



Smelter closure could save the West's lakes

✓ *page 13*

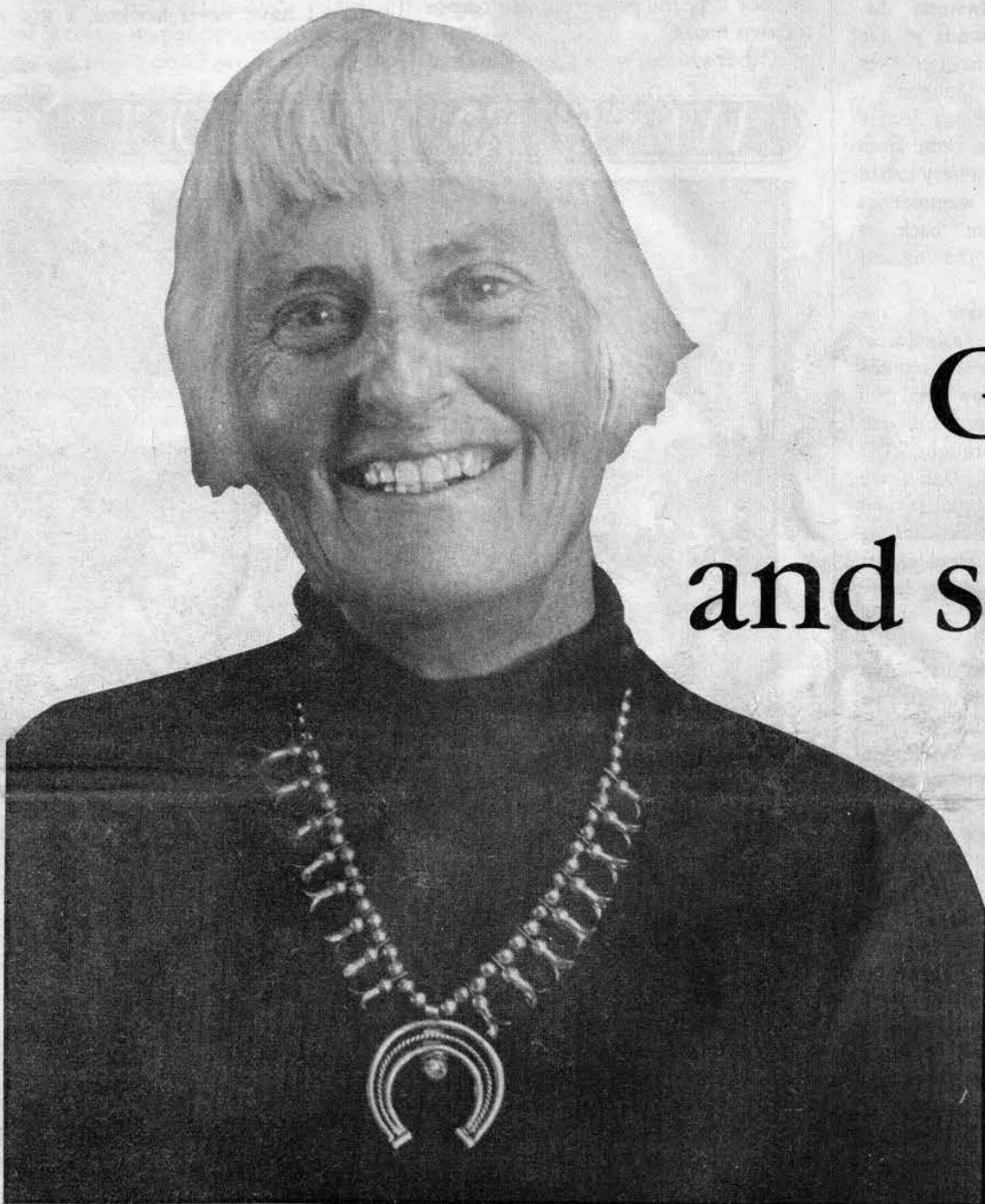
High Country News

August 4, 1986

Vol. 18 No. 14

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One Dollar



Gudy Gaskill and some friends build a 480-mile trail

by Ed Marston

The conventional wisdom is that money gets things done in our society -- that it fuels the engines of accomplishment and progress.

That may be so in some general sense. But you cannot prove it by the Colorado Trail -- a 480-mile-long Denver to Durango mountain path for hikers, horses and non-motorized mountain bikes.

The trail is being built for a relative pittance by volunteers after a well-funded professional effort collapsed several years ago without building a mile of trail. The trail is being built across Forest Service land, but that \$2 billion a year agency has been unable to provide much more than moral support for the effort.

Despite the low-key, volunteer, ad

hoc nature of the effort, the trail seems unstoppable. Come fall 1987, trekkers on foot, horseback or mountain bikes will be able to drive to Waterton Canyon just southwest of Denver and set off on a 480-mile walk.

The six-week-long route has been planned to bring them close enough to towns to reprovision, but for the most part they will be in the backcountry. There will be challenging mountains and ridges to climb to either side of their route, but the trail, despite days atop the Continental Divide and the crossing of five major drainages, will be suitable even for those with limited backcountry experience.

The trail is designed to grow. With time, the single track 480-mile route should blossom with a variety of cloverleafs, providing one to several-day loops feeding in and out of the main trail. It is also intended to serve as a Denver to Durango route for cross country skiers. But routing substitute portions of the trail out of avalanche country will take many more years, and make it many miles longer.

The idea of a well-marked route across the state is exciting in itself. It should attract people from all over

America who wish to walk for a few days or for the entire summer.

But the trail's long-term promise is even more interesting. It is at least possible that it will create order out of the spaghetti-like chaos of recreation trails, cattle paths and old jeep, logging and mining roads which now litter Colorado's seven national forests.

The recreational trails are generally destination routes, leading to a mountain lake or peak. The logging and mining roads lead to work sites. They were all built independent of each other, without regard to linkage or maintenance. At best, they are usable as isolated entities. At worst, they are eroding, unmarked, and often hazardous to those who use them and to the streams they fill with silt.

By comparison, the Denver to Durango trail, which passes through parts of the Colorado ski belt before heading south through the mineral-rich Leadville and Silverton areas on its way to Durango, is already beginning to reform the Colorado trail system.

Even before the trail is complete, a group has been formed to maintain

and expand the trail. The present construction work involves several hundred volunteers a summer, and is creating a cadre of people who know how to design and build trails and direct crews. And because some of the trail's appeal will be its links with other trails, it may help civilize the trail system for miles on either side of the central corridor. In addition, it is focusing attention on the need for trail maintenance as well as construction.

The Colorado Trail effort, which began in 1973, has also revealed an unexpected side to the Forest Service. The agency, despite a huge budget and tens of thousands of employees, spends essentially nothing on trails. In the face of a pitiful maintenance budget, its trails are falling into ruin or disappearing under new logging roads.

Nevertheless, the Colorado Trail would not be near completion without strong backing over 13 years from three different Regional Foresters in Denver -- Bill Lucas, Craig Rupp and Jim Torrence. These leaders, while lacking the money to build the trail themselves, helped create an atmos-

(Continued on page 10)

Dear friends,



High Country News

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The semi-annual High Country News vacation is over. The staff would gladly give up its vacations. But many readers say they can't keep up with all the news and commentary in each HCN, so every six months we give them a chance to catch up. That's as far as we'll go. Staff refuses to skip a third issue.

There's some, small, sincerity in that refusal. Even on a biweekly schedule, there is not enough room to print all the awful things people should know about the region. When an issue is skipped, triage becomes necessary. Essential lawsuits, disastrous defeats at the hands of one bureaucracy, stunning victories over another bureaucracy, are ignored.

What we can't ignore are letters from two ex-interns. One came from New Yorker Dan Cohen, a very urban person who spent last summer in Paonia, and then went back to Manhattan to discover the natural world pursuing him:

"A tree fell into one of the windows in my roommate's bedroom during Hurricane Gloria a few months ago, smashing the window and grill and giving a 6 a.m. wakeup call that even he couldn't sleep through." The trunk was 2 1/2 feet thick. Dan wrote that he can understand planes and helicopters crashing, cranes falling over, and an occasional steel girder finding its way from a building ledge to the pavement. "But an actual tree?"

Bruce Farling, whose internship dates back to winter 1984, wouldn't be surprised to find a tree fall on him, since he is a wilderness ranger in Montana. But he wrote to us of urban matters, such as fashion: "A chunky muley buck sniffing around the cabin tonight, looking rather dapper in velvet." His partner is Montana environmentalist Dick Kuhl, and the two spend some time discussing wildlife and roading. But real passion is reserved for baseball:

"I know it's just a matter of time until Kuhl pushes me too far with his preposterous declaration that Sandy Koufax was the best all-time pitcher..." (We've always liked Bruce, but we're amazed to learn that he knows so little about baseball.)

Staff won't say it was overwhelmed by the almost 500 responses to the HCN reader survey published in the May 26 issue. But we were whelmed enough to give up on the idea of running the survey a second time. Wendy Marston spent a chunk of her summer tabulating the returns (next time, we'll ask fewer questions), and the results will be in the next issue.

Two HCN alumni were featured in the July/August issue of Sierra magazine. Joan and Bruce Hamilton, who kept HCN going for a good chunk of the 1970s, starred in an article titled "Camping with Kids." Joan wrote the article, and posed with daughter Katie for the cover. Patrick, Katie, Bruce and Grandpa illustrated the story inside.

The summer has seen its share of visitors, including one of the most patient people we've ever met: filmmaker Bob Landis, who stopped by with spouse Connie to say hello. Bob teaches mathematics at a Billings high school, so he is probably a legal resident of that city. But he actually belongs to Yellowstone's Lamar River Valley, where he has spent large chunks of the past nine years shooting his recently released film, *Song Dog*.

Some wildlife films are shot with the help of helicopters, or by dumping a variety of animals into an enclosure and then filming their interaction. Bob shoots his footage in the wild, which may be why it took him nine years to gather the 27 minute of footage in *Song Dog*.

He was good enough to send us a VCR copy of *Song Dog*, and we will review it in the Bulletin Board one of these issues. One startling scene shows a band of coyotes stealing a very young cub from a black bear. After he finished the film, Landis said he filmed an elk defending its calf from a coyote pack. The coyotes killed the calf quickly, but the grieving mother kept the pack from the corpse for two hours.

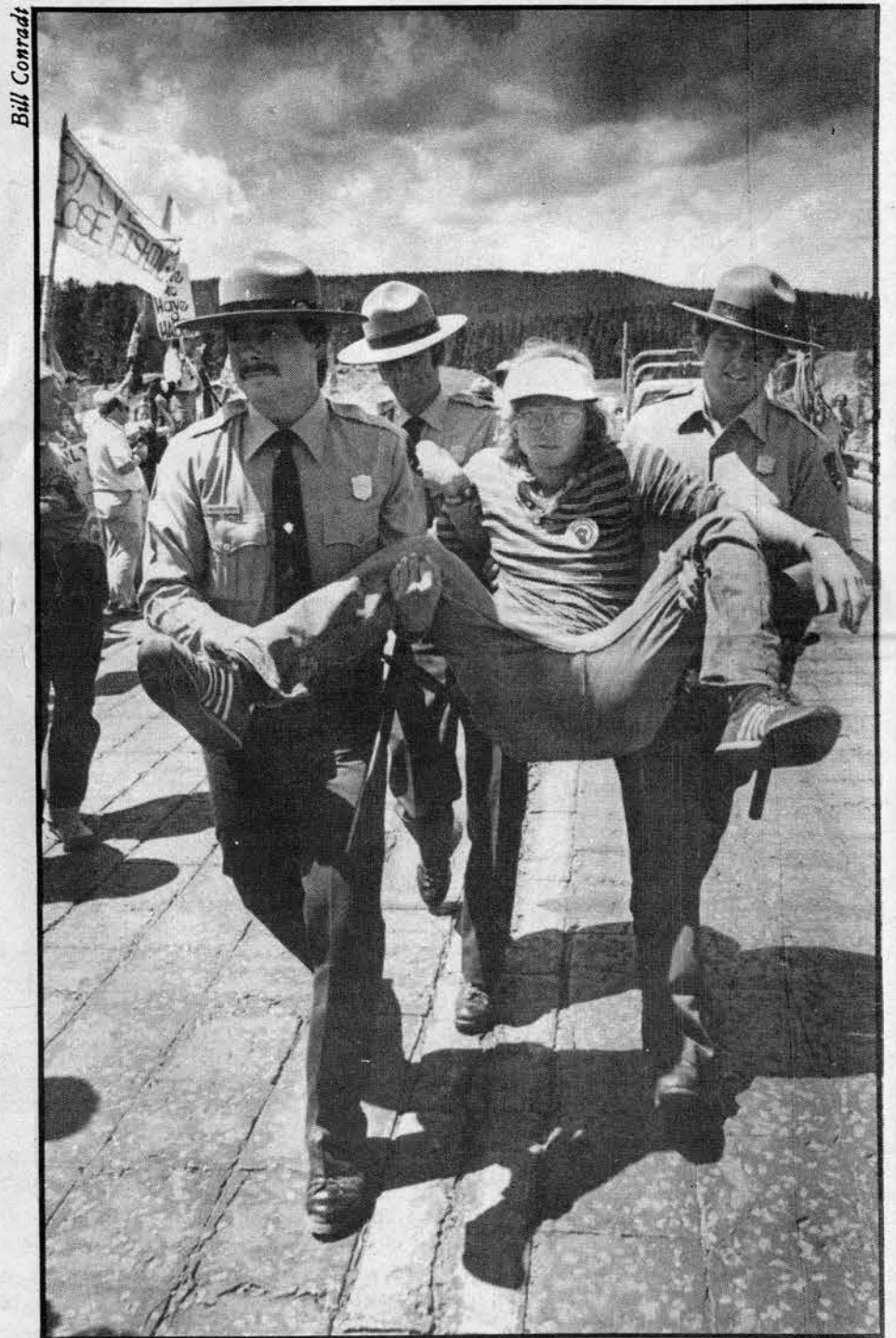
Other visitors were Steve Smith of

the Denver-based Colorado Environmental Lobby; Marj Dunmire, an artist from Estes Park, Colorado; and Lynn Jacobs and his family. Lynn is the Utah carpenter who spent an inheritance to produce the tabloid on grazing described in the July 7 issue. The Jacobs were on their way home from the Earth First! meeting in the Yellowstone area.

Finally, an Albuquerque reader writes to say that when he went into the hospital for treatment of lung cancer contracted because of too many years in smoke-filled offices, "The only place where I could get away from the nurses' smoking was in the nursery. And at my age! But at least, since I have never smoked, I got it free."

--the staff

WESTERN ROUNDUP



Earth First!er removed from bridge at Yellowstone National Park

Earth First! invades Yellowstone

Nineteen members of the environmental group Earth First! were arrested in mid-July for demonstrating at Grant Village Visitor Center and Fishing Bridge Campground in Yellowstone National Park.

Dave Foreman and another Earth First! member chained themselves to a door, and some 60 others blocked traffic to protest the Park Service's decision to keep campgrounds open in prime grizzly bear habitat. Some demonstrators were dressed in bear masks and suits and held signs saying: "If bears had religion, Yellowstone would be the promised land," and "Bureaucrats Out, Bears In," among others.

Responding to pressure from elected officials, the Park Service

backed off from an earlier decision to close campsites at Fishing Bridge. Instead, the agency agreed to leave the area open to tourists while environmental impact statement studies are underway. Yellowstone Superintendent Robert Barbee told the *Great Falls Tribune*, "When there is a formal request from Wyoming congressmen, as well as from (Montana Rep. Ron) Marlenee, who sits on the national park subcommittee, you don't just say, 'Shove off.'"

Eleven protestors were jailed on misdemeanor charges of disorderly conduct and disrupting government business.

--Jane Coumantaros

Wyoming couple holds back the loggers

Old Chief Tosi was a Shoshoni Indian who defied the U.S. government by refusing to stay on the reservation. He preferred to summer in Wyoming's upper Green River Valley, on the banks of a creek that now bears his name.

Today's summer settlers on Tosi Creek are also giving the U.S. government fits. Joe and Stella Retel of Rock Springs last month got a restraining order prohibiting the Forest Service and Louisiana-Pacific from crossing their land (HCN, 7/7/86). The order halted upgrading of the long-sought road connection L-P wants over Union Pass to shorten the trip from a timber cut in the upper Green River Valley to a lumber mill in Dubois. A Forest Service legal opinion supported the Retels' claim that no one has a right-of-way to use the road across their land. Bridger-Teton National Forest officials then told L-P it was the company's responsibility to secure permission to cross the Retel property.

The couple said they have always allowed the Forest Service, cattlemen and the public in general to cross their land. "The cowboys do us the courtesy of asking permission before they cross," he said. "But those lumber trucks aren't going to stop for you, a cow, for nobody."

The Retels said they decided to take on L-P and the government because they are convinced that L-P wants to cut as much timber in the upper Green River Valley as they can, destroying fish and wildlife habitat and watershed. "Fish Creek and Teepee Creek used to be good fishing," Joe Retel recalled, "but now all there is is silt." If we could just stop L-P from timbering and tell 'em to get the hell out, that would be great."

The Retels' lawsuit against the Forest Service and L-P was transferred to federal court in Cheyenne. U.S. attorney Richard Stacy convened top officials of the Bridger-Teton National Forest and L-P, and their attorneys and the Retels' attorney in Cheyenne on July 9 in an effort to resolve the property rights issue without litigation. But on July 16, the Retels' attorney, John Zebre of Rock Springs, contacted Stacy and told him the Retels would not agree to any settlement that would allow L-P to haul logs across their property.

"The Forest Service now has the opportunity to demonstrate to the public that their sole interest in the Union Pass road is not the wellbeing of L-P," Zebre said.

Zebre says it is up to the Forest Service to decide whose interests they are going to serve. He hopes they will "simply tell L-P that since L-P failed to secure the necessary right-of-way from a private landowner they should travel the route upon which they based their bid for the timber sale." Zebre said litigation possibilities range from a federal court hearing on the right-of-way to outright condemnation.

Bridger-Teton officials and legal experts offer differing views on available options. Bridger-Teton Forest Supervisor Brian Stout said condemnation is "only a legal possibility and only a last resort." He said the Forest Service needs to work out a solution to its own access across the Retel land, but that "temporary

Katherine Collins



Stella and Joe Retel at their cabin near Union Pass Road

log-hauling is a matter between L-P and the Retels."

U.S. attorney Stacy continues to insist the Forest Service has "the color of right to use the road for the public benefit" and can pursue the rights of L-P to use the road in accordance with the U.S. Forest Service Chief's decision to allow the upgrade of the road." He said the Retels' deed does in fact contain a "specific written reservation to the Forest Service."

Zebre, however, said Stacy is referring to a written notation of a verbal agreement made between the previous owner of the property and the Forest Service. "And Wyoming fraud statutes prohibit any transfer of real property rights by verbal agreement." Zebre also noted that the earlier legal opinion of the Forest Service was that the agency did not have a legal right-of-way across the land.

Conservationists say that the Retel property-rights dispute is their last best hope to halt logging in

inappropriate areas. Wyoming Outdoor Council president John Barlow said "several thousand dollars in contributions" will go to help the Retels pay their legal costs. He said he hopes the long-awaited Bridger-Teton plan will soon be out since he predicts that the new plan will call for a substantial scaling-down of timber harvesting.

The Retels say they are glad the Forest Service has resumed use of their road for its routine functions. "But we're not going to sign anything," said Joe Retel. The couple is also gratified by the number of letters and contributions -- over \$400 -- they have received. A letter from Jackson, Wyoming, read, "As a Forest Service bottom-level employee I am behind you 100 percent. Please win. Sorry I can't send more. I am more sorry that the rights of one family can be trampled on by the rich and the powerful in this country."

--Katherine Collins

Yellowstone to host 150 horses

Accompanied by a park ranger, 150 members and guests of the Appaloosa Horse Club were set to ride through Yellowstone National Park for four days, beginning Aug. 4.

Usually only 25 horseback riders are allowed in the park or surrounding national forests at one time. But the group applied for and was granted a special use permit, which costs \$50. Riders are re-enacting the Yellowstone leg of the 1,300-mile route taken by Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce tribe some 100 years ago.

Yellowstone Park assistant superintendent Ben Clary said a condition of the permit is that riders pack in provisions for themselves and their horses. Originally, the club wanted 300 horses, but Clary said consultations with outfitters in Wyoming and Montana led to the 150-horse limit.

One unforeseen problem when campsites were selected is that the third-night site is in grizzly-bear

habitat recently closed to the public. A French tourist was mauled by a grizzly in that area. Clary said the park ranger will keep an eye out for bear. In general, he added, camp sites were chosen because of their access to roads and minimum impact to the park.

Don Marshall, a highway contractor in San Antonio, Texas, who chairs the club's trail rides, said riders from all over the country are paying \$350 each for the trip. He said there will be 12 support vehicles for the outing, including one to truck in a temporary dance floor for a live band.

Marshall said the club last came through Yellowstone 13 years ago. By the time the next swing through the park comes around in 1999, Marshall said, Congress will certainly have designated the entire trail as "historic."

--Betsy Marston

HOTLINE

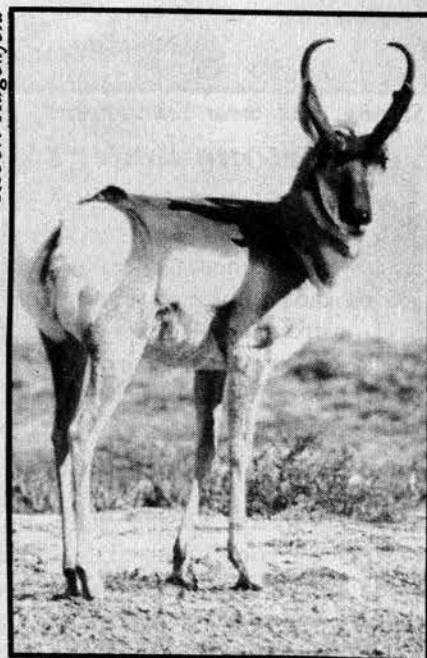
Up in gas

The Department of Energy has officially bought the \$2.1 billion Great Plains coal gasification project for \$1 billion. The world's largest coal gasification plant had been bankrolled by a DOE loan of \$1.5 billion to five energy companies. But last year the companies defaulted on loan payments after natural-gas prices plummeted. DOE then foreclosed and has been managing the plant for the past year. The government had been negotiating with Coastal Corporation and Transco Energy Company, both members of the consortium which developed the gasification project, but their May 28 proposal was unacceptable, according to DOE. The agency said an investment banking firm will now market the synthetic fuels facility.

Unocal's oil shale plant works

Since May 1982, the only news the oil shale industry got was bad: cancellations of projects; cutbacks in federal support, culminating in December in the strangulation by Congress of the Synthetic Fuels Corp.; and the dizzying drop in the price of oil. Overhanging it all was the nation's only commercial oil shale plant -- the \$800 million Unocal retort in Parachute, Colorado. For three years, that plant refused to cough up more than a barrel or so of crude at a time before being clogged by the "fines" produced by the retort. But Unocal, under stubborn, outspoken Fred Hartley, kept the project alive and 400 employees at work. That tenacity has now paid off. In July, the retort ran for days, rather than minutes, and turned thousands of tons of rock into thousands of barrels of oil. The success may mean Unocal will not seek to build the fluidized bed combustor with a \$327 million loan guarantee it says the Synfuels Corp. granted it in its last moments of life. (Several Congressmen are suing to stop the guarantee.) But Unocal does have a \$400 million federal price guarantee to subsidize production by the present system.

Robert Hilgenfeld



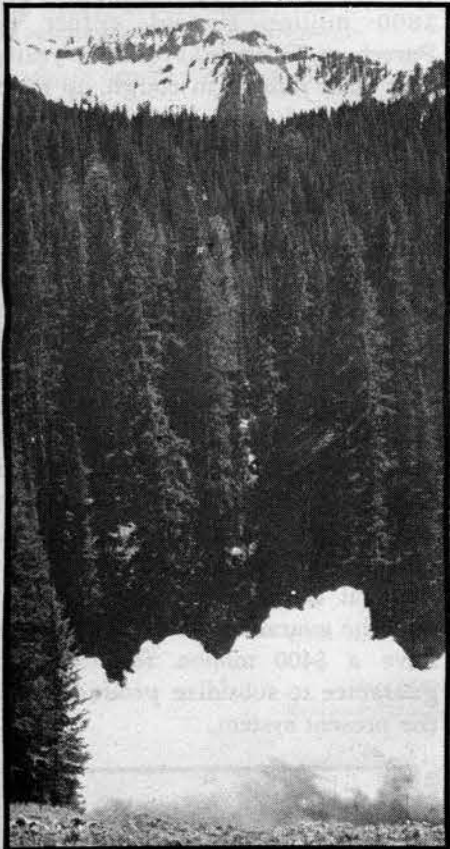
Open season

Almost half a million pronghorn antelope now roam Wyoming, but by issuing unlimited hunting permits the state hopes to cut the population from 400,000 to 288,000 by 1988. While the Game and Fish Department will allow each hunter to buy only one buck permit, it will sell an unlimited number of permits for does and fawns in 44 of the state's 112 antelope hunting areas.

HOTLINE

Utah group may fold

Utah is in danger of losing one of the very few citizen groups in the state willing to take on water development interests. Intermountain Water Alliance, which has fought hard for wildlife refuges, minimum stream-flows and a state water plan, and against such projects as the Central Utah Project and the White River Dam, is in grave financial trouble. According to Alliance director Dorothy Harvey, a national foundation has stopped its \$10,000 per year support of the group. The seed grant was expected to get the group going. But Harvey quoted the foundation as saying: "It's time that Utah people demonstrated that they care enough about water issues to help the Alliance." *Deseret News* columnist Joseph Bauman wrote that the largest amount Utahns ever contributed to the Alliance in a year was \$3,000. Harvey said that the group's broadbased policy approach to water was unlikely to attract public support in Utah. As a result, the Alliance is circulating grant proposals to outside foundations even as it negotiates with libraries in case it should have to close and give away its research files. The Alliance can be reached at Marmalade Hill Ctr., 168 W 500 N, Salt Lake City, UT 84103.



Seismic blast near Yellowstone

Yellowstone under siege

A Sierra Club 28-page report called *Yellowstone Under Siege* attacks the federal government for leasing oil and gas on most of the available federal land surrounding Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. About 6 million acres or 60 percent of the six national forests surrounding Yellowstone are not exempt from oil and gas leasing, and 83 percent of this land is already under lease and thus permitted to be developed, the report says. The Sierra Club charges that federal agencies never did any comprehensive analysis nor developed any plan to mitigate impacts on wildlife or recreational values. The report also says that procedures for public notification and participation in leasing and permitting decisions are inconsistent. Also, many maps and other information are unavailable, which makes effective public evaluation impossible. For a copy of the report send \$1.50 to Sierra Club Information Services, 730 Polk Street, San Francisco, CA 94109.

2300 Idaho elk threatened by road

Another struggle for control of public land has boiled to the surface, this time in eastern Idaho. At stake is one of the largest elk herds in the West -- a 2,300-head herd that summers in Yellowstone National Park and winters in the Juniper Sand Dunes, near St. Anthony, Idaho.

Despite the best efforts of local Bureau of Land Management officials to protect the herd, the state BLM "apparently caved in to pressure from landowners, county officials, state politicians and Interior Department officials," says a spokesman for the Idaho Environmental Coalition.

IEC board member Jerry Jayne says state BLM Director Delmar Vail "pulled the rug out from under the local BLM" when Vail released on June 6 a draft environmental impact statement on a controversial 8.8 mile, farm-to-market road.

Although the BLM denies any connection with the road issue, local district manager O'dell Frandsen is being transferred. Frandsen opposes building the Egin-Hamer road.

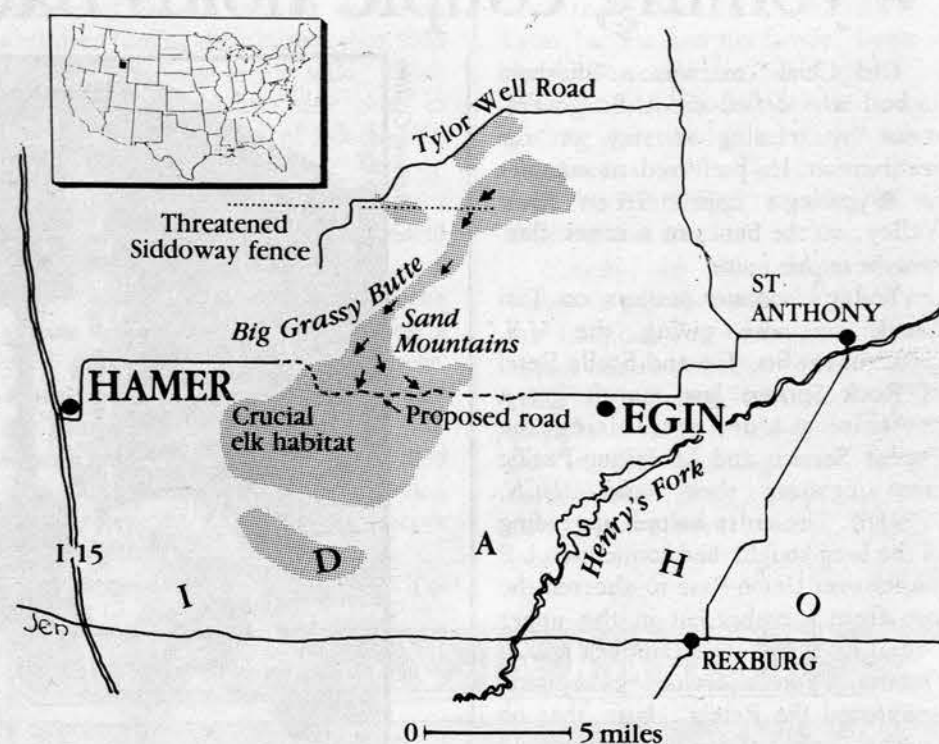
The EIS's preferred alternative -- a new one -- would allow construction of the proposed Egin-Hamer road across the Sand Creek Wildlife Management Area, bisecting the winter range of the elk herd. The preferred alternative also provides for periodic winter closure of the road if monitoring shows impacts on the elk herd. The BLM chose this alternative in spite of the road's estimated life-long (30-year) negative economic effect of \$1.2 million, and a possible depletion of the elk herd from today's 2,300 down to 150.

This latest chapter is part of a long process of struggle and accommodation between landowners and BLM land managers. Last November, Fremont and Jefferson county commissioners asked BLM for the fourth time for right-of-way to construct the road across public land. County commissioners said they backed the road because it would save local potato farmers \$125,000 a year in transportation costs.

The BLM district manager had seemed certain to again deny the request. Public comment ran seven to one against the road, and an environmental assessment revealed damage to the elk herd, loss of revenue from hunting and questionable economic justification for the project.

But the matter was taken out of the hands of local BLM officials. County officials and local landowners, dismissing arguments that the road would endanger the elk herd and rejecting alternative routes for the farm-to-market road, shifted the fight to a new arena. They put pressure on state legislators who passed a resolution backing the road. Then Republican Lt. Gov. David Leroy, who is in the governor's race against Democrat Cecil Andrus, relayed that message to Interior Secretary Don Hodel and BLM Director Bob Burford. In late April, these high Interior officials called the state BLM director to Washington, D.C., to discuss the road. When he returned, he told the Idaho Falls *Post-Register* there would be an environmental impact statement containing a new alternative.

Fremont county commission Chairman James Siddoway says the new alternative proposing to build the road is "better than what we've got in the past," but he does not want the Fish



The arrows indicate elk migration to critical winter range across the proposed road. State Fish and Game officials say the road would eliminate elk use of 6,000 acres of public land.

and Game Department to monitor the elk herd and determine the need for winter closure. "I don't mind the monitoring," he said, "but I can't agree with Fish and Game doing it." He says there should be a rancher, an elected official and someone from BLM and Fish and Game. Siddoway is also upset about the estimated cost of the road -- \$80,000 per mile. He says his figures indicate that the road could be built for \$10,000 to \$12,000 per mile, and the "inflated figures will upset taxpayers."

Siddoway's nephew, Jeff, is also pleased that the EIS favors construction of the road. He says if the road is built he will abandon his earlier threat to construct a 10-mile fence on his property blocking the elk migration corridor. He had reasoned, "If the elk can't get down there from Yellowstone the BLM can't talk about the effect the road will have on the elk." The younger Siddoway admits the contested road is of little economic benefit to him, but says he is "tired of Fish and Game and the BLM running the state for wildlife."

Local Fish and Game Biologist Rod Parker doesn't agree that the state is being run for wildlife. He says, "the entire decision-making process has been side-tracked" in issuing the new alternative. "It's very disheartening when our work is thrown out the window for political expediency." Parker has no doubt that a road would undo much of the work begun 40 years ago to establish what is now the largest desert-wintering elk herd in the U.S.

He cites studies in Montana and Colorado showing the adverse effects

of roads upon elk herds. Parker is also skeptical about gaining cooperation from the counties to enforce closing the road. "There've been other disagreements over road closure," he said. "They're opposed to big government meddling in their affairs."

Parker sees irony in the Siddoways' opposition to big government. He notes, "They have no qualms about going straight to the Secretary of the Interior to overturn a local decision reached by resource professionals and sportsmen," he says.

The Egin-Hamer controversy illustrates another way in which public and private lands interlock in the West. It isn't a straightforward example of a private landowner blocking access to public land, as in Wyoming's Elk Mountain or Colorado's Dominguez Canyon. Because the large elk herd migrates across private land, a private landowner has a lever of sorts on the public land agency and wildlife manager.

An August 12 public hearing on the draft EIS is scheduled for 7 p.m. at the Idaho Falls Library Conference Room, 457 Broadway, Idaho Falls. A second hearing in Boise on August 14 will be at 7 p.m. at the Boise Public Library, 715 South Capitol Blvd. Public comment on the plan will be accepted until September 11. Comment on the earlier environmental assessment will not be included in the final EIS. Comments should be addressed to BLM Idaho State Office, 3380 Americana Terrace, Boise, ID 83706 (208/334-1492).

--Katharine Collins

BARBS

Indoor plumbing may save lives.

A 26-year-old camper from Minnesota was rescued by a helicopter after being lost in the Colorado Rockies for 27 hours. The woman had left her campsite in search of a potty. She alerted rescuers by spelling out SOS with toilet paper.

How barbaric! In America, he would have been appointed Secretary of Interior.

The U.S.S.R. has fired the chief of safety for nuclear energy, possibly as a reaction to the Chernobyl accident.

The ornery, independent West again takes a courageous, principled stand against federal meddling.

Seven states stand to lose federal highway funds because they have not raised their minimum drinking age to 21. Five of the seven are in the West: Colorado, Idaho, Montana, South Dakota and Wyoming.

The folks at Coors learn first-hand about free markets.

The decline in the price of crude oil led A.A. Phillips, the president of Coors Energy Co., to tell the *Denver Post*: "We're absolutely hopeless and helpless to do anything about it... It's sure hurting our industry."

The U.S. Army cleans up after itself

Some 30,000 residents near the U.S. Army's Rocky Mountain Arsenal can drink their tap water again, after months of having to boil it or buy bottled water.

But their fight with the Army is not over.

Using \$1 million dollars in Army money, the South Adams County Water District north of Denver has installed and turned on a carbon filtration system as a temporary means to remove chemicals from its well water.

Last February, the Colorado Health Dept. issued an advisory to the water district's Commerce City, Adams City, Irondale and Dupont residents to boil their water or buy bottled supplies.

To the delight of Beth Gallegos and her local group, Citizens Against Contamination, the advisory was lifted in late May when the filters were switched on.

"This is a big day for us," Gallegos said at the recent dedication ceremony, attended by a pack of politicians. "It will be an even bigger day when we have a permanent system."

The citizens' groups, now with firm backing from members of the Colorado Congressional delegation, is keeping pressure on the Army to commit money for a permanent water-treatment system. The \$1 million can keep the carbon filters going for a year or two; after that more money will be needed to ensure safe tap water.

Last year, the citizens' group had to cajole and persuade and constantly demand action from officials. Now

officials are readily coming forward to help. Pushing for clean, safe water, and sometimes bashing the federal government have become good politics.

In the U.S. House of Representatives, all six members of the delegation, led by Republican Rep. Hank Brown of Greeley, have urged the Army to pay for the permanent system. In the Senate, at Democrat Gary Hart's urging, the Armed Services Committee has voted to require the Army to pay up.

Still, Citizens Against Contamination finds its work frustrating, in that it must deal with many entities at once: the Army, Environmental Protection Agency, state health department, water district, and lately, the U.S. Department of Justice.

When asked at a recent public meeting to clarify a point about Arsenal cleanup plans, Army officials deferred to a Justice Department lawyer. The Justice Department is defending the Army against the state, which is suing for environmental damages caused by the Arsenal.

Caught in the middle, but essentially leaning toward the Army's point of view, is the EPA.

The EPA has spent months trying to find sources of chemical contamination in addition to the Arsenal. Stapleton International Airport is one of the Denver-owned sites under investigation as a possible contributor to the water district's pollution problem. But, so far, the EPA has found only one culprit responsible for tainting the water district's wells: the Arsenal, where the Army once made nerve gas and Shell Chemical

Company made pesticides. The land has been called the most contaminated piece of real estate in the nation.

For that reason, and with the Superfund law to lend credence to his argument, Rep. Brown told *The Denver Post*, "The figures I've heard indicate the overwhelming portion of the responsibility is from the Army. The fact that they don't admit to 100 percent responsibility is a moot point."

Under Superfund, the nation-wide toxic waste cleanup law, "they have to pay," he said.

The Army has said that its 27-square-mile Arsenal is only partially responsible for the contamination. TCE, a chemical solvent that causes cancer in mice, is one of several known or suspected carcinogens being filtered out by the temporary treatment system. TCE, or trichloroethylene, has been found in groundwater at the Arsenal near a motor pool/railyard area and an old landfill. The chemical flows underground from the Arsenal to water district wells.

"The majority of it, let's face it, comes from the Arsenal," said Gallegos, voicing an opinion held by the local water district and the state health department.

Gallegos, a slight woman, usually mild-tempered, reserves most of her anger for the Justice Department. "If they were interested in justice, they wouldn't care about the Army. They would care about giving safe drinking water to the citizens."

--Dan Jones

HOTLINE

Deadly rocks and snow

Deaths and injuries from grizzly bears in Wyoming's Yellowstone region get the most publicity, but the prolific killers are the rocks and snow of the area's mountains. The latest fatality occurred July 14 on the Grand Teton National Park's Mount Moran. According to the *Jackson Hole News*, two members of a "green" party of six slipped while climbing up a large snowfield known as the Skillet, with 21-year-old Abigail Mackey falling to her death. Nicola Rotberg was rescued by fellow climber Steve Adkison and Park Service rangers. The group tried to climb to the 12,605-foot peak via the pan-shaped snowfield even though the same route had caused two deaths and one serious injury last summer. In all, Grand Teton National Park rangers rescued 31 backcountry climbers and hikers in 1985. Eight had died in the backcountry, with seven of the deaths caused by climbing.

Hodel opposes Nevada park

Interior Secretary Donald Hodel says a proposed national park near Ely in eastern Nevada is a bad idea because his department can't afford it. The park proposal passed the House in a Democratic-sponsored bill, but Hodel said recently he hopes Nevada's two Republican senators will draw up a more acceptable plan. Park supporters say a national park will attract tourists to the eastern part of the state, an area based on agriculture and mining, but now economically depressed.

Colorado's transplanted otters make themselves scarce

Old Indian legends portray the river otter as a wanderer constantly on the move. Wildlife manager Mark Konishi believes there are otters living in eastern Colorado along the Piedra River, but he hasn't been able to find them.

Historical records suggest a century ago they were common in Colorado, but water pollution and extensive trapping in the early 1900s led to their demise. By the 1950s they were scarce, and in 1975 the Colorado Wildlife Commission put river otters on the state's endangered species list.

The Division of Wildlife then developed a plan to reintroduce the river otter to Colorado. Wildlife biologists decided that four areas offered the best habitat: the Gunnison River above and below the Black Canyon; Cheeseman Reservoir; the Kawauneechee Valley in Rocky Mountain National Park; and the Piedra River. As many as 41 otters, most from states like Oregon, Washington, and Wisconsin, where they are more plentiful, were later released. Now it's tough to find the creatures.

"When you transplant animals into new environment they usually wander, and otters have a big home range to begin with. They're an elusive, low-density animal," said Tom Beck, a Division of Wildlife biologist. "If you're depending on sign and visual sightings, they're real hard to keep track of."

Two years ago, a doctor from California who owns property along the Piedra River, reported seeing a mother otter carrying her young. "If they're reproducing, then they're

doing well," said Konishi, "but we have no way of verifying these reports." So far, there is no hard evidence that river otters have reproduced in any of the four transplant areas.

Several reliable sightings along the Piedra suggest that at least several of the 10 transplants are still in the area. Last winter Konishi hoped to locate one, but all he found was sign -- blood on the ice where a fish was eaten, tracks and slide marks in the snow and a small pile of scat.

"There were a lot of days out there when I wouldn't find any sign at all," he said. "Finding that scat kept me going for a couple of weeks."

According to Beck, radio telemetry is the key to any future work with otters. Surgically implanted radio transmitters were used on some of the otters released in Rocky Mountain National Park. "We know something about their movement up there," he said. Some stayed in the area, and a couple went over the mountains up into North Park.

But when transmitter batteries ran out, monitoring these otters was difficult. "Up there, the grass gets to be waist high," Beck said. "It's a beaver jungle and it's real hard to find any sign."

There have been other problems with surgically implanted transmitters. According to a Division of Wildlife report, biologists at the University of Idaho found that after surgery, "pulmonary and cardiac complications, resulting in failure to eat, were responsible for the deaths of two otters."

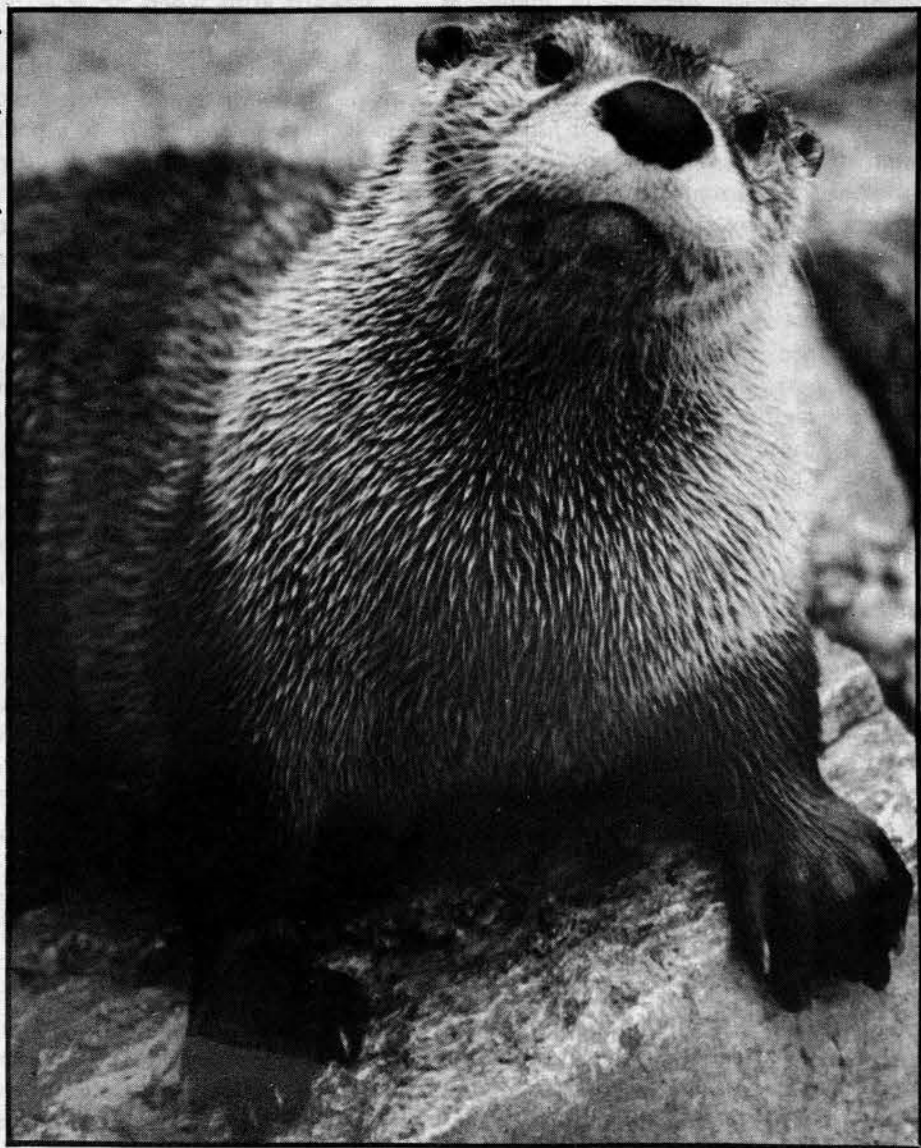
Beck hopes to develop "an external transmitter package" similar to a system used with polar bears in the Arctic. Transmitters are meshed in with the animal's fur. This way the trauma of surgery can be avoided and

transmitter batteries can be replaced when the animals are recaptured.

Until then, the jury is out on the otter transplant program. "We really don't know where they went," Beck said.

--Peter Anderson

Dick Randall, Defenders of Wildlife



HOTLINE

Project Lighthawk: a green spy-in-the-sky



Smuggler Mountain

Cleaning up Aspen

The Smuggler Mountain site in the ski resort town of Aspen, Colorado, has been declared eligible for cleanup under the Environmental Protection Agency Superfund program. Aspen/Pitkin County health officer Tom Dunlop said up to 75 acres on the mountain is contaminated with toxic lead, debris from the old Smuggler Mountain silver mine and cadmium mine tailings. Cleanup will include removing the contaminated topsoil and covering the ground with a clay cap. In fall 1984, when Smuggler Mountain first appeared on the Superfund national priorities list, county officials said a local cleanup was preferable because publicity could hurt the local economy (*HCN*, 3/4/85). The costs of the cleanup, estimated at \$1 million to \$1.5 million, will be borne by 10 "Potentially Responsible Parties," including the county, area miners, homeowners associations and developers.

360,000 acres at stake

After several decades of maneuvering and lawsuits by claimants such as Tosco Oil Company, the Department of Interior is on the verge of immediately handing over to private interests 15,500 acres of public land in western Colorado, and setting a precedent for the surrender of another 345,000 acres in Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. As of this writing, it was still not known whether Interior would continue the legal fight in the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver, or allow the claimants to have the 15,500 acres without an additional legal struggle. Interior had lost a legal round when Federal District Judge Sherman G. Finesilver ruled against the department. The claims involve land underlain by oil shale deposits. Although the basis for the claims is oil shale, if the claimants get control of the land, they could put it to any use they wish. Kannon Richards, who just retired as Colorado State Director of the BLM, wrote in a memo to Washington last October, "We cannot justify to the public, as trustee of the public lands, the giving away of 360,000 acres of land at \$2.50 an acre." Richards told Denver's *Rocky Mountain News*, "A lot of people will come unglued when they find out we gave away 300,000 acres of public land, but at that time it will be too late to do anything about it."

The saying that "Those who control the sky, control the land beneath" applies precisely to the West's mountain ranges, canyons, roadless forests and snow-covered back roads.

The great distances and difficult geography in the region put a premium on air travel, either to provide overviews of the land and of resource-based operations such as mines, smelters and logging operations, or to ferry people to hearings and other critical events.

Until recently, control of the West's air rested with government agencies, industry and land developers. Then, in 1980, with the founding of Project Lighthawk by a young pilot-environmentalist named Michael Stewart, the balance began to shift. In the five years since its founding as a one-pilot, one-plane operation, Project Lighthawk has expanded so that it has gained a nickname: The Green Air Force.

Project Lighthawk has hundreds of missions under its belt. A typical one occurred in 1983 in New Mexico, when state BLM director William Luscher disallowed the Continental Divide Wilderness Study Area. The wildlands parcel west of Socorro was dropped as a wilderness candidate because Luscher's staff told him, it lacked "sufficient opportunity for solitude."

Environmentalists disagreed, and Karin Sheldon, an attorney with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, and Judy Bishop of the New Mexico BLM Wilderness Coalition, convinced Luscher to fly the area with them in the Project Lighthawk plane.

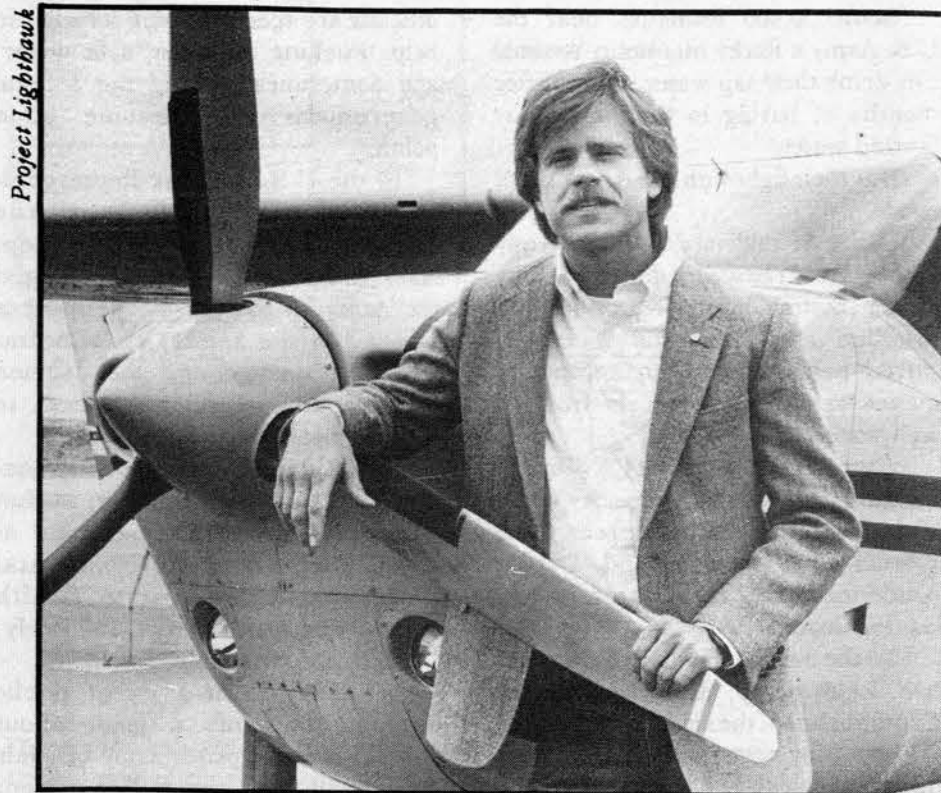
Stewart recalls, "We flew out over the mesa and said, 'Bill, we're over the Continental Divide WSA right now, and there's not a person, vehicle or structure within 40 miles.' After staring down at the grasslands for awhile, Luscher said something like, 'Well, it sure looks like my staff got some faulty information.'" Luscher returned to his office and reinstated the area as a wilderness candidate.

Stewart grins when he tells that story. He grins a lot, and at first glance is the stereotype of the blond, can-do, adventuring pilot made famous in war movies. Up to a point, his background reinforces that first impression.

He left academe -- Stanford and then the Australian National University at Canberra -- to work 2,000 feet underground as a chute tapper and blaster for Magma Copper at San Manuel, Arizona, in order to finance his ambition -- to become a pilot. Using his underground earnings, Stewart got his private and commercial pilot licenses. (He has since used those licenses to help put pressure on Magma -- Arizona's third worst polluter -- to clean up or shut down.)

But that's ahead of the story. First came a job as a pilot for a now defunct commuter airline in New Mexico. He had the seven-hour Albuquerque to Santa Fe to Taos to Denver to Santa Fe to Albuquerque hop, for which he was paid \$25.

He made less in Guatemala, where he was a volunteer for the non-profit humanitarian Wings of Hope. Flying out of Santa Cruz de la Quiche for the Quiche Indians, who are descendants of the Mayas, Stewart ferried people, food, and supplies into their remote jungle homestead lands, and flew out



Michael Stewart

medical emergencies. Wings of Hope compressed a grueling eight-day mule trip into a two-hour flight.

Back in the U.S., Stewart went to work for an operation that, like Magma, he opposes today. He hotshotted planeloads of Cessna-set tourists through the Grand Canyon (*HCN*, 1/20/86). From there, he put in a stint as an Alaskan bush pilot and float-plane jockey. Two of his four fellow bush pilots have since died in crashes.

Along the way, he did professional river-running, and became involved with Greenpeace, Project Jonah and various anti-nuclear groups. By the time he was 30, Stewart had a unique set of credentials. He had several thousand hours of pilot-in-command time, instrument, single-engine land and sea, and multi-engine land pilot ratings, and a deep love of wilderness.

The combination came together in late 1980, when he received grants totalling \$66,000 from two western ranching families with a strong interest in conservation. He brought a single-engine six-seat Cessna Turbo-210 and incorporated Project Lighthawk as a non-profit entity.

In its first seven years, Lighthawk has flown hundreds of missions for scores of conservation groups. Along the way, its annual operating budget

has grown to \$119,000, and its staff to two full-time pilots and an administrative assistant. Stewart serves the Southwest from his Santa Fe base, while Bruce 'Flash' Gordon flies Lighthawk's other Cessna Turbo-210 out of Colorado and Montana bases to cover the Northern Rockies and the Pacific Northwest.

Despite the two planes, demand outstrips Lighthawk's capabilities, and all requests must fall within the rough guidelines set up by Lighthawk's seven-person board of directors.

Lighthawk fees average \$30 per flight hour. That is one-fifth the going commercial rate, and covers only a portion of the fuel costs. Overall, client fees account for about 15 percent of the Lighthawk budget; the rest comes from grants and gifts.

For written information, or for a 15-minute VHS cassette, contact: Project Lighthawk, P.O. Box 8163, Santa Fe, NM 87501.

--David L. Petersen

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David Petersen is a Durango, Colorado, resident and the associate editor and western correspondent for *The Mother Earth News*.



The Green Air Force

Laramie, Wyoming, sticks to its poisons

LARAMIE, Wyo. -- An aerial spraying program to kill mosquito larvae proceeded as usual this spring despite a warning from an organization of professional wildlife biologists about the chemical used in the work.

The Wyoming Chapter of the Wildlife Society warned Albany County officials that the chemical called fenthion, which is sprayed from airplanes, may be causing "severe environmental consequences."

In his letter to the county's weed and pest office, Wildlife Society President Bruce Johnson asked county officials to consider using alternative chemicals or a biological control agent for controlling mosquitoes along the Laramie River.

Johnson, a Wyoming Game and Fish Department biologist, said two studies have shown that fenthion, an organophosphate insecticide sold under the trade name Baytex, can cause harmful effects in small mammals and birds.

Baytex use may be partly responsible for the decline of an endangered toad native to the Laramie Basin, Johnson's letter said.

Other, less harmful methods are available to control mosquitoes, the letter said, noting that a bacteria known as *Bacillus thuringiensis* is a biological control agent used frequently in Wyoming.

County weed and pest control director Tom McNamee said in late June that "the taxpayers want the

mosquitoes sprayed and we're doing it with the material registered to do it."

One of the chief concerns mentioned by the Wildlife Society is the possible connection between Baytex use and the rapid decline of the Wyoming toad, which was common in the basin until about 10 years ago. It was listed as an endangered species by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1984.

"Fenthion spraying has frequently been cited as a possible cause" of the toad's near demise, the letter said. "A University of Wyoming study in 1982 suggested that Baytex probably interferes with reproduction by inhibiting fertilization of the toads' eggs."

The Game and Fish Department's authority on amphibians, Mike Stone, said that searchers have been unable to find any signs of the toad this spring. Twenty years ago, he said, the toad was found in many ponds and irrigation meadows in the Laramie Basin.

Stone said he is encouraging local officials to consider alternatives to fenthion. "I polled our fisheries people throughout the state and it appears that Laramie is one of the few places still using Baytex," he said.

Biologists have no conclusive evidence linking Baytex to the endangered toad's decline, he said. "But because of potential problems to wildlife, it would be a good idea to switch to something else that could be

more effective and yet less hazardous."

The Wyoming toad is a relict population of the Dakota toad left behind when the Wisconsin ice sheet retreated 10,000 years ago. The nearest population of the Laramie toad's surviving cousins today is 500 miles away in Montana, North Dakota and Canada. The spraying of fenthion onto more than 50,000 acres of the Laramie Basin occurs each year just at the time the embryos and tadpoles of the toad are most sensitive, biologists believe.

The city of Laramie, the county and Laramie River ranchers have all contributed to the aerial spraying for several years. The city's total mosquito control budget of \$42,000 includes \$14,000 for the aerial spraying and other funds for a fogging program for adult mosquitoes in town.

Laramie sanitarian Don Forcum said a mixture of Malathion and a synthetic pyrethrum are used in town. Forcum emphasized that the studies done on the effects of Baytex on the endangered toad "didn't prove anything."

He said the organic alternatives are more costly, although he acknowledged that the price of the bacteria has been declining and is not as uneconomical as it was only one or two years ago. "You have to balance the ecology, the effectiveness and the cost," he said.

--Philip White

Lost farmland is statistically resurrected

The July 1986 issue of *The Atlantic* contains good news: America may not be losing farmland to urbanization at an accelerating rate. If the article is accurate, the U.S. has tens of millions of acres of farmland it thought had been covered over during the 1970s and first half of the 1980s.

Gregg Easterbrook, an *Atlantic* national correspondent, writes that the supposed tripling of the rate at which the U.S. was losing farmland -- from a 1960s figure of one million acres per year to the 1970s figure of three million acres -- was based on poor statistics, faulty assumptions and politicians and reporters who were all too willing to accept bad news. He quotes numerous experts in support of his contention that farmland is not being covered over at a high rate, that only a tiny portion of the country has been paved over, and that large amounts of land stand ready to replace land taken out of production.

But the July newsletter of the non-profit American Farmland Trust carries a very different story. Its first page headline asks: "Will Cities Take Half Our Best Farmland?" The story does not provide a definitive answer, but it does say that 58 percent of the most productive farmland is located within or adjacent to metropolitan areas, and therefore threatened by urban expansion.

The front page of the Trust's newsletter also shows a picture of its Policy Director, Robert Gray, who just received an award from the Natural Resources Council of America. Gray is also featured in the *Atlantic* article. He was the one expert Easterbrook quoted who said large amounts of farmland continue to disappear.

Gray directed the National Agricultural Lands Study during the Carter Administration. It was NALS which

concluded that urban land expansion had tripled, and that the accelerating development was covering not pastures but the nation's most fertile land.

Gray told Easterbrook that he stands by that conclusion: "If anything, I think it's too conservative. But even if it is wrong, the ultimate proof is that the people at the state and local level, who have to deal with specifics of land use, consider urban conversion a serious problem."

Easterbrook speculates that in some communities the goal is to save open space, not farms; so that farm preservation may be serving as a socially and legally acceptable route to exclusionary zoning. He says that both well-to-do and modest communities are using it to pull up the drawbridge. "Interest in preserving the amenity value of land thus appears to cut across income lines."

The Trust's address is: 1717 Mass.

Canyon noise bill passes committee

The full House Interior Committee has approved a bill to ban sightseeing flights below the rim of the Grand Canyon. The relatively tough bill (conservation groups want flights to stay 2,000 feet above the rim) is a reaction to the deaths of 25 people in a canyon air crash in June (*HCN*, 7/7/86). The bill would also ban low flights over Yosemite and over the crater at Hawaii's Haleakala National Park. The Park Service would also have to study flights over at least 10 other parks, including Glacier and Mt. Rushmore. The bill initially called only for study, but after the crash Arizona congressmen Morris Udall and John McCain had it strengthened. Meanwhile, in a letter to travel agencies across the nation, a major air tour

operator, Scenic Airlines, Inc., of Las Vegas, NV., called the noise issue overstated (the level is equivalent to "normal conversation"), called the fatal crash the "first incident of its type," and asked the agents to send stamped, addressed cards enclosed with the letter to Grand Canyon park superintendent Richard Marks. The cards ask the agency not to control the flights.

BARBS

The Congress is getting tough.

The House Interior Committee recently voted to give ski areas 40-year leases on an estimated 90,000 acres of national forest land. The industry had asked for 55-year leases.

HOTLINE



Grazing report

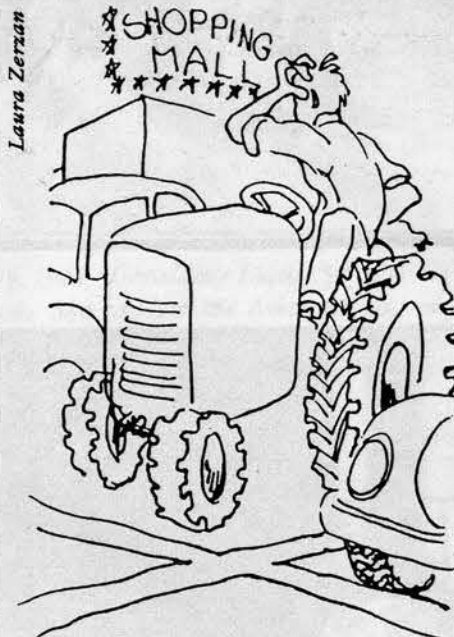
The House Government Operations Committee has published a report, *Federal Grazing Program: All is Not Well on the Range*, that attacks federal agencies for subsidizing just two percent of the country's beef producers. A recent \$4 million federal study found that grazing fees on public lands (mostly in Western states) fell \$111 million short of paying the federal expense of managing the program during 1982-1984. Also according to the government study, the market value of all public lands in 1983 should have brought a charge of \$6.53 per animal per month to a rancher and not \$1.35, which is the price still in effect. The House report includes accounts of abuses that have occurred from subleasing grazing permits on Bureau of Land Management lands. Oklahoma Democratic Rep. Mike Synar, who has urged reform of the grazing program, says he hopes the report will counteract changes from some cattle growers who called it distorted before it was published. Subsidized ranchers "fear the loss of a cheap gravy train," Synar said. A copy of the House Report No. 99-593 is free from Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402.

Court protects eagles

The Supreme Court decided 9-0 that Indians who kill bald eagles will be subject to federal prosecution. The decision reverses a 1985 appeals court ruling that Indians may kill endangered species on reservation land, reports the Wildlife Management Institute. In 1984, several Indians were arrested in South Dakota and Nebraska for shooting more than 200 bald eagles, and were charged with selling parts of the birds as native American artifacts. Convicted in federal court, the Indians appealed and won the right to kill endangered species under treaties -- as long as they did not sell the birds or their parts. But on June 11, the Supreme Court ruled that the Bald Eagle Protection Act abrogated Indian treaty rights to kill bald or golden eagles without a permit from the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Road the wilderness

Idaho Republican Rep. Larry Craig says building a road through the vast Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness could promote tourism in Idaho. Although the 2.2-million-acre wilderness is the largest in the lower 48 states, Craig said few people use it because the average person doesn't have the time or money to fly in. "Wilderness is a very elitist attitude toward the handling of our resources. If there were no roads in Yellowstone, no one would see Yellowstone," Craig said this summer.

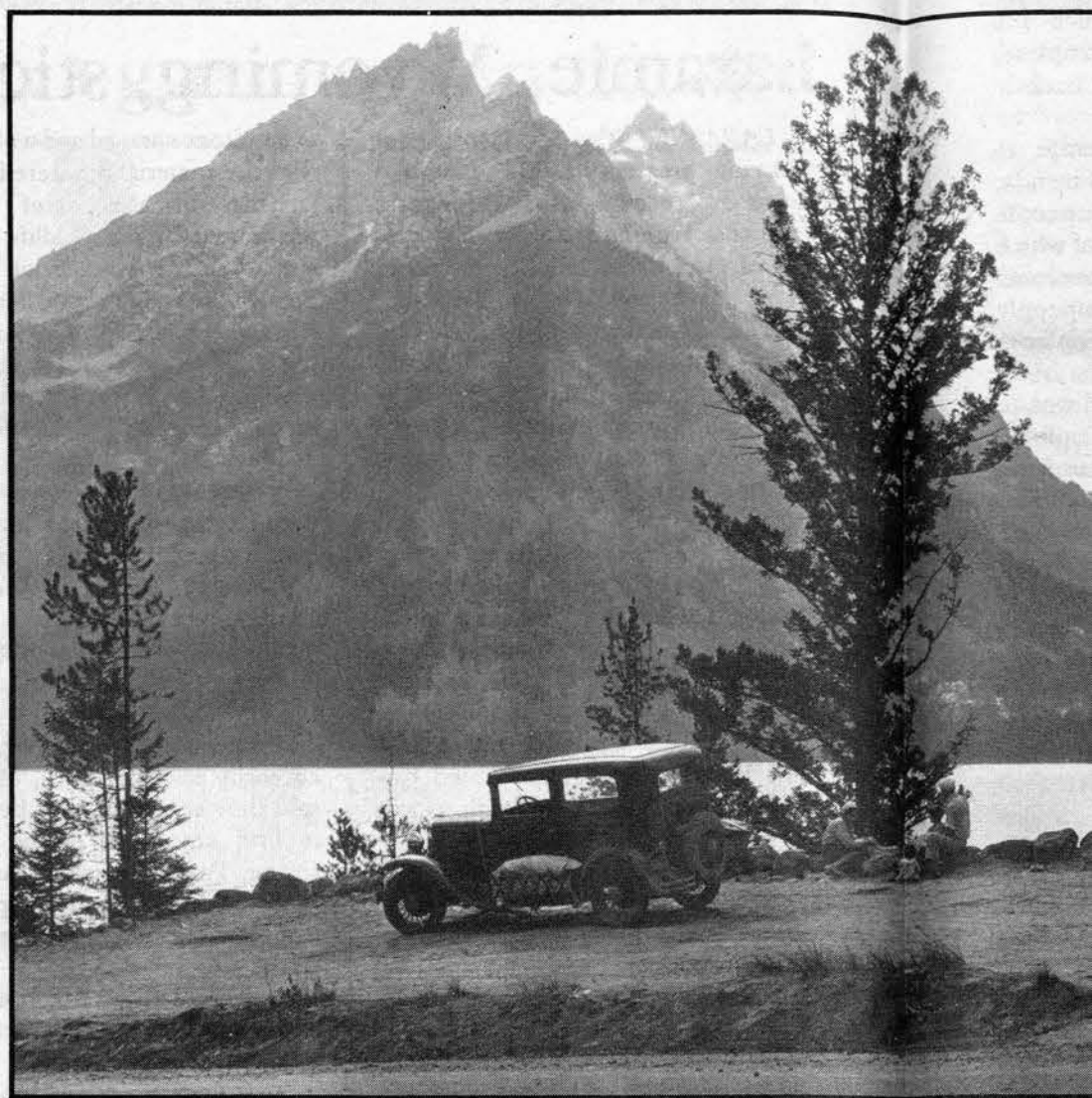


Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036. The *Atlantic* can be reached at 8 Arlington St., Boston, Mass. 02116.

--Ed Marston



Dave and Bert, goose hunters, by George Schofield



Jenny Lake and the Tetons, early 1930s, by Harrison Crandall

In the shadow of the Tetons - the early days



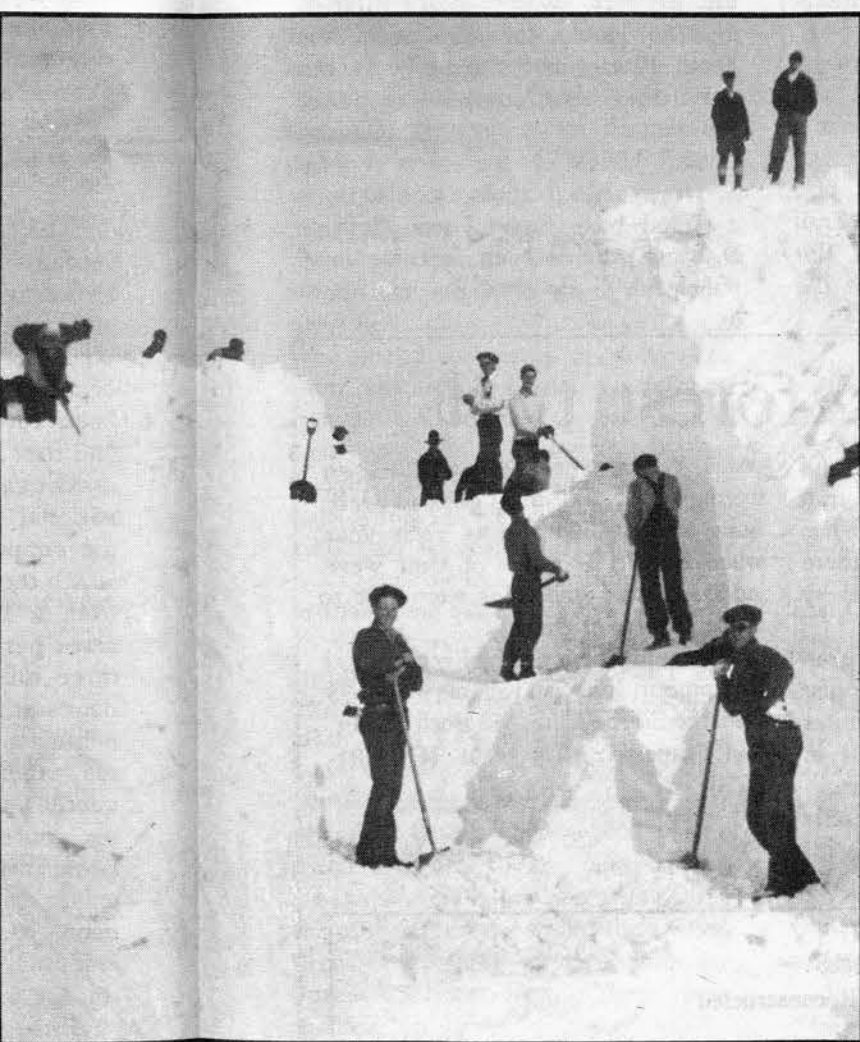
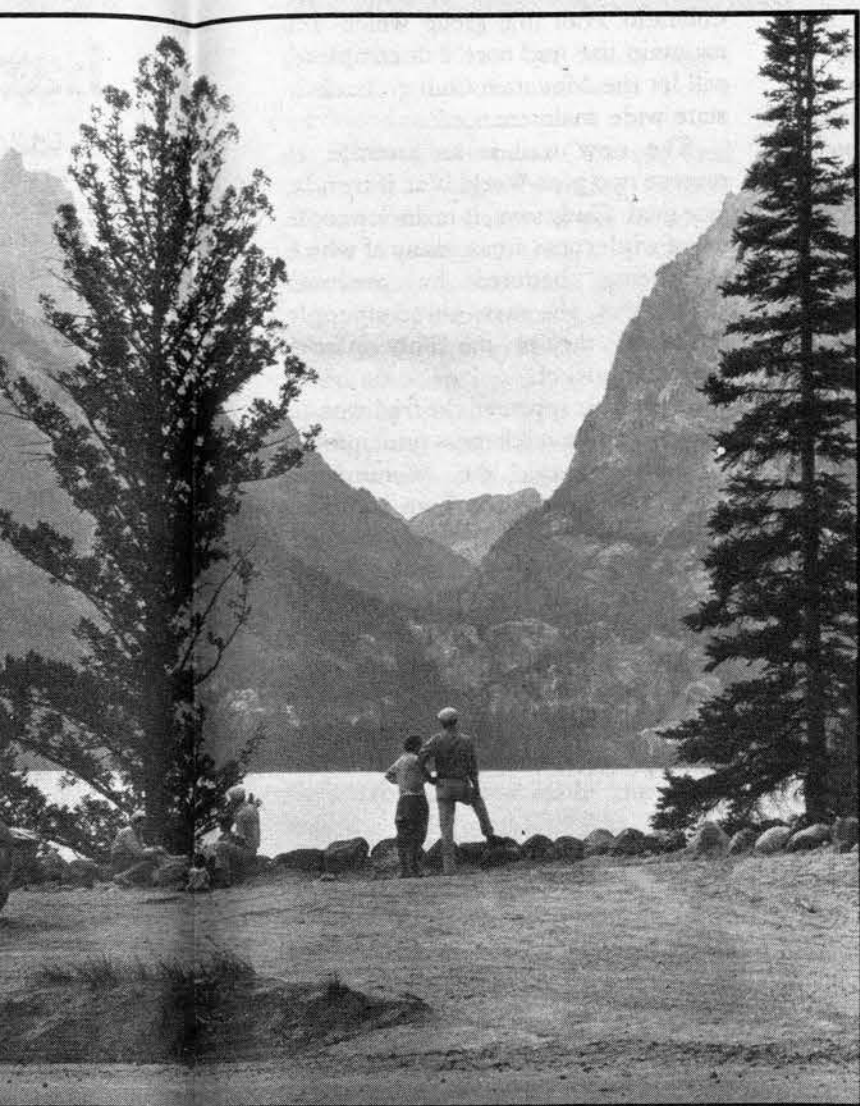
The Jackson Town Council, 1920-1924. Jackson was the first town in the United States to be governed entirely by women. Mayor Grace Miller [center] had previously platted the town.



Digging through a snowslide south of Jackson.

The magnificent mountains surrounding northwestern Wyoming Jackson Hole have attracted people of diverse backgrounds and interests over the years. In the 1870s, photographers began aiming their cameras at Jackson Hole's remarkable scenery, its wildlife and the explorers, trappers, sportsmen, settlers and visitors who roamed the area.

Virginia Huidekoper has lived most of her life in Jackson Hole. She founded the weekly newspaper, the *Jackson Hole News*, worked as a professional airplane pilot and bus driver.



Digging through a snowslide south of Jackson.

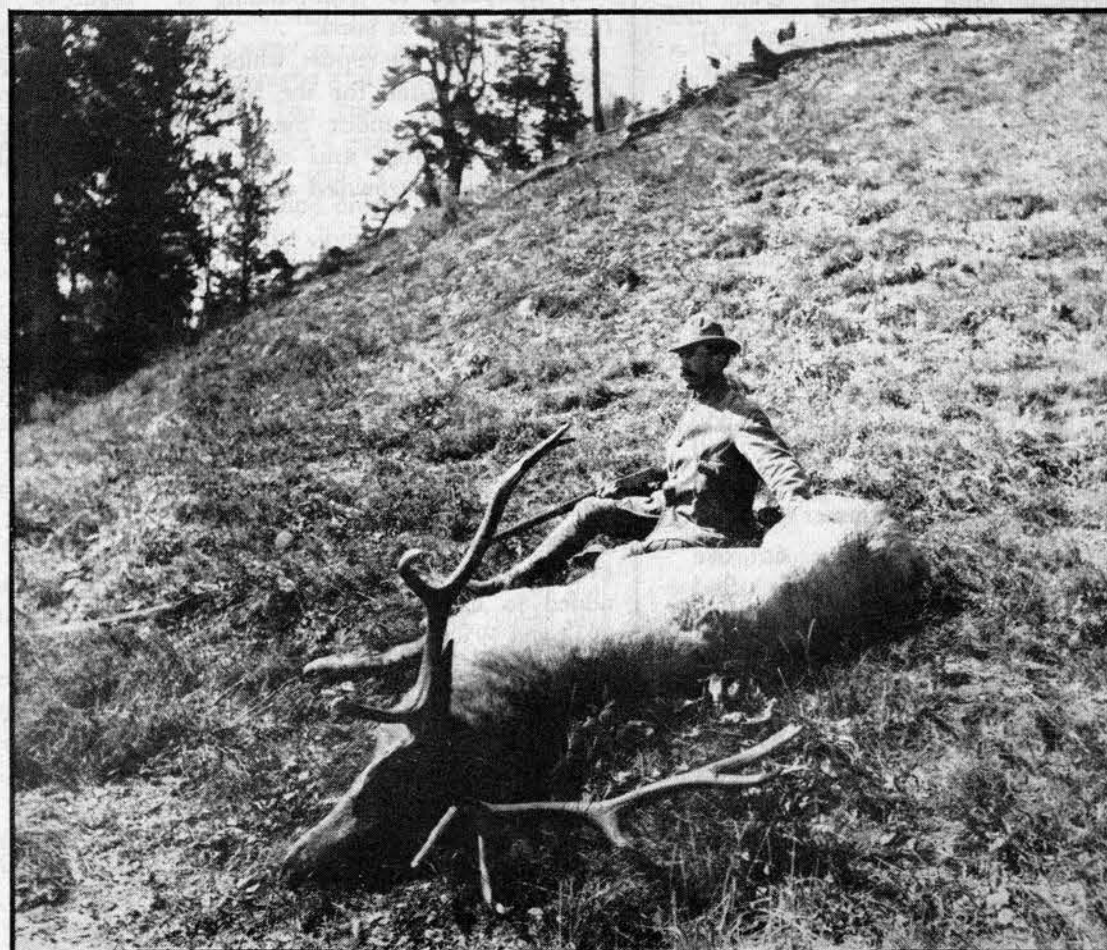
The magnificent mountains surrounding northwestern Wyoming's Jackson Hole have attracted people of diverse backgrounds and interests over the years. In the 1870s, photographers began aiming their cameras at Jackson Hole's remarkable scenery, its wildlife and the explorers, trappers, sportsmen, settlers and visitors who roamed or came to stay in the area.

Virginia Huidekoper has lived most of her life in Jackson Hole. She founded the weekly newspaper, the *Jackson Hole News*, worked as a professional airplane pilot and built

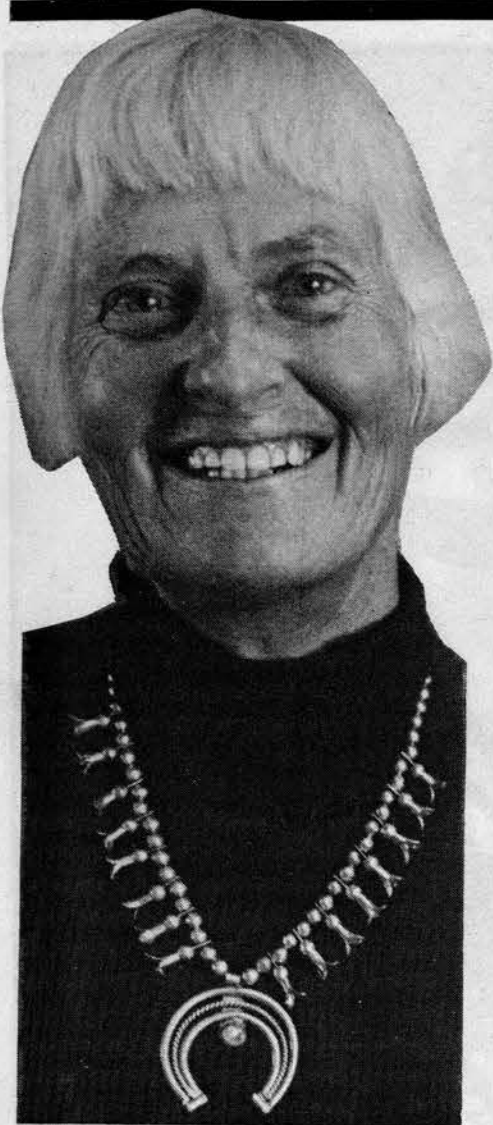
a log house on the ranch that she manages near Wilson. She also collected early photos of Jackson Hole from established archives as well as from family albums, shoe boxes, trunks and wallets. She assembled the photos in a permanent file to be preserved in Teton County, and published the best in a book, *The Early Days of Jackson Hole* (Grand Teton Natural History Association, Moose, Wyoming, 1978. 131 pages, \$12.95, paper). The photos shown here are from the book, which spans the decades from 1872 to the 1930s.



On August 19, 1924, Geraldine Lucas, 59, was the first Jackson Hole woman to climb the Grand Teton. She carried the American flag on her back.



Elk hunter, by Benjamin D. Sheffield



Gudy Gaskill

The trail...

(Continued from page 1)

phere in which volunteers would do the work. It can even be seen as a subversive action for the timber-oriented agency, since it sets the stage for increasing pressure for preservation.

The Colorado Trail was born with a silver spoon in its mouth. The idea came out of a luncheon conversation between former Regional Forester Bill Lucas and former *Colorado Magazine* editor Merrill Hastings in 1973, and was funded by a \$100,000 grant from the Denver-based Gates Foundation and \$50,000 from others.

The money went to the now-defunct Colorado Mountain Trails Foundation; it paid salaries, produced a glossy brochure and took care of telephone bills and rent. What it didn't do was survey or build trail. By the time most of the money was gone, a dismayed Gates Foundation had withdrawn its pledge of continuing support.

But the spending did clear the decks. With the apparatus it supported out of the way, volunteers operating on a pittance went to work. Now, after years of winter planning and summer trail work, they are spurting toward Durango. Precisely 424 miles are in place. If 350 volunteers show up, they will complete 28 miles this summer and the last 28 miles in summer of 1987.

Those who set out on the completed trail in fall 1987 won't find the hike as easy as envisioned by the original planners. Editor Hastings proposed it after a trip to Europe, and he imagined hikers spending evenings at European-style Hüttes, where food and beds would eliminate the need for packs. Today's planner-builders hope to put up cabins once the trail is complete. But they will provide only a roof.

Hikers will experience a trail designed with a definite philosophy in mind. It avoids all but the edges of wilderness, it stays away from towns

and it deliberately passes through some ugly scenes in the backcountry.

Gudy Gaskill, the 59-year-old heart of the Colorado Trail effort, says it was designed "to get close to the scene of man-made destruction. It will go near Climax (AMAX's molybdenum mine above Leadville), gravel pits, roads, timber cuts and recent man-made forest fires" to show visitors destruction the backcountry has suffered. But mostly the trail will pass through unspoiled mountain country.

The trail was designed in the mid-1970s. As Gudy recalls, while the Colorado Trail Foundation was spending \$150,000, unpaid volunteers, working out of Denver and Durango, used topo maps and winter and summer visits to the backcountry to lay out a trail corridor incorporating the philosophy of wilderness avoidance and views of beauty and the beast.

The rough corridor -- a line on a map rather than a surveyed route -- became part of an environmental assessment the Forest Service completed in February 1980. That assessment, approved after a series of public hearings around the state, put the route's corridor through five of the state's seven national forests.

Whenever possible, the Colorado Trail connects existing trails. Roughly 315 miles of trail were already in place. "We found a lot of trails out there not being used." In some cases, the trails were overgrown or eroded, and extensive maintenance has been done to make them usable.

The restoration was consistent with an existing Colorado Mountain Club state-wide trail maintenance program being run by Gudy. She knew from that experience that maintenance is not appealing to volunteers, and for

that reason she kept the more appealing Colorado Trail effort low key at first. "We wanted to keep maintaining the rest of Colorado's trails. We were in no hurry on the Colorado Trail."

But on Dec. 9, 1984, writer Ed Quillen blew Gudy's strategy out of the water and the Colorado Trail out of the closet. He published an article in the *Denver Post's Empire Magazine* which changed the fate of the Colorado Trail. The article was titled "Trail to Nowhere," and it is the best piece written on the trail's history and terrain.

It presented a picture of wasted money, of District Rangers who didn't have or want to have any idea of how or where the trail was to cross their domain, and of a discouraged Gudy Gaskill: "It's going to take a while, building only two to four miles a year."

At that rate, "a while" would have been the 21st century. But Gudy hadn't reckoned with the power of the press. Quillen's article brought in a flood of volunteers and galvanized Colorado's Gov. Richard Lamm, who wanted to see the trail completed before he left office. The trail won't meet that deadline, but Lamm did get Colorado state government behind the effort, he signed an agreement with the Forest Service that made the trail the top recreation priority in Region 8, and he and other local notables found time to swing pulaskis, move rocks and cut trees as part of the volunteer effort.

Gudy, who seems torn between completing the Colorado Trail and maintaining the rest of Colorado's trails, has mixed feelings about the rocket-like acceleration of the program. "As I feared, the Colorado Trail has pushed aside other projects. But the formation of the Friends of the

Colorado Trail (the group which will maintain the trail once it is complete) will let the Mountain Club go back to state-wide maintenance."

The new trail is an attempt to reverse two post-World War II trends. One goal, Gudy says, is to draw people out of wilderness areas, many of which are being battered by overuse. Wilderness, she says, attracts people "because they're the only places they've heard of."

At first, it appeared the trail was to violate the non-wilderness principle by running through the Weminuche Wilderness on the San Juan National Forest on its way to Durango. But he who rows also gets to steer. Gudy says, "I just put off building that part year after year." Recently, the Forest Service took the route out of the Weminuche. "It adds 40 difficult miles of trailbuilding through the LaPlata Range, but it's worth it."

At times, Gudy thought she was losing ground. "They built a logging road over our trail at Buff Creek in the South Platte. The logger went bankrupt and left a mess." But support from the Regional Office again came to the rescue. "They ordered the district to restore the trail."

The South Platte River section near Denver faces another threat. Construction of Two Forks Reservoir by the Denver Water Board (HCN, 4/28/86) could drown miles of the South Platte, and the trail. At the same time, the Denver Water Board has helped the project by building several miles of trail. The Forest Service, out in the field, has also been a mixed bag. Some Forest Service Districts have been spectacularly unhelpful, Gudy says. But the South

The case of the vanishing forest trails

A concise 15-page report, *National Forest Trails: Neglected and Disappearing*, tells a sad story for anyone who likes to hike through national forests. The story is best told through a graph that charts miles of road-building since 1976 for timber cuts, compared to trail-building or repair. The trend is stark.

According to the report, which was prepared last June for the National Trails Coalition, under Sierra Club supervision: "More and more trail users are being crowded onto fewer and fewer trails."

Between 1969 and 1983, the number of visitor days for trail use jumped from 5.6 million to about 13 million, a 132 percent increase. But it was in the 1940s that the number of miles of national forest trails peaked at 144,000 miles.

Since then the total number of trail miles built, maintained and repaired by the Forest Service has declined -- even though 20 million acres were added to national forests between 1932 and 1950. By 1974, trail system mileage was only two-thirds what it had been 40 years earlier.

By 1980, the last year the Forest Service reported system-wide figures for trails, only 101,000 miles of trails were left.

Roads for vehicles have mushroomed in forests, and the report documents that change in emphasis. In 1932, there were 3.2 miles of trail for each mile of road on national

forests. That dominance eroded, and by 1955, road miles exceeded trail miles for the first time. The gap has continued to widen, and by 1983, there were three miles of road for every mile of trail.

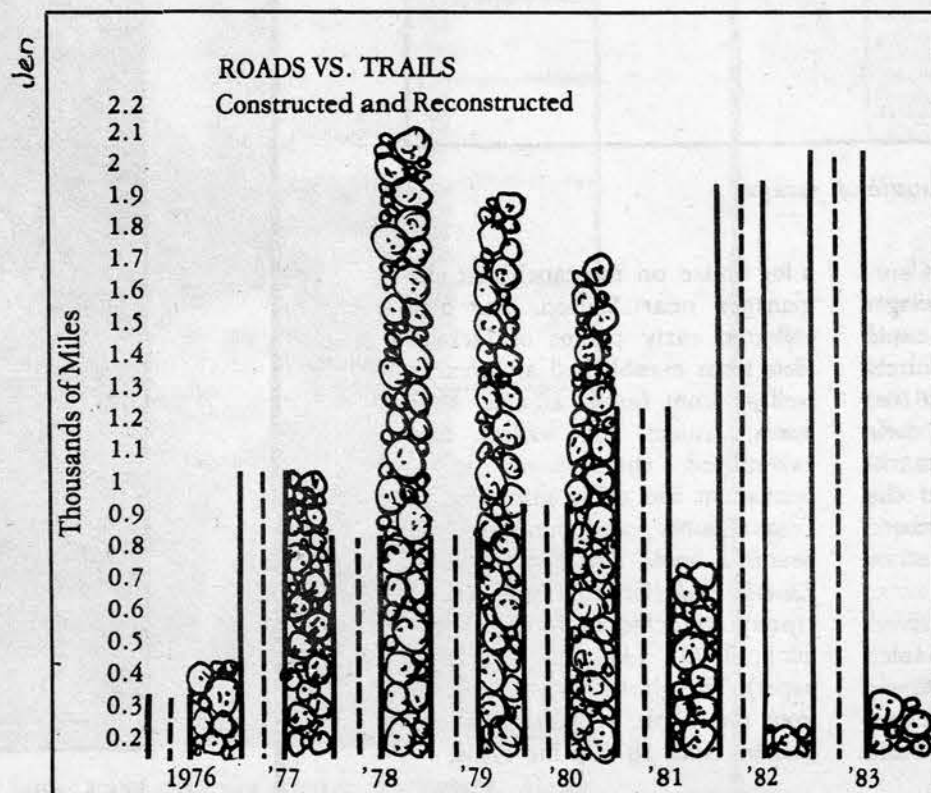
Some of the new roads are in roadless areas, and "the Forest Service estimates that 700 to 900 miles of roads per year will be built in roadless areas in the next 10 years."

As the report points out, trails share equal status under the law with

roads. Yet between 1980 and 1983, an average of 1,700 miles of road were built on national forests each year while only 513 miles of trail were added. And some trails were lost to roads built over them.

The report, funded by Recreational Equipment, Inc., is available for \$1.75 from the Sierra Club, 530 Bush Street, San Francisco, CA 94108 (415/981-8634).

--Betsy Marston



August 4, 1986 -- High Country News-11

Park, South Platte and Salida ranger districts all built trail with Forest Service funds.

Although the name Colorado Trail will stick, it might be fitting to name sections after those who played a role in its construction. Gudy's should be the longest and the most spectacular. As chairperson of the Colorado Mountain Club committee, she has been associated with the effort since its beginning, and has done everything from planning to raising food money to supervising crews all summer.

Gov. Lamm, who once quipped that the trail is the only way to link Colorado's Front Range and Western Slope, deserves a stretch. Retired regional forester Bill Lucas has earned a section, as has Merrill Hastings, whose trip to Europe inspired the idea, and whose early articles in *Colorado Magazine* made the effort visible. And journalist Ed Quillen deserves a stretch for getting the trail unstuck.

But if the route were accurately named, it would be the People's Trail. Gudy has a stack of questionnaires filled out by some of the 1985 volunteers; they show that a cross-section of people from all over the nation have helped push the trail through heavy timber, across long rock slides and over bogs.

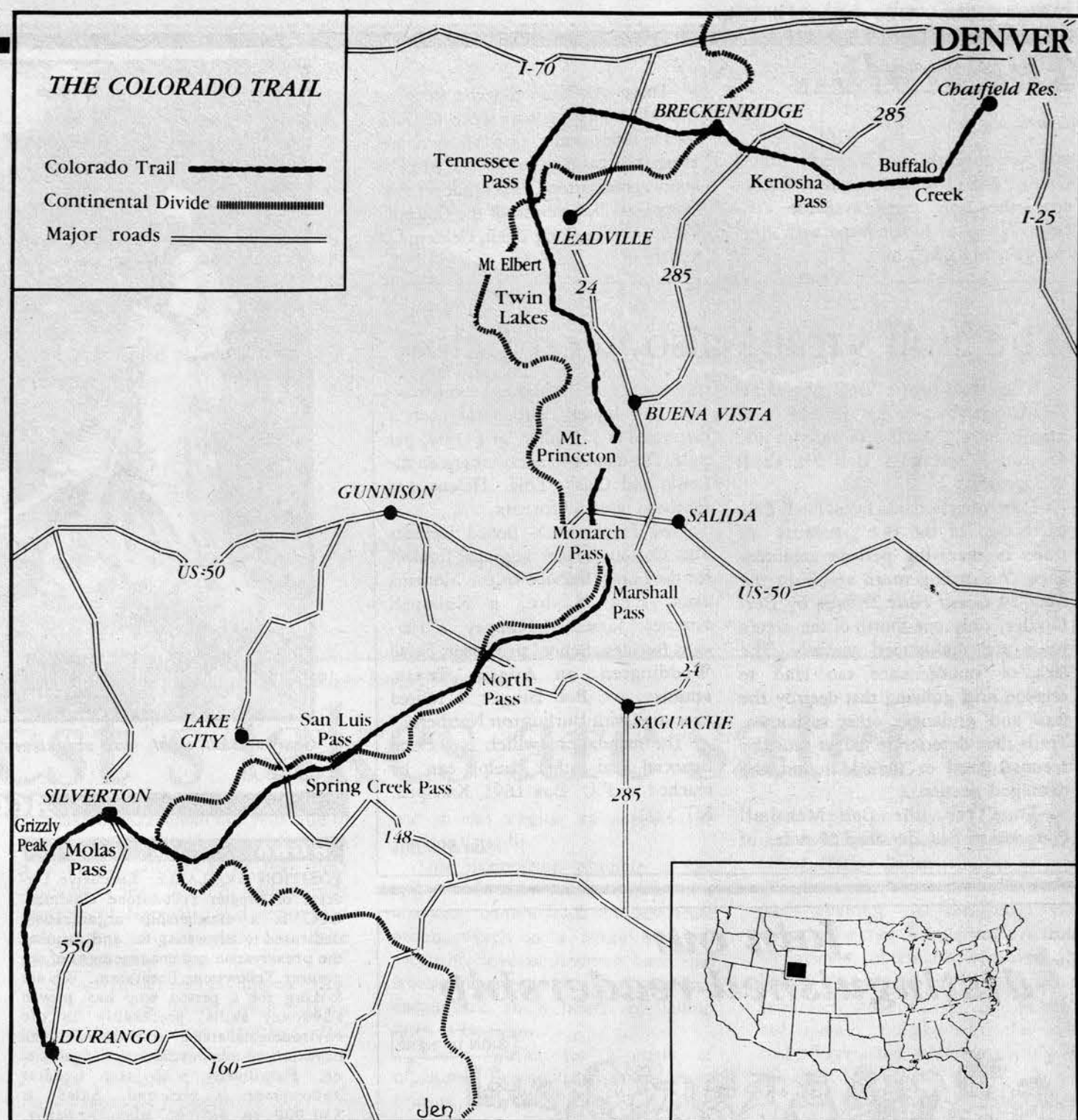
Among last summer's volunteers were the 64-year-old retired lady who loved the "adventure of building the trail" and the 37-year-old college teacher who wrote: "I liked the hard work. And I want there to be a Colorado Trail." A 68-year-old retiree did it to "show my appreciation" for years of hiking in the mountains.

A 21-year-old student at Northeastern University saw an article on the trail in *Parade*. She signed up, and after her tour pited "all those people who spend thousands of dollars on their vacation and end up fighting crowds and cramming themselves onto tour buses." She also "lost weight, saw Colorado and came home with a suntan." A 69-year-old retired kindergarten teacher said she had read about the trail "but thought I was probably too old." She was wrong.

Gudy, who runs trail crews all summer, says, "A 55-year-old will write and say: 'I'm too old for hard labor. Can I do light work?' I write back: 'You need to get into shape.' People in our society no longer do hard physical labor. They're excited to learn that they can. We had a cross-cut crew -- one lady was 65 and the other 47. By the end of their week, they were having contests with the Forest Service crew. They were thrilled."

Each crew, Gudy says, commits itself for a week, of which four days are spent building trail and three in play. On the average, a crew builds a mile of trail in that week. Each member of the 27 15-person crews this year will pay a \$25 registration fee. In return, they will be provided with trail-building equipment by the Forest Service, tents and other camping equipment by the Colorado Mountain Club, and food paid for by Gudy's fundraising. They will follow a route surveyed by the Forest Service. Gudy says, "We have to build the trail the summer they survey it. Otherwise, something eats the flags during the winter."

Gudy says the food costs \$450 a week per crew. "I've been doing it so



Back and forth across the Divide

One end of the Colorado Trail is in Waterton Canyon, but you can also hike the Hiline Canal from downtown Denver to the Waterton Trailhead. The trail crosses the Platte River at the town of South Platte, passes six miles south of Bailey, meanders through the Lost Creek area and crosses Kenosha Pass and U.S. 285.

It then drops down to near Jefferson Lake and crosses the Continental Divide into western Colorado at Georgia Pass, running through Breckenridge and then over Ten Mile Range into Copper Mountain Ski Area. From there, it goes up Guller Creek and Searle Pass, and into

the site of the old Camp Hale Tenth Mountain Division camp.

From Tennessee Pass, it follows the eastern base of the Massive Range, skirting Turquoise Lake and Twin Lakes Reservoir, on the east side of Independence Pass. It travels south on the eastern edge of the Collegiate Range, and then climbs to Monarch Pass by way of Fooses Creek, and then on to Marshall Pass.

It turns south and west between the Gunnison and Rio Grande national forests. The trail now stays high, crossing the Continental Divide nine times in the 45 miles between Marshall and North passes. The trail crosses the divide five more times in

the next 60 miles between North and Spring passes. Between the two passes, it goes by San Luis Peak in the La Garita Wilderness. At this point, the San Juan Mountains are to the south.

From Spring Pass, the trail heads west and south into the Elk Creek drainage and crosses the Animas River at Elk Park. After crossing the Durango to Silverton narrow gauge railroad and State Highway 550, the trail continues west to the Rico Mountains, and then south for about 50 miles to the Junction Creek campground, three miles north of Durango, by way of the Indian Creek Trail Ridge.

long I can walk into a store with a menu in my head and buy the food for an entire crew." In addition, the Forest Service throws a barbecue one night. "I want people to know they worked for the Forest Service, and not for me or the Colorado Mountain Club."

The volunteer effort, then, costs about \$500 a mile. If the Forest Service did the trail building, it would cost \$7,000 to \$15,000 per mile. That means the agency would have spent a few million dollars to do what the volunteers will do for a few hundred thousand. (Region 8's trail building budget this year is \$350,000 and its maintenance budget \$950,000, for 20 forests in Nebraska, South Dakota, Wyoming and Colorado.)

Once the trail is built, the more difficult task of long-term maintenance begins. Gudy says, "I can't get volunteers to come back if they

spend their time on maintenance. It's hard mentally. You don't see a nice new trail result from your work."

So instead of depending on the recruitment of volunteers, she is asking organizations to become "Friends of the Colorado Trail" and adopt 25-mile sections. "If it's done each year, maintenance won't be that hard." So far, Outward Bound has adopted the Leadville section.

Gudy also sees the need for institutional reform. Fully loaded horses, she says, can do enormous damage to a wet trail, but the fees paid to the Forest Service by guides and outfitters do not return to a trail fund. She wants that changed. She also wants the Forest Service to contract with volunteer groups for trail maintenance. "We can do it for a fraction of the cost they can. It would be an excellent investment."

Gudy is committed to seeing the

trail through to completion. She is looking for old log cabins, perhaps located on patented mining claims, that can be torn down and then rebuilt at key points along the trail. She estimates that a cabin can be put up for \$10,000.

And she is willing to discuss a second trail, this one a variation on Hastings' original idea, threading its way from Denver through the backcountry via ski resort towns such as Breckenridge, Vail, Aspen and Crested Butte. "But someone else will have to do that one." Meanwhile, the trail moves toward completion -- toward the day in fall 1987 that someone sets a golden water bar athwart a switchback. In addition to this summer's construction work, the Forest Service is putting up "Colorado Trail" signs on finished segments,

(Continued on page 12)

The trail...

(Continued from page 11)

and volunteers at Western State College are at work on a guide. Right now, the only maps available are photocopies of forest maps with the trail roughly inked in.

Those who wish to get a jump on that 1987 opening can write to Gudy for the forest maps, or for information about volunteering, or for the place to send contributions. Her address is: Gudy Gaskill, Friends of the Colorado Trail, 548 Pine Song Trail, Golden, CO 80401.

The Bob's trails also need help

The non-profit Bob Marshall foundation hopes to restore and maintains 1,500 miles of trails in and around Montana's Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Like most national forest land, only a fraction of the Bob's network of trails is receiving periodic maintenance. According to an article in the May 29 *Great Falls Tribune* by Bert Lindler, only one-fourth of the area's trails are maintained annually. The lack of maintenance can lead to erosion and gullying that destroy the trail and endanger other resources. Trails that deteriorate too far must be reconstructed or routed around the damaged sections.

Thus far, the Bob Marshall Foundation has identified 20 miles of

trail in need of immediate reconstruction and repair. The total cost is estimated at \$265,000, or \$13,000 per mile. The damaged sections are on the Lewis and Clark, Lola, Helena and Flathead national forests.

The foundation's board includes Tom Coston, former regional forester for the Forest Service in the Montana area; Kent Saxbe, a Kalispell attorney; James McKenney, a Harvard Business School professor; Sarah Weddington, an Austin, Texas, attorney; and Bob Binger, a retired executive with Burlington Northern.

The foundation, which is seeking financial and other help, can be reached at: P.O. Box 1691, Kalispell, MT 59901.

--Ed Marston



Gudy Gaskill, right, with volunteers

ACCESS

WORK

POSITION AVAILABLE: Executive Director of Greater Yellowstone Coalition. GYC is a membership organization, dedicated to advocating for and insuring the preservation and enhancement of the greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. We are looking for a person who has proven advocacy skills, preferably in the environmental arena -- and who is also an experienced administrator and fundraiser. Familiarity with the Greater Yellowstone is preferred. Salary is \$30,000 to \$35,000 plus benefits. Application deadline is Aug. 20, 1986. Contact Bill Bryan, 109 East Main Street, Bozeman, Montana 59715. (1x14p)

MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CO-ORDINATOR: Colorado Environmental Coalition needs self-motivated, creative, energetic person to coordinate membership development program. Duties include: membership renewals and updates; implementation of direct mail membership recruitment program; computer data entry. Experience with direct mail fundraising, writing and clerical skills, computer ability, initiative, creativity essential; familiarity with environmental issues very helpful. Salary: \$9000/year (3/4 time) plus insurance. Send resume, writing samples and ideas on how you would implement this program to: Colorado Environmental Coalition, Membership Hiring Committee, 2239 E. Colfax, Denver, CO 80206-1390 (303-393-0466). Deadline: Aug. 15, 1986. Start early September. (1xb)

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SOLAR ELECTRICITY: Power from the sun for your home, cabin, RV or boat. Photovoltaic panels, wind generators, gas refrigerators, and more. \$1.00 catalog. Yellow Jacket Solar, Box 253E, Yellow Jacket, Colorado 81335. 303/562-4884. (EOI 4p)

FOR RENT: Near Hells Canyon-Eagle Cap Wilderness, Oregon: 4-bedroom home, \$300/wk. Corrals, decks, outstanding fishing. Horse and llama pack trips available. 503/297-6071. (4x14b)

RECYCLED PAPER. Free color catalog of environmental notecards and recycled office and printing paper. Earth Care Paper, 325-56 Beech Lane, Harbor Springs, Mich. 49740. (7x13p)

SINGLE? ENVIRONMENTALIST? PEACE-ORIENTED? Concerned Singles Newsletter links unattached like-minded men and women, all areas, all ages. Free sample. Box 7737-B, Berkeley, CA 94707. (6x5)

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WILDERNESS SEMINAR IN ART: Western Wyoming College, with a grant from the Wyoming Council on the Arts, offers a seven-day horseback pack trip/seminar in painting into the Wind River Range, led by Artist-in-residence Zac Reisner. Aug. 25-31. Eight-student limit, financial aid available. For further information, call Dave Kathka at 307/382-2121, or write: Western Wyoming College, Box 428, Rock Springs, WY 82901. (2x13b)

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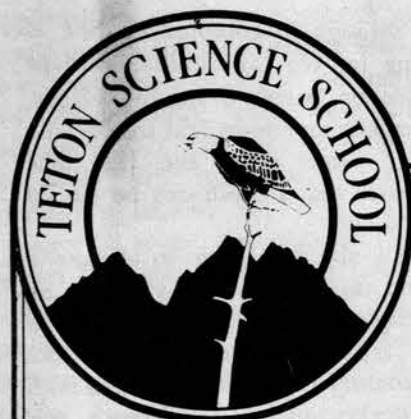


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Douglas smelter shut

Del Owens



Wind River Range, Wyoming

The West's lakes are safer

by Ed Marston

Michael Stewart of Project Lighthawk calls it the biggest environmental victory since the defeat of the giant Kaiparowits power plant proposed for southern Utah's canyon country. Robert Yuhnke of the Environmental Defense Fund calls it a "large piece of fortuity for the West."

"It" is the closure by the Environmental Protection Agency July 9 of the Phelps Dodge copper smelter in Douglas, Arizona, a stone's throw from the Mexican border and only 56 miles north of the giant new Mexican copper smelter at Nacozari.

Phelps Dodge is an uncontrolled plant which has been emitting 300,000 tons of sulfur dioxide a year. That made it the largest emitter in the U.S. When Nacozari, which opened in June, gets up to speed, it will emit 500,000 tons a year until controls are installed.

If the two smelters, plus a third at Cananea, Mexico, which emits 125,000 tons yearly, were to operate together, they would devastate land within the so-called smelter triangle in Mexico and Arizona. Dick Kamp, whose Border Ecology Project is a local leader in Arizona in the fight against the emissions, says, "They would kill people."

The emissions are also believed capable of killing lakes far to the north, in Colorado's Rocky Mountains and Wyoming's Wind River Range. The Environmental Defense Fund has done studies that show smelter emissions falling out on those mountains. EDF's Yuhnke says the Wind River Range is especially vulnerable because 80 percent of its many lakes have very low resistance to acidification.

The closure of Phelps Dodge, if it sticks, means southern Arizona and the Rockies won't see an appreciable

increase in SO₂ fallout this year due to Nacozari. And if the Mexican government adheres to its July 1985 agreement with the U.S. and installs controls at Nacozari, acid deposition will drop significantly in the mountains after 1988.

Stewart's Project Lighthawk played a role in the closure, flying various people to and from hearings and helping to publicize the extent of the Phelps Dodge plume. But his comparison to Kaiparowits may be wide of the mark. Kaiparowits was beaten by national environmental groups in the face of strong state and local support in Utah for the project. Phelps Dodge was closed by an alliance of local and state business and civic groups, labor unions and national environmental groups.

The national groups did studies, filed lawsuits and lobbied in Washington. But EDF's Yuhnke said the shutdown would not have happened without the support of communities around Douglas. That support convinced local congressman James Colby to call for a cleanup, and Gov. Bruce Babbitt to recently call for an outright shutdown.

In part, Phelps Dodge beat itself. It busted its union in 1983, and 40 percent of its present workforce is new to the community. As a result, it lost the support of the U.S. Steelworkers and of ex-workers with deep roots in Douglas.

But it was also beaten by economic trends in southern Arizona, and the new type of person those trends have attracted. Although it is far south of Phoenix, the towns in Cochise County are 4,000 to 5,000 feet high and have relatively mild winters and pleasant summers. It is also in attractive country, near Coronado National Forest, with its array of 10,000-foot mountain peaks. As a result, the communities around Douglas, such as Bisbee and Sierra Vista, have attracted small industries and retirees. There is also organic fruit-growing, based on groundwater and the lack -- so far -- of pests, says Dick Kamp.

Those economies are incompatible with a smelter emitting 800 tons a day of deadly SO₂. Kamp says that even Douglas, whose newspaper is the only

one in the region to support the smelter, is split.

One interesting example of the split, and the conflict with new activities, comes from the new state prison, which is a major new job producer. Several prisoners have filed lawsuits charging that the state has endangered their health by jailing them in Douglas.

Kamp works for a chain of smalltown newspapers in southern Arizona owned by Bob Wick. The newspapers have crusaded against the emissions, and Kamp describes Wick as a "businessman-ecologist" who sees the health of the region as dependent on a sharp reduction in SO₂ emissions.

Despite the consensus, Phelps Dodge, whose smelter is 80 years old, and employed 360 workers until the shutdown, seemed capable of resisting cleanup until December 1987, when a federal law would finally force it to shut down or clean up. (The firm said it would shut down.)

Earlier, there had been federal pressure, as a result of concern over acid rain, to control Phelps Dodge in order to get Mexico to control Nacozari. But the July 1985 U.S.-Mexico agreement, which linked a 1988 cleanup of Nacozari to cleanups or shutdowns of U.S. smelters by 1988, removed pressure for a 1986 or 1987 shutdown. Although the Environmental Protection Agency has had the power for several years to require Phelps Dodge to reduce its emissions, neither EPA nor the state seemed likely to act.

Yuhnke says the situation changed in May, when the EPA held a hearing in Douglas and heard testimony from the area's suffering asthmatic patients.

"We think the EPA bureaucrats saw that the cleanup wasn't an academic exercise. We think they left feeling a good deal of guilt about the suffering these people were enduring." They also knew, Yuhnke says, that EDF was prepared to go to court to ask for an injunction on the basis of an immediate threat to human health from the extremely high SO₂ levels. "They didn't want to tell the judge why they hadn't acted to protect human lives."

For whatever reason, the EPA lifted its suspension of the Arizona air

quality plan on July 9. That let the state's air quality limits finally go into effect. Phelps Dodge, unable to meet the limits (180 tons/day while they were emitting 900 tons/day) shut down. The next day, the Arizona Department of Health removed the Phelps Dodge permit. Either action separately meant Phelps Dodge could not operate. Yuhnke said the state could have acted without waiting for the EPA, but refused.

As of this writing, Phelps Dodge, with the help of Arizona Sen. Barry Goldwater, is attempting to convince EPA administrator Lee Thomas to allow it to operate for another few months, until its present stock of concentrate has been smelted. Yuhnke says even if the EPA should reverse itself, the state would also have to act, and then the EPA would have to go to court to face EDF's lawsuit.

Although many of those laid off by Phelps Dodge are the 1983 strikebreakers, the Border Ecology Project does not downplay the pain of the 300 layoffs. Kamp said the Wick newspapers will help the laid-off workers look for work. And the newspapers are pushing for job training funds.

As a sign of what may happen in Douglas, Kamp points to nearby Bisbee, which lost 1,200 jobs in 1975 when Phelps Dodge shut its copper mine. No single large company came in, Kamp says. Instead, many small activities moved in, and a University of Arizona study reports a Social Security payroll of \$10 million a year in the town of 7,000. "Bisbee has been stable for the last 10 years."

Relatively speaking, the Douglas smelter is a much smaller part of that community. Douglas has 15,000 residents, and its Mexican border town, Agua Prieta, has 85,000. The devaluation of the peso hurt Douglas' retail trade, as it hurt retail sales in all U.S. towns on the Mexico border. Kamp says the cross-border economy is improving, and that economic development experts predict the removal of the smelter's smoke will help the town and region. It will also

(Continued on page 14)

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Smelter...

(Continued from page 13)

help local agriculture, because the SO₂ stunted crops.

For EDF and Bob Yuhnke, the closure, if it sticks, means the end is in sight for the organization's Western Acid Rain Project. It was started in 1981, Yuhnke recalls, with a first goal of "changing the politics of copper." Firms such as Kennecott and Asarco cleaned up relatively soon after 1981, in part the result of earlier negotiations with the EPA, and in part the result of anticipated environmentalist pressure.

But Phelps Dodge was determined to resist to the end. Because it was the largest emitter in the nation and because it was the key to controlling Nacozari, EDF concentrated on it for several years.

If Phelps Dodge is really gone, the nation's largest emitter becomes Magma Copper's smelter at San

Manuel, Arizona, 100 miles to the north. This Newmont Mining subsidiary emits 250,000 tons per year of SO₂, damaging both the local area and distant mountain lakes. Unlike Phelps Dodge, Magma says it will clean up by the deadline, and Yuhnke says the only option is to wait for 1988. The delay in adhering to air quality standards was granted by the U.S. Congress in 1977, when it gave the EPA the power to give copper smelters so-called NSO exemptions from air quality standards. Copper is the only industry to enjoy such exemptions.

The last part of EDF's acid rain project in the West, Yuhnke says, is to put "80 percent nitrogen oxide controls on the West's coal-fired power plants. Once that is done, the West will be safe from acid rain for the next 30 to 50 years."

Copper industry gets lean by chopping at wages

A tin miner in Cornwall, England, recently told a *New York Times* reporter: "The government says there's no aid to keep the mines running, but wants us all to dress up now as country yokels in smocks and pose for the tourists who will want to see what mining was like."

For awhile, it appeared that the copper miners and smelter workers of the West were headed for the same fate as the Cornish tin miners. The huge pit at Butte, Mt., was closed by Atlantic Richfield's Anaconda division in 1983, and the last 700 miners laid off. In 1985, Standard Oil of Ohio had its Kennecott subsidiary shut down the Bingham Pit near Salt Lake City, and lay off its last 2,700 workers. A few years earlier, the operation had employed 7,000. Arizona, a major copper state, faced a similar job shrinkage in job opportunities, as mines and smelters closed.

Overall, U.S. copper employment dropped by two-thirds, from 42,423 in 1980 to 15,578 in 1985, according to the *Engineering and Mining Journal*. The descent in employment followed a descent in price, from over \$1 a pound in 1980 to 60 cents today. The drop was caused by increased foreign production aggravated by a drop in demand. Fiber optics, plastic pipes and aluminum car radiators have all been pushing copper out of traditional markets.

The copper shutdowns had some environmental benefits. Smelting produces large quantities of sulfur dioxide, believed to be a major cause of acid rain. Although firms such as Kennecott and Asarco had installed pollution control devices, even their smelters emit some SO₂. And uncontrolled smelters produce huge quantities of SO₂.

In one case, a shutdown created an environmental problem. Kennecott's eight square miles of tailings ponds in Magna, near Salt Lake City, began to dry up and blow last year, when Kennecott stopped pouring 100,000 tons a day of fresh, wet tailings atop the 75-year accumulation (HCN, 10/16/85).

The blowing became serious last summer, and Kennecott took steps to control it. Nevertheless, the ponds celebrated this Fourth of July by hitting Magna with a dust storm so intense motorists had to use headlights at noon and residents had to seal their homes despite the heat.

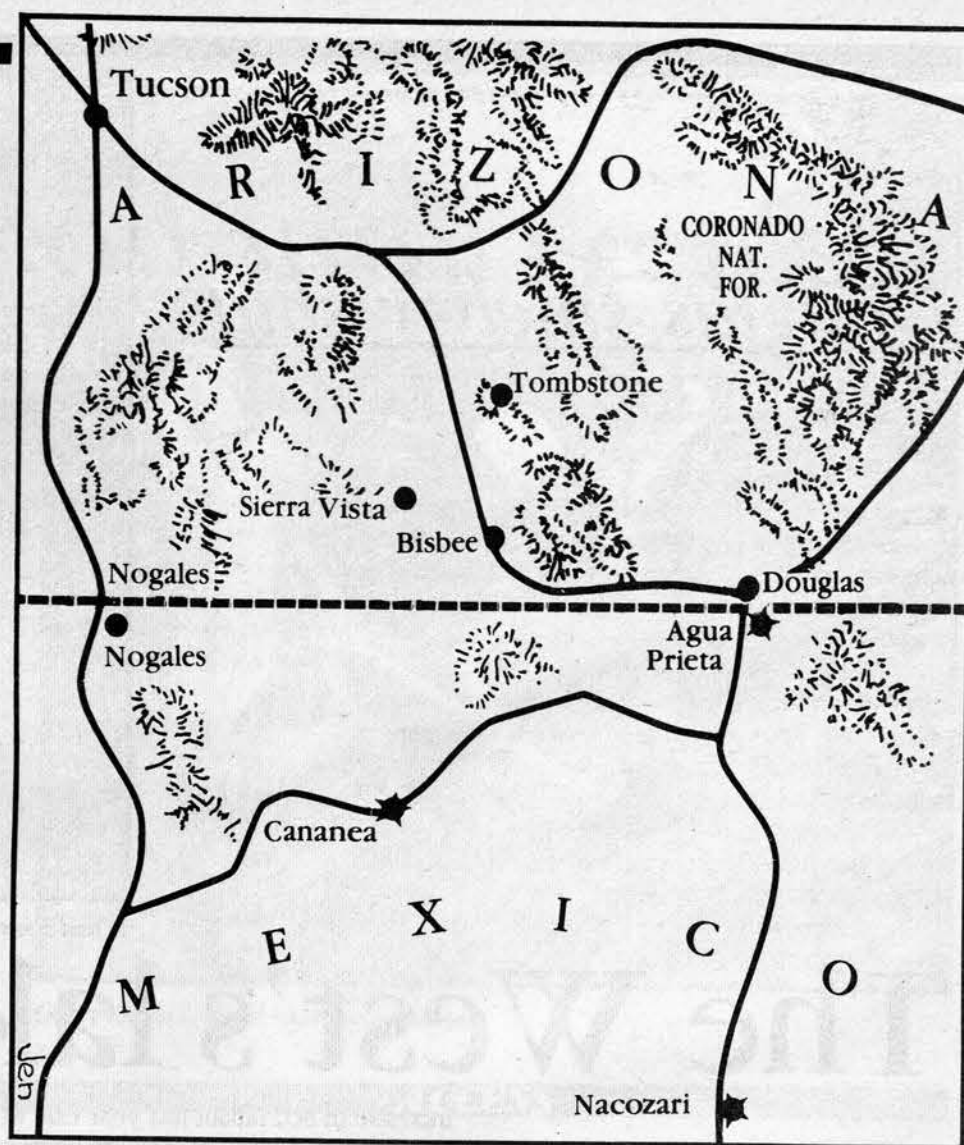
Now the problem may solve itself. Kennecott's 14 unions have voted a 23 percent cut in wages and benefits, and 2,000 workers may return to work this year. In addition, Standard Oil will put \$400 million into further modernization of the operation. Pay and benefits at Kennecott had totaled \$24 an hour. This lowers it to about \$18.50, with hourly wages running from \$7 to \$12.

The agreement followed similar wage cuts at Newmont Mining Corp.'s Magma Copper and Pinto Valley Copper in Arizona, which employ 3,100. Asarco's unions, with members in Arizona, New Jersey, Washington and Texas, also have agreed to cuts.

Negotiated wage and benefit cuts are not the only path to the low costs companies say they need. In 1983, Phelps Dodge broke the union at its Arizona operations (see accompanying story). And in Butte, Montana, an Anaconda open pit and copper concentrator is starting up again, but on a small scale and without the 13 unions Anaconda negotiated with. Thus far, Montana Resources, Inc., a subsidiary of Washington Corp., has hired 200 people and plans to hire another 100 by mid-August. The copper concentrate produced by the operation will be smelted overseas.

The goal of the reduced wages, modernized operations and freedom from what managers see as inefficient union operating rules is to get their firms' breakeven point down from over \$1 a pound to the 60 cents needed to operate in this new age. Kennecott, for example, says it will reopen this year, but only if the price doesn't drop below 55 cents per pound. At present, it is less than a nickel higher.

--Ed Marston



BULLETIN BOARD

SONG DOG

Song Dog is the name the Indians gave to coyotes. It is also the name of a 27-minute documentary by Montana filmmaker Bob Landis, edited by Dale Johnson. Landis spent almost a decade collecting footage of the coyote and other wildlife in Yellowstone's Lamar River Valley. The time was well spent. There are spectacular scenes, such as the theft of a black bear cub from its mother and of a fish from an otter. But the meat of the film, so to speak, is the moment-to-moment life of the ever-active coyotes as they bully each other, spray the boundaries of their territory, raise their young, hunt mice in the snow and snap up grasshoppers in the fall. The film shows the coyote's life cycle but it also features cameo appearances by guest artists, including some wonderfully graceful landings by owls and a battle between two bighorn sheep which is as majestic and ceremonial as anything we have ever seen. The film is not perfect. The narration is a bit heavy and pedagogic, and if the narrator intoned "Here in the Lamar River Valley" once, he intoned it a thousand times. But those are quibbles.

Song Dog is available on 16 millimeter film and on videotape, and is for sale (\$350 to \$400) or rent (\$40). For information, write: Dale Johnson, Trailwood Films, P.O. Box 1421, Huron, SD 57350.

MORCK SUCCEEDS RICHARDS

Neil Morck will succeed the recently retired Kannon Richards as Colorado state director of the Bureau of Land Management. Currently director of the BLM's Denver Service Center, Morck has served as range manager in Nevada and Montana, and district manager in Rock Springs, Wyoming.

PEACE DAYS

Earth appears blue and white from space, and during the four days of "International Peace Days" some people from all over the world will wear the two colors as a symbol for peace. Organizer Jim Ranney, who is a past president of the Montana Lawyers for Peace, says he hopes the campaign of symbolic action will become an annual event. International Peace Days are scheduled for Aug. 6-9, the days when Hiroshima and Nagasaki were bombed in 1945. Ranney says the colors worn are also those of the United Nations, the peace dove and the Russian symbol for peace, the birch tree. For more information write People for Peace, c/o James Ranney, 1429 Jackson Street, Missoula, MT 59802 (406/243-6492).

POLITICS AT TELLURIDE

The Telluride Ideas Festival is gearing up for a second annual get-together, tackling this year's theme, "Reinventing Politics." Sponsors are the Telluride Institute and Bellwether Foundation, and "presenters" include California State Assemblyman Tom Hayden; campaign manager for George Bush, Lee Atwater; writer and environmentalist Edward Abbey; social analysts Patricia Aburdene and John Naisbitt; and British politician Shirley Williams. The Aug. 15-18 conference costs \$425, with a discount of \$175 to residents of the Four Corners states. For more information write Karen Cain, The Telluride Institute, Box 1770, Telluride, CO 81435 (303/728-4981).

A MUSTERING OF STORKS, SMACK OF JELLYFISH, CAST OF HAWKS...

Thanks to the bimonthly magazine, *International Wildlife*, we've learned some 500-year-old terms for groups of animals we never knew possessed names. Had you heard of a charm of finches, leap of leopards, knot of toads, shrewdness of apes or parliament of owls? The magazine, published by the National Wildlife Federation, says there is room for more modern creativity and is therefore sponsoring a search for new names of animal groups. We are not told, however, what groups of animals are nameless. (Is there already a revulsion of grasshoppers?) Send entries to *International Wildlife*, 1412 16th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036.

UTAH CANYON COUNTRY



UTAH CANYON COUNTRY, the first book in the new Utah Geographic Series, is now available! Includes authoritative text by Moab author F.A. Barnes, 162 color photos by the West's finest photographers, color maps and charts, and a foreword by Ted Wilson, former mayor of Salt Lake City. Send \$14.95 plus \$1.00 for postage (\$15.95 total per book) to: Utah Geographic Series, Box 8325, Salt Lake City, Utah 84108. Money-back guarantee if not fully satisfied.

OPINION

Real reclamation

The collapse of the West's traditional extractive and public land economies -- oil and gas exploration and production, logging, grazing, mining, milling -- has halted many a destructive project. The most spectacular stops have been the oil shale and uranium industries in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah; oil and gas exploration in western Wyoming; Colstrip 4 in Montana and AMAX's proposed molybdenum mine outside Crested Butte, Colorado.

The derailments have had deplorable side effects. Whatever toll they took from the landscape and air, the extractive activities supported families, schools and colleges, civic activities and charities. They even supported environmental groups whose job it was to watchdog them. The bread we were all living off nourished even as it sickened.

The shrinkage of that economic base has caused dislocation, misery, great anxiety, resultant social and physical disease, and hunger in hundreds of communities in the West. The effects are easiest to see in rural towns, but they can also be seen in Casper, Denver, Salt Lake and Great Falls. We recently spent an hour in south Denver looking for an address amidst cul de sacs, circles and lanes. We thought we were back in Paonia, so plentiful were the For Sale signs and the U-Haul trucks. When the hinterland collapses, the cities follow.

The unemployment, nosediving housing prices and emptying towns are serious. But there is a long-term effect that could be worse. As these industries decline, they become more destructive than they were in prosperity. The destructiveness can be unintentional. Kennecott, for example, closed its huge copper operation near Salt Lake City over a year ago. Since then, its tailings pile near Magna has been blowing worse than ever, making residents' lives a misery. The eight square miles of discarded mill wastes are blowing because they lack fresh tailings to keep them wet. Kennecott is doing what it can, but that has not been enough.

Unlike Kennecott, other mining companies are doing what they can to avoid reclamation. Wyoming's coal and uranium industries are pleading poverty in their bid for a relaxation of reclamation standards.

The so-called Pinwheel Amendment desired by freight firms is an example of industry using hard times to plot destruction. Mining, agriculture and logging have enlisted some shortsighted Western senators and congressmen in their quest to raise the limits on truck size and weight on the West's interstate highways. The commodity producers say lowering trucking costs will enable them to survive. They won't survive, of course. They will only stay afloat a few weeks or months longer at the expense of the West's roads. It is a scorched

earth policy and it will make it that much more difficult for the region to renew itself.

The same tendencies are visible on public land. The West's logging industry is in its death throes, and that has made it more shrilly and righteously insistent on subsidized roading and access to old-growth forests. It can only see as far as the next stand of virgin timber. The industry's desperation made national headlines earlier this summer, when President Reagan placed tariffs on certain Canadian wood products. The West thus spent part of its political capital to save an industry that probably cannot be saved.

Cattle grazing on public lands presents a similar picture. The plight of the cattlemen means that BLM and Forest Service personnel are more likely to allow overstocking of grazing land, invasion of recreation and riparian areas, illegal transfer of grazing leases, and the like.

More serious, ranch owners in many areas have been reaching out for control of adjacent BLM and national forest land by closing off, often through political means, public access across their private land. Their control of roads leading onto the public's land means they can charge fat fees to hunters, or that they can sell their ranches at an inflated price to people looking for a hideaway or hunting club. In attempting to save themselves then, some owners of private land are endangering future economies based on public land. The trend is endemic throughout the Rocky Mountain states.

This is a grim picture. Are those of us who are with the West for the long term, and who look forward to the establishment of a more balanced and self-sustaining way of life, helpless in the face of the destructive death throes of the traditional industries? A story from southern Arizona elsewhere in this issue suggests differently.

The story describes how the Environmental Protection Agency acted, after many years, to shut down the single largest emitter of sulfur dioxide in the nation -- the Phelps Dodge smelter at Douglas, Arizona. The smelter has attracted national attention because it poses an acid rain threat to the mountain lakes of Wyoming and Colorado.

The smelter wasn't closed by acid rain fears. The economy in southern Arizona is shifting from mining and smelting to clean industry, retirement, tourism, fruit-growing and trade with Mexico. Phelps Dodge is a dinosaur in the midst of these new economies. Led by the publisher of a chain of newspapers in the region named Bob Wick, local leaders convinced the area's congressman and Arizona Gov. Bruce Babbitt to push for cleanup. The formation of a coalition was aided by Phelps Dodge's 1983 union busting, which lost it the support of organized labor.

Some factors leading to the closure of the smelter are unique to Arizona. But others are

general. At one time, loggers, miners and smelter operators earned several times the average Western wage. Their high wages made such industries extremely attractive to communities, and often brought the added political clout of a U.S. Steelworkers or United Mineworkers union.

Now the wage differential is narrowing, although lumber-mill operators, miners and smelter-workers still make more money than the tourist industry's ski-lift operators, raft guides and waitresses. As the extractive industries, led by the Phelps Dodges and Louisiana-Pacific, chop wages, they also put themselves on more equal footing with other economies that would live in the West.

Southern Arizona shows how effective those economies can be in controlling the extractive industries. Thus far, however, only the surface has been scratched. For example, the plumbing that regulates the West's rivers is controlled by irrigators and hydropower generators. It is past time for fishermen, rafters and other recreationists to bend river-flows to their needs.

Public land recreationists are a comatose giant when it comes to influencing management of Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service lands. Environmentalists have fought well for wilderness and against roading-logging. But a coalition to bind together hunters, snowmobilers, car campers and fishermen is needed if the job is to get done. The environmental movement will have to jettison some purity, but the rewards will be great.

In the Phelps Dodge case, the Environmental Defense Fund has shown the way to such coalitions. In 1981, EDF established its Western Acid Rain Project, and took aim at the copper and electric utility industries. It stuck with that project, under the leadership of attorney Robert Yuhnke, for five years, providing national lobbying, legal help and strategic thinking. The key to success was its willingness to establish and stick with a long-term plan and to forge a coalition with other interests. Those interests brought in conservative Wyoming Congressman Dick Cheney, a vengeful copper workers' union, self-interested business people and the like. Each case, as we work to reclaim the West, will be different. But the basics of the Arizona model will hold.

The Arizona example demonstrates that the extractive industries need not vanish. Kennecott and Asarco chose to clean up their smelters early on, and they will not be pushed out because of pollution.

Reduced livestock and logging industries can also survive, but only if they adapt. At present, grazing on most public land is not a multiple use. If the cows are present in the usual concentrations, hikers and car campers avoid the area, trails are often trashed and watersheds endangered. Similarly, logging and oil and gas exploration often drive out uses based on wildlife, scenery and lack of roads. But reform is possible. And reform is essential if those industries are to survive as part of a different, stable West.

--Ed Marston

BULLETIN BOARD

PERSPECTIVE ON PUGET SOUND

The Institute of the North American West and the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy recently issued a 20-page tabloid called *Inland Waters: Perspectives on the Sound*. The "sound" is Puget Sound, and the tabloid contains eight articles that look at the basin from a number of perspectives. E. Richard Hart, director of programs for the INAW, has a one-page introduction to the tabloid. Historian Richard White, in an article that is as brilliantly written as it is blandly titled ("Land Use, Environment and Social Change"), traces, in a multi-disciplinary, detailed, on-the-ground manner, how humans have altered the landscape and the environment of areas, often to their own grief. Other articles deal with water quality, salmon, birds and wetlands, and a strategy for saving Puget Sound. While they last, copies of the tabloid are available at no cost from INAW, 1411 Fourth Ave., Ste. 610, Seattle, WA 98101.

WOLF CREEK SKI AREA

The U.S. Forest Service has completed a draft Environmental Impact Statement on the proposed Wolf Creek Valley Ski Area in southern Colorado. The four-season resort would accommodate 11,750 skiers at one time, and would be built by Westfork Investment, Ltd., between Pagosa Springs and Wolf Creek Pass, on U.S. Highway 160. The partnership is asking for 2,365 of national forest land to go with its 2,564 acres of private land. The project has run into severe financial problems as a result of other activities by the former developer, Harvey Doerring. The EIS states that skiing in the Rockies is expected to increase at a 7 to 10 percent rate for at least the next five years. Copies of the EIS can be obtained from, and comments sent to: John R. Kirkpatrick, Forest Supervisor, San Juan National Forest, 701 Camino Del Rio, Durango, CO 81301. The deadline for comments is August 25.

CLOSING COSTS LOOM LARGE

The Washington-based research organization, Worldwatch, warns that no country has counted on the cost of closing down nuclear reactors, even though more than 350 power plants will be taken out of service in the next 30 years. In *Decommissioning: Nuclear Power's Missing Link*, Cynthia Pollock writes that decommissioning cost-estimates range from \$50 million to \$3 billion per 1,000-megawatt reactor. The process involves cleaning, dismantling and burying equipment to protect the public from long-lasting nuclear radiation. Pollock criticizes the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission for not addressing decommissioning regulations, which prevents accurate planning for the future. She says utilities need to collect money from customers when a nuclear plant enters service so that heavy borrowing can be avoided later. Of the four retired commercial reactors in the U.S., only one began funding its decommissioning costs before it shut down. For a copy of the report, write Worldwatch Institute, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 (202/452-1999).



THE ROCKEFELLER PARKWAY

A revised management statement has been issued for the 82-mile John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway, a national recreation area since 1972 that links Grand Teton National Park to Yellowstone National Park. The actual link between parks is 7.5 miles but the parkway's surrounding 23,770 acres are used for hunting, fishing and boating on the Snake River and many other recreation and conservation activities. All grazing on parkway lands was ended in 1981. The management document describes the parkway lands and potential conflicts but proposes no future management plans. For copies of the statement write: Superintendent, Grand Teton National Park, P.O. Drawer 170, Moose, WY 83012 (307/733-2880).

LETTERS

Wallowa Llamas



BAN THE EQUINES

Dear HCN,

So, llamas are not perfect after all. Perfection is indeed an elusive quality. I found Ray Mills' remarks (HCN, 6/23/86) interesting. Llamas are indeed an exotic animal in the context of the Bob Marshall Wilderness. So are horses and mules.

I also found it interesting that Mr. Mills turned the Bob Marshall into a "horse and mule wilderness" with a stroke of his pen. I had the impression that wilderness areas are open to anyone using non-motorized transportation.

Regarding his desire to restrict llamas from cliff-face trails, I notice that in the encounter described, it was the horses and mules that panicked, not the llamas. Perhaps horses and mules should be restricted from cliff-face trails, or used only with flagmen.

Winston Cheyney
Boise, Idaho

THE WRONG BALLPARK

Dear HCN,

I appreciated Darby Junkin's article in the June 9, 1986 issue of the *High Country News* on the Denver hearings on the President's Commission on Americans Outdoors.

However, the article misquoted me as estimating that the cost in Colorado alone to buy water rights for wilderness areas would be in at least six figures. I did not say it was going to be that inexpensive and did not base my estimate on the purchase of water rights for wilderness areas. My testimony was that \$100 million would be conservatively required over the next decade for major water right acquisitions to protect aquatic habitats in the western United States, not including the Pacific states, and that \$10 million could be required for the Upper Colorado River Basin alone. These are extremely rough estimates, and were only intended to provide some order of magnitude. The misquote in the Junkin article leaves us in the wrong ballpark, and understates the issue.

David L. Harrison
Boulder, Colorado

A CONUNDRUM EIS

Dear HCN,

Your July 7 article, "Miner wants to quarry in a wilderness," was far and away the most thorough to date on the threat to the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness Area.

The threat is real. Anyone who has walked along the narrow Conundrum Creek Valley will understand the damage that could result to one of the nation's premier wilderness areas from the proposed mining operation. It's an unpleasant prospect. The Forest Service gambled when it spent nearly \$1 million to buy the surface inholding for inclusion within the wilderness area without the mineral rights underneath. The mining scheme could render that expense a waste of money. That is unfortunate. So is miner Ed Smart's apparent pleasure at the Forest Service's discomfort. It is, however, by no means a foregone conclusion that the miners have the right to drive a bulldozer into a designated wilderness area, regardless of Mr. Smart's statement that "the law is on my side."

The law is on our side, too. It requires that the owners of rights on federal lands be given "reasonable access" -- not just "access" but "reasonable access." When the Congress used the word "reasonable" it empowered the Forest Service to make a judgment as to what is reasonable in a given situation. This situation involves driving a road into a superb designated wilderness area for private development of a material that is not rare and the value of which is purely ornamental. What is reasonable when the issue is marble versus the Maroon Bells-Snowmass wilderness? Miners moved an enormous quantity of material out of the Colorado Rockies by horse and mule for decades. It's reasonable to think they could do it again.

There is another law on our side: the National Environmental Policy Act. The Forest Service must complete its environmental studies to determine the impact of a quarrying operation and road on the wilderness area, to

determine what kind of access is reasonable, the terms -- frequency of trips, seasons of use, kind of equipment, other restrictions -- under which it will be given, and the reclamation and bonding requirements that will be imposed. The Forest Service may have an obligation to provide reasonable access to owners of valid rights. But it also has an equally clear duty to regulate that access.

I urge readers to let the Forest Service know how important the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness Area is and that they want the Forest Service to conduct the most rigorous environmental studies, with full public participation, before making any decision. The Forest Service is leaning toward writing an environmental impact statement on the proposal. We need to support that decision; an environmental assessment is obviously inadequate. Environmental impact statements are expensive but one is necessary in this case. And it is appropriate for the proponent to pay for it -- especially considering that the White River National Forest is chronically short of funds, that all federal land management agencies are feeling the pinch of Gramm-Rudman budget cuts and that the marble mining scheme could cost us as taxpayers the million dollars we spent to buy and protect the wilderness inholding. Send letters to: Mr. William N. Johnson, District Ranger, Aspen Ranger District, 806 West Hallam, Aspen, Colorado 81611.

Darrell R. Knuffke
Central Rockies Regional Rep.
The Wilderness Society
Denver, Colorado

QUESTIONS
ON CONUNDRUM

Dear HCN,

Thank you for your fine, in-depth report in the July 7 *High Country News* about our marble quarry project. I would like to comment on a couple of minor errors:

We will not use a D-5 caterpillar tractor to improve two miles of old road. The distance from the

wilderness gate to our property line is 1 1/4 miles. The only work we plan to do on the Forest Service road is about 30 feet of pick and shovel work by hand.

Why would the two appraisers hired indicate our property would be "ripe for development, particularly as second home sites" when, in truth, Conundrum Gulch is a notorious avalanche area? Who were these appraisers?

The geologist that Trust for Public Land hired to assess the mineral potential of the property was a bit off base in saying there weren't any minerals in the area that could be mined economically. He must not have inquired in the right places.

Edwin J. Smart
Aspen, Colorado

COMMON ANCESTORS

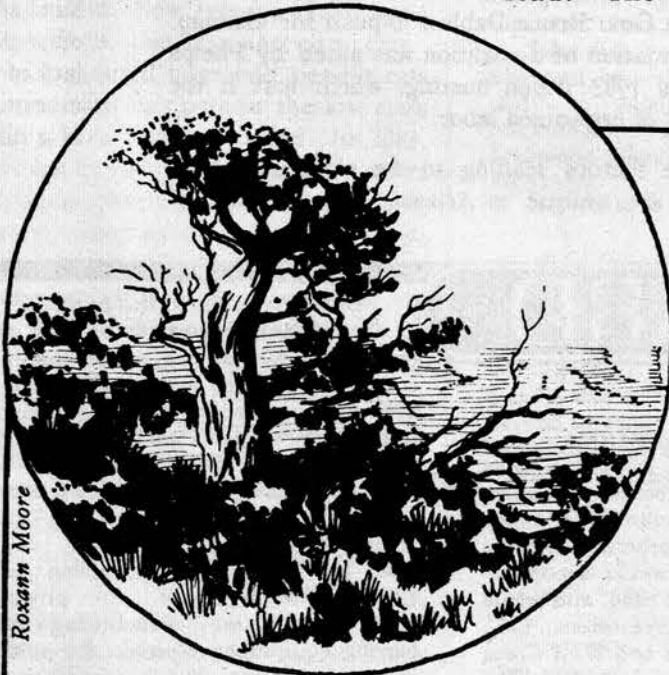
Dear HCN,

I read with great interest your article of 6/23/86 regarding llama drawbacks. It seems the horse/mule/llama controversy has deep roots in Western tradition versus modern innovations and ideas. Smoke Elser is a well-known and respected outfitter, but errs in his beliefs about llamas. While llamas may not be "native" to North America it should also be noted that neither is the horse or mule. However, all three of these animals descend from ancestors that evolved on this very continent.

Llamas do lead in a line and can carry twice what the average person will bear on his or her back. Llamas will never replace horses or mules, nor should they. I have packed with all three animals, most extensively with llamas, and believe any animal can be packed safely and with low-impact if the user is skilled and educated. Conversely, any animal including dogs and goats can be packed with negative impact by a careless person.

They may not be perfect (after all you can't ride 'em, Smoke), but in the long run I believe llamas' benefits will outweigh their drawbacks.

Stanley Daugherty
Enterprise, Oregon



Roxann Moore

A Lasting Gift ...

Conservation values are rooted in love of place. For more than 16 years, HIGH COUNTRY NEWS has been helping to protect the West's priceless heritage—from the places everyone knows such as the Grand Canyon to the places only a few may know.

You can help assure that HIGH COUNTRY NEWS will continue to serve as the voice of a community of people who care about the West and its special places. A charitable bequest of cash, land or other assets to HCN will leave a legacy for future generations.

If you are considering a bequest to HCN, consult your lawyer on the type of provision to best meet your needs. A bequest, however, can be simply stated, "I give and bequeath to High Country Foundation, presently at 124 Grand Avenue, Paonia, Colorado 81428, _____ dollars (or _____ shares of [corporation] stock, or _____ percent of my residuary estate)." A bequest can greatly reduce estate taxes, increase and perpetuate support for HCN, and still provide for one's family.

If you have questions about making a bequest or adding a codicil to your will, please write Ed Marston, Publisher, HIGH COUNTRY NEWS, P.O. Box 1090, Paonia, CO 81428.

And, if you do decide to include HIGH COUNTRY NEWS in your will, won't you let us know?

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