

A Special Issue

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High Country News - March 31, 1986

High Country News

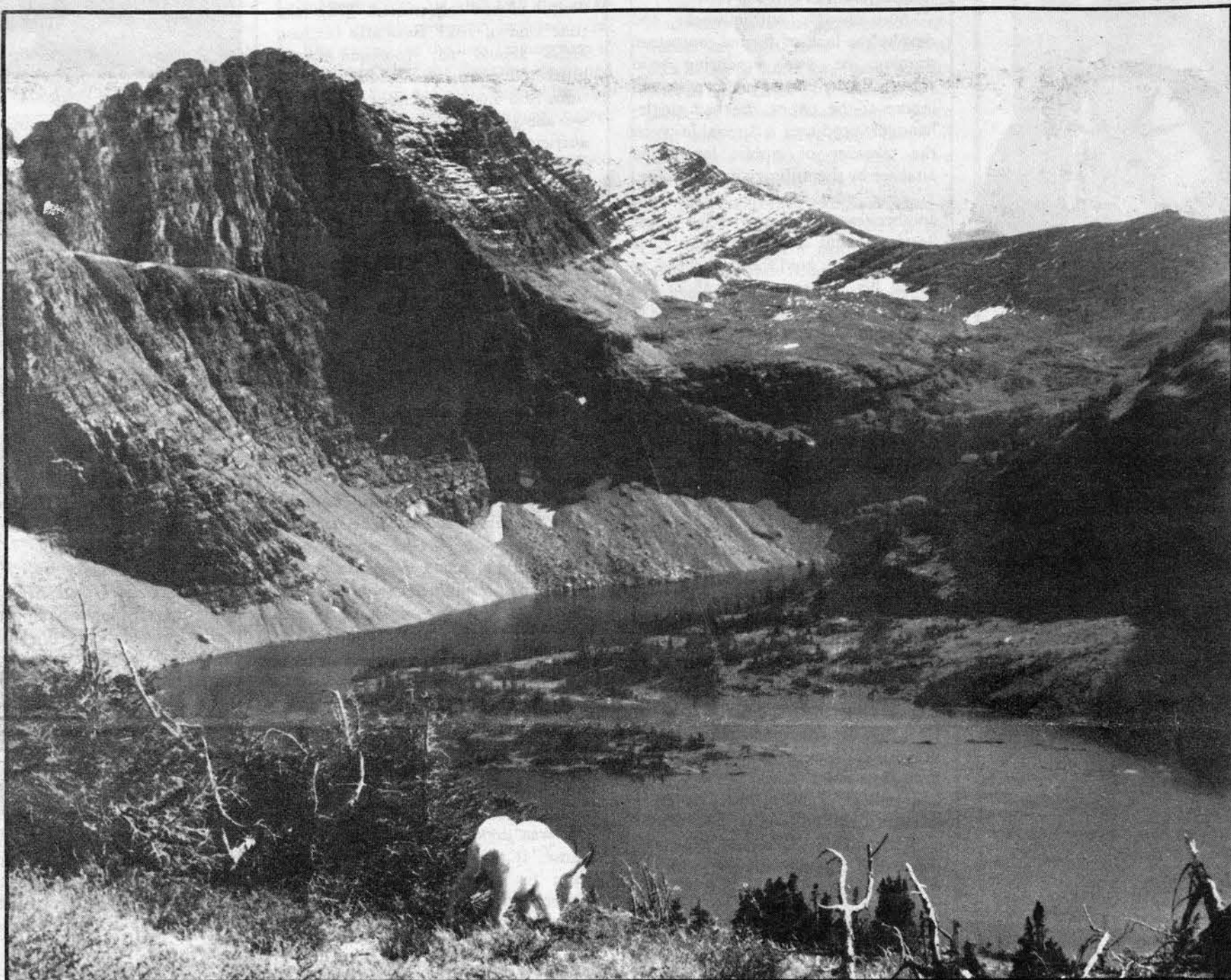
March 31, 1986

Vol. 18 No. 6

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One Dollar

David J. Spear



Rocky Mountain goat, at home in Glacier National Park.

The Glacier-Bob Marshall country

A still-wild chunk of America is vulnerable to development

They glisten with great beauty when the sun shines on them in a particular direction, and most probably from the glittering appearance have derived the name of the Shining Mountains.

Meriweather Lewis
July 22, 1806

by Bruce Farling

One hundred and eighty years after Meriweather Lewis' first view of "the Shining Mountains" of present-day Glacier National Park, millions of visitors annually head for its ragged peaks and fog-shrouded forests.

Designated a national park 75 years ago, early proponents of Glacier's preservation, such as conservationist/writer George Bird Grinnell and Great Northern Railroad heir Louis Hill, were convinced park status would protect forever the area's natural resources.

They were wrong, conservationists say today, because dozens of activities either next to or within the park threaten its integrity.

When lumped together, Glacier Park and the nearby Bob Marshall Wilderness are at the hub of one of the West's largest wild areas. Only the

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the vast wilderness of Idaho's Salmon-Selway country rival the Glacier-Bob Marshall wildlands in scale.

The area encompasses Glacier and Waterton Lakes National Parks, the 1.6-million-acre Bob Marshall Wilderness complex, several million U.S. Forest Service and Canadian roadless acres, as well as millions of additional acres in roaded federal and private land. In all, the Glacier-Bob Marshall country covers 10,000 square miles -- an area the size of the state of Connecticut.

Like the Yellowstone Ecosystem, the Glacier-Bob Marshall country is an ecological network most affected by human activity on its unprotected margins. The naturalness of the margin areas, such as Canada's roadless lands, the Rocky Mountain Front, the Swan Crest and the North Fork Flathead basin, are a measure of ecological health for the area as a whole. The wildlife, clean air and clean water of the Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness are inextricably linked to the unprotected areas. Consequently, Glacier's bull trout,

(Continued on page 7)

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Dear friends,



High Country News

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There is a history to this Special Issue on the Glacier Country which goes back to the winter of 1984-1985 (the last real winter in the Rockies), when Bruce Farling came to HCN as an intern. All of the paper's interns are special, but because Bruce brought to his internship years of experience as a wilderness ranger for the U.S. Forest Service in the northern Rockies, he was extra special.

Sure enough, within weeks, and despite the lack of formal journalism training, he was producing solid stories. By the end of his three-month tenure at the paper, he had single-handedly produced a Special Issue on the takeover of public lands and airspace by the military in this region.

This year, after completing another seasonal stint with the Forest Service (what a strange mix of employers he has), Bruce chose to spend his winter writing about the northern Rockies. This issue of HCN is one result of his winter's work. It is environmental reporting at its finest... not the exposure of a scandal, but the uncovering to public view of a coherent way of looking at one of the largest more or less intact pieces of America.

Bruce, with the help of fellow writer Mollie Matteson and artist/mapmaker Lester Dore, has pulled together in one place the natural resource and land use issues affecting the Glacier-Bob Marshall country. The model for this Special Issue is the Yellowstone Ecosystem concept. That ecosystem is unified in several ways, but especially by the wide-ranging and endlessly fascinating grizzly. It is not clear that the Glacier Country can be properly called an ecosystem. But even assuming it lacks that biological and geological unity, there is great value in a unified look at the region.

The enemy of conservation is a piecemeal, fragmented approach, in which a region is nibbled to death, and in which groups opposed to unfortunate development struggle in isolation. This Special Issue attempts to show what is at stake overall, where the critical fights are and who is fighting those fights.

It is written as much for those of us who live outside the region as it is for residents of the northern Rockies. It is an attempt to make vivid and connected such treasures as Glacier National Park, the North Fork area around the metropolis of Polebridge, the Rocky Mountain Front, the Bob Marshall Wilderness, the Flathead Valley.

(We have printed extra copies of this issue, and those who wish can buy them by the piece or in bulk.)

Speaking of alumni, we ran across another former HCN intern last week at an emergency farm meeting in Delta, Colorado. Lynda Alfred, now with the Western Colorado Congress in Montrose, arose in the midst of the emotional meeting to tell the embattled farmers, many of whom have been foreclosed on, or about to go into spring planting without operating loans, that WCC stood ready to help them.

WCC, which is leading the fight against the local Louisiana-Pacific plant's polluting ways, and against the Forest Service's attempt to save aspen trees by chopping them all down, is not always popular with the agricultural community here. So we were filled with admiration when Lynda, who is not a large person,

spoke up during that highly emotional setting.

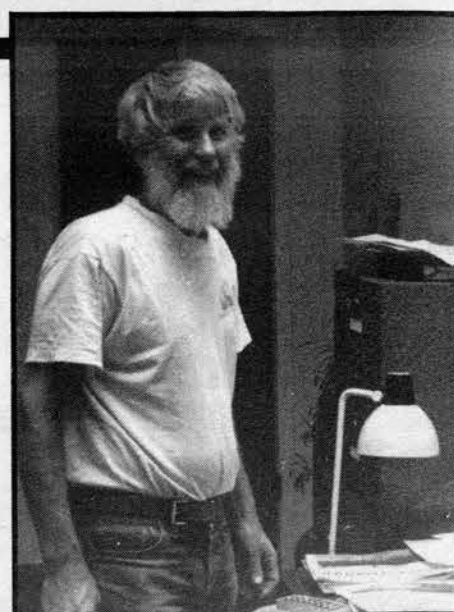
Ever since its founding by Lander rancher Tom Bell in 1970, *High Country News* has been in the "you bet your life" business. The paper has been so thinly staffed and capitalized that the words "staff" and "capital" often seemed inappropriate.

HCN has changed over the years, but old habits die hard. So last month the paper took a gamble, this time betting -- let's say -- half its life. The event was a 50,000-piece mailing in search of new subscribers. Why take that kind of risk? Basically because HCN should not continue as a hunkered down, crisis-ridden operation. And 4,000 subscribers, although we are grateful to them all, is not a sufficient base for anything approaching stability. Thanks to some excellent support from donors and foundations in 1985, and a strong renewal rate among present subscribers, the paper can afford to seek out another several hundred readers -- people who will profit from our information even as they help us survive.

To *Newsweek* or *Time*, 50,000 letters is nothing. But to HCN it is a huge project, especially when undertaken on the usual shoestring. Logistics were fearsome. The envelopes, cards, and letters filled much of a two-car basement garage. And while previous mailings could be brought from the printer to Paonia in a car or two, this one required a truck. Not a pickup truck, but a real truck, one owned by a fruitgrower who takes his apples to Denver and Boulder and deadheads back, picking up loads where he can.

Stuffing and labelling the envelopes was not something that could be done by the staff of an evening or weekend. It took a crew of up to seven, working day after day, to get the job done. And there was, of course, no room in HCN's alley-like office, so the job was done in a staff member's home. It was an especially difficult time for circulation manager C.B. Elliott, since she had to keep up with her regular work and manage the crew a mile away.

As of now, all the envelopes are stuffed, 30,000 have been mailed (some, we know, to existing subscribers, but there is no reasonable cure for that), and the returns are flowing in. Circulation is at 4,700, and



Paul Murrill

each day's mail brings in 15 to 40 potential subscribers. We say "potential" because if the new readers are not pleased with HCN, they have the option of cancelling. The tension of managing the mailing is mostly over, but we are still wondering what the final result will be.

Those who do not regularly read the *New Yorker* should get the Feb. 24 and March 3 and 10 issues of that magazine. They contain a fine portrait of Wyoming geologist David Love written by John McPhee in his usual lucid and entertaining style. The fact that Love is one of HCN's original subscribers, and the fact that the third installment of the portrait mentions this paper, merely made the articles that much more enjoyable.

In *The Memory of Old Jack*, Wendell Berry's wonderfully drawn farmer tells people who have come to borrow something: "It's hanging." Jack may not have known on which wall it was hanging, but he knew it was not underfoot.

Now, thanks to Paonia woodworker Paul Murrill, the staff at HCN can also say, "It's hanging." Paul, who specializes in the making of doors, windows and cabinets for some of the more expensive homes in Aspen, did some *pro bono* work recently for HCN: a bookcase for back issues, a map shelf for our bulky three-dimensional topo maps, and numerous other shelves and corkboards.

The only trouble is that the shelves -- most of which have a fine satin finish -- are putting the rest of the office to shame.

--the staff

HOTLINE

The Cache la Poudre flows toward wildness

A proposal to designate the Cache la Poudre River Colorado's first wild and scenic river won committee approval yesterday and appears headed for quick floor action, reports the *Rocky Mountain News*. An omnibus wild and scenic river package that includes the Poudre and rivers in five other states was quickly passed by the House Interior Committee. Rep. Hank Brown, R-CO., introduced legislation last October to designate 75 miles of the Poudre River as part of the National Wild and Scenic River System. Starting at the river's source in Rocky Mountain National Park, 31 miles would be designated "wild" and 44 miles would be designated "recreational." Brown said the bill stipulates that existing water rights will not be affected, and future water-storage projects outside the designated segments will not be precluded.



Fishing on the Cache la Poudre

WESTERN ROUNDUP

A proposed powerline jolts New Mexico

Residents in north-central New Mexico are embroiled in the most divisive environmental controversy to touch the state since the Bisti Badlands debate.

Two New Mexico utilities propose to build a 50-mile-long, high-voltage powerline through the heart of the scenic tourist country north of Santa Fe. The new powerline would feed power to Los Alamos National Laboratory where new research projects relating to President Reagan's "Star Wars" missile defense are increasing power consumption.

The controversy started when the Bureau of Indian Affairs issued a draft environmental impact statement on the powerline last October. Two public hearings were offered and a month-long public comment period. Overflowing hearing chambers and angry questioning of BIA officials forced the agency to schedule more hearings and to triple the length of the public comment period.

Opponents of the powerline fear its 150-foot steel towers will mar the nearly pristine Jemez Mountains near Bandelier National Monument, setting a bad precedent for an area rich in archeological sites, wildlife and lands sacred to 16 different Indian Pueblos.

But most of the controversy centers on whether the powerline is needed. The Public Service Company of New Mexico claims the line is needed to complete its statewide grid of 345kv powerlines and to supplement smaller powerlines that feed power to Los Alamos lab. The utility warns that without the new powerline, known locally as the "Ole line," north-central New Mexico will experience power outages beginning next year. Critics point to a lack of documentation in the draft EIS and lack of outside evidence verifying a need for the powerline.

The draft EIS rejects nine alternatives to the new line, although BIA officials admit that both the alternatives and their defeating arguments were supplied by the utilities themselves. "We took their word for it that there is a need for this powerline," said the BIA's William Allen.

Good alternatives to the new powerline are rejected without explanation," said Don Hancock of Southwest Energy Research Associates. The final EIS needs to look very closely at whether this line is needed at all. The draft EIS did not take seriously our concerns about the basic need for the line."

Two possible routes are covered in the draft EIS. One would traverse the Jemez Mountains from the west, crossing the Valle Grande before passing Los Alamos and Santa Fe. The alternative cuts down through the populous Rio Grande River Valley over private and Pueblo Indian lands.

Ted Davis is president of a multicultural group recently formed to preserve the Jemez Mountains. Last month the group, Save the Jemez, asked the Bureau of Indian Affairs to revise or supplement its draft EIS and form a Blue Ribbon Committee to examine the need for the 345-kilovolt line.

Davis cited a 10,000-word critique of the draft analysis that was written for the Albuquerque-based group by

Amory Lovins, a utilities consultant and advocate of energy conservation. Lovins concluded in his study that the draft EIS ignored the best alternative, which was a low-cost strategy emphasizing efficiency and load management. He also said the draft was "grossly deficient" in demonstrating a need for the line, leaving him to conclude that the line was designed not for Los Alamos County, but for bulk transmission -- selling power outside the region.

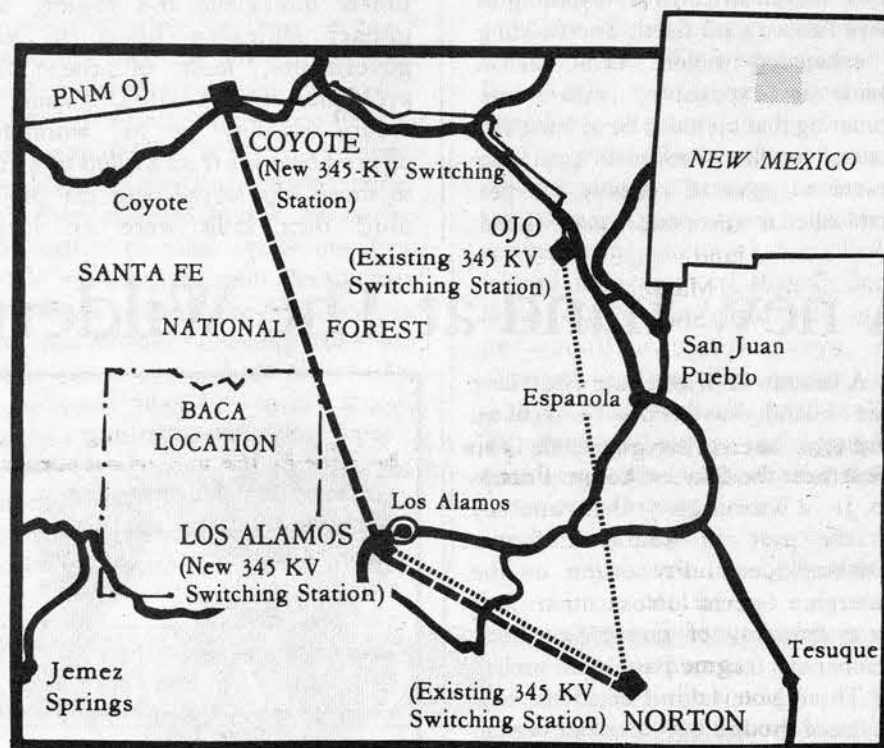
Federal officials are concerned about the impact of the powerline on threatened and endangered species' habitat. "The Jemez Mountains harbor some of the most important habitat for threatened and endangered species in the Southwest," says a Forest Service document responding to the powerline proposal. Four federal agencies -- U.S. Fish and Wildlife, Bureau of Land Management

and Bureau of Indian Affairs -- have all stated opposition to siting the powerline through the Jemez Mountains, primarily because of potential harm to wildlife habitat, recreation, and Indian lands.

"It is possible that the Jemez Mountains have the greatest concentration of significant archeological sites in North America," said William Sweetland, chief archeologist for Bandelier National Monument. "More than 8000 sites have been found in Bandelier's 23,000 acres and we've just begun to really look."

Save the Jemez can be reached at Box 4067, Albuquerque, NM 87196. Inquiries about the draft EIS can be made to William Allan, environmental protection specialist, Albuquerque office of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Box 8327, Albuquerque, NM 87198.

--Tom Ribe



Jackson digs in against oil

Anschutz Corp. of Denver is encountering stiff opposition from Jackson Hole, Wyoming, residents over the company's plan to drill a 5,000-foot oil and gas well in the Mosquito Creek area of the Bridger-Teton National Forest.

No new road construction would be required, but the newly formed Mosquito Creek Steering Committee says a successful wildcat well would lead to full-field development as it did at Exxon's Riley Ridge site. The Mosquito Creek area is popular with sportsmen and hikers, and is also part of the Palisades Wilderness Study Area designated by the Wyoming Wilderness Act of 1984. The Act specifically allowed for oil and gas exploration.

Bridger-Teton officials have indicated that if large amounts of oil and gas are found, the area may never become designated wilderness. According to the Steering Committee, there are 11,530 acres of land leased to four major oil companies in Mosquito Creek and all of the Palisades Wilderness Study Area is under lease.

The Steering Committee warns that the Anschutz operation will change the wilderness character of the Mosquito Creek area, increase heavy truck traffic, blight the scenic impact of Jackson Hole and increase crime.

At a recent Teton County Commissioners meeting, more than 45 residents protested the well. As a result, commissioners have asked the Forest Service to arrange a public hearing with Anschutz. Commissioner Leslie Peterson said residents are angry because public lands have been routinely leased for years without public input, so that now citizens feel compelled to oppose even single wells.

--Keith Waller

BARBS

It's not as efficient as war, but it will do until things pick up.

Secretary of Defense Casper Weinberger has decided to continue the military practice of selling cigarettes at up to a 35 percent discount at military PXs.

People can be rude.

Commenting on mounting opposition in the seven states chosen as possible sites for the nation's second nuclear waste dump, Department of Energy spokesman Brian Quirke told *Associated Press* that "people have let us know they don't particularly appreciate the bag of nuclear waste we are toting with us."

HOTLINE



Radiation Hot Shop at Idaho National Engineering Laboratory

TMI heads west

The melted core of the Three Mile Island nuclear reactor will soon be shipped piecemeal by train from Pennsylvania to the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory in eastern Idaho. Starting this May or June, and lasting until late 1987, some 40 radioactive shipments will roll across 10 states on their way to INEL. The reactor will be stored and studied at INEL until the Department of Energy finds a site for a permanent nuclear wastes dump. Reaction in Idaho to the nuclear transfer has been mixed. Some business people and politicians say it will bring an economic boost to the area, while environmentalists and anti-nuclear activists fear that Idaho might wind up as a de facto nuclear waste repository.

Another ski area

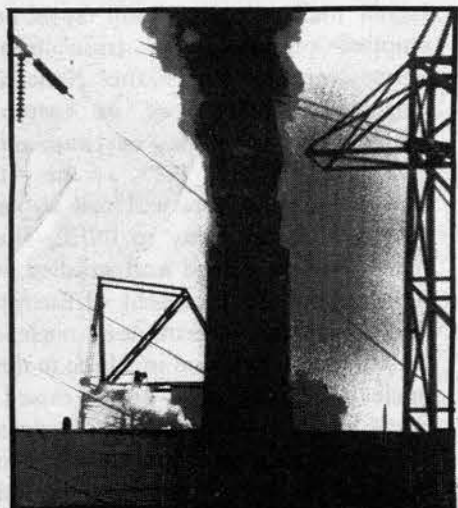
The U.S. Forest Service has set in motion the process which could lead to a \$100 million ski resort south and east of the busted mining town of Leadville, Colorado (*HCN*, 2/3/86). Forest Service Chief Max Peterson upheld Regional Forester Jim Torrence's decision that Quail Mountain should be studied for a ski resort. Quail Mountain is a 13,461-foot-high mountain overlooking Twin Lakes and east of Aspen over Independence Pass. The ski area would be outside the major ski corridor along Interstate 70, and would have to compete with it. The Quail Mountain Citizens Alliance, allied with the Colorado Wildlife Federation, and various individuals, had appealed Torrence's decision to Peterson and have vowed to watch the permitting process closely. Critics say the mountain doesn't have enough snow and have questioned the dependability of the developer. Colorado has several major ski area expansions in the works, including large ones at Vail and Snowmass (*HCN*, 12/23/85). In addition, the Adams Rib Ski Area development, outside of Eagle, which has Forest Service approval, has been standing still due to market conditions.

HOTLINE



Deadly quota

A recently released environmental impact statement by the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department puts a limit of 21 human-caused grizzly bear deaths per year. State biologists, working with the assumption that seven grizzly killings go unreported each year, have set a ceiling of 14 reported deaths, including those during the state's grizzly season. Even with 21 grizzly killings a year, wildlife officials expect an increase in the bear's population, which is now estimated to be between 356 and 549 bears. The EIS also recommends that no more than eight females be killed in a year, and that females with cubs and young bears be excluded from the hunting season. For a copy of the EIS, write to the Montana FWP Department, Wildlife Division, 1420 East Sixth Ave., Helena MT 59620.



A deteriorating nation

Environmental problems are generally getting worse, according to the National Wildlife Federation's Environmental Quality Index for 1986. Contaminated water heads the list, with 63 percent of rural residents drinking well water contaminated by uncontrolled drainage from agricultural land, construction sites and roadways. In other areas, leaking toxic waste dumps are the major dangers. The report also notes that wetlands are being destroyed at an estimated 350,000 acres a year, and that acid rain now threatens thousands of lakes and streams.

Agri-depression

Researchers at Colorado State University have discovered a potential link between organophosphate pesticides and neurological disorders such as depression, confusion and memory loss. The study was paid for by the Environmental Protection Agency and conducted by Eldon Savage and Thomas Keefe, professors of environmental health. Physiological and neurological functions of 100 people exposed to pesticides such as parathion and malathion were tested and compared to those of a control group of 100 people not exposed to these chemicals.

Wyoming's boom comes to an abrupt halt

Southwestern Wyoming's latest boom will end this summer, when 5,500 construction workers complete the first phase of Exxon's giant natural gas project near La Barge. The construction workers will be replaced by 200 permanent operating employees.

Exxon has permits to build the second phase of the \$2.2 billion project. But the giant firm announced March 19 that it had indefinitely delayed the second phase due to falling oil prices.

When the project goes into operation this fall, it will produce 480 million cubic feet of gas per year -- one-third natural gas, or methane, and two-thirds carbon dioxide. The natural gas will flow into a glutted market already suffering from what was once called a "bubble" of excess supplies, but which now appears to be a lake, or perhaps an ocean.

The carbon dioxide will be piped to Rangely in northwest Colorado to revive Chevron's faltering oil field, and to Bairol in central Wyoming to revive Amoco's oil field. The flooding of exhausted fields with carbon dioxide is expensive, with some estimating that oil must be at least \$20 a barrel for the process to pay. The present oil price of roughly \$15 per barrel killed the proposed phase II and

could conceivably affect phase I, although it is 80 percent complete.

Exxon's permits for phase II are good through 1988, and the firm presumably hopes that the market will come back before then. Environmentalists had participated in the permitting hearings in an attempt to minimize the project's emission of compounds of sulfur, which could cause acidification in the nearby Wind River Range. The project is an acid rain threat because the wells produce hydrogen sulfide, as well as methane and carbon dioxide.

Environmental and economic effects aside, the La Barge project indicates that Wyoming has learned how to do large projects without huge social disruptions. Southwest Wyoming was the scene of construction of the Jim Bridger Power Plant, which in the mid-1970s made Rock Springs a national symbol of corrupt, dissolute, unplanned Western boomtowns.

This time, with the help of worker camps, the busing of workers to towns throughout the region, and impact mitigation funds to local government, most of the 1970s problems were avoided. Exxon, to create stability in its workforce, offered bonuses from \$1,000 to \$3,000 to those who stayed with the project until their skills were no longer

needed or the project was complete. Those bonuses have now caused unrest, since many thought they were to receive them on March 1. Exxon disagrees and has not made the payments.

The large towns which have accommodated the project -- Rock Springs, Kemmerer, Green River -- had been hurting due to declines in the local economy and welcomed the influx of thousands of workers. It filled their empty apartments and trailer courts, and led to large jumps in retail sales. Local government, schools, police forces and departments of social services also received impact mitigation to help with the temporary need for services.

It was always known that the construction phase would end, but its demise this summer comes at a particularly bad time. A large part of the towns' income comes from sales tax, which will drop sharply with the departure of the construction workers. Another major source of income is the tax the state levies on oil and gas wells, and then partially distributes to towns. So the fall in oil and gas prices not only postponed phase II, but will also cut other aspects of the towns' income.

--Ed Marston

A new hand at The Wilderness Society

A veteran of Watergate and Three Mile Island has replaced William Turnage as president of The Wilderness Society. George Frampton, Jr., a Washington, D.C., attorney for the past 10 years, a former Assistant Special Prosecutor on the Watergate Special Prosecution Task Force from 1973 to 1975, and a member of a federal panel that probed the Three Mile Island accident, took charge of the 150,000-member organization on January 1, 1986.

The Wilderness Society under Turnage had been accused of an emphasis on lobbying at the Washington, D.C., level and of neglecting work at the grassroots. In a recent interview, Frampton said that a centralized approach served the environmental movement well in the early 1980s, when major battles were fought in the Congress over state wilderness bills.

But he says he now wants to see The Wilderness Society reach out to the field, acting as a resource for existing local and regional groups. "We can offer Washington, D.C., contacts, strong analysis and media capabilities. But the grassroots folks have detailed knowledge of the land. They're the ones who can invigorate the public. After all, they're the troops of this movement."

Along these lines, Frampton has set up a project with joint TWS/Washington Wilderness Coalition funding to work on forest plans in Washington state. And he sees more cooperative efforts ahead. The cooperation can be seen as a creative way to replace the TWS field staff which Turnage weakened in the 1970s (HCN, 8/5/85). TWS had been planning to open new offices in several Western locations, but those plans have been deferred until funding is secure.

Frampton has accelerated his group's emphasis on BLM wilderness,



George Frampton

especially in Utah, New Mexico and Oregon, as well as a major effort on the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Following the direction set by Turnage, Frampton says he'll continue to make National Forest planning the group's number one issue. TWS has started the National Forest Action Center, which will house a computerized data base with information on what national and local groups are doing on each forest.

"We want to make sure that every forest is covered when the time for appeals rolls around. Our shared data base will help groups know what positions have been taken in negotiations on these forest plans."

--Maggie Coon, Ed Marston

What's the opposite of chaperone?

On the premise that "night time is the right time," Wyoming Game and Fish Department officials tried pairing six captive black-footed ferrets after dark last week. But for the third week in a row, the masked animals showed no interest in mating. "In the wild at Meeteetse they are more active in the early hours of night," said Huey Dawson, manager of the G&F's Sybille wildlife research unit northeast of Laramie, where the four females are two males are being kept. "So we tried pairing them at night this week, but it didn't seem to help. Those young males don't seem to know what it's all about yet," Dawson said, "and the females apparently aren't in heat yet. It's getting a little discouraging, but we are just going to keep trying."

--Philip White



Black-footed ferret



Louisiana-Pacific violates no-smoking law

Louisiana-Pacific's waferboard factory in Olathe, Colorado, is still unable to meet state pollution standards. Built at a cost of \$13 million almost two years ago, the highly automated plant was almost shut down by the state last year.

Then, this March 5, the state Health Department's air pollution control division got tough again and revoked two of L-P's air emissions permits. L-P has appealed and is permitted to continue operating until a hearing is held this spring.

Scott Miller, the state's only inspector in western Colorado, compiled the evidence against L-P. "There are a lot of issues to cover, and I was tired of running over to L-P every six minutes," he says. Miller installed an automatic 8-millimeter camera across the highway from the plant to measure visible smoke from L-P's Konus wood-fired boiler. The camera took pictures every 40 seconds. Visible smoke indicated that pollution control equipment -- including a baghouse -- was being routinely bypassed.

During the 60 days the camera filmed, from mid-October to mid-December 1985, Miller reports that pollution control equipment was bypassed every day but three.

In no case did L-P, as required by law, inform the state within 10 hours afterward or the next working day to devise remedial action. In some cases the Konus boiler smoked for as much as a half-hour at a time, says Miller.

The second L-P permit in jeopardy is for the wood wafer-dryer, whose smoke emissions must be no more than 20 percent opacity under state law. Miller says L-P has "flunked two-thirds of the tests" he has given.

L-P operating manager Dewey Gierke says the company can't change two facts: "We've been out of compliance and we have adversely affected the air... Our credibility is not at a peak."

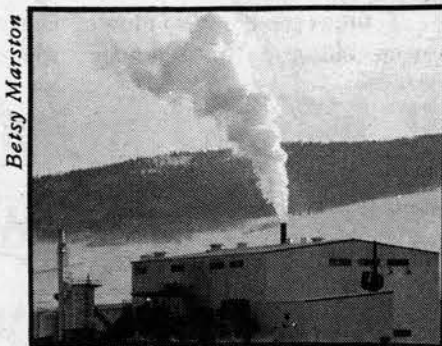
Gierke says that L-P hopes to limit recriminations and "move on from here" by switching to a new resin that won't irritate the 20 residents who live less than five miles from the factory. L-P will also add a more sophisticated "segmented cyclone" to clean up emissions from the Konus boiler, Gierke says.

L-P has recently hired Chuck Bray, a former air pollution control division compliance officer for Colorado, as a part-time consultant. On the job since February, Bray says his role is to help L-P deal with the state's regulations as they relate to the plant in Olathe. Bray says he is not involved with L-P's plant in Kremmling, Colorado, which is a twin to the Olathe factory.

In large part that is due to the "squeaky wheel syndrome," says Gierke. "A perceived problem is a problem whether it's there or not." Residents near the Kremmling plant have not been active complainants.

At L-P's permit revocation hearing last year (HCN, 9/30/85), a dozen neighbors to the Olathe plant testified that they suffered nausea, headaches and other physical symptoms from L-P's smoke. To gain clout, some neighbors joined the conservation coalition Western Colorado Congress, which has researched L-P's slow compliance record in other states, such as Wisconsin.

Gierke says once state approval comes through, a new resin, tested quietly this winter for three weeks, should eliminate odor and complaints.



L-P in Olathe

"By the time we're through, we'll have spent a million dollars on additional pollution controls," Gierke says. "The media never tells our side and we're not as communicative as we could be. That's our real problem."

WCC member Margaret Orjias, who lives less than a mile from the Olathe factory, says families near L-P have been L-P "guinea pigs" for two years. "Our life is based on where their logs are, how often they bypass pollution controls and how the wind is blowing," Orjias, who keeps a close watch on L-P, says she didn't notice any difference this January when the company secretly experimented with the new resin. "We were fortunate we had a mild winter with good wind direction," she says.

The state Health Department is now preparing a testing protocol for the diisocyanate resin, which is related to the chemical that killed or injured thousands in Bhopal, India. What makes the resin safe is its non-volatility, Gierke says. The chemical is "like Karo syrup" and does not react with air, he points out. The resin now used to seal 4-by-8 foot wood panels has a phenol-formaldehyde base.

--Betsy Marston

Wyoming senate votes no

The Wyoming Senate recently killed a resolution sponsored by Dubois Republican Bob Baker, chief forester for Louisiana-Pacific. He wanted the state to oppose any management plans that would establish a Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Baker's resolution charged that the Greater Yellowstone Coalition was trying to restrict public use on federal lands surrounding the park, thereby eliminating the concept of multiple use. Bob Anderson, executive director of the Coalition's alliance of 45 conservation groups, said the group supports multiple use as a way to achieve acceptable levels of all forest uses. Baker's resolution breezed through the House, with the first opposition coming on the third reading from Rep. Barbara Dobos, who said the bill addressed plans which have not yet been developed. In the Senate, the amended resolution was rejected 25-5 on its third reading. State Sen. John Turner said the Legislature was trying to dictate management decisions through the bill.



Second thoughts at Yellowstone

Officials at the National Park Service are having second thoughts about closing the popular Madison Junction Campground at Yellowstone National Park. Park officials had planned on closing the campground, which would have saved the park \$74,000 annually, to meet the across-the-board cuts imposed by Gramm-Rudman. Park Service spokesman George Berklacy said that the park may "re-program" or divert funds from other areas such as construction projects, to keep the campground open. A week after this announcement, Interior Secretary Donald Hodel said that all stories about facilities scaling back were "politically motivated." Hodel told the *Denver Post* no camp grounds or other facilities would close. "If you're hearing that, you're hearing speculation or rumor."

BARBS

Maybe we'll pass on the sushi.

Japanese doctors say sushi eaters may contract roundworms. The worms can be removed with forceps on the end of an instrument stuck down the patient's throat and esophagus into the stomach.

BULLETIN BOARD

RECREATION HEARING IN DENVER

The President's Commission on Americans Outdoors will hold a hearing in Denver May 14 in Supreme Court chambers at the state capitol. The focus of this tenth hearing in a nationwide series is the appropriate recreational role of multiple-use lands. Sally Ranney, head of the American Wilderness Alliance and one of the 15 commission members, will chair the meeting, which may still have slots open for those wishing to testify. Interested people should act quickly. Contact the Commission at Box 18457, 111 20th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, or call 202/634-7310 before the April 8 registration deadline. Correspondence or telephone calls should be addressed to Day Lohmann, John Lugar or Ron Fowler and should describe your area of interest, the group you represent and issues you wish to address. The Commission has also requested written testimony in the form of problem-solving concept papers. Contact the Commission for format and deadline.

A WELL-USED FOREST

The Wasatch-Cache National Forest close to Salt Lake City, Utah, tells us it was once again the top national forest in the country in terms of recreation use. Ranking second during fiscal year 1985 was Angeles National Forest in Pasadena, California. The most popular activity in the Wasatch-Cache was camping, followed by dispersed recreation such as hiking, fishing, hunting, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. Driving for scenic pleasure was third in popularity and downhill skiing was fourth. Recreation use is measured by combining people and hours; a recreation visitor day equals one person visiting for 12 hours or two people visiting for six hours each.

SUMMER COURSES IN THE ARTS

The Anderson Ranch Arts Center in Snowmass Village near Aspen will offer a variety of courses again this summer. The award-winning institution, which was once a sheep ranch, will offer instruction in black-and-white and color photography, ceramics, wood working, furniture making, print making and painting. The instructors include Robert Gilka on photojournalism, Val Cushing on pottery, Jens Morrison on low-fire construction, Matt Christie on basic lithography, Judy Dater on the nude portrait and self-portrait and Victor Babu on porcelain. For information, contact the Anderson Ranch, Box 5998, Snowmass Village, CO 81615 (303/923-3181).



YELLOWSTONE'S PRIVATE ACREAGE

Two small tracts of private land within Yellowstone National Park now have a draft Land Protection Plan. One 16.4-acre parcel is owned by the state of Montana and was once part of a state school section; the other 1.6-acre tract is a cemetery that contains 100 to 200 graves, some nearly 100 years old. Both tracts are near the park's northern border. The draft plan suggests no federal action for the cemetery site, but recommends acquiring the Montana school tract through a land exchange since the state cannot restrict use of the land. Copies of the draft plan are available from the Superintendent's office, Box 168, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190.

GETTING TO KNOW THEM

Trips are being arranged by the Colorado Adopt-a-BLM wildland program to monitor and get to know areas being considered for Bureau of Land Management wilderness designation. The first trip is scheduled for April 12 and 13 in the Black Ridge Wilderness Study Area west of Grand Junction, an area known for its high concentration of natural arches and large canyons. It is also home to mountain lion, black bear and eagles. For more information on this or other trips scheduled later contact Sharyl Kinnear at Box 204, Grand Junction, CO 81502 (303/245-1191), or Dick Guadagno at 303/861-1345 in Denver.

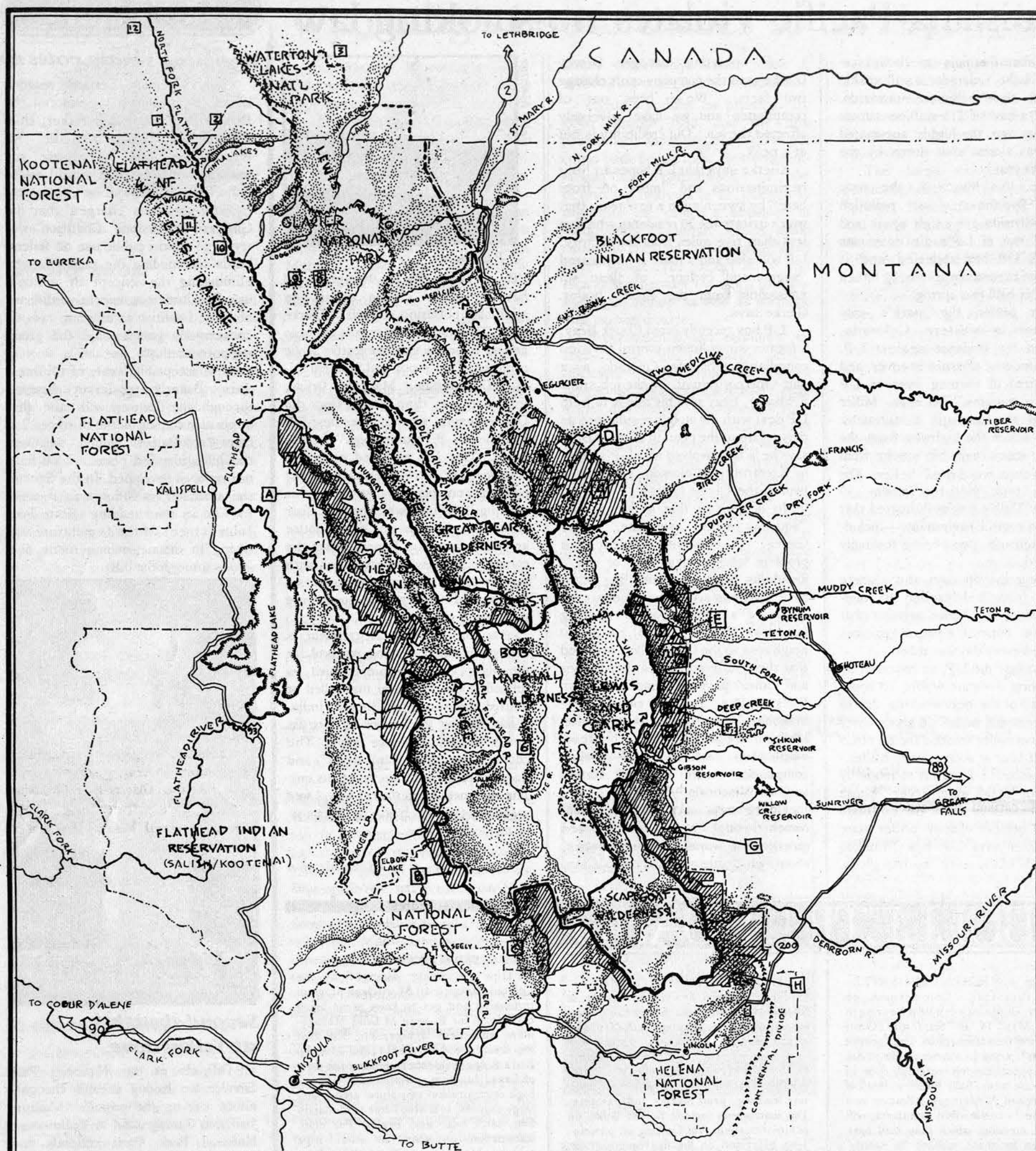
REFUGE REVIEW

As required by Congress, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is preparing a new environmental impact statement on the operation of the National Wildlife Refuge System. Written comments are due by May 3 to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Room 2343, Main Interior Building, 18th and C Streets NW, Washington, D.C. 20240. For Western states, a public meeting will be held March 20 at 7 p.m. at the Stapleton Plaza Hotel, Denver, Colorado. For more information, call Gerald Nugent at 303/236-8150.

AUDUBON IN WYOMING

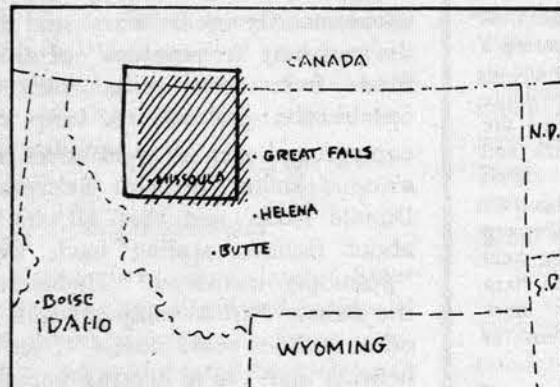
National Audubon Society has its catalog ready for this summer's courses. In the West the setting is 7,500-foot Torrey Valley in Wyoming's Wind River Mountains near the town of Dubois. Courses include field ecology, nature photography and wilderness research backpack trips. Backpackers do everything from bird banding to mammal and bird counting. For more information, write Audubon at 4150 Darley Ave., Suite 5, Boulder, CO 80303.

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THE GLACIER/BOB MARSHALL COUNTRY

LOCATION MAP



SCALE IN MILES



	MOUNTAINS		PROPOSED WILDERNESS		DESIGNATED WILDERNESS		INTERNATIONAL BOUNDARY
	LAKES AND RIVERS		NATIONAL PARK		INDIAN RESERVATION		NATIONAL FOREST

ISSUES AFFECTING AREA

- 1 PROPOSED CABIN CREEK MINE
- 2 ONGOING SHELL GAS EXPLORATION
- 3 PROPOSED SHELL GAS EXPLORATION NEXT TO WATERTON
- 4 HALL CREEK GAS EXPLORATION PROPOSAL-BADGER/2 MEDICINE
- 5 OTHER PROPOSED GAS WELLS ON FRONT ROADLESS & STATE WILDLIFE AREAS

BOB MARSHALL WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT

- 7 LOGGING AND ORV'S IN THE SWAN RANGE
- 8 GLACIER BUDGET CUTBACKS
- 9 ROAD WIDENING PROPOSED IN GLACIER PARK
- 10 PRIVATE LAND DEVELOPMENT
- 11 LOGGING IN THE WHITEFISH RANGE
- 12 CANADIAN'S MASSIVE LOGGING OPERATIONS

PROPOSED WILDERNESS AREAS

- SWAN RANGE
- A SWAN CREST-JEWEL BASIN
- B SWAN FRONT
- C MONTURE CREEK
- ROCKY MOUNTAIN FRONT
- D BADGER-TWO MEDICINE
- E TETON RIVER HIGH PEAKS AND CHOTEAU MOUNTAIN
- F DEEP CREEK
- G RENSIAW MOUNTAIN
- H FALLS CREEK

Glacier...

(Continued from page 1)

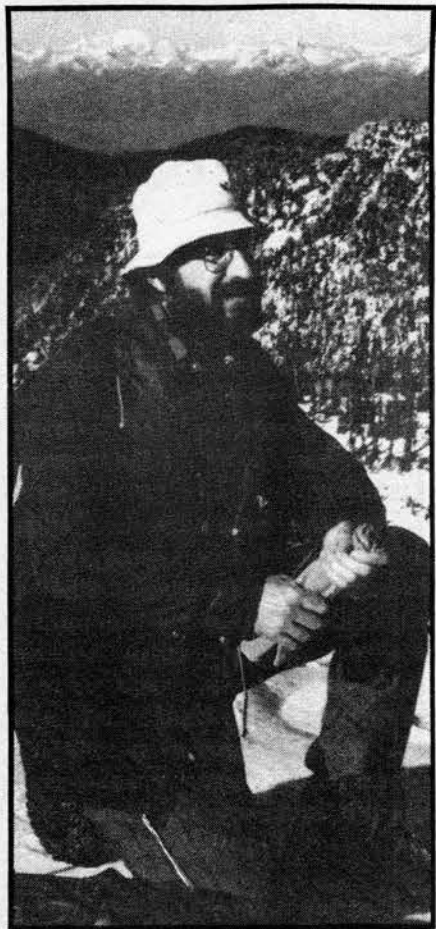
which spend part of the year outside the park, are vulnerable to Canadian coal mines and logging, while some of the Bob's grizzlies must dodge sheepmen's bullets when the bears venture outside the wilderness.

Management of the Glacier-Bob Marshall country differs from Yellowstone because it is affected by Canada. International squabbles can hamper resource management decisions on the American side. For example, some critics of Canada's proposed Cabin Creek coal mine (HCN, 8/5/85) say the Canadians would be less likely to build it if the Reagan administration would help strengthen the Canadian dollar or curtail Midwest air pollution, which is said to be responsible for Canada's acid rain. The Cabin Creek proposal is just eight miles northwest of Glacier Park, on a tributary of the North Fork of the Flathead River.

Conservationists and land managers also say wildlife populations in the Glacier-Bob Marshall country are healthier than in the Yellowstone system. In terms of endangered species, the Northern Montana area's grizzlies are doing pretty well. Their population is estimated at 600 to 800, and some biologists say it is increasing. The gray wolf is making a modest comeback around Glacier (HCN, 2/17/86), peregrine falcons are sighted on the Flathead Forest and bald eagles have become a common sight in the park and Flathead Valley in the fall. There have also been recent, unconfirmed reports of woodland caribou, the nation's rarest mammal, in the area.

Over at Yellowstone, conservationists fight for a dwindling grizzly population, squabble with Idaho politicians over wolf recovery and scramble for a politically palatable solution to the park's elk and bison overpopulation. One veteran Montana conservationist calls Yellowstone and its problems "a national tragedy," and says the Glacier-Bob Marshall country "is our absolute rock-bottom chance to manage a large wild area right."

But managing the area "right"



Jasper Carlton

James R. Conner

When lumped together, Glacier Park and the nearby Bob Marshall Wilderness are at the hub of one of the West's largest wild areas. In all, the Glacier-Bob Marshall country covers an area the size of Connecticut.

may be a Herculean task. Conservationists cite the Cabin Creek mine, logging in the Flathead's North Fork, off-road vehicle use in the Swan Range and oil and gas development on the Rocky Mountain Front as impacts that must be studied cumulatively to manage the Glacier-Bob Marshall as a system. To accomplish this, however, a broad spectrum of agencies and conservationists must share common goals.

Within the loose boundary description of conservationists, the Glacier-Bob Marshall country includes two national parks (Glacier and Canada's Waterton Lakes), five national forests (Flathead, Kootenai, Lewis and Clark, Lolo, Helena), Bureau of Land Management lands, Canadian Forest Service holdings, the Blackfeet and Confederated Salish/Kootenai Reservations, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks wildlife areas and thousands of acres of private land.

A bundle of agencies share an active role in the area, such as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bonneville Power Administration, Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Reclamation, Environmental Protection Agency, at least four Montana state agencies, the International Joint Commission (which oversees boundary water disputes), and the United Nations, which has designated Glacier and Waterton parks as Biosphere Reserves.

But unlike the Yellowstone ecosystem, the area has no national constituency or large coalition to push for its integrated management; instead there is a slew of loosely affiliated, backyard conservation groups doing most of the environmental watchdogging. That may soon change.

As chairman of the recently formed Committee for the Glacier-Bob Marshall Ecosystem, environmental activist Jasper Carlton envisions managing the giant area on an ecology first, economics second basis. Referring to the wildlife-rich area as "the Serengeti Plains of North America," Carlton says that the Glacier-Bob Marshall country is ecologically intact, but "its genetic integrity is rapidly being chipped away." He blames fragmented agency management and what he calls the Forest Service's reluctance to recognize the area as more important for wildlife than development.

Carlton says he doesn't want to shut off Forest Service development, but claims if land management were done on an ecosystem basis, with full compliance with federal laws, the area's ecology would only be slightly

affected. He says his group will act as consultant and liaison for local conservation groups, tying them into the ecosystem concept.

This winter, Dr. Charles Jonkel, a University of Montana biologist and bear researcher, began organizing an international coalition dedicated to the preservation of Glacier and Waterton Lakes national parks. He says integrated management of the parks and adjoining areas is necessary because they are recognized by the international community as outstanding natural areas through designation as UNESCO Biosphere Reserves.

At a recent hearing in Canada, Jonkel said the concept of an international coalition was well received, and he adds that it would dovetail with the objectives of Jasper Carlton's committee. Officials don't necessarily agree.

During a recent interview, Flathead National Forest Supervisor Ed Brannon said the Glacier-Bob Marshall ecosystem Carlton speaks of "is an interesting metaphor, but doesn't exist."

Brannon says his forest, a major component of both Carlton's and Jonkel's management proposals, already coordinates plans with the Park Service and other agencies, and that the park's welfare is always a priority in his decision-making. He says

integrated management of such a large area as proposed by Carlton is unnecessary and improbable.

Alan O'Neill, acting superintendent of Glacier National Park, says he likes the idea of integrated management and considers it one of the biggest challenges in Glacier's future. O'Neill lauds the cooperation he gets from the Flathead Forest, but says cooperative management agreements with private landowners are a current priority. With the 17,000 acres of privately owned land on the park's rural western boundary, O'Neill says incompatible development there could destroy the genetic connection for wildlife migrating to and from Forest Service and park lands.

Although integrated management is the ultimate dream of conservationists for the Glacier-Bob Marshall country, they currently attack issues on a piecemeal basis. The hottest issues include:

The North Fork of the Flathead

John Frederick, the owner of a small hostel in Polebridge and chairman of a local conservation group, called the North Fork Preservation Association, says the Cabin Creek mine is the biggest threat to the North Fork and park resources. As proposed, it would cover 6.5 square miles, produce 2.2 million tons of coal

(Continued on page 10)

Appeals flood the Flathead

The Flathead National Forest in Montana's Glacier National Park country may be setting a record for appeals. So far, there are 39 separate appeals of the just-completed 50-year management plan. The plan, which was begun six years ago, charts direction on the 2.3 million-acre forest. It is the first plan to be completed in the Forest Service's Northern Region.

Thirty-seven of the appeals are from conservation groups or individuals, most of them local residents, says Flathead Forest Planner Robert Hensler. The other two appeals are from timber industry groups.

Conservationists challenge the plan's wilderness allocations and grizzly management proposals, while timber groups appeal for more tree-cutting than the plan now allows. Conservation groups such as the Flathead chapter of the Montana

Wilderness Association want the plan's proposed 98,000 acres of new wilderness to be increased to 240,000 acres. Other appeals ask for better protection of endangered species, old growth trees and bull trout. The Montana Wilderness Association says the wilderness addition can be made without hurting the local timber industry.

Timber companies say the proposal to cut one billion board feet over the next decade is inadequate. They want a 30 to 40 percent increase.

The 39 appeals are being reviewed by Forest Service Chief Max Peterson, although much of the legwork is being done by Flathead forest personnel. If any or all appeals are denied it is possible that final resolution of a management plan may come to a court room.

--Bruce Farling

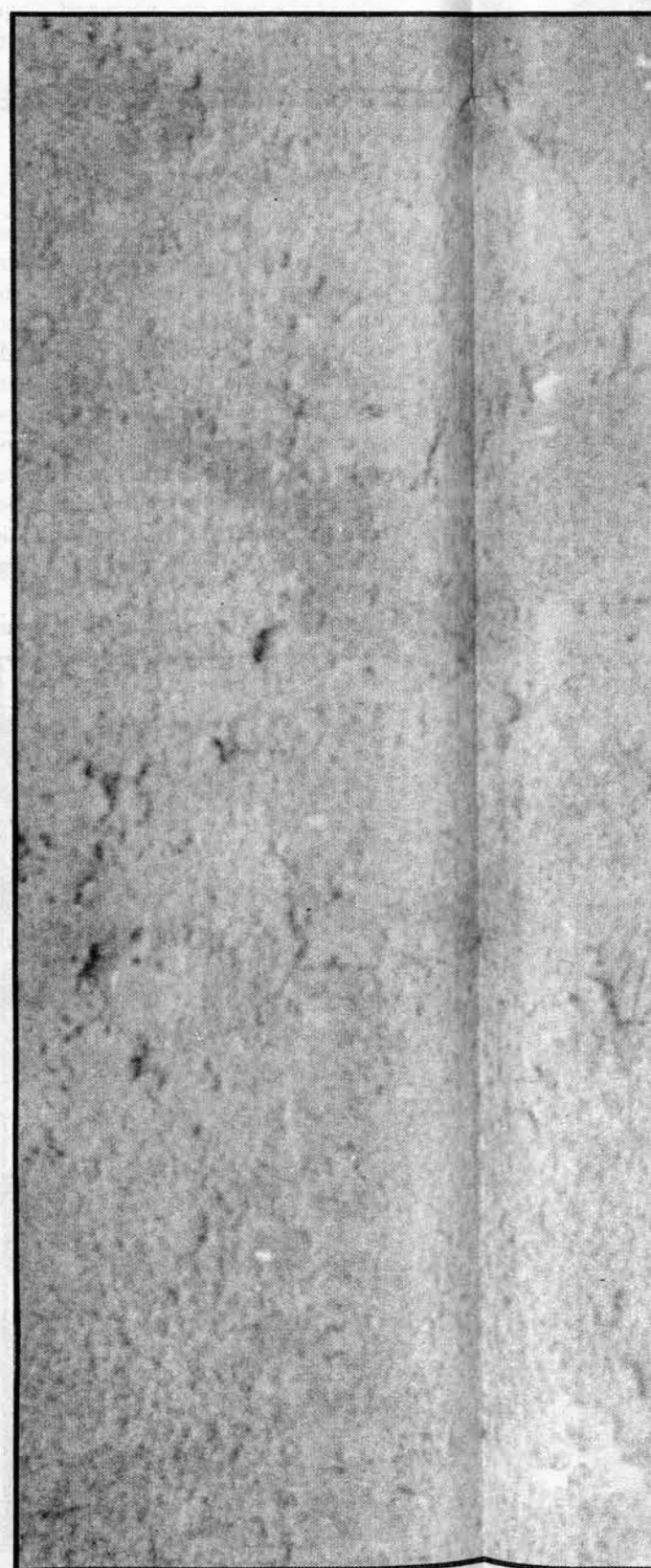
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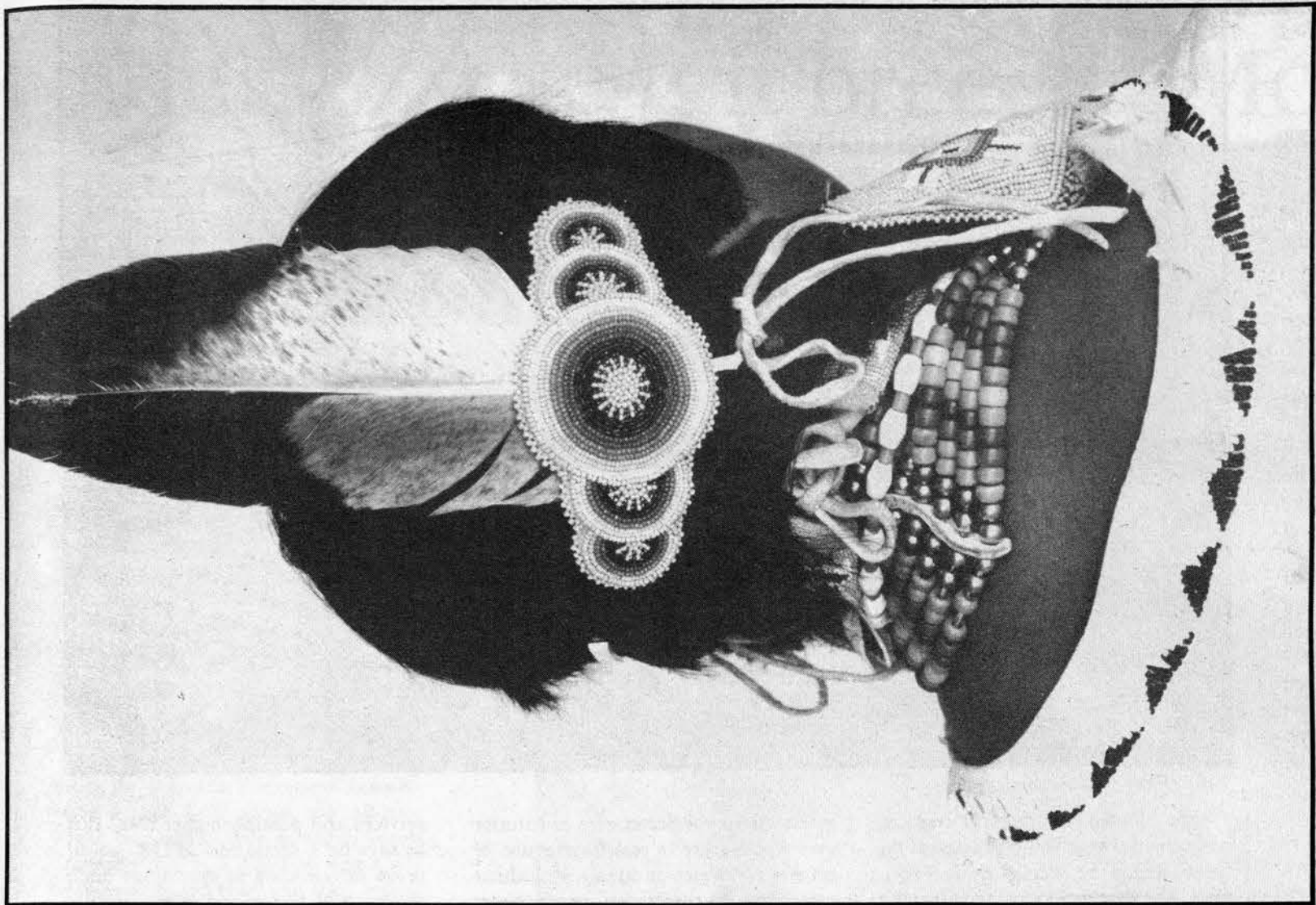


John Running



Through the eyes of





Photos, clockwise from lower left: Sierra Tarahumara, Mexico; Assiniboine/Cree traditional dancer, Fort Belknap, Montana; Billy Young Pine of the Blood Tribe, Standoff, Alberta; Shoshone girl, Wind River Reservation, Fort Washakie, Wyoming.

Photographer John Running lives in Flagstaff, Arizona. Some of these photos are from his book *Honor Dance*, published by the University of Nevada Press.



Glacier...

(Continued from page 7)

annually for 21 years, and bring in 500 people to the wild, sparsely populated area.

Frederick says the mine would destroy the North Fork's rural ambience as well as impact grizzly, wolf, elk and trout populations. Currently the project is under review by an international commission (HCN, 4/1/85), but Frederick says "it has essentially been approved in principle by the Canadian government."

Frederick and his wife, Sharon Constantino, have bought stock in Rio Algom, the mine's sponsor, so they can lobby against the mine at stockholders meetings. He says they have been "received very politely" at the annual Toronto meetings and last year mustered 1.6 million of 31 million share-votes against the mine. "We'll definitely be going back to Toronto this year," Frederick says. Recently, however, Frederick was told the mine issue would not be allowed on the ballot.

Frederick and other conservationists also monitor Flathead Forest timber sales and roadbuilding in the North Fork. They are currently negotiating with the Forest Service to alter a large sale in the Whale Creek drainage, which Frederick and some biologists say is the North Fork's most productive bull trout spawning area.

Because private land in the North Fork is valuable winter range, local conservationists and landowners are developing a land use plan addressing subdivisions. With the help of the Flathead Forest, a portion of the area's 400 landowners have agreed in principle to limit development. Flathead superintendent O'Neill hopes that the fragile coalition can hammer out a final plan addressing his concerns for the park's wildlife that use private land.

The Swan Range and Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex

Running 100 miles from Columbia Falls south to the Blackfoot Valley, the Swan Range forms the western wall of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. Here, environmental disputes revolve around wilderness designation for Swan Crest and Swan Front roadless areas, off-road vehicle activity in grizzly habitat, and logging in sensitive wildlife and fishery areas.

Glacier gets a new superintendent

GLACIER NATIONAL PARK, Mont. -- H. Gilbert Lusk has been appointed the 17th superintendent of Glacier National Park by Park Service Director William Penn Mott.

Like his predecessor Robert Haraden, Lusk comes to Glacier from the Big Bend National Park in Texas, where he has been superintendent since 1981. At 42, Lusk will be one of the youngest superintendents of a flagship park.

"I have never visited Glacier," he said, "but it's a magnificent resource. There are a few parks you feel like you're working your whole life to get to, and Glacier is one of those."

Lusk was the first superintendent of Wolf Trap Farm Park for the Performing Arts near Washington, D.C. Born in Jersey City, New Jersey,



Swan Range, Montana

The Montana Wilderness Association proposes over 160,000 acres of the Swan Range be designated wilderness. The Forest Service recommends 75,000, and the Montana delegation in its on-again, off-again attempts to package wilderness legislation, proposes even less. Resolution awaits passage of a wilderness bill -- a prospect conservationists hold little hope for in 1986.

In the Northern Swan Range, the Swan View Coalition, a local conservation group, appealed an off-road vehicle race that has been held since the early 1970s, in what coalition spokesman Keith Hammer calls critical grizzly habitat. The appeal, which was recently rejected by Regional Forester James Overbay, is a sore point between Hammer and Flathead Supervisor Ed Brannon. Brannon says the appeal was moot because the 1986 race is on hold until his forest and a task force of locals decide how the Northern Swan will be used for recreation in the future. Hammer is pressing for an administrative decision mandating that the race be moved if it is held again. He cites support for a race relocation from state biologists, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the local Forest Service biologist.

Hammer says his group's next step is probably court. On March 11, the Swan View Coalition filed a notice of

intent to sue the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture to restrict the use of off-road vehicles in areas of habitat critical to the threatened grizzly bear. The coalition charges that the ORV race forces grizzlies with cubs to "compete with screaming motorcycles for use of the only snow-free habitat during the critical spring periods."

In the Bob Marshall complex, which is a combination of the Great Bear, Scapegoat and Bob Marshall wildernesses, controversy is brewing over the Forest Service's new wilderness management program called Limits of Acceptable Change. Proposed as a way to identify and eliminate unacceptable impacts in wilderness, LAC, after two years of extensive public participation, is drawing criticism from user groups such as commercial outfitters. They tend to see the proposal as an attempt to limit their use while allowing private parties in the wilderness more liberal access.

The Parks

The biggest issue in Glacier Park is budget cuts. Acting Superintendent O'Neill says because of the Gramm-Rudman law, Glacier will have to pare \$290,000 from its operating budget of \$4.9 million. He says it can be done without gutting the park's programs, but the public should expect reduced

services and possibly higher fees. But he says he's afraid cuts in 1987 could prove devastating to operations such as seasonal hiring and interpretative services. Grizzly bear management will stay at the same level as last year, thanks to \$100,000 from a National Park Service special fund.

In Canada's Waterton Lakes National Park, the possibility of nearby oil and gas drilling worries both Canadian and American conservationists. The Alberta Wilderness Association and Charles Jonkel oppose a proposed Shell Canada well on Waterton's fringes because they say it conflicts with park values. Jonkel says the cumulative impacts of the drilling will adversely affect grizzlies, bighorn sheep and wolves. Other critics claim that the area's natural gas contains hydrogen sulfides at levels dangerous to wildlife and people if a well blows. They point to a well-blowout west of Edmonton several years ago which sent fumes hundreds of miles south. That, they warn, could happen to Waterton.

Glacier Resource Manager Gary Gregory says we must remember that the area is a unique international resource. "Glacier and Waterton are not Chugwater, Wyoming," he says.

□

Bruce Farling is an HCN correspondent in Missoula, Montana. These articles were paid for by the High Country News Research Fund.

Lusk was raised in then-rural northern New Jersey and also near Abilene, Texas.

He holds a degree in history from Gettysburg College in Pennsylvania, with minors in sociology and anthropology.

Lusk began his Park Service career while still a teenager, as a student trainee at Castillo De San Marcos National Monument in Florida. The Glacier superintendency is a GS-15 post with a salary ranging from \$52,000 to \$56,000.

Lusk's appointment is effective March 30, although he said he plans to visit other Western parks while en route to Glacier and will probably arrive on the job in mid-April.

--Don Schwennesen

Sierra View Coalition, Inc.



Motorcycles start a 12.7-mile race in critical grizzly spring habitat.

A feisty, true-grit breed in Montana

by Bruce Farling

One thing Northwest Montana conservationists share with their counterparts elsewhere is an inordinate fondness for paper. Ask Keith Hammer of the Swan View Coalition about his off-road vehicles versus grizzly battles and you're likely to get bombarded with legal briefs, affidavits and reams of memos.

If you happen to be having dinner with John Frederick of the North Fork Preservation Association and mention an interest in local land use planning, be prepared for cold mashed potatoes. He'll jump up, drag in cardboard boxes crammed with papers, furtively flip through them to find some obscure document, then expound on its importance as you spill gravy on copies of an old timber sale appeal. And, don't ever, ever, in a discussion with the Montana Wilderness Association's Dick Kuhl about the all-time best National League baseball team, casually slip in a question about the Flathead Forest plan, and then expect to settle the who's better -- Stan Musial or Henry Aaron -- debate. Kuhl will immediately focus on roadbuilding economics -- all backed up by the volumes of documents he can produce from the catacombs of his basement.

Regardless of what side of an environmental dispute you're on, you can't help but admit that these guys know their stuff. And there seems to be plenty more like them in Northwest Montana.

In the communities surrounding Glacier National Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness there are at least 25 backyard conservation groups working on public land issues. It's just a matter of time before some bored graduate student in sociology or statistics writes a thesis on the population dynamics of environmentalists, and finds that Northwest Montana has the highest density of conservation groups in the Rockies.

Detecting new territory for exploitation, other researchers will confine the work: carrying capacity of given areas for conservationists will be debated and researchers will analyze their eating, drinking and reproductive habits. Conservationist habitat will be mapped through satellite technology (leading to the discovery that they spend enormous amounts of time working in apartment kitchens, miniscule "offices" and seedy bars). Dick Kuhls and Keith Hammers will be probed, prodded and radio-collared. Researchers will become famous and write stories for *National Geographic* magazine.

Some, however, might discard scientific convention and look at these conservationists as dedicated individuals. As in so many Western states, grass-root conservationists in Northwest Montana fit no ready-made mold. They are teachers, loggers, mill-workers, part-time plumbers, seasonal and permanent Forest Service employees and unemployed jacks-of-all-trades. A few have anarchist tendencies -- a few are Republicans.

Some receive a salary for their conservation work; most have modest to nonexistent incomes. They are not the mythical

wealthy, elitist backpacker "from somewhere else" bent on locking up valuable natural resources. They are next-door neighbors. Many are community activists. Instead of bowling on Wednesday nights, for some reason they prefer reading environmental impact statements or writing letters to Sen. John Melcher, D-Mont.

Although a handful are doctors or lawyers, professionals are rare. Many moved to Montana for its environment. A significant number have lived in the state all their lives. It's a familiar pattern found in other Western states.

Grass-root conservationists are beyond stereotyping. One thing is for certain: though they don't often get the credit (or criticism) afforded the professionals in the national environmental groups, they are the people who make the whole movement tick.

Jasper Carlton, a Flathead Valley resident, has been categorized in local papers as "one of those elitists from elsewhere." Some timber industry folks see him as an environmental gunslinger brought into the Flathead to "clean up town," after which he'll ride off in search of another environmental shootout.

Looking at the particulars, this Clint Eastwood image almost fits. Carlton was involved in local environmental issues on the Oregon coast in the 1970s, then moved to Northern Idaho, where he gained a reputation as a sometimes controversial champion for the woodland caribou. He was instrumental in getting a reluctant Interior Secretary James Watt to list the species as endangered, then packed up his six-guns and landed in the Flathead Valley.

Additionally, way back in the fuzzy cheeked days of the environmental movement, he battled the Tennessee Valley Authority over the welfare of a nondescript little fish -- the snail darter. Some of his Montana critics

derisively resurrect his involvement in this famous case. Despite the criticism, Carlton still speaks of "saving the little critters, such as the northern bog lemming and the pygmy shrew." And he says he's now in the Flathead for good.

Carlton and Keith Hammer spend a lot of time battling the Flathead National Forest: more specifically its supervisor Ed Brannon, Jr. They claim Brannon deliberately withholds information needed to monitor the Forest's management actions. They can produce plenty of documentation to support their case, but Brannon says their complaints are groundless and that he must draw lines on information requests based on how much time and money he has. He says the two conservationists are "very disruptive."

Although in most areas Forest Service-conservationist disputes are usually limited to administrative channels, with both sides entering and exiting the ring shaking hands (sometimes reluctantly), the differences between Brannon and Carlton/Hammer looks more like a bitter, personal brawl -- one that has the potential to damage public process on the Flathead Forest.

Brannon refuses to bargain with the two, and they in turn plan to take some of his management decisions to court, or possibly Congress.

Another conservationist Brannon lumps with Carlton and Hammer is Jim Conner, chairman of the Flathead Group Sierra Club. He says Brannon's clamp-down on information "has poisoned the whole atmosphere." Brannon disagrees, saying the three conservationists "are not in the mainstream" and represent the interests of only a few. Conner disagrees, citing the hundreds of members in his group as well as Hammer's and other local organiza-

tions. He adds he would prefer to work cooperatively with the Forest Service.

Despite their segmentation and different approaches, Northwest Montana conservationists seem to be effective. Because of a lawsuit Conner won in Federal court, the Forest Service must now analyze the cumulative effects of oil and gas leasing. The dogged work of Kuhl, Frederick and others has resulted in a Flathead Forest Plan that more thoroughly addresses their concerns for grizzlies than what was originally proposed.

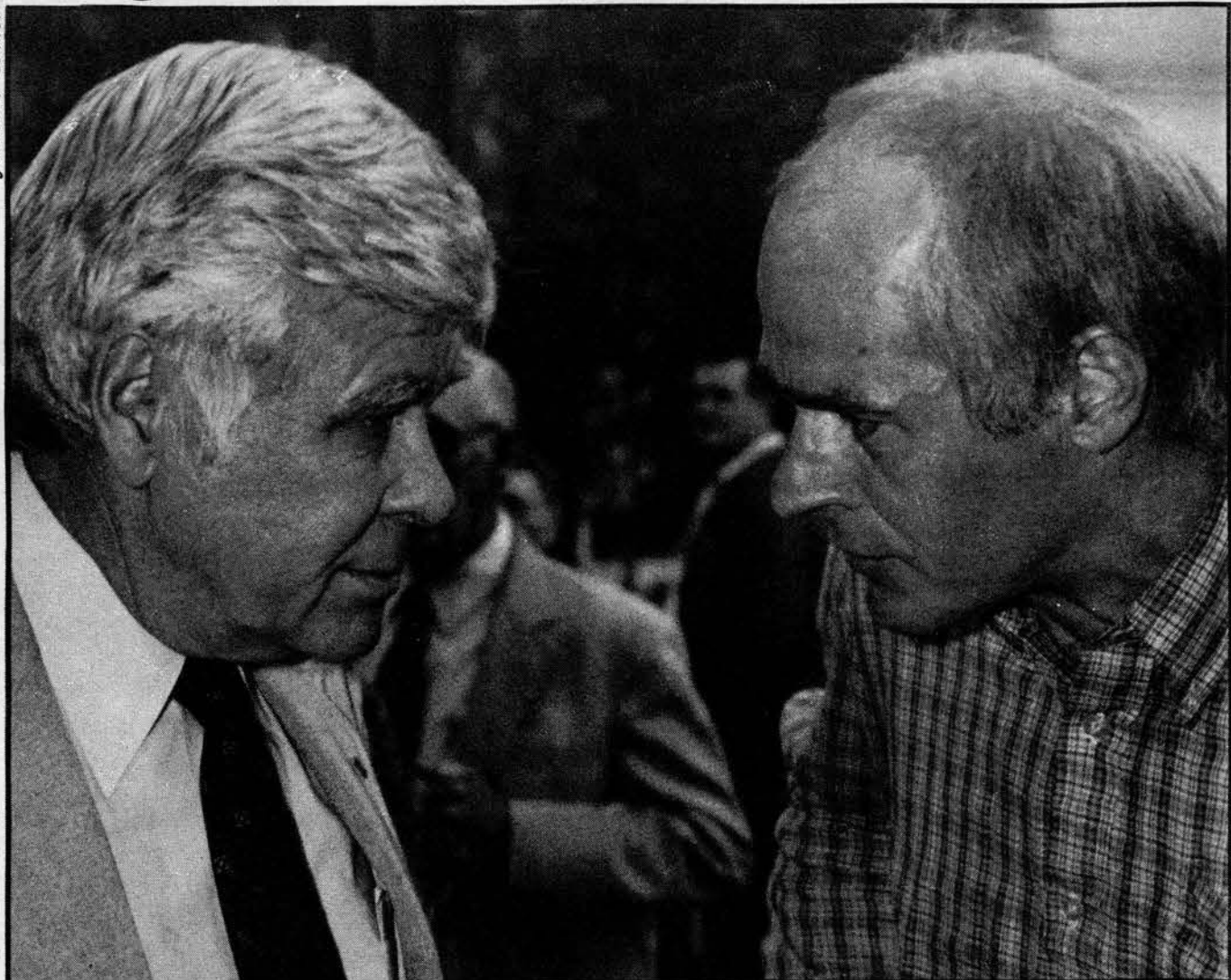
Over in East Glacier, on the Rocky Mountain Front, Lou Bruno, a teacher and representative of the Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance, has been instrumental in temporarily halting oil and gas leasing in the wildlife-rich Two Medicine drainage.

Northwest Montana environmental issues have also involved the well-known bear biologist Charles Jonkel and biologist/author Douglas Chadwick. Both attempted to get the Interior Department to list the caribou as endangered in Montana.

Glacier Park issues are monitored by Elaine and Art Sedlack of West Glacier. Art is a folk hero of sorts because of an incident some years ago when he was Park Ranger. Frustrated by the illegal antics of an outlaw snowmobiler, Sedlack, a proponent of vehicular capital punishment, executed the offending man's machine with a blast from his Service revolver. This raised a flap with both snowmobilers and the Park Service and led to the Montana Wilderness Association creating an annual award in his name.

In Kalispell, Jasper Carlton and others have opened an office. That they are effective may be measured by the building's owners' comments when told of Carlton's line of work. He gravely asked the conservationist: "We're not going to get bombed, are we?"

James R. Conner



Conservationist Richard Kuhl, right, speaking with Montana Sen. John Melcher.

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Oil men stake out the Rocky Mountain Front

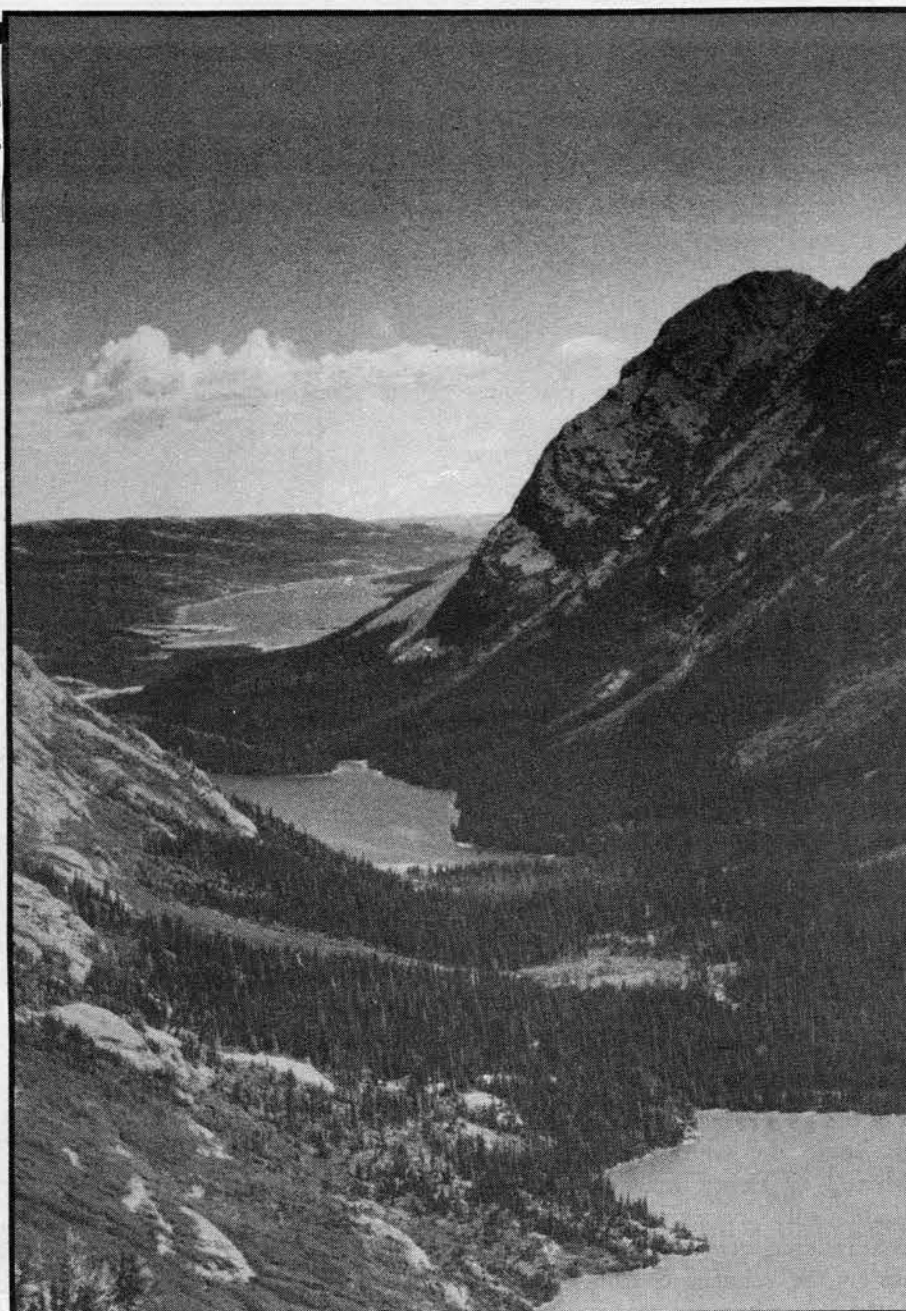
by Mollie Matteson

Controversy over oil and gas development in a pristine area of the northern Rockies is heating up. The 103,000-acre Badger-Two Medicine area of the Lewis and Clark National Forest is part of the Rocky Mountain Front of Montana -- a slender ribbon of rugged country where the mountains rocket up from the high plains. A thousand-foot limestone escarpment stretches more than a hundred miles from Roger's Pass near Lincoln, north to Glacier National Park. The Bob Marshall Wilderness is its western neighbor, and to the east the shortgrass plains roll and dip to the horizon.

On December 21, 1983, a brief announcement in the morning paper jolted east Front residents wide

awake. The Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management were sponsoring a public hearing on a proposed drilling in the adjacent Badger-Two Medicine area. The hearing was scheduled for the following day in Choteau, Montana. Despite the sudden snow squall that howled out of the mountains and the unreasonably short notice, 50 concerned neighbors of the Forest Service unit appeared at the hearing. There they learned that American Petrofina had applied for permission to drill a natural gas well on Hall Creek, in the northwest corner of the Badger-Two Medicine. The company had already staked an access road. The Forest Service had proposed that they build a permanent concrete and steel bridge over the Two Medicine River, rather than a temporary structure that could

David J. Spear



Rocky Mountain Front, Glacier National Park.

be removed once the company completed its operations. The road would cut through open, rolling meadowland -- prime winter range for elk and deer.

Residents of East Glacier, Browning and other nearby communities had known for a while that the energy

industry was eyeing the Badger-Two Medicine. For several years they lived next to a blasting zone. One petroleum company after another exploded lines of dynamite in the unit in a procedure called "seismic exploration." The shock waves told the companies what they needed to know: that there was

Where the mountains meet the plains

Montana conservationists say the Rocky Mountain Front is the cream of the state's crop of unprotected wildlands. They claim it is the wildest stretch of the Rockies' east face between Canada and Mexico.

They mention that two of its roadless areas received the Forest Service's highest "wilderness attribute" score in RARE II. Additionally, biologists tell you the healthiest grizzly population in the Lower 48 states and the nation's largest wintering herd of bighorn sheep use the area. They'll add that the gray wolf occasionally prowls the Front, and that the area is critical to one of the nation's largest elk herds -- that of the adjoining Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Conservationists say these credentials are ample proof that the area should be in the nation's wilderness system. But the same geology that created the Front's startling scenery has produced another resource not quite as important to conservationists. That is natural gas, or rather the potential for it in large deposits, and it has raised a firestorm of controversy about the Front's future.

Nancy Cotner, the Bureau of Land Management employee responsible for oil and gas leasing on the Front's federal lands, says the area may be one of the richest natural gas areas in

the West. She says its overthrust geology already produces 4 percent of Montana's natural gas from two working wells, and that more development might allow the Front to compete with the large wellfields in Alberta, Canada, and Wyoming.

Lewis and Clark National Forest Supervisor Dale Gorman acknowledges that much of the proposed gas exploration may be on his forest. He says, "Nature has left us many treasures on the Front," and adds that his role in the area is that of "recommender." He recommends oil and gas leasing only if it can be done in a manner compatible with the area's wildlife, specifically the grizzly. Gorman says the Lewis and Clark is working with biologists to develop a management plan that can accommodate gas exploration and also mitigate impacts on the bears.

Critics of gas leasing, such as Mike Bader, the Missoula-based spokesman for the Badger-Two Medicine Alliance, a conservation group, say any development is incompatible. His group and the Montana Wilderness Association are fighting to get 320,000 acres of the Front designated wilderness.

Bader's group has already sparred with the BLM over the proposed Hall Creek well in the Badger-Two

Medicine roadless area -- the Front's largest undeveloped area. The Alliance and National Wildlife Federation appealed a leasing decision on Hall Creek to the Interior Department's Land Board and won. The Board cited a lack of mitigation for grizzlies and the absence of an enforceable road closure plan in the lease decision as reasons to uphold the appeal.

The conservationists' victory may be short lived. The Lewis and Clark will soon release a revised lease proposal that purports to address the problems cited by the board. But any resolution of the Hall Creek issue is complicated by the political power of the Blackfeet Tribe. The Tribe says if the well is approved, roads can't be closed because Indian access in the area is guaranteed by treaty rights. If roads are left open, however, it may be impossible to ensure that wolves, grizzlies and other wildlife will not be poached, an issue that the Appeal's Board directed be settled.

Conservationists hope the leasing issue in the Badger-Two Medicine, as well as in the whole Rocky Mountain Front, will be settled by Congress. Some portion of the Front will be included whenever the Montana delegation is able to push wilderness legislation through. In their ill-fated 1984 bill, the congressman only recommended 38,000 acres of the

Front for wilderness. Conservationists were appalled, and forced the delegation to look at the Front once again. Early indications are that the new bill, scheduled out this spring, will not come close to conservationists' bottom line of 320,600 acres.

The Front is where the mountains meet the prairies. It is also where grizzlies meet stockmen. In recent years, the bears have ventured onto local ranches and occasionally dined on sheep. Stockmen say the incidents are becoming more numerous, and a few want to shoot the bears, despite the animal's threatened species status.

Three ranchers recently filed suit in federal court to repeal the Endangered Species Act so they could shoot the bears when they venture onto private land. One of the stockmen, Ira Perkins, has circulated a petition claiming that "the presence of this horrendous beast along our streams and around our homes creates an atmosphere of fear for the lives of our children, ourselves and our livestock."

According to Lance Olsen of the Great Bear Foundation, Perkins declined an offer from his group for reimbursement of sheep killed by grizzlies. Perkins said: "I didn't raise sheep so the grizzlies could eat them."

--Bruce Farling

probably significant reserves of natural gas trapped in the folded rock beneath the Badger-Two Medicine.

The Forest Service released an environmental assessment of the Hall Creek drilling in April 1984. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service had 90 days by law to review the report. FWS ruled that the project would jeopardize local populations of wolves and grizzly bears -- both legally protected under the Endangered Species Act. They argued that the proposed access road and bridge would lead to an increase in illegal hunting, which was already a serious problem. The road wound through particularly vulnerable wildlife habitat, where the spacious, gentle, open terrain offered little cover for fleeing animals.

The FWS requested a project plan that would mitigate the negative effects of the access road. They asked specifically for a law enforcement program that would reduce grizzly poaching in the Badger-Two Medicine by 75 percent. The Forest Service's biological evaluation team had previously ruled that the Hall Creek drilling project "might affect" the endangered wolf and grizzly bear. After the FWS issued its "jeopardy opinion," the team designed a patrol schedule for the unit which would require six annual tours, each lasting several days. The Forest Service also chose a new access route through dense forest, where wildlife would be less vulnerable to passing traffic. They also promised to close roads to restrict access.

With these revisions in the drilling plan, the FWS deemed the project "no jeopardy." On January 31, 1985, the Bureau of Land Management -- the chief overseer of underground federal resources -- approved the American Petrofina application.

The Badger-Two Medicine is the largest roadless unit on the Rocky Mountain Front, with some of the region's most spectacular scenery. The stark stone faces of Kiyo Crag, Morningstar Mountain, Half Dome Crag and Feather-Woman stare out over the rippling grasslands. They are incised by icy, clear creeks -- Lonesome, Red Poacher, Whiterock, Lookout and Cruxifixion. The valley bottoms are plush green carpets: stately, mature Englemann spruce, Douglas fir, fluttering aspens, cottonwood, and at the water's margin, willow and birch.

The less dramatic, but more hospitable region in the north and western Badger-Two Medicine is a magnificent wilderness. Along the South Fork of the Two Medicine and on the softly swelling Lubec Hills, a patchwork quilt of bunchgrass meadows, lodgepole pine stands and aspen groves offers cover and winter forage for big game. Moose find sanctuary in the headwaters of the South Fork, where the river loiters in beaver ponds and brushy fens. Mountain goats and bighorn sheep scabble on rocky slopes rising above chattering creeks.

The Front is the only place in the United States where the grizzly bear still wanders onto the plains, and the Badger-Two Medicine has been called the best grizzly habitat along this mountain-grasslands interface. The unit's resident grizzly bear population is presently six, but biologists estimate it could support four times that many -- if the animals were not subject to poaching and other

pressures. Keith Aune, bear researcher for Montana's Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, says the area is even more important as a "corridor for grizzly bears travelling between Glacier National Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness..."

The roadless area is fine wolf country, with a plentiful food supply. A massive wolf extermination campaign was successful in Montana by the 1930s, but the species is now making a comeback (HCN, 2/27/86). In the shadow of the mountains, where winter gales roar over the Continental Divide and batter the plains towns of East Glacier and Browning, some residents became more and more frustrated by Forest Service management of the Badger-Two Medicine.

Their list of grievances includes inadequate law enforcement that allows heavy poaching, the Forest Service's refusal to close jeep trails to off-road vehicles whose drivers harass wildlife, and inattention to illegal activities associated with seismic exploration.

Biologists working in the area for the state Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department say they've seen several dozen violations of interagency wildlife-monitoring guidelines. The guidelines are meant to direct the method and timing of seismic work, among other matters.

The Audubon Society compiled a list of violations as reported by the biologists, and they include helicopters flying low to "buzz" grizzlies, seismic blasting continuing beyond a cut-off date designed to minimize impacts on denning bears, and scheduling seismic blasting too soon in elk calving and mountain goat nursery areas.

Some accuse the Forest Service of taking no action against the seismic crews or the companies that employed them. Some Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department biologists say they reported the misdoings to the Rocky Mountain Front ranger district, but never received a response.

Lloyd Swanger is chief forest ranger on the Front. "Wildlife-monitoring guidelines are simply that -- guidelines; not hard and fast rules like the biologists in there thought," he says. "If we know there are no denning bears in a particular area, for instance, we'll let the seismic crews go ahead, even if the guidelines cut-off date has passed. And we've been accused of not doing any law enforcement. We've always done it as a part of our regular duties... We now have a full-time law enforcement specialist, fully trained, armed, and with authority to arrest. He will perform regular patrols in the northern Badger-Two Medicine."

Swanger admits there is a lot of four-wheel drive traffic in the Hall Creek area -- the only part of the Badger-Two Medicine which includes several miles of primitive dirt roads. Many of the vehicles carry hunters from the Blackfeet Reservation. Swanger rejects what seems to be a common belief that the Indians account for most of the poaching.

"That's discrimination as far as I'm concerned," the ranger says. "Two grizzlies were shot last year, found dead. People were saying, 'Look what the Blackfeet did.' Simply assumed they did it. We've got to clean up our act as far as the Indians go."

Indians and non-Indians alike finally joined together in the Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance in November 1984 -- two months before

The stark stone faces of Kiyo Crag, Morningstar Mountain, Half Dome Crag and Feather-Woman stare out over the rippling grasslands.

the BLM approved the Hall Creek drilling. Lou Bruno, public relations director for the group and a resident of East Glacier, credits a bear biologist from the University of Montana for goading the local people into action.

Says Bruno, "Chuck Jonkel really started it. He's been studying the grizzlies up here for years. He made us realize that to save the bear, to save the Badger-Two Medicine, we needed a grass-roots operation -- local people working to preserve the place next door." Bruno recalls how Jonkel drove the five hours from Missoula to East Glacier in the early history of the Alliance "just to attend our evening meetings. And then he'd drive back again the same night."

Jonkel's dedication paid off. In March 1985, the Alliance appealed the BLM decision on Hall Creek, and requested a stay on any construction activities. Nine appellants joined them, including the Montana Wilderness Association, the National Wildlife Federation, and the Blackfeet Tribe. The Interior Board of Land Appeals ruled in favor of the Alliance in August because the new access route was not surveyed for archaeological sites. Ranger Swanger had contended that "a fallen down old trapper's cabin" was the whole of the archaeological offerings in the path of the new road.

The Alliance and its supporters pointed out a second flaw in the Forest Service plan for an alternate access road. The new route wound through woodland, instead of open meadows, providing wildlife with better cover and protection from passing traffic than yard-high grasses. But the Lewis and Clark Draft Forest Plan did not exclude the lodgepole pines surrounding the new route from future timber sales. The judges agreed that the Forest Service must clearly state the need to preserve the trees in the management plan.

A third point involved the Forest Service assertion that they could legally close any and all roads to the public. Limiting road access was an important component of the revised drilling plan, which would reduce grizzly mortality and poaching of other wildlife species. The Blackfeet Tribe, however, holds treaty rights to the area, and they claimed they could not be denied vehicle or other access. They backed their argument with a legal precedent set in the Pacific Northwest where Indians successfully held their right to do subsistence fishing with modern machinery and techniques. The Blackfeet said they could not be barred from using modern methods of travel into their hunting grounds.

The appellants also argued that the Forest Service had not produced an adequate law enforcement program.

Biologist Keith Aune testified that the schedule of six patrols a year was too infrequent to decrease grizzly deaths by 75 percent, as requested by the Fish and Wildlife Service. The FWS had also specified that the Forest Service involve the Blackfeet Tribe in the interagency law enforcement program. But the Blackfeet had not agreed to participate in any such program.

Since the August ruling American Petrofina has hired an archaeological consulting firm to do the required survey. The Forest Service claims that it addresses the timber base question in the Lewis and Clark Final Forest Plan, to be issued this spring.

Ranger Swanger maintains that friendly negotiation with the Blackfeet will solve the remaining questions of access and Indian participation in a law enforcement program. So far, the tribe has yet to give its consent to the Forest Service proposals. Joe Jessepe, tribe member and president of the Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance, says that the tribe will go to court if the Indians are denied access. But he also says that the Forest Service may find a way to legally resolve the final two points, whether they have agreement from the Blackfeet or not.

"If they want to, and if the oil companies press them hard enough, I think they can figure out a way to start the drilling this spring," Jessepe says.

If the Forest Service resolves all issues raised by the Interior Department court, drill rigs may be rolling into the area as early as May. American Petrofina is only one of 12 companies awaiting the okay sign. Last fall Chevron announced its interest in a site on Goat Mountain, about 20 miles into the heart of the

(Continued on page 14)



Morningstar Mountain, Two Medicine roadless area, Montana

The Front...

(Continued from page 13)

roadless area. The Lewis and Clark Draft Forest Plan shows 22 potential gas wells dotting the Badger-Two Medicine -- mostly in the creek bottoms -- and a network of access roads. Since the natural gas found in this region usually contains undesirable sulphur components, the drilling companies would need to construct a gas-processing facility within the area or just outside its borders.

State conservationists have proposed that the Badger-Two Medicine be officially designated a wilderness area. An attempt was made to protect it in 1978 by including it in the "Great Bear" additions to the Bob Marshall Wilderness. Montana's congressional delegation dropped the unit at the last moment, although the rest of the bill survived. Now the delegation is preparing a state-wide wilderness package, and it appears that the Badger-Two Medicine will be left out again. Under RARE II, the Forest Service did not recommend wilderness status for the area. The reason cited, and repeated by all members of the delegation, was Indian treaty rights.

The Badger-Two Medicine was once part of the Blackfoot Reservation. The federal government took an interest in the land after several mineral discoveries in the late 1800s, and acquired it by treaty in 1896. It became a unit of the Lewis and Clark National Forest and has yielded little commercially valuable timber or hard rock minerals since. The authorizing

treaty between the United States and the Blackfoot Tribe allowed Indians to retain certain rights, including use of timber for domestic purposes and for construction of Bureau of Indian Affairs facilities, and hunting and fishing under state law. The treaty also assured the Blackfeet that they would have access to the area -- a fact crucial to the Hall Creek appeal.

Beyond these rather limited claims to the land, the Blackfeet have had little say in the management of the Badger-Two Medicine since 1896. The Forest Service has primary responsibility for the surface resources of timber, watershed, and wildlife. The BLM has the final word on use of the hard rock minerals, oil and gas. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department can influence wildlife management policy, and state game laws operate here as elsewhere.

Some members of the tribe would like to change this distribution of authority. Blackfeet attorney Vickie Santana says the tribe could make a case for recovery of the ceded strip, but will probably have to settle for increased influence on policy and management decisions.

"I think we could argue that when the tribe agreed to the treaty in 1896, they understood it as a 50-year lease," says Santana. "There is some evidence from interviews with tribal elders that they did not think the transfer of land was permanent. This probably won't win us ownership of the Badger-Two Medicine, but we

could gain effective control of the timber, wildlife and grazing."

While Blackfeet claims on the ceded strip remain in dispute, the Montana congressional delegation is reluctant to commit itself to either wilderness designation or development. Montana Rep. Pat Williams, D, says, "The land has great significance for the Blackfeet and the delegation wants to be very certain that the tribal heritage is safeguarded." Speaking more pragmatically, he explains that the four-man delegation will keep a hands-off position until "the Blackfeet Tribal Council can reach a consensus decision on a recommendation for designation of the land." Otherwise, as Vickie Santana warns, the tribe is likely to go to court for any rights the area's official wilderness status might deny them.

John Gatchell, Montana Wilderness Association director, doesn't believe the Blackfeet have to lose any rights they already have in the Badger-Two Medicine. "Wilderness designation will not preclude treaty rights. If need be, they can be written right into the bill." The most obvious apparent conflict is the Blackfeet claim to timber. Gatchell suggests, however, that limited firewood gathering and cutting for posts and poles could be permitted. Santana is skeptical, but submits a compromise solution.

She says, "The tribe can decide what areas it wishes to retain for timber use, draw a line on the map, and the rest can be wilderness."

Observers both inside and outside of the tribe realize how difficult it will be for the Blackfeet to come to a general agreement on an issue which has divided them so deeply. Many Indians belong to the Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance and urge wilderness designation. The Honorary Council, a group of Blackfeet elders, recently expressed its support for wilderness also. Meanwhile the regular Tribal Council -- an elected body -- has focused its efforts on development and its economic benefits, both in the Badger-Two Medicine and on the reservation. The tribe leased a gas well site on Napi Peak to Chevron this fall. The mountain lies just within the reservation boundary, next to Glacier Park.

Vickie Santana points out that "the tribe opposed Hall Creek, but we're not opposed to oil and gas development on principle."

The Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance continues to work closely with the tribe, explaining what wilderness designation means and what could happen to the Badger-Two Medicine without it.

"Many Indians really love that place," says Lou Bruno. "But many also don't realize that it isn't theirs any longer. They think nothing's going to happen to it unless they say so. That's a dangerous illusion."

--Mollie Matteson

Mollie Matteson is a naturalist and writer in Missoula, Montana.

An informal, far-flung network

List by Bruce Farling

GROUPS WITH PRIME INTEREST IN FLATHEAD FOREST ISSUES

Flathead Chapter, Montana Wilderness Assoc.
Dick Kuhl, Chairman
P.O. Box 5403, Kalispell, MT 59903
406/257-5793

Swan View Coalition
Keith Hammer, Chairman
P.O. Box 1901, Kalispell, MT 59901
406/755-1379

Mission-Swan Greenwatch
Susan Dan Rooy
P.O. Box 120, Seeley Lake, MT 59868

Flathead Group, Sierra Club
Jim Conner, Chairman
78 Konley Drive, Kalispell, MT 59901
406/755-8925

Flathead Wildlife Federation
Frank Rosiejka, Chairman
Kalispell, MT 59903
406/752-4361

Flathead Audubon Society
Lynn Kelly
Bigfork, MT 59911
406/883-5797

Coalition for Canyon Preservation
Sharlon Willow
Box 422, Hungry Horse, MT 59919

Friends of the Wild Swan
Steve Kelly
1536 Lakeshore, Whitefish, MT 59937

GROUPS WITH PRIME INTEREST IN NORTH FORK FLATHEAD ISSUES

North Fork Preservation Association
John Frederick, President
Box 1, Polebridge, MT 59928
406/888-5518

Resources Limited
Rosalind Yanischevski and Tom Owen
Whale Butte Road, Polebridge, MT 59928

Flathead Coalition, Inc.
Wayne Herman, Representative
Kalispell, MT 59901
406/257-3789

GROUPS WITH PRIME INTEREST IN ROCKY MOUNTAIN FRONT ISSUES

Badger-Two Medicine Alliance
Lou Bruno, Representative
Box 25, East Glacier, MT 59434
406/226-9294

Badger Chapter, Badger-Two Medicine Alliance
Mike Bader, Chairman
P.O. Box 8374, Missoula, MT 59807
406/728-2260

Rocky Mountain Front Advisory Council
Rachael Glazer
Missoula, MT 59801
406/728-7191

OTHER GROUPS

Alberta Wilderness Association
Box 6398 Station D
Calgary, Alberta, T2P 2E1
403/283-2025

GROUPS WITH INTEREST IN THE WHOLE REGION

Committee for the Glacier/Bob Marshall Ecosystem
Jasper Carlton, Director
P.O. Box 2607, Kalispell, MT 59903
406/755-4745

The Waterton/Glacier Coalition
Dr. Charles Jonkel, Director
Border Grizzly Project
University of Montana
Missoula, MT 59812
406/728-0345

Montana Wilderness Association
John Gatchell, Program Director
P.O. Box 635
Helena, MT 59624
406/443-7350

Montana Wildlands Coalition
Jim Richards, Chairman
Box 717, Helena, MT 59624
406/227-6864

Great Bear Foundation
Lance Olsen, Chairman
P.O. Box 2699, Missoula, MT 59806
406/721-3009

Montana Wildlife Federation
Emily Swanson, Executive Director
Bozeman, MT 59771
406/587-1713

National Wildlife Federation
Tom France, Staff Attorney
NWF Resource Clinic
240 N. Higgins Ave., Missoula, MT 59801
406/721-6705

Defenders of Wildlife
Hank Fischer, Northern Rockies Representative
Missoula, MT 59801
406/549-0761

OPINION

This race of Lemmings built power plants

by Robert Gottlieb

The easy days of the resource-related forecaster, a job once called "fun" by a utility executive, are over. Electrical utilities, water agencies, gas companies, nuclear reactor builders, multinational oil giants, all share a volatile and difficult future. And the basis of the dilemma has more to do with the long-standing assumptions of resource development than the nature of the job.

The latest example of the forecaster's dilemma is the quiet and little-noticed announcement in February by the two utilities that make up the Western Terminal Association. They said they had dropped all plans to build a \$1.6-billion liquefied natural gas terminal at Point Conception on the California coast. But barely 10 years ago these utilities had argued that without the facility, major economic consequences would result. They painted a grim picture of failing industries, a rapid rise in unemployment and enormous fuel shortages, all to take place by 1985. Today, natural gas suppliers and utilities are facing a crisis of another sort, this one based on glut and a shrinking market.

How could the forecasters be so wrong in less than 10 years? The problem lies not just with the natural gas industry. There are numerous examples in the resource area of these kinds of 180-degree reversals. Take the two largest regional federal power authorities. Ten years ago, the current Secretary of Interior and former Secretary of Energy, Donald Hodel, was making speeches throughout the Pacific Northwest in his capacity as head of the Bonneville Power Administration. Hodel was telling his audiences of businessmen, politicians and utility executives that unless local utilities joined with BPA immediately to construct two additional nuclear plants, there would be within the decade a cycle of regional blackouts, power shortages and industry relocations. Those two units became part of the package of five nuclear power plants which later induced the first utility bankruptcy in the nation. Then, in 1983 and again in 1985, another set of forecasts projected a future of surplus power for the Pacific Northwest.

Bonneville's equivalent in the Southeast, the Tennessee Valley Authority, announced with great fanfare -- also in 1975 -- that it would build seven new nuclear power plants to serve a three-state area. Within 18 months, TVA reversed itself dramatically, scaling back long-standing presumptions about increased energy usage. Today, all seven plants have been withdrawn and TVA is even having trouble operating its coal facilities at anywhere near capacity.

These problems are typical of fuel sources such as coal, nuclear, oil and, in some cases, water. But the liquefied natural gas situation is particularly instructive. Back in the mid and late 1970s, the gas utilities forged a powerful coalition of industry



groups, labor leaders, politicians and the Jerry Brown administration. The coalition saw LNG as a transitional fuel source for an alternative energy future. There was local opposition and environmental criticism, primarily around safety considerations as well as Indian opposition related to the use of burial grounds for the facility site. But the LNG advocates put together an initial juggernaut that overwhelmed the opposition and convinced the Legislature to pass a measure preempting local land-use controls over the siting.

The decision to finally forego the natural gas project and site is only one of several embarrassing situations facing the utilities. Today, the natural gas industry is in the doldrums, faced with a myriad of demand-oriented problems, including co-generation, that have allowed a number of large industrial users to scale back purchases of natural gas. Far from a crisis in supply, the gas industry is facing a crisis of markets and oversupply.

The predicament of the gas industry, similar to other resource developers, is related to the traditional forecasting argument -- the one-to-one relationship between resource use and economic growth and prosperity. Utilities had developed over time an institutional bias structured around that relationship. Historically, utilities had been regulated in such a way that the greater the capital invested in new facilities, the higher the return to investors. By the 1960s and 70s, regulators, executives, forecasters and resource developers had all become wedded to a system that revolved around growing demand, bigger facilities, expanding resource development and investor profit margins.

That system was predicated on various assumptions about supply, demand and economic growth. It included the concept that demand is not sensitive to price for such essential resources as

water, electricity or gasoline. Ultimately, that produced a forecasting methodology and pricing structure that related the demand curve directly to increases in population and economic develop-

ment. The forecaster, in the days when the job was "fun," simply analyzed trends in population growth, industrial and economic activity and supply sources. The curve, all agreed, tended in only one direction -- upwards.

Today, there are no simple trends and equations, even for the most recalcitrant and growth-oriented utilities. Price elasticity -- the relationship of price to demand -- is now more accepted, though there is the additional problem of sorting out why demand continues to shrink or remain stable even when the price of the resource goes down, as is now occurring with oil. Long-term and even medium-term forecasts in the resource area have become a thin reed on which to construct future facility plans.

The key today in resource development is no longer supply but demand, and the business is as much about conservation as building new facilities. To solve the forecaster's dilemma requires a new way of thinking about resources, a new set of assumptions about supply and demand. Such a change, however, is still resisted by most utilities and resource developers, given their continuing institutional bias and the failure to change the basis of rate setting and regulation. And, until such change occurs, it makes the job of forecasting a magnet for criticism. Meanwhile, the poor forecaster can only shrug with the rest of us, and say: "Who could have predicted?"

□

Robert Gottlieb is a writer in Los Angeles, California.

LETTERS

STILL ALIVE

Dear HCN,

Last October you carried an article titled, "Few mourn the demise of great land swap." But it is not dead! The proposal to interchange 25 million acres of federal lands between the Bureau of Land Management and the Forest Service has been sent to Congress despite overwhelming opposition expressed at field hearings during the summer of 1985.

It is not merely an interchange of lands for administration. Title III of the "Federal Lands Administration Act of 1986" would declassify the national forest lands going to the BLM and return them to "public lands."

This amounts to several million acres that would lose national forest status. Many ranger district-size areas would go. In Montana and South Dakota the Ashland/Ft. Howe and Sioux ranger districts as well as the Pryor, Highwood, and Big Snowy mountains would be declassified. In Idaho, the Soda Springs and Twin Falls ranger districts would be declassified. In Wyoming, the Kemmerer, half of the Big Piney and the Laramie Peaks ranger districts would be declassified. In Utah, the Moab, Monticello and Pine Valley ranger districts would be declassified.

I feel the same care should be given in declassifying national forests as in declassifying any of our national parks. The principle is the same.

The projected savings created by the interchange are questionable.

Most savings would come about through reduced manpower and services. The FS manpower has already been reduced by one quarter in the past four years and its ability to provide proper management is suffering. The BLM has fared equally badly. Further manpower cuts are the last thing that is needed.

Certainly there should be small and isolated tract interchange between the BLM and the FS. The FS should have responsibility for managing the minerals under national forest lands. But the massive interchange of whole ranger districts should not be approved by Congress. The public and the lands involved will be poorly served by the interchange.

Vern Hamre
Gallatin Gateway, Montana

SEEKING

Dear HCN,

I was very interested in your article on Leadville, Colorado, in the Feb. 3 issue. I own a 10-acre piece of property, an old mine claim, in the area, and did not know the extent of water pollution there. The property is on Iowa Gulch, which is the next one south from California Gulch.

I wondered if there is an environmental group in the Leadville area that would be interested in knowing of a landowner who is also environmentally concerned.

Jill Davies
Box 65, Hwy.
Noxon, MT 59853
406/847-2228

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afield

Wrecking in the wilderness

by Don Baty

I always get a little nervous when people approach me with a romantic glint in their eyes, looking to hear stories about packing into the wilderness. That romantic glint brings to mind long days in the saddle with a steady, cold rain falling, contrary mules and wrecks.

I figure that there are three basic kinds of wrecks: morning wrecks, midday wrecks and evening wrecks.

Morning wrecks occur bright and early when you're leaving camp in good time with the whole outfit looking sharp. The stock are saddled and all lined out, packs put together riding square and neat and the sun just breaking over the horizon. Next thing you know something sets it off. Horses or mules are bucking and kicking, saddles are awry, and your square, neat packs are strewn all over the landscape.

The biggest wreck I've ever heard of was a morning wreck. According to Charlie Shaw in *The Flathead Story*, here were nine full strings of 10 mules

each loaded and ready to go at the Spotted Bear Ranger Station when the cook invited the packers in for one last cup of coffee. While they were drinking their coffee something spooked one of the strings and its 10 mules went bucking and bawling into the other animals. All 90 head became involved. Some got tangled up and went down, but most stampeded into the woods, trailing packs and equipment. Mules and packs were found the next day as far as eight miles from the ranger station.

Midday wrecks occur when you're all lined out and going about your business and a grouse comes up under your lead mule's feet, or a swarm of bees attacks the string, or a backpacker lets out a bloodcurdling yell just as you're working your string by them.

One of my more interesting wrecks was a midday wreck. I was going down the trail with a short string when my old lead mule got on the wrong side of a tree. I dropped the lead rope, but there's a momentum to buck; mules just don't stop fast. A horse behind



the mule confused matters by going on the same side of the tree I did. I was already bailing off to straighten things out when the last animal in line, a tall excitable bay named Slim, came barreling along and climbed the tree. Slim got about 15 feet up the tree before he realized what a ridiculous position he was in. Amazingly, he landed on his feet. I think I got out of that one easy.

Evening wrecks are the worst. They happen late in the day when you're thinking about getting in to camp and taking it easy. Smoke Elser tells of an incident in his book, *Packin' In On Mules and Horses*, in which a mule slipped and fell down a bank into the North Fork of the Blackfoot River just at dusk, taking two other mules with it. Smoke had to pile into the river

and start pulling loads in order to straighten that one out. Smoke uses that story to illustrate the importance of quick-release knots, but a guy can't help but think how uncomfortable it would be to be in the Blackfoot River struggling with three mules, and night coming on.

Which takes me back to the beginning of this story. I can certainly see how folks get romantic notions about packing in the wilderness. A guy's got to love it. But when you put that string together in the morning, you never know when it's going to come unglued.

Don Baty has been a seasonal worker in Montana's national forests for about 15 years.

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COMMUNITY ORGANIZER WANTED: The Dakota Resource Council is a grass-roots organization of farmers and rural people active in energy development, family farm and toxics issues. Members are committed to social justice and advocacy. Organizer position open to work on Family Farm Preservation Project, responsible for membership recruitment, leadership development, fundraising, action research, campaign development. Starting salary is \$9,600 annually, benefits. Contact Theresa M. Keaveny, Dakota Resource Council, 29 7th Avenue West, Dickinson, ND 58601. (701/227-1851). (2x6)

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