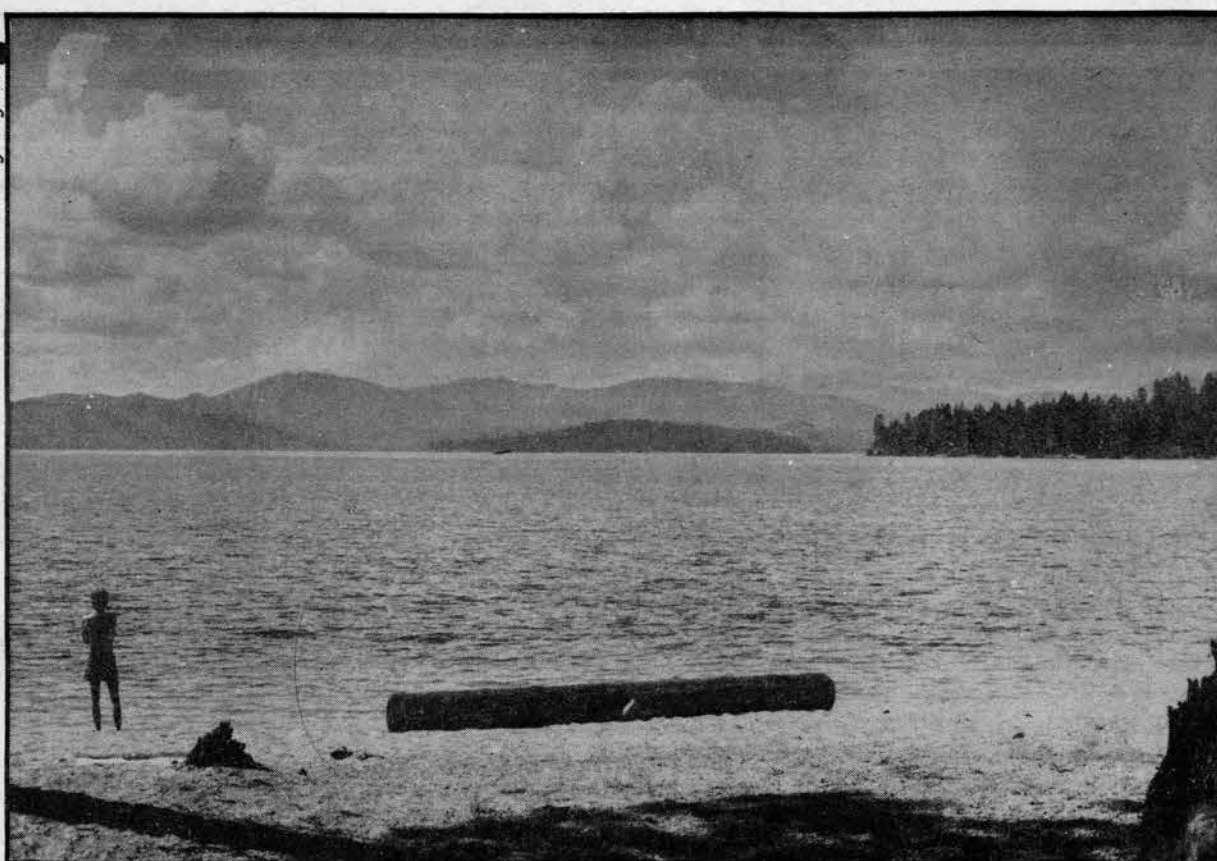
The Coalition has hoped all along that the Land Board would take the lead on a public acquisition scheme, but the Board sees little hope for that financially. John Nutter, western regional director for the Nature Conservancy, thinks Goldsmith is willing to sell at fair market value, but

agrees that it will be very difficult to finance. Goldsmith consultant Bruce Colwell said at the hearing, "We won't hold onto the land; we'll either develop it or sell it." Beyond that Goldsmith is keeping mum.

The combatants are agreed on two points: the present ownership pattern on Priest Lake's east side is undesirable and will not continue, and the status quo for little-known Priest Lake is gone.

Pat Ford is a freelance writer and former director of the Idaho Conservation League.

Gerry Snyder



Priest Lake looking west from Indian Creek Bay.

J.W. Patterson & Associates
Denver, Colorado

Audubon Camp in the West
Boulder, Colorado

Thomas Udall
Sante Fe, New Mexico

Paul T. Petersen
Grand Junction, Colorado

Kay Firor
Sunol, California

Robert Willey
Chicago, Illinois

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Ettlinger
Bannockburn, Illinois

Audubon Society of Western Colorado
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Many thanks to all HCN Research Fund contributors

LETTERS

NAVAJOS ARE REALISTIC

Dear HCN,

Vauter Parker, attorney for the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, made some valid points in his article, "Indians and Environmentalists Drift Apart." He cites the example of the Navajo tribal council entering into an agreement with Public Service Company of New Mexico to participate in an enormous coal-fired power plant in the San Juan Basin, a region already overburdened with power plants and strip mines.

In defense of the Indians, however, it must be remembered that reservations are just that -- not sovereign nations. I am sure there can be little doubt that the coal resources of the San Juan Basin will be developed and power plants built no matter the feelings of the Navajos on the matter. The fact the Navajo tribal council, for example, was threatening to close the Four Corners Power Plant because of pollution problems went against them as Congress considered the so-called Navajo-Hopi land dispute. (I say "so-called" because that dispute is very much a fabrication of energy and development interests who used it to achieve a situation more amenable to energy development at Black Mesa.) Similarly, it must be remembered that if Indian tribes become too stubborn about programs favored by government and industry, the end result may very well be massive cuts in education, health and welfare programs.

The Navajo tribal council, therefore, is probably being nothing more than realistic in its decision to join in the power plant endeavor. It will happen; better for them to participate in the process and profit from it than to oppose it and have it go forward anyway. It should be remembered, however, that many of the Navajos, perhaps even a majority, do oppose continued energy development on their reservation. Not until Native Americans are given true autonomy will we really know their attitudes on the environment -- an autonomy I am willing to bet won't happen until the multi-billion dollar resources beneath the reservations are exhausted.

Kathleene Parker
Denver, Colorado

ARTICLE CRITIQUED

Dear HCN,

I am writing in response to Vauter Parker's opinion piece entitled "Indians and environmentalists drift apart" in the April 1, 1985, *High Country News*. Several statements in Mr. Parker's letter deserve clarification.

Although the New Mexico Generating Station would indeed bring with it the opening of new, very large coal strip mines, under the law these mines could not encroach on the De-Na-Zin Wilderness Area. The San Juan Wilderness Preservation Act of 1984 (its proper title) does specifically acknowledge the priority of valid existing rights. However, the coal claims that conflict with De-Na-Zin, as well as with the Ah-Shi-Sle-Pah Wilderness Study Area, are not valid leases but rather preference right lease applications (PRLAs) filed in the

late 1960s under the Minerals Leasing Act of 1920. Interior Department solicitors have made it clear that DOI views the PRLAs not as valid existing rights in themselves but rather as rights to have the claims processed, subject to the present environmental safeguards and leasing laws.

These laws, including the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and the Surface Mining Control and Reclamation Act (SMCRA) clearly specify that wilderness areas and WSAs are unsuitable for coal surface mining; hence any PRLA that matured into a federal coal lease would have to exclude from surface disturbance the parts of the lease that overlapped the wilderness or WSA. Needless to say, the permitting of a coal strip mine even bordering a wilderness area would generate great opposition among conservationists. Mr. Parker is quite correct in his appraisal of the fragility of these areas and their unique scenic and scientific resources.

Mr. Parker misunderstands that all 26 of the New Mexico PRLAs are covered by the Navajo Tribe's land selections, when in fact the total is not now more than 14. The Tribe is entitled to select up to 35,000 acres of land in New Mexico, while the San Juan Basin PRLAs cover more than 75,000 acres. Clear information on the precise overlap of the Tribe's selections with existing PRLAs has not been readily available, and several adjustments to the selections have been made. One may argue, of course, that the land selections have sequestered the bulk of the coal; however, since the coal reserve data on the PRLAs is proprietary, this is a difficult assertion to either confirm or deny.

Moreover, the actual extent of control over this coal by the Navajo Tribe is arguable. Under the terms of the San Juan Basin Wilderness Act, the PRLA holders are entitled to a prior right to lease the coal should their lease applications pass the requisite legal and economic tests; no royalties would be forthcoming to the Tribe if this should occur. It is also possible, however, that the Navajos could issue tribal leases to the present holders of applications covered by the land selections, thereby avoiding the federal leasing process. Also, the preferred coal to fuel an NMGS would probably come from the adjacent federal leases at the plant site in the vicinity of the Bisti Wilderness. These leases are now held by PNM and are unaffected by the Tribe's land selections under the terms of transfer stated in the 1984 act.

Next, the applicability of SMCRA performance standards to Indian lands should not be in doubt, if SMCRA itself is any guide. Section 710 of that law specifies that "all surface coal mining operations on Indian lands shall comply with requirements at least as stringent" as the performance standards specified elsewhere in the act. That federal regulations and enforcement may not have implemented this provision of the law is possible, but the situation is open to remedy.

The BLM and Public Service Company of New Mexico's original proposal for the 2000 mw coal-fired New Mexico Generating Station was fraught with numerous environmental and legal problems; these were amply stated by New Mexico conservationists and Native American activists during the environmental review

process that occurred in 1982-83. Questions of water supply, air quality degradation, reclamation of adjacent mined lands, and numerous other issues plagued the proposal.

These issues still plague the concept of a large, mine-mouth power plant, situated north of Chaco Canyon in the middle of the Bisti Badlands, whether the plant be built by PNM, the Navajo Nation or a consortium. Opposition to such a project remains firm among New Mexico environmentalists, but as we know too well, environmental concerns may be swept aside.

In terms of appraising the potential for success of such a venture, the most potent considerations remain those of market demand for the power to be produced by NMGS or its successor project. According to detailed studies by the Environmental Defense Fund, such a market for additional generating capacity does not exist and is not likely to materialize before the beginning of the next century or thereafter. Other power plants now underway, such as the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station (slated ultimately at 3870 mw for its three units combined) will further limit potential markets. Absent the demand for additional electricity, it would be profoundly bad judgment for the Tribe, for PNM, General Electric, or anyone else to invest some \$5-6 billion dollars in a long-term project to produce surplus electricity in a soft market.

Local opposition by Eastern Agency Navajos to the idea of another generating plant in the San Juan Basin has been quite strong, although Tribal participation in the project would doubtless be conditioned on a strong hiring preference for Navajos and other measures to maximize local benefits could be expected in the design of the project. Tribal representatives have mentioned the need for an extensive program of electrification on the reservation, which has little internal electric distribution despite its position as a major exporter of power. Nevertheless, there exists minimal regional demand for power (especially with the closure of the uranium industry, once a major system load) and the area at present lacks potential for industrial economic development capable of absorbing substantial electrical production. As a result, most of the benefits from a power plant in the area will flow to other regions, regardless of who builds it.

The necessity of economic development for Indian tribes is indisputable, however, and conservationists can ignore this necessity only at the risk of disillusionment and confusion as Native Americans strive for more than an economically marginal existence. This is the constructive lesson that Mr. Parker draws for the environmental community to study. Under U.S. law, Indian tribes are independent sovereign nations that should properly exercise control over their own resources. Certainly we have urged that they pay careful attention to the nature of the development that they undertake, learning from the mistakes that our industrial society has inflicted on them as well as on ourselves. However, their decisions must ultimately be their own; such is the nature of sovereignty.

Jonathan M. Teague
Albuquerque, New Mexico



NAVAJO ARTICLE ATTACKED

Dear HCN:

Mr. Vauter Parker's "opinion" of April 1, 1985, reminds me why I am no longer a member of groups like the Sierra Club for whom he is a coordinating attorney.

It breaks my heart when environmentalists gripe about their disenchantment with Indian cultures. "Conservationists may themselves have painted too ideal a picture of Indian attitudes toward land..." Really, Mr. Parker, whose traditional values are behind the plans to build four new power plants on the reservation? Isn't a power plant a product of a culture centered on individual enterprise, private property, and the massive exploitation of natural resources? A power plant is as traditionally Navajo as the countless Christian missions, liquor stores, shopping centers, and pickup trucks found on the reservation and surrounding lands.

Perhaps we would be better off with their traditional values than they are with ours!

Roxann Moore
Sidney, Texas

A LESSON NOT LEARNED

Dear HCN,

I just completed reading the April 15, 1985 edition of *HCN*. It contained many disturbing ideas and thoughts and it struck deep at the issues confronting not only western Colorado but the West in general.

This issue was an excellent summation of many experiences during the latest boom and bust. What is disturbing, however, is that with all the lessons learned, western Colorado would still welcome another boom with open arms.

Economics based on a disregard for natural processes and resources are not in the long-term interests of the West.

There is much to say and not enough time to say it, except that I appreciated the work of the staff at *HCN* and hope it can continue.

Greg Trainor
Grand Junction, Colorado

GRAPES WERE SLIGHTED

Dear HCN:

In your April 15 edition you ran a nice story about peaches and apples roaring back. How about grapes? Don't forget we have Colorado's only winery at Palisade. The Colorado Mountain Vineyards has already produced several award-winning vintages.

Jim Evans
Associated Governments
of Northwest Colorado

BOOK NOTES

Rural poems from rural people

*From Seedbed to Harvest:
The American Farmer*

Poetry anthology. Big Timber, Montana: Seven Buffaloes Press, 1985. 114 pages. \$6.75, paper.

—Review by Linda Hasselstrom

You don't read reviews? Read this one. You don't read poetry because it never deals with the everyday problems of ranching and farming? Wrong again!

Seven Buffaloes Press of Big Timber, Montana, has collected poems from seven agricultural areas of the U.S. and Canada in an anthology titled *From Seedbed to Harvest: The American Farmer*. Each region could produce its own anthology, but until that day comes this book provides a wonderful look at living everyday poetry created by rural people.

Those of us with rural backgrounds will relive old times and meet familiar friends in this collection. Those to whom rural life is a puzzle can learn from this book what it looks like, sounds and smells like, and perhaps begin to understand why so many people won't leave the farm even when the farm leaves them.

The 69 poets in this collection speak of mishaps with combines, of the mess and mystery of birth, of windmills like old men with rusty joints, of the joys of catching fireflies and the smell of growing things. None of them write from the viewpoint of the inexperienced, who sometimes see rural life as one long romp in the roses. These writers have all been there, and some of the poems are harshly realistic.

You'll meet an old man who sold his land for development but refuses to sell his house: "This would be the party/house they tell me." (William J. Vernon). You'll see people "weak and silly from too much town" (Lee Pennington) who try to go back to the land. There's a man killed while plowing: "the field/folds in Ezra Becker/ like a hidden dream" (Craig Challenger).

One man's "perpendicular farm" yields rocks, which he piles. The piles collect snakes: "Lafe thinks that rocks must be snake fertilizer" (Jim Wayne Miller). You'll learn, if you don't know or remember them, the hardships of "The Simpler Life" (Patricia Shirley). William Pitt Root writes of vicious hurricanes in the south in a powerful poem about his father's struggle on the land. R.T. Smith writes of hog

killing, of readying the kettle "black as homemade sin."

The voices of women are strong in this collection, as they are in reality. "Journal of a Farm Woman" by Thelma Poirier, a Canadian poet, might have been written by a hundred South Dakota women.

Through the entire book are familiar scenes: old men driving old trucks, kids picking bugs off the crops or trapping muskrats, women canning. Several poets touch on changes in rural life; one recites a litany of tools: "maul,/ spokeshave, rat-tailed rasp -- /familiar to me only as names,/ not from calluses formed." (Joseph Bruchac III).

Every section of the country is represented in the book, but whether the writers are dealing with the irrigation and grapes of the San Joaquin Valley or old hay stackers in the West, it all has a familiar ring. In Edward J. Reilly's poem "Preparing Supper" from the Midwest section, I could see my childhood self waiting with the pail of scalding water while my grandmother snapped the neck of a chicken.

Unfortunately, poetry does not sell well in the modern world, partly because many poets have developed styles of writing so obscure no one



From Seedbed to Harvest

THE AMERICAN FARMER

without a Ph.D. can comprehend them. Don't fear that in this book. Buy it for all the people you know who care about rural life.

Linda Hasselstrom is a poet, publisher and rancher from Hermosa, South Dakota. A book of her poetry, *Caught by One Wing*, was published last year.

ACCESS

WORK

JOB OPENING: Public Lands Coordinator for the Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning. Responsibilities include coordinating organization's involvement in public lands issues in Teton County, Wyoming (Bridger-Teton National Forest, Grand Teton National Park and National Elk Refuge); staffing volunteer public lands committee; grassroots organizing; fundraising; general office help. Qualifications: B.A. degree in related field; experience in grassroots organizing and consensus building; good communication skills.

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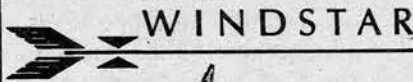


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LETTERS

BOOM AND BUST

Dear HCN,

Please find enclosed my renewal to HCN. I appreciate your recent boom and bust articles. I think they remind us of a land ethic which is long past due for implementation in this country. Putting this over to the public is extremely difficult. I should know. I have been advocating it locally in the Bluegrass of Kentucky for 10 years.

We have an influx of Easterners who have become permanent residents who escaped seaboard congestion. Development and industrialization have become the goal of political pundits and a scourge to traditional ways of life. As you conclude in your recent article on the boom and bust in your home country, I too hope that there are silent undercurrents which will eventually bring about permanent reforms in the rape and run system perpetuated by chambers of commerce, real estate interests, developers, etc. It is long past due.

You have done yeoman work in elucidating the problem in your series on boom and bust in the West.

Van Shipp
Versailles, Kentucky

GOOD COVERAGE

Dear HCN,

Thanks for the good coverage on the USFS under fire, especially in the January 21 issue. I can't think of any other source which is providing such coverage, and there are many folks who are -- or should be -- interested in this area. Keep up the good work.

Donna Story
LaPorte, Colorado

16-High Country News--April 29, 1985

BOOK NOTES

*The grizzly: nature at its most powerful**The Grizzly Bear*

Thomas McNamee. New York, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1984. \$18.95, illustrated, cloth.

Review by Jim Robbins

If the grizzly bear is successfully eliminated from its remaining habitat in the U.S., we will have lost the chance to learn some vital lessons.

Grizzly bears have already taught us what lousy neighbors people make. *Ursus arctos horribilis* once roamed as far east as Minnesota and numbered more than 100,000. The population in the Lower 48 has dwindled down to 900 or so, erring on the side of the bear, and confined to two relatively small areas. Now they are being pressured in their last refuge.

The bear has only begun to teach us something about itself. Grizzly bear researchers acknowledge that very little is really known about the reclusive grizzly -- and will tell you that there is a good deal that will never be known.

Still, the grizzly bear shows us what nature at its finest and most powerful can be like. It can impart lessons on humility and fear. If we let it, the bear, at the top of the food chain, can show us how to preserve and protect our environment for our own well being.

This is the most important role for Tom McNamee's book, titled simply, *The Grizzly Bear*. With an obvious

heartfelt empathy for the beast, McNamee has taken almost all that is known about grizzly bears and expertly woven it into the tale of a mythical sow bear and her cubs.

The book looks at this ursine family during one complete season of their life in and around Yellowstone Park. The chapters are divided by months, starting with April.

"Stillness. Utter stillness. Miles on snowy miles of it, of nothing moving, not a bird, not a deer, not a wind-quivered willow shoot. No wind -- no one... There appears in that whiteness a darkness, a hole. There appears in the hole a wet, black nose. Sniffing."

"And with a sudden snow explosion, where there was nothing there is all at once a lot of something. A grizzly bear. Three hundred pounds thereof."

McNamee's book is filled with literature -- he is a poet -- and state-of-the-art bear biology. Though he has a tendency to occasionally use a two-dollar word where a ten-cent one would do, McNamee's first book is as solid as the sinewy muscles of a young boar grizzly. He is the first author to go to such great lengths to understand the bear, and to try and translate that understanding for his readers.

It's not a perfect book. McNamee could have spent more time with the bears in the wild, as some other authors have spent with their subject. Given the secretive nature of the

animal, however, that would have been a Herculean task.

One indispensable service McNamee provides for the reader is his chin-deep wading through the morass of charges, counter-charges, controversies and misunderstandings surrounding the Yellowstone purge of garbage-eating bears in the 1970s.

McNamee's account is lucid and calm, and people interested in a careful explanation of the dismal episode will find it here.

Reading this detailed account of the bear, and having observed grizzlies frequently in the wild, I believe that the grizzly bear, among other things, is a symbol for a mostly hidden part of the human psyche -- a strong and powerful symbol. It is also a symbol of nature. Some may think we have moved away from the natural world, but we are products of it and invisible nerves still connect us to it. To destroy the grizzly bear is to destroy a part of ourselves. And McNamee's book is a landmark toward breaking down that wall of misunderstanding that keeps us from allowing the grizzly the necessary elbow room for existence.

Meanwhile, the grizzly bear exists for the most part as it has for centuries, unaware of its role in a controversy that may be the most violent that man has ever focused on another species.

It is winter for McNamee's bears, as the book closes.



"And still they stagger to the moose carcass, half a dozen times a day for half a dozen days, grunting, belching, roly-poly and languorous as sultans. Their layer of fat grows thicker, and their coats are thick and oily-sleek."

"At last their appetite fails them. When the blizzard comes, therefore, they are ready. They stretch, crawl in through the long dark tunnel, and snuggle up, the big bear curled around her curled-up cubs."

"After three days and nights of white tempest, the apron of spoil, their tracks, the den entrance, all signs of grizzly bear are gone."

"The sun is a pale disc in the thinning silver overcast. All the windless afternoon not a willow shoot quivers. All the windless night, the moon is a silver disc in a blackness pricked with stars. The aurora borealis shimmers over the far peak. The stillness is complete."

LETTERS

JONKEL ACCURATELY DESCRIBED DISTORTIONS

Dear HCN,

I certainly appreciated seeing Charles Jonkel's article entitled "Must wildlife movies distort reality to entertain?" He accurately describes the distortions and exploitations that are common in American wildlife movies and raises the question of the possibility of any money-making film "just showing the way it is."

Of course the answer is that there are many fine wildlife and nature films being made today by foreign cinematographers and producers. In some cases their subjects and locations are in the U.S., but you are not likely to see them on commercial TV. The Public Broadcasting System, however, gets the best of the lot and offers extensive nature programming. What you get to see may depend on where you live, but we in Anchorage are fortunate to have a well-funded (#1 in the country in viewer support) station which leans heavily on wildlife and nature programs. We get to see the whole range of offerings from the U.S. and overseas, usually two or three times.

I do not know whether the causes are cultural or economic, but it is a fact that we must rely on foreign producers and cinematographers for high quality nature films that do not exploit wildlife or insult the viewer's intelligence. These films are very expensive. Some require three to five years to produce, and apparently only outfits like BBC, Survival Anglia, and David Atten-

borough are willing to invest the time and money required.

American producers seem to be stuck in the Walt Disney or Marlin Perkins formats. In the first case the animal is an actor performing in ways some script writer thinks is cute, a la Donald Duck. In the other case we have a human hero with animals playing the supporting parts. Jacques Costeau has taken that format to the commercial extreme, but any number of Americans would love to follow him, and are trying to do so with their films on diving with whales and sharks.

The few American-made films that are not ego-trips insist on featuring humans and even the National Geographic films fall into that pattern. Geographic gave us two exquisite films ("Etosha, land of dry water" and "Sands of Namib") by the English team of David & Carol Hughes in which there were no humans. They were followed by an American-made film, "Flight of the Whooping Crane," in which Geographic's script called for humans to be gods and saviors while the cranes were bit players.

I do not agree with Jonkel that NOVA has the best films on PBS. In fact I think its programs sometimes tend to the sensational, astrology, and mysticism. The best nature films can be found on *Nature*, *Survival*, and the series like *Life on Earth* and *The Living Planet*. Again, the difference may be that the films used on NOVA are "made in the U.S.A."

The larger question, then, is why American companies don't, or won't produce films "just showing the way it is?" It is certainly not due to a lack of subject matter, because excellent "foreign" films are shot in the U.S.

("Yellowstone in winter" by Wolfgang Bayer, for instance). Is it because American networks and sponsors think such films will not be commercially successful in terms of selling mouthwash and panty hose? Or is it a cultural bias which requires that wildlife be subordinate to the rugged American hero?

H.W. Gabriel
Anchorage, Alaska

(The writer is a wildlife biologist, photographer and writer, who tells us he is moving to Missoula, Montana.)

RATHER A WOLF

Dear HCN,

The gospel of wildlife management as recently presented by professor Charles Jonkel must have been sabotaged after leaving his typewriter. Surely this internationally prominent expert wouldn't condemn Hollywood for distorting our view of wildlife and then be caught slamming wolf protectors when "the wolves are eating every last moose." Of course, without modern management practices, the wolf would have eradicated the moose thousands of years ago.

Was it a clandestine infiltrator on the High Country staff, armed with a red pencil, who has this noted biologist damning wolves for attacking the family pet? Mr. Jonkel works at the University of Montana, not the American Kennel Club!

Some years back, I lost a pet dog to predators unknown, solely because I chose to live in wild places, home to wild animals. If such were the worst fate imaginable, I would have moved to the city and entrusted my

companion to the more predictable predator-prey relationship between the urban auto and man's best friend.

But I'm not an objective scientific observer. I'd rather have a wolf in my backyard than a biologist.

John Walker
Sidney, Texas

A CORRECTION

Dear HCN,

Although it is trivial in regard to the main thrust of the story, Bruce Farling incorrectly wrote in his story about military airspace in the West (HCN, 3/4/85), that the Sierra Club has been in court for four years trying to stop Boeing 747s from landing in Grand Teton National Park.

Although the suits were used as only an example of litigation to stop noise impact, your readers should be told that the aircraft in question is a Boeing 737 -- quite a sizeable difference from a 747. Even the Boeing 727, the workhorse of the airlines, is not allowed into Jackson Hole because of noise restrictions. Only the newer generation 737-200 and 737-300 with special engine hush kits are allowed to operate in Jackson Hole. Most other aircraft cannot carry a full load and still meet restrictions in the Jackson Hole Airport's Noise Abatement Plan. The Sierra Club, by the way, lost the suit over the 737s while a separate suit challenging the airport's new lease and use permit is still pending.

Rip Woodin
Jackson, Wyoming