

High Country News

December 22, 1986

Vol. 18 No. 24

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One Dollar

Greg Lehman



An America that did not happen — see page 8

Loggers in Washington

Treaty ends Colorado water wars

by Ed Marston

It is an exaggeration to compare the recent agreement signed by three Colorado water agencies to the treaty of Versailles. But it is not a big exaggeration.

In the West, where liquor is for drinking and water is for fighting, the city of Denver, the West Slope's Colorado River Water Conservation District and the Northern Colorado Water Conservation District have decided to end decades of courtroom and political bloodletting by signing a tripartite agreement. The agreement will drastically change how Colorado water decisions are made and their outcomes. The implications are large enough to affect the Colorado River basin right down to the Mexicali and Imperial valleys of Mexico and southern California.

The agreement may set the stage for further dewatering of the Colorado River headwaters, meaning higher salinity and less water in the river's lower reaches; construction of the Two Forks Reservoir; the saving of the Eagles Nest Wilderness from invasion; the development of ad-

ditional water use on the Western Slope of Colorado; and the forging of a united Colorado on water matters. But it is written in broadbrush strokes, and its ultimate results depend on imponderables.

Although it is not obvious from the agreement, it represents a shift of political and economic power on the West Slope away from the rural agriculture interests found in the broad valleys below 6,500 feet elevation, and toward the urban ski and tourism interests found in the mountain towns. Vail is a particularly big winner.

The agreement ends two tit-for-tat lawsuits that could have cost the three bodies several million dollars in legal and expert-witness fees. Beyond that, how the agreement will shake out is speculative. For example, the two water districts agree "not to oppose or impede in any manner the federal, state and local permitting necessary for the construction of Two Forks Reservoir" on the Front Range's South Platte River.

That appears to be a large victory for Denver and its 45 or so suburban

partners in the \$275 million project. The water districts, along with environmentalists, had been mortal enemies of the 1.1 million acre-foot reservoir. Two Forks threatens a Gold Medal trout fishery on the South Platte and sets the stage for additional dewatering of the Colorado River basin.

But Robert Weaver, a water consultant and member of the Front Range Environmental Caucus, says the agreement may instead delay Two Forks. He says other parts of the 18-page document make cheaper water available to the urbanized Front Range, thereby putting off the need for Two Forks. Jim Monaghan, who worked closely with the Metropolitan Water Roundtable on behalf of Gov. Richard Lamm, says the agreement delays Two Forks for 40 years.

The agreement makes cheaper alternative water available to Denver through the principle of water exchange. Denver, Northern Colorado Water and other transmountain diverters from the wet Western Slope to the dry Eastern Slope of the Rockies have already taken all the easy water. They have built reservoirs, such as

"Lake" Dillon and "Lake" Granby, near the Continental Divide and captured headwaters runoff for shipment through tunnels to their Front Range users.

As a result of the existing 500,000 acre-feet of diversions, no more water is available to Denver and the suburbs from the headwaters. Instead, Denver and other cities were planning to penetrate deep into western Colorado to capture more of the 10 million acre-feet of Colorado River water that flows off western Colorado mountains each year. (The Colorado River produces about 14 million acre-feet a year.) To move that distant water to Denver would require huge pumps, large canals and pipes, a series of reservoirs and large amounts of electric power.

However, there is already a large block of water sitting close to the headwaters -- the 150,000 acre-foot Green Mountain Reservoir. Green Mountain was built for the West Slope and Northern by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation. It sits on the Blue River, north of and downstream of Lake Dillon.

(Continued on page 12)

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WESTERN ROUNDUP

Mining near Grand Canyon draws protest

Six days after a Denver company started mining a uranium claim close to the Grand Canyon, over 100 demonstrators gathered at the south entrance to the national park. Included were members of the grass-roots group, Canyon Under Siege, formed in Flagstaff, Ariz., two years ago, Earth First!, Friends of the River and the Sierra Club, all of which have taken part in park protests for the last two years. This time tribal members of the Havasupai, the canyon's only permanent residents, joined the demonstration.

Protesters dressed in radiation suits and gas masks, and some held signs and passed out leaflets to tourists. Trish Jahnke, one of the demonstrators, said the response was mostly favorable. She carried a sign that read: "Radioactive parks scare tourists."

Conservationists have been concerned about development close to the canyon since 1980, when some of the world's richest uranium deposits were found on public land just outside of the park. On Nov. 14, two days before the protest, the supervisor of the Kaibab National Forest, which borders the canyon, issued a final environmental impact statement on a proposed mine 13 miles south of the canyon. In that EIS, Forest Supervisor Leonard Lindquist said the Energy Fuels Nuclear mine would have no significant impact on the environment.

Conservationists appealed the final

Dan Dagget



Protesters at Grand Canyon National Park

EIS on Nov. 14, but discovered that the firm had already begun bulldozing vegetation from a 14-acre meadow. Forest Service spokesman Dennis Lund said there had been a mixup about the appeal's deadline. After the tribe and conservationists objected, Energy Fuels was ordered to stop all operations except for drilling a water well to monitor groundwater.

During the demonstration, 30 people visited the mine site where Mabel Hannah, an elder of the Havasupai, prayed that "the scar upon the land be healed."

During a press conference, Grand

Canyon National Park spokesman Butch Farabee read a statement issued by Superintendent Richard Marks. Farabee said the Park Service shares many concerns expressed by the demonstrators, including the problems of "more dust, more poaching and more pot-hunting" on land around the park. Conservationists who spoke urged an end to mining activities until an area-wide environmental impact statement could be completed that outlines areas too sensitive or too closely tied to the park ecosystem to be open to mining.

--Dan Dagget



High Country News

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Dear friends,

Librarians especially should take note that this is the last issue of High Country News for a month. The usual biweekly schedule goes monthly in January and July to give readers a chance to catch up on back issues of the paper. That break is especially needed now because many readers have not yet waded through the water issues, or have only read the issue on their particular basin.

Staff, as in past years, is regretful about not having anything to do over Christmas, but we owe it to our overburdened readers to take this break. Actually, we are sincerely regretful about the many manuscripts piling up in our "to be run" file -- stories on oil shale, on the Animas LaPlata and Dolores water projects, on small hydro development in Wyoming and Idaho, on nuclear fallout in Utah, on uranium mining damage in New Mexico, on an historic shift in use of the national forests. Despite those riches, the Jan. 5, 1987, issue will not appear. We will be back in your mailboxes on Jan. 19, 1987.

Thanks to an influx of subscriptions from the four water issues and from Christmas and Research Fund gift subscriptions, High Country News is, for the moment, going to an historically high number of people -- circulation manager C.B. Elliott and her crew will mail out 5,454 copies of this paper to subscribers in all 50 states and several foreign countries.

There is also the possibility that HCN will produce its first book. A publisher is interested in putting the four water issues between two covers. That will make us feel better. We didn't foresee the demand and printed too few copies of the first three issues to meet the many individual and bulk

requests that came in. (We do have mountains of the Colorado River issue on hand, however.)

We're pleased to run George Sibley's essay on the ideological underpinnings of the Forest Service. All but one of the accompanying pictures are by prize-winning photographer Greg Lehman of the Daily World in Aberdeen, Wash.

The staff of any organization or corporation has the problem of retaining its individuality. We are all more or less prone to become "organization men." That danger is especially strong with a High Country News. The paper has such a strong personality, and its mission and goals are so public and so strong, it tends to take over its staff's lives. The tendency is reinforced by readers, some of whom expect the same 24-hour purity they look for in clergy. One reader recently asked a staff member, during a discussion over electric energy, "Does the HCN board of directors know the way you think?"

It makes for an interesting life. More to the point, it makes staff

judgments on the status of HCN and of the rural West it serves especially suspect since it is our own lives and futures we are pondering. With that hedge, we should say that 1987 looks especially good to us. We believe the region is finally recovering from the aftershocks of the last boom, and that social, political and economic normalcy is returning.

Always barring another boom, it seems to us that the political and social forces are in place to fulfill the rural West's potential. What is that potential? The West, because of its broken terrain, its aridity and its difficult communications, is made to order for small communities, a modest and unpretentious lifestyle, and a closeness to nature. The last boom was threatening because it would have imposed a new scale and a new way of life on the region. Now that the boom is past, the region can concentrate on digging out from under the debris left by that boom and building on its natural strengths.

We wish you a joyous holiday season and a 1987 filled with promise and challenge.

--the staff

Greg Lehman



Most of Grisdale's loggers rode company buses called "crummies"

Interior wants more study of canyon noise

In a long-awaited decision, the Interior Department declined to recommend measures for stemming aircraft noise in Grand Canyon National Park. At a Nov. 17 press conference, Assistant Interior Secretary William P. Horn announced the department was deferring responsibility to the Federal Aviation Administration because "there's no way we could substitute our judgment for theirs."

While acknowledging that aircraft are a problem, Horn suggested a new, two-year joint FAA-Interior study to provide "thorough and scientifically sound research." But he added that noise perception was "idiosyncratic" and "a value judgment." Horn rejected the research of the Park Service, which he oversees, calling it insufficient for making noise-management recommendations.

The Park Service has conducted extensive aircraft monitoring and visitor surveys at the canyon for more than 10 years, and park officials have described aircraft as the "number one resource problem in the park." Their studies found that aircraft noise is nearly continuous in much of the park, and that 70 to 80 percent of visitors away from urban areas felt the noise had degraded their experience. At hearings in 1985 and last June, there was overwhelming public support for banning or severely restricting flights. An estimated 100,000 aircraft a year fly in and over the park.

Interior said its main concern was safety and urged the FAA to install radar equipment and supply air controllers for the park, which now lacks radar coverage. The safety issue gained nationwide attention last June when two tourist aircraft collided over the canyon, killing all 25 aboard. Since 1980, 61 people have died in 19 aircraft crashes in or adjacent to the canyon, making air flights the most dangerous way to see the park (HCN, 5/26/86).

Interior also suggested that unofficial flights be prohibited in the Inner Gorge, the narrow canyon-within-a-canyon just above the Colorado River. While few air tours fly there, Interior's Office of Aircraft Services has long expressed concern that pilots dipping into the Inner Gorge might collide with Park Service helicopters.

Shortly after Interior's announcement, the FAA said it was considering tentative safety regulations prohibiting flights below an unspecified canyon "rim level," with higher minimums for private aircraft. Most commercial aircraft rides would apparently be unaffected since they generally fly above or close to the altitude of the outer rim. There is no agreed-upon definition of rim altitude; topographically it varies from about 5,000 to 9,000 feet above sea level. Some helicopter operators say they might be placed at a competitive disadvantage by the FAA proposal because they normally fly a few hundred feet below the less expensive fixed-wing rides.

In an environmental assessment last spring, the Park Service said that a rim level minimum could increase aircraft accidents by squeezing flights into a thinner vertical airspace. At least one airtour operator has vowed to ignore any rim-minimum regulations, and environmental groups express doubt that low-level altitude restric-

tions could be enforced, even with radar. Although the FAA did not comment on Interior's radar proposal, the agency had previously rejected the idea as prohibitively expensive. Conservation groups believe radar controllers would "turn the park into LAX" and justify still more flights.

The FAA did not address the noise issue, but has generally opposed noise restrictions in other natural preserves and urban areas. Air tour operators and conservationists agree that a rim-level minimum would probably increase noise for visitors standing on the canyon rim.

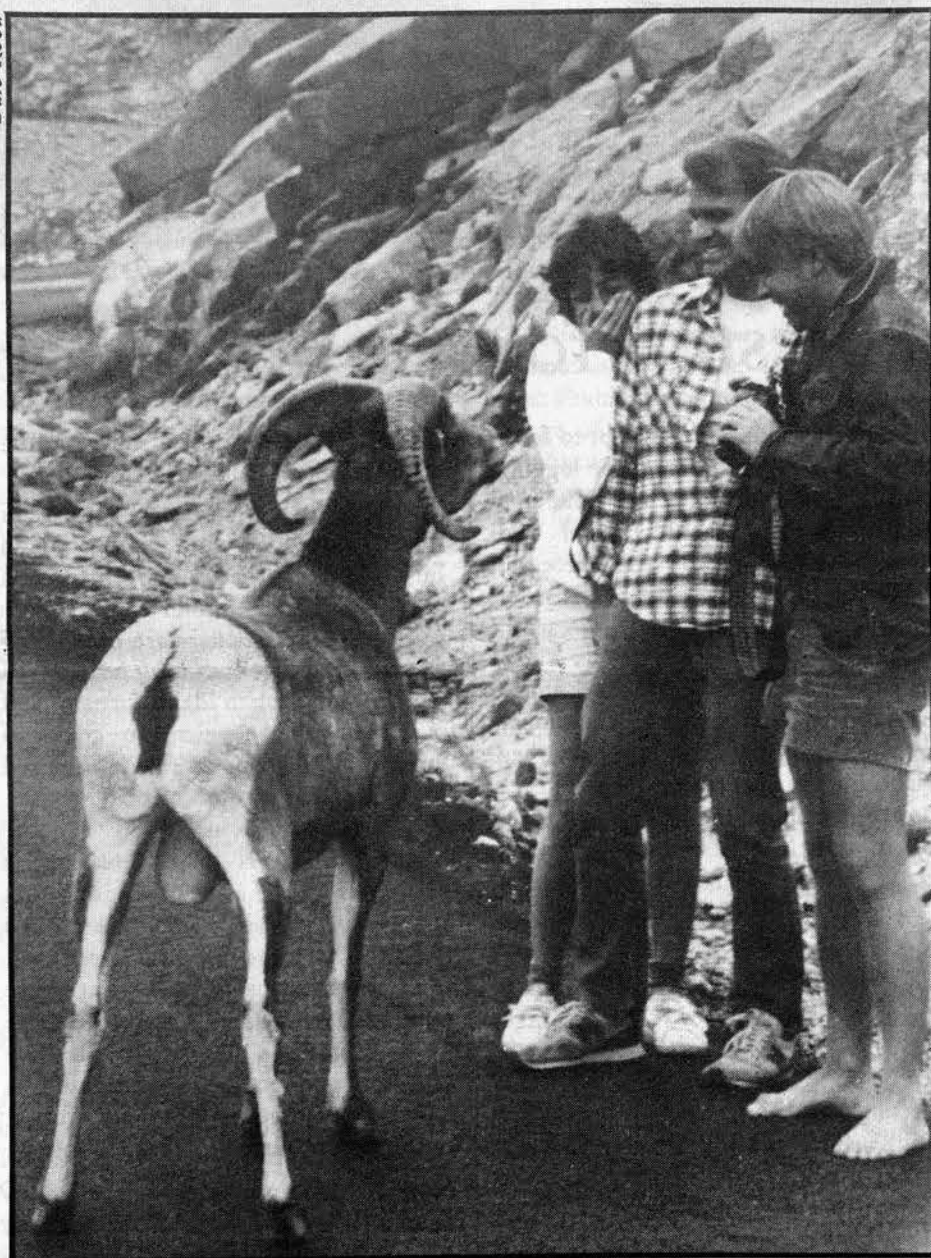
Environmental groups dismissed both the Interior and FAA recommendations. Rob Smith, southwestern representative of the Sierra Club, said

they were "meaningless" and that Interior had "clearly not complied" with a 1975 law requiring it to make rules and regulations for aircraft to protect the natural quiet and experience of the park. Ben Beach of the Wilderness Society called the announcements "a sham" and said a lawsuit was pending.

The failure of Interior and FAA to take action on the noise problem is likely to give renewed support to a bill that would study and control the growing aircraft problem in all the national parks. The bill passed the House almost unanimously in September, but was killed in the Senate by Arizona Sens. Goldwater and DeConcini.

--Dennis Brownridge

Dale Reed



Tourists meet a bighorn sheep on the paved road at the top of Mt. Evans

Bighorn sheep give ground to goats

Back in 1961, the Colorado Division of Wildlife decided to import 15 mountain goats to the Mt. Evans area, about 50 miles west of Denver. There were already as many as 100 bighorn sheep in the area, but biologists assumed there was plenty of room for both species in the high country above 10,000 feet.

That may not be true. A five-year study just concluded by DOW researcher Dale Reed indicates that mountain goats don't share, they compete for turf and win. In numbers, goats now number 168 while bighorn sheep have only gained slightly, to 111.

Using radio collars, Reed says he studied 100 "interactions" between the two species and found the goats forcing the bighorn to give up space or food and other resources 30 percent of the time. In no cases were the bighorn

dominant; 70 percent of the interactions were neutral.

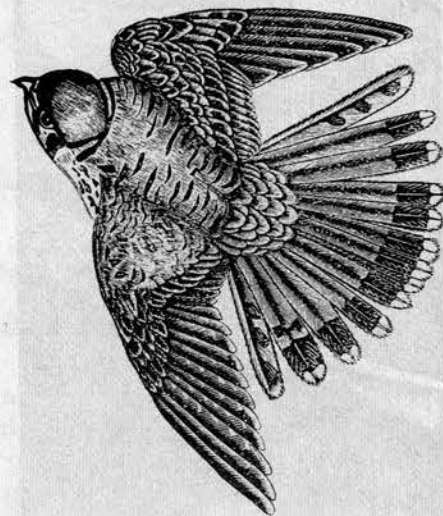
Biologists assumed 25 years ago that mountain goats, which roam the upper reaches, would separate from sheep to seek the highest crags. Instead, Reed says the two species are sharing the same turf, which ranges from 11,000 to 12,900 feet surrounding 14,264-foot Mt. Evans.

Although goats seem able to bully bighorns, Reed says they are not difficult targets for hunters, who bought 15 mountain goat permits in the Mt. Evans area this year. Sheep are warier and harder to hunt, Reed says.

A wildlife census is now underway, but Reed says in 1983 there were 5,200 bighorn sheep and 960 mountain goats in Colorado.

--Betsy Marston

HOTLINE



An interstate recovery

Several years ago the Audubon Society placed the American kestrel on its possible endangered species list, but recently this smallest member of the hawk family has found its niche in a human-dominated landscape. Experimental programs in Idaho and Iowa increased kestrel numbers by building nesting boxes on the back side of freeway signposts. The kestrels, which have a metabolic rate so high they must eat several times their body weight daily, thrive on a smorgasboard of insects and rodents in their new freeway environment. The programs have been successful enough to draw financing and support from state transportation and game departments and the federal Bureau of Land Management.

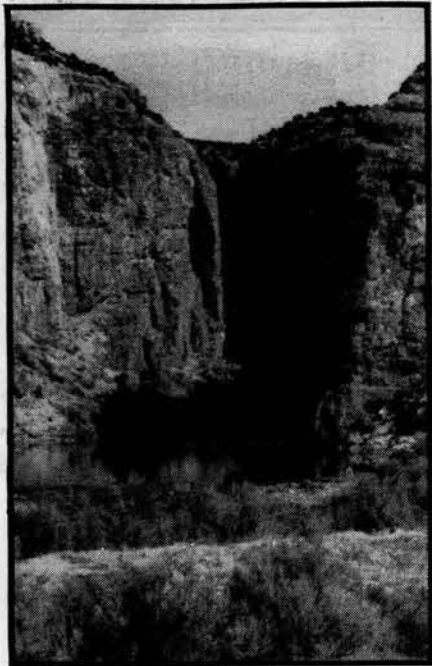
Trail-to-rail wins

Voters in Aspen in western Colorado and surrounding Pitkin County voted 'yes' to railroad service from Denver. They said local government should negotiate with, and eventually sell, a right-of-way easement to, a company that plans to run passenger trains from Denver's Stapleton Airport direct to the ski resort. The roughly two-to-one margin in favor of the proposal came after noisy debates over the railroad's planned use of a recreation trail that uses the now-abandoned roadbed of Aspen's original railway, the Denver and Rio Grande Western. (HCN, 10/27/86). The railroad company has already bought 39 passenger cars, representing 85 percent of the total necessary to run 19-car trains. Many of the vista-dome cars once ran from Chicago to Denver and Oakland on the California Zephyr.

Utah stung by imports

Utah beekeepers say that importation of foreign honey is the single largest problem facing their industry. Beekeepers at an annual Utah convention this December predicted that economics would drive many out of beekeeping. This year, for example, the number of beekeepers in Utah is expected to drop from 762 to 600. According to the *Deseret News*, countries such as Canada, Australia, Mexico, China and Argentina bar the importation of U.S. honey and subsidize their own beekeepers, who sell their product at lower prices in American supermarkets. About 220 million pounds of American honey is produced and consumed each year, but last year the U.S. imported 100 million pounds. In addition to foreign competition, climate, weather and pesticides have also injured the Utah bee industry.

HOTLINE



Cross Mountain

Wilderness reversal

The Bureau of Land Management recently reversed its non-wilderness recommendation for Cross Mountain in northeastern Colorado. Conservationists were surprised and not pleased last March when the BLM opposed wilderness designation for the mountain, says the Sierra Club's Mark Pearson. The area has the attributes of a wilderness area, such as a spectacular 1,000-foot gorge cut by the Yampa River, and isolation for bighorn sheep, antelope and elk. It also has oil and gas potential, says Bill Pulford of the BLM, which was the basis for the bureau's original non-wilderness designation. BLM's change of heart came after an avalanche of pro-wilderness public comments. Sixty people attended a meeting in support of the area in Denver, and Pearson says there was also unanimous support for Cross Mountain at meetings in Vernal, Utah, and Craig, Colo. In addition, 135 out of 140 letters to the BLM concerning Cross Mountain supported wilderness designation.

Timber compromise

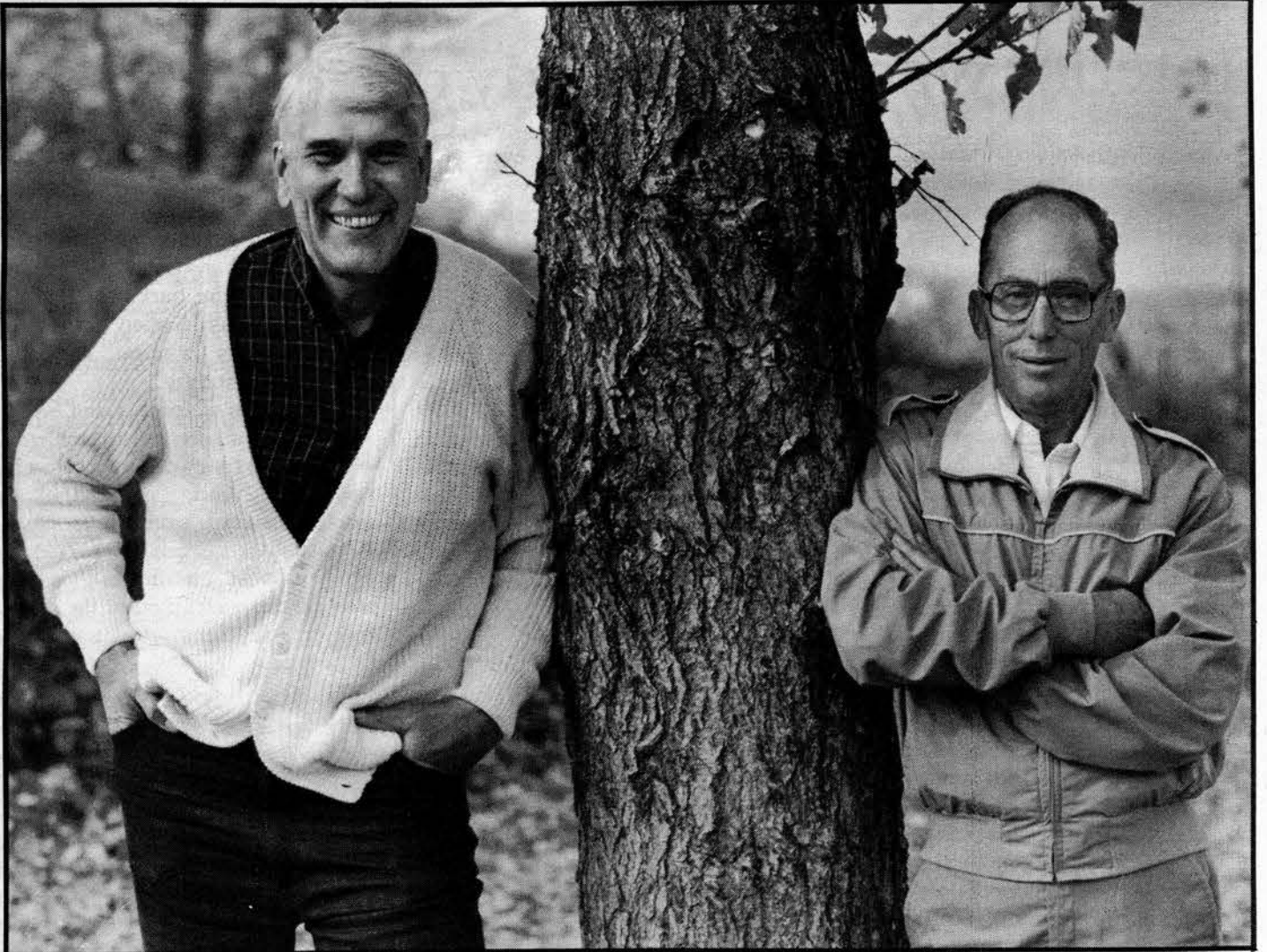
Western Colorado Congress, a 700-member environmental coalition, and the Western Slope Energy Research Center have withdrawn their appeals of two aspen sales and agreed not to file any others for three years. In return, the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest has agreed to follow its regional guidelines for managing aspen, which specify acreage limits. The agreement also requires that the forests take special precautions to protect wildlife and recreational resources, and provide opportunity for public involvement. The guidelines themselves resulted from appeals of the GMUG Forest Plan by the state of Colorado and the Natural Resources Defense Council in Washington, D.C. Those appeals were made on the ground that the forest plan overemphasized timber at the expense of all other resources.

BARBS

Forty square feet seems like an awful lot of space for a wild environment.

The head of a corporation that will raise beavers in captivity near Missoula, Mont., told the Missoula County Commissioners recently: "We have duplicated the wild environment in about 40 square feet" of concrete beaver pens.

Bob DeLashmott



Former Nez Perce National Forest supervisors Robert Rehfeld, left, and Donald Biddison

Foresters foresee trouble on Idaho forests

A timber industry attempt to force the Forest Service to increase logging on public land will force the issue into court, reducing local control and hurting industry in the process, according to two former supervisors of the Nez Perce National Forest in Idaho.

Through pressure on the Idaho congressional delegation, "the timber industry will get the answer they want. But the Forest Service will never be able to implement it because they'll be in court. They'll have won the battle but lost the war," says Donald L. Biddison, the previous Nez Perce supervisor.

Biddison and his predecessor on the Nez Perce, Robert O. Rehfeld, say national forest management is in jeopardy because timber interests want to impose a political solution on a natural resource problem. Biddison was Nez Perce supervisor from 1974 to 1982, retiring in 1984. Rehfeld was Nez Perce supervisor from 1970 to 1974, retiring in 1982.

The national forest planning process in Idaho was stalled last spring when the timber industry convinced the Reagan administration to study the cumulative economic effects. Sens. James McClure and Steve Symms, both Idaho Republicans, pressured the Secretary of Agriculture, who in turn leaned on the Chief of the Forest Service, to stop the scheduled release of eight final forest plans in Idaho, including the Nez Perce Forest, Biddison said. Only final plans for the Targhee and the Caribou forests in southeastern Idaho have been released.

"I don't have any objection to giving them more timber, if you protect the other resources. But on the Nez Perce you can't do it," Biddison said. "The consequences of implementing any higher timber volume is unacceptable," he said. The Forest Service planners "have got it as high as they can and still protect these other resource values."

The private timber land "has been pretty well cut out so it's in the timber

industry's interest to cut more on the national forest," Rehfeld said.

But a timber harvest greater than that outlined in draft plans would hurt forest fisheries, wildlife and aesthetics, the former supervisors said. Millions of dollars are now being spent to improve spawning habitat for anadromous fish in Idaho forests, and it doesn't make sense to overload streams with sediment from increased logging and from more roads, Biddison pointed out.

If the forest plan process is scrapped by the courts the danger is that the whole controversy will then go back to Congress. Biddison predicted that national conservation groups that pushed for a planning process in the first place -- having seen the disastrous effects of clearcutting -- would then push Congress for a standardized plan for forests to follow.

If that happens, public-land-dominated states such as Idaho will have the future set in Washington, D.C., not in Grangeville, Orofino, McCall or Missoula. "There's a lot of pressure to have a prescriptive planning process. It would tell what you were going to have, rather than leaving it to professionals out in the field that can achieve an informed balance," Biddison said.

Biddison and Rehfeld sought out an interview to point to some middle ground where the forest plan controversy could be resolved.

As long as the plans aren't settled, remaining roadless areas are closed to timber harvest. In the meantime, the forests have to concentrate on the already-roaded land to keep the amount of timber offered for sale constant. Those areas already threaded with roads can only absorb so much activity before water quality and other problems develop, Rehfeld said.

But current forest supervisors won't permit the forests to be degraded by too much logging in too small an area, Rehfeld said. To prevent deterioration, the amount of land offered for timber sales will soon

have to be decreased, he said.

The timber industry is doing what it has accused the environmentalists of doing for years -- stalling, he said. But the stall will hurt logging communities when the forest supervisors slow down timber sales, he added.

Environmentalists, or preservationists as he called them, are not blameless either, Rehfeld said. The issue of clearcuts was a "smoke-screen" to begin with, designed to shake the Forest Service credibility and to improve the chances for wilderness designation, he said. Now the same thing is being done with the issue of below-cost or deficit timber sales, Rehfeld said. Environmentalists assume there is nothing to lose by stalling the forest plan process because it keeps the roadless lands in limbo, he said.

But if the controversy goes from the courts back to Congress, a more restrictive definition of wilderness could exclude some areas now under consideration, Rehfeld said. "The big wilderness decisions have been made in the state of Idaho. It really shouldn't make that much difference to either side, they're talking about peanuts," Rehfeld said.

State government hasn't provided any leadership to resolve the problem, either, the supervisors said. The Idaho Fish and Game Department cooperated with the Forest Service in the past but recently it has not been helpful in finding a compromise solution, Biddison said.

The Forest Service has done a competent job of balancing the needs of forest uses in the forest plans, according to the former supervisors. The public and representatives of groups have also had ample opportunity to make comments,

What is needed now is a way to remove the forest planning process from politics and to find a settlement based on what the land can provide, Biddison and Rehfeld agreed.

--John McCarthy

Compromise ends Idaho's Priest Lake fight

The Priest Lake Coalition dropped its two lawsuits against Sir James Goldsmith's Diamond Lands Corporation on Oct. 29. Diamond in turn dropped its plan for a destination resort at Priest Lake's Huckleberry Bay and will seek to convey back to Idaho 5,000 acres above the bay acquired from the state last year.

Although this bitter dispute now ends in cooperation, Priest Lake's primitive northeast shore will still see some changes. The difference is that the corporation and lake residents have agreed to seek limited and jointly planned change.

In 1982, British financier Sir James Goldsmith bought the timber giant, Diamond International. Among Diamond's extensive Idaho holdings were seven miles of Priest Lake's east shoreline (one-sixth of the large lake's total shoreline) and many scattered sections behind it. A year later, Goldsmith proposed a land exchange with the state to make possible a Sun Valley-scale resort at Huckleberry Bay. After two years of bitter conflict with lake residents and users who overwhelmingly opposed the resort, the Republican majority of the Idaho Land Board approved an amended exchange in 1985. The Priest Lake Coalition, which formed in 1983 to fight Goldsmith's plan, immediately filed two lawsuits challenging the decision.

Then mortality intervened. Goldsmith's American agent in charge of Priest Lake died just before the exchange was approved. His replacement, a personable Englishman named Vivien Franklin, soon concluded the major resort plan was economically and politically impractical. "It was a mistake," Franklin says. "I decided we shouldn't do anything

the local people didn't want." He started talking with the Coalition, local developers, and state agencies.

The Oct. 29 actions cap a consensus approach worked out over the last three months. Limited development of the lodge-cabins-marina type common on the lake's southern half will occur on Diamond's lakeshore lands in partnership with local developers and with input from lake residents. Diamond will seek to sell or trade back to the state the bulk of the lands it acquired last year -- 5,000 timbered acres lying behind the company's shoreline at Huckleberry Bay. "I give you our assurance that no Diamond-affiliated entity will ever develop the 5,000 acres," Franklin wrote the Coalition.

The Coalition dropped its lawsuits, which had not been going well anyway, and will help fashion an acceptable plan for the shoreline. A Priest Lake Foundation, funded by Diamond and lake residents, will be formed to conduct water quality and wildlife studies. "We look forward to cooperating with Diamond Lands in protecting Priest Lake rather than litigating against it," said Coalition chairman Harry Batey. "We hope the state of Idaho will be equally cooperative."

Batey's words suggest one of two difficult issues remaining. Idaho must make an offer for Diamond's 5,000 acres that is financially acceptable to the company. The state has no cash for the deal, so all or most of the offer will have to be other state lands. "Diamond wants timber-cutting rights on state land that they could sell to someone else for cash," says Stan Hamilton, head of Idaho's Lands Department. "But we can't legally exchange cutting rights for land, and

I'm not sure we would want to anyway. We definitely want that 5,000 acres, but we're not sure what we can offer." If Idaho's offer isn't good enough, Diamond may seek a private buyer, who would not be bound by Diamond's promise not to develop the acreage.

Second, agreeing on what "limited" development at Huckleberry Bay means will be challenging. Diamond and the developers will want to maximize and the Coalition to minimize. The Coalition represents a broad spectrum of interests, from the developers working with Franklin to those who want no change at all at Huckleberry Bay.

Diamond, for instance, is expressly retaining a ski lease on state land it acquired above the bay in the exchange. In response, the Coalition is reserving a potent weapon. "We reserve the right to bring federal suit under the Endangered Species Act if any future development is attempted on the 5,000 acres," Batey said. "We would regard any attempt to utilize the ski lease as cause to bring such a suit." The area is grizzly bear and woodland caribou habitat, and there has been at least one wolf sighting at Huckleberry Bay.

Priest Lake was set to be a major regional issue in the Idaho election when Franklin engineered Diamond's change of heart. Its defusing helped Republicans, who otherwise would have been labelled the party that gave away Priest Lake. Gov. John Evans, who lost the U.S. Senate race to incumbent Steve Symms, was unable to capitalize politically on his consistent opposition to the land exchange.

--Pat Ford

HOTLINE



Bear sightings up

Glacier National Park in Montana reports that tourists saw 2,796 bears this year, 57 percent more than in 1985. Grizzlies accounted for 1,089 of the sightings. There were only two incidents of property damage, but 31 trails or campgrounds were closed due to bear activities. Grizzlies injured three people, while one grizzly was killed by a park official during a removal and three were successfully moved outside the park. The Park Service says the numbers indicate visitors and employees are reporting bears more often, not that there are actually more bears in the park. The low incidence of property damage shows that park visitors are storing food properly, the Park Service adds.

A move to Paradise

A wealthy religious group is moving its headquarters from Los Angeles to Montana's Paradise Valley, 10 miles north of Yellowstone National Park, and the move is worrying park officials and some local residents. The Church Universal and Triumphant plans to build a town for up to 500 people covering 30,000 acres, and has already drilled a 450-foot geothermal well to heat its buildings. Yellowstone Park's Ken Czarnowski is concerned about the effects geothermal drilling will have on geysers in Yellowstone, and park officials are asking the state of Montana to prepare an environmental impact statement based on the church's plans. At this point, Czarnowski says the church has not made details of its plans public.

Mono Lake decision

A federal appeals court this month ruled that the United States, not California, owns thousands of acres around Mono Lake that have been uncovered as the lake level has fallen. Conservationists with the Sierra Club and Natural Resources Defense Council said the court decision will protect the land and lake from commercial mining and mineral leasing. The lake has shrunk 25 percent in size and doubled in salinity since 1941, when the city of Los Angeles began diverting water from the streams that feed Mono Lake.

Hitmen get wrong quarry

Two eagles, a bald and a golden, were recently found dead next to the carcasses of antelope on the Charles M. Russell Wildlife Refuge in eastern Montana. Rod Hanlon of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service says the antelope were hauled into the refuge and laced with the insecticide carbofuran, which is so dangerous that the people poisoning the game were risking their own lives. Hanlon says the poisoned animals may have been planted by local ranchers to kill coyotes, an illegal act that in this case killed eagles.

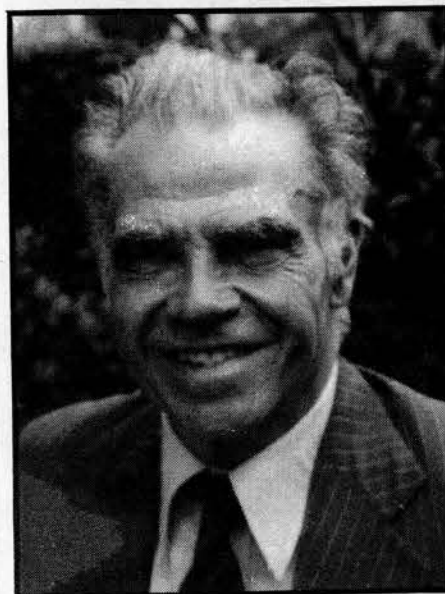
A guardian of the public lands retires

Charles H. Callison, a veteran of more than four decades in the environmental arena, stepped down last month as director of the Washington, D.C.-based Public Lands Institute. Callison, 73, won't actually retire; he says he will stay active as a consultant on public lands and other conservation issues.

Callison was conservation director for the National Wildlife Federation between 1951 and 1960 and then became the assistant to the president of the National Audubon Society. Seven years later, Callison became

executive vice president and under Callison's leadership the society built up its field staff, opened 10 regional offices and developed Audubon's present chapter structure.

In 1977, a year before he reached Audubon's mandatory retirement age of 65, Callison left to found the Public Lands Institute, based in Denver, Colorado. The Institute, which merged with the Natural Resources Defense Council in 1981 and moved to Washington, D.C., became one of the nation's first watchdog organizations to keep an eye on the 270 million acres



Charles Callison

of federal land controlled by the Bureau of Land Management. The Institute has helped to expose inadequacies of the Surface Mining Act; revealed abuses of the 1872 mining law and pressed the BLM to carry out its congressional mandate to identify and protect areas of critical environmental concern.

Vim Wright, a conservationist who worked with Callison from the early 1970s on says, "I don't think many people have put into perspective how valuable he has been to the environmental movement. Charlie has probably gotten more legislation passed than any of the legislators, and the legislators have gotten all the credit."

--Steve Hinchman

Idaho timber study stalled again

Like the national forest plans that preceded it, the Forest Service's timber-supply study for Idaho will be delayed. The new date for its release is January.

The study was sought by the Idaho timber industry, which claimed that the Forest Service had not considered dwindling supplies of private timber. Critics of Idaho's forest plans argued that without public timber to make up the difference, Idaho mills would run short of logs.

Only two of Idaho's 10 national forest plans have been completed, in large part because the Reagan administration called for the timber-supply study on May 23. Karl Bergsvik, assistant director of timber

management for the Forest Service in Washington, said the latest delay is the result of a meeting with Douglas MacCleery, deputy assistant agriculture secretary. Bergsvik said changes weren't substantive.

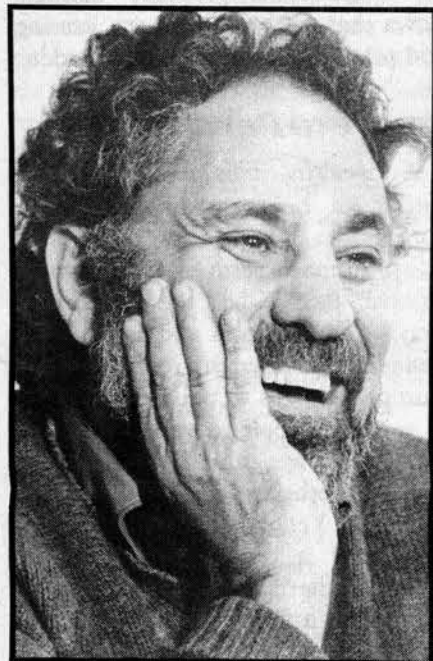
For the Nez Perce National Forest, the study comes too late to affect its plan. Scheduled for printing in mid-June, the Nez Perce plan was delayed until the supply study was finished. The plan is now set for release in March. But because public hearings had already been held, the Nez Perce final plan cannot be altered without repeating many of the same steps, said Forest Supervisor Tom Kovalicky.

--Bill Lofrus

HOTLINE

A larger window

Montana Gov. Ted Schwinden has proposed a gradual, permanent reduction in the state's 30 percent coal severance tax. Part of a sweeping tax reform package aimed at reducing individual and corporate taxes, the plan is an attempt to simplify the state's tax system and encourage economic development. Schwinden called for the tax to be cut to 25 percent by July 1, 1988, and lowered to 20 percent by 1990. Until this is implemented, Schwinden said he wants to continue his two-year-old temporary "window of opportunity" in which the tax was reduced by a third for new coal production. The "window" was scheduled to end next June. The proposed tax cut would apply to existing production and new production. Schwinden said the plan would help "assure the competitiveness of Montana coal in the 1990s as present contracts are renegotiated." Most Montana coal contracts expire at this time.



Abbie Hoffman

An outside agitator

Calling himself an outside agitator, ex-Yippie leader Abbie Hoffman spoke recently to students at the University of Idaho about student activism. Hoffman, who served a year in prison on cocaine charges, blasted Idaho as the home of nuclear wastes and right-wing fascists, and said his mission was to make trouble -- "to stand on a corner and say the emperor's got no clothes." He urged young people to get politically involved; to work against apartheid in South Africa and transporting nuclear waste. Hoffman also said that testing employees for drug use reminded him of the loyalty oaths of the 1950s. The difference now: "To prove you're a good American... you've got to pee in a cup."

As low as they'll go

In Idaho, 173 foreclosed farms will be sold, ending a moratorium that began last spring. The Farmers Home Administration delayed the sales so that the private market could set market values. An AP report, however, says that FmHA sales now won't depress prices because a substantial decline in the value of farmland has already occurred. For most federal properties, prices asked will be far lower than what the government has invested in them.

A new coalition fights the Forest Service

More than 350 people joined Blackfeet traditionalist Indians in a protest march against the Forest Service Nov. 20 in Missoula, Mont. The Indians said that the spiritual stronghold of the tribe was at stake -- the Badger Two-Medicine roadless area, which is threatened by oil and gas leasing.

Supporters included University of Montana students, farmers, business people, professors, blue collar workers and children, who followed 60 Blackfeet from the college campus for a mile and a half in blustery, wet weather to the Forest Service office. Waving signs such as "Mother Earth is Sacred" and "No Drilling!" the marchers drew waves and some cheers from onlookers, including hundreds of high school students crowding the windows of Missoula's Hellgate High.

The Badger Two-Medicine area, east of Glacier National Park, is a grizzly bear migration corridor and a part of the wildlife-rich Rocky Mountain Front. The rally also protested oil and gas leasing for the Front's 400,000 roadless acres. The leasing would be allowed under the proposed Lewis and Clark National Forest Plan.

The Blackfeet Cultural Program, Glacier Two-Medicine Alliance and the alliance's Badger Chapter of Missoula organized the protest. For the first time, Blackfeet traditionalists (those who practice their Indian religion) acted with support of the Blackfeet Tribal Council. The council on Nov. 19 endorsed traditionalists' efforts to protect the Badger Two-Medicine area in recognition of its religious importance.

"Our goal is to regain that area -- the Badger Two-Medicine -- to manage it as a Blackfeet Spiritual Wilderness Area," said George G. Kipp, a religious practitioner of the tribe and one of several Blackfeet who spoke at the Forest Service office and in front of the Missoula County Courthouse.

The 120,000-acre Badger Two-Medicine is part of the "ceded strip," land that the U.S. government supposedly bought from the Blackfeet for \$1.5 million 90 years ago.

"Our oral history says all they wanted was the rocks in 1896," Kipp said. "We interpreted it that we'd take the forests, game and water. It was a lease."

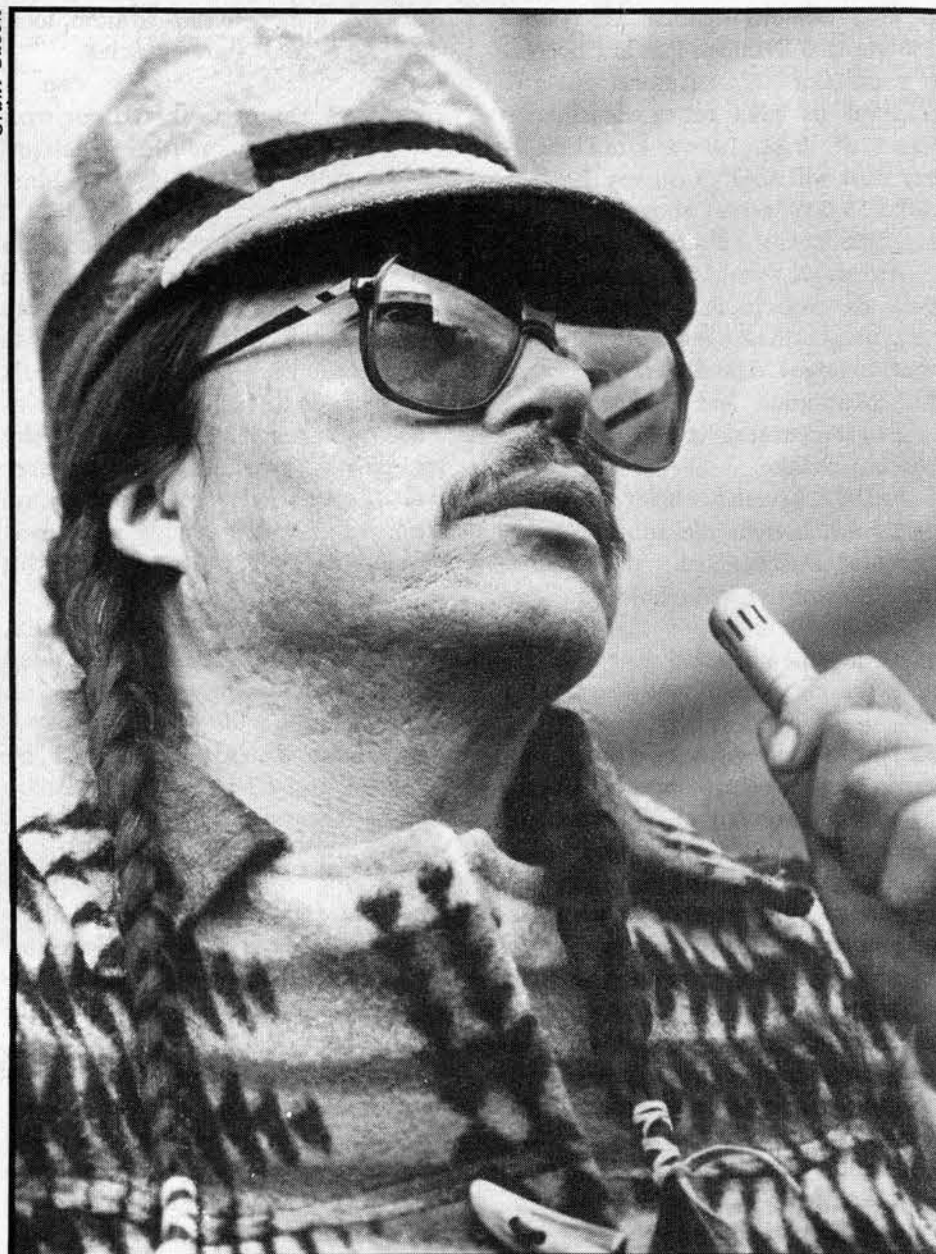
Support shown for preserving the spiritual qualities of an undeveloped Badger Two-Medicine crossed the boundaries of two cultures.

"The Badger Two-Medicine has been scheduled for oil and gas development against the wishes of the people," said Mike Bader of the Missoula-based Badger Chapter, which advocates wilderness protection for all Rocky Mountain Front roadless areas, including a tribally-controlled wilderness for the Badger Two-Medicine.

Kipp said, "These people's beliefs are very compatible to ours," adding that conservationists share the Indians' "respect for the creator's creation."

The Badger Chapter and several Blackfeet filed separate appeals of the Lewis and Clark Forest Plan, which identifies 51,000 out of 1 million acres for wilderness. All remaining areas would be open to oil and gas leasing.

Grant Sasek



Blackfoot Indian George G. Kipp

In response to the Badger Chapter's appeal, Forest Service Chief Max Peterson ordered a halt of roadless-area development on the Lewis and Clark National Forest, pending resolution of Forest Plan appeals.

Meanwhile, Regional Forester James Overbay denied the Blackfeet Appeal, saying the agency had met the requirements of the American Religious Freedom Act of 1978 by speaking with the tribe's Honorary Council. The act requires federal agencies to consult with Indian leaders and religious practitioners to protect Indian religious freedoms.

In a recently released 60-page response, Regional Forester James Overbay cited 17 meetings between March 1979 and last February with several tribal groups. Overbay said, "The Forest Service has yet to hear of or read of any claim of the Blackfeet people, apart from this appeal, that the entire area is indispensable to native traditional religion." The Blackfeet appeal said specific sites important to the tribe could never be singled out because doing so would be "an infringement of religious rights."

In its initial rejection of the Blackfeet appeal, the Forest Service said its talks with tribal leaders indicated that the Blackfeet people were opposed to wilderness designation of the area.

Traditionalists, however, disagree with the Forest Service appeal denial. Kipp explained after the rally, "They didn't ask the right people in the right way." He said that tribal religion could not simply be discussed in a regular meeting announced in the newspaper.

"We've always considered it (the Badger Two-Medicine) the sacred area," he said. The appeal will next go

to the chief of the Forest Service for further review.

The sanctity of the Badger Two-Medicine to the Blackfeet has made it difficult for traditionalists to defend it publicly, Kipp said. But in the last two years, increases in seismic, oil-exploration activities and motorcycle use have disturbed traditionalists.

Mollie Kickingwoman, an elder member of the tribe, is known for her healing powers with herbs. She said she finds the medicinal roots she requires in the mountains and lakes of the Badger Two-Medicine. She and her husband, 73-year-old George Kickingwoman, designated spiritual teacher of the tribe, drove the 250 miles of snowy roads from the reservation to the protest march in Missoula.

Bader agreed that the Indians should be able to limit access and manage the area as a tribal wilderness, following a precedent set by New Mexico Pueblo Indians, who recovered the 48,000-acre Blue Lake area from the U.S. government for that purpose.

Kipp said, "We realize that once it (Badger Two-Medicine) is developed, we will lose that essence which is spirituality. If we lose that, we are then a lost nation."

--Deborah Richie

BARBS

If the University isn't tough with this outbreak, the students will next be hiding Easter eggs all over campus.

Police were called to Brigham Young University Dec. 8 when 300 students began roaming the campus, shouting and singing Christmas carols. Damage was light.

Lost in Helena: 100,000 gallons of diesel

A Burlington Northern depot leaked thousands of gallons of diesel fuel into storm drains in Helena, Mont., this summer. This was not an isolated incident; a conservation group says BN has caused at least 71 hazardous-substance spills since 1972.

Diesel odor from an underground fuel line was first detected by area residents in the beginning of August, says Kevin Keenan of the state Water Quality Bureau. Keenan says at first he couldn't see any contaminating substance in the storm drains, but when complaints about the petroleum-like odor continued, a second check confirmed diesel in the drains and storm water retention ponds. Further tests identified that it was diesel used by BN.

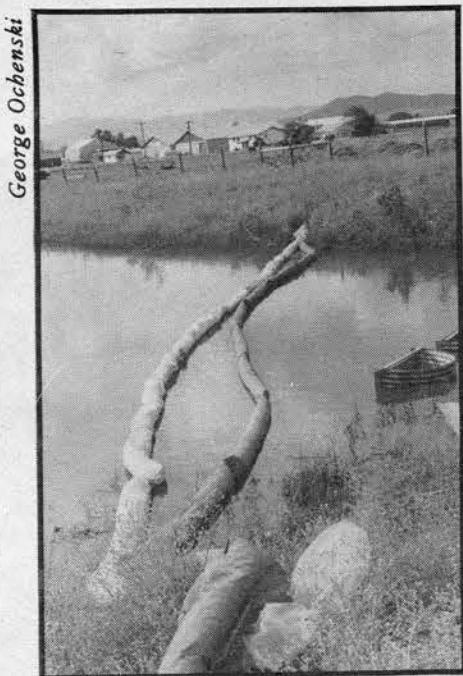
The railroad did not accept immediate responsibility for the leak. However, the Water Quality Bureau was convinced the fuel belonged to BN and insisted the railroad do its own investigation. Three weeks later BN found a leak in one of its fuel lines. Although the faulty line was replaced, heavy rains had already helped to spread at least 100,000 gallons of diesel into Helena's storm drainage system, irrigation ditches and groundwater.

BN has now accepted full responsibility for the spill although Howard Kallio, a railroad spokesperson, says BN is not entirely at fault. He says the fuel would have remained on company property if the city's storm drainage system had not malfunctioned, sucking the diesel into

downtown storm-water retention ponds. The state's Keenan agrees that deterioration of the storm system drain made the problem worse, but he says BN created the spill and had primary responsibility to control it.

George Ochenski, a researcher and lobbyist for the Helena-based Montana Environmental Information Center, says the incident demonstrates that BN should keep an inventory of its fuel stocks so it knows when and how much fuel is lost. Ochenski says since no one knows how much diesel seeped into Helena's water system, it will be difficult to tell when the cleanup is complete. BN, the second largest consumer of diesel fuel in the nation after the U.S. Navy, has been responsible for dozens of spills in Montana. It is very important that BN "clean up its act" says Ochenski.

The cleanup is reportedly progressing at a rate of 1400 gallons per day and could cost \$2 million. The railroad will now heed Water Quality Bureau suggestions and examine 12 diesel fuel sites in Montana for possible contamination, says the Water Quality Bureau's Keenan.



Cleaning up the BN spill in Helena, Montana.

--Kate McIvor

HOTLINE

A 76-year-old dispute

A federal court recently approved an out-of-court agreement between a power company and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe of Washington. The agreement returns to the 600-member tribe its traditional fishing rights on the White River, which flows from Mt. Rainier into Puget Sound. The tribe sued the Puget Sound Power Company in 1972, but Native American Rights Fund attorney Walter Echo-Hawk says the controversy began in 1910, when the company built a dam a few miles upstream from the Muckleshoot reservation. The dam depleted the flow of water in the White River and almost wiped out salmon that had used the river to spawn. Today, the tribe is asking to be repaid for the fish it lost due to the dam, and after many pre-trial hearings, Puget Sound Power agreed to a settlement. The Indians are happy with the agreement Echo-Hawk says, because it requires the power company to increase water flow in the White River four-fold and to construct a large fish hatchery on the White River for the tribe. Echo-Hawk says the improvements mean there will be more salmon in the White River than under pristine conditions.

BOOKS

Seeing the Northern Rockies from inside

The Native Home of Hope

Thomas N. Bethell, Deborah E. Tuck, Michael S. Clark, editors. Howe Brothers, Box 6394, Salt Lake City, Utah 84106, 1986. 196 pages, \$12.50, paper.

Review by Pat Ford

There are today about 2,200,000 people in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. In the past 15 years, a few of them have worked to excavate and create a future-focused regional identity for the three states -- for the northern Rockies. They are moved by an instinctive community and a judgment akin to Benjamin Franklin's in another context: We shall either hang together or be hung separately. *The Native Home of Hope* is a fine expression of that work.

The book is a project of the Northern Lights Institute, created by some of those few people four years ago to stimulate regional thinking. It consists of 23 first-person narratives, edited from taped interviews with an assortment of interesting people who live in the northern Rockies.

There is storytelling. Belle Wine-stine recounts managing Jeannette Rankin's 1916 campaign, when Montana elected Rankin the first woman to Congress. She served in Congress before women could even vote in national elections.

Charles Banderob talks from the homestead near Billings he moved to in 1907; how his father and then he grubbed a farm from the sagebrush and held on to it. How others tried and couldn't:

"A family came out from Iowa in 1911 and homesteaded the 40 acres of land right across the road. They built a five-room house there and put running water in it. They worked the land, the same as we did, and

borrowed \$7,200 above and beyond the money they brought with them. But that property was sold in a foreclosure sale in 1929 for \$67.50 -- house, barn, and 40 acres of land. That family was eliminated."

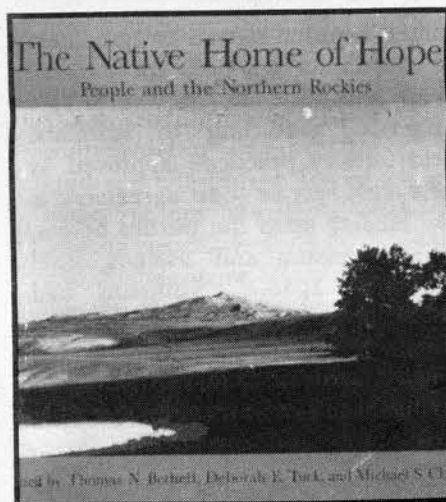
There are newer stories, about the migratory travails of a Northern Cheyenne family under Eisenhower termination policy, the past and present of Butte, growing up on the Salmon in the outfitting business and the birth and death of radical newspapers.

And there are a lot of stories about farming. Banderob created a farm and helped create the Farmers Union in the 1920s. Tyler Dodge tries to build a living on crops and cows near Wheatland, Wyoming, and tries to organize fellow farmers on energy and water decisions squeezing them. Tom Preuit survives, while marking the casualties, in the precarious business of growing sugar beets in Wyoming.

Reed Hansen near Idaho Falls recalls the community spud harvests of the 1940s and 1950s, explains why east Idaho grows great potatoes, worries about the bigness and specialization engulfing farming, and wonders if his son chose right in coming back to farm. Burt Trueblood explains his patient reclamation of farmed-out land, and his stewardship of good land, south of Boise. Humberto Fuentes describes following the crops with his family, and his farmworker advocacy now with the Idaho Migrant Council.

"Water" is the most-used word, spoken from many perspectives, including the heretical:

"It's not wise politically to proclaim this from the housetops, but there is no question in my mind that this water can be put to better use downstream, and is being put to better use, in Arizona, California, Mississippi, the Dakotas -- places where you



have better soil, faster growing seasons, and a lot more people to take care of. So that's probably where the water ought to go -- where it's going right now."

This from Wyoming historian and former legislator (he did not say such things in office) T.A. Larson.

There is more such commentary. Boise's Walt Minnick, the only corporate executive interviewed, delivers the most articulate challenge to growth:

"It's unfortunate that the governors of all three states, by trying to attract more companies here, are bringing about the destruction of what it is that makes these states distinctive... the public policy of the region should be to discourage immigration... We shouldn't be providing special incentives for growth. We don't need to import electronics or forest-products companies. (Minnick is CEO of Trus-Joist). We're already getting them fast enough."

I read *The Native Home of Hope* from inside its subject -- interested in the Northern Rockies' past, involved in its life, intent on a regional future that will also be my own. Anyone in Idaho, Montana and Wyoming who cares about our land and people will

be absorbed and prodded by this book. Read it twice -- its themes and internal arguments are sharper the second time.

People from other states will enjoy it, but I don't know if it will move them. I read it after the Idaho election, chewing on my state's future, its paradoxical politics, on the public enterprise itself. What came most forcefully from the pages were the voices of those on the same track. Lynn Dickey: "We're not very good at picking the things that are precious to us and figuring out the steps to take to hang onto what we can."

Colleen Cabot: "People who have lived an honest, self-sufficient life on this land want to be able to carry that forward." But "We can't just draw on the past and continue on, though that's what a lot of people around here want to do." Jim Murry, Montana AFL-CIO: "We're not going to let our friends go under -- the family farmers, the coalitions we've formed with church groups and among low-income people and women's groups, the Democratic party, and people in the environmental movement -- and they feel the same way about us. We've taken 75 to 100 years to build the coalitions we have today."

And Jack Pugh, who leads off the book but also sums it up for me: "You have to understand that I went from being just another guy who worked in the mines and came home and drank beer and watched TV and talked about football and went hunting and fishing -- from that, in a three-year period, to the state Legislature ... Nobody survived in the West without major cooperative efforts. Stegner says we have to go back and learn from that and use that sense of community to build institutions as magnificent as our scenery, so that we can indeed survive as a region. I think he's exactly right."

There are evocative photographs throughout, mostly by Mike McClure. It is good to see a regional publisher, Howe Brothers of Salt Lake, taking on a project like this. May they at least break even.

An America that did not happen

by George Sibley

Last year, the Simpson Timber Company, operating in the rainforest region of Washington's Olympic Peninsula, announced the closing of "the last residential logging camp in America." It's called Camp Grisdale, on the southern edge of the Olympic National Forest.

This announcement was noted in the *Seattle Times* as "the end of an era," and the "loggers' last stand," conjuring up images of burly men in red flannel shirts filing axes and polishing up Paul Bunyan stories around a bunkhouse stove in the evening, or shovelling down griddlecakes at the cookshack table to stoke their personal boilers against a day of work in primeval forests.

Camp Grisdale, however, was not part of that early era in the history of the American timber industry. The events that precipitated the construction of Camp Grisdale occurred just 40 years ago, in 1946, and were hailed at that time as the beginning of a new era "at the opposite pole from the stag camps and blanket stiffs of pioneer logging." Instead of the jerrybuilt camp with its cramped bunkhouse, built for a transient workforce engaged in the cut-out-and-get-out timber mining of old-growth forests, Camp Grisdale was built as a planned community for a permanent workforce of loggers who would be cutting a sustained-yield rotation for at least a century. Simpson built houses for lease to married loggers -- \$27.50 a month for a three-bedroom house. Through the 1950s and 1960s, Camp Grisdale had a store, a church and a school for the loggers' kids.

Camp Grisdale was built to harvest timber from the Olympic National Forest for processing in Simpson's mills in Shelton and McCleary, two Puget Sound communities dominated by Simpson Timber mills and plants. That marked the first large-scale entry by a major timber company into the national forests of the Northwest.

But it was hardly no-strings-attached access. To get that public

Greg Leberman



Camp Grisdale

timber, Simpson signed an agreement in 1946 to cut not only the national forest lands, but also its own private timberland according to sustained yield forestry practices approved by the Forest Service -- an agreement to be "binding upon the parties hereto, their successors and assigns, until Dec. 31, 2046." Simpson had committed itself for a century to a joint land-management agreement whose goal was the long-term social and economic stability of the communities involved.

This 100-year agreement was drawn up in accord with what might be regarded as the first "National Forest Management Act:" Public Law 273, the Cooperative Sustained Yield Forest Management Act of 1944. This was Congress' first major legislative effort to determine how, and for what purposes, the "national forest reserves" should be moved from "reserve" status to "resource" status.

It was as different from the National Forest Management Act of 1976 as the 1930s were different from the 1980s. Focusing primarily on reforming the timber industry and strengthening local and regional communities, the 1944 forest manage-

ment act was idealistic and cultural where the 1976 act is pragmatic and economic. In the context of the original and on-going American cultural dichotomy, it was Jeffersonian while the 1976 act is Hamiltonian.

Although Public Law 273 is still on the books, its end was written in the events that made an end to Camp Grisdale; it was a law whose vision was out of phase with the emerging post-war world. But ironically, even as Public Law 273 is dying from disuse, the same idealistic ecological vision that inspired it is now inspiring the increasingly widespread and effective grass-roots rebellion against the National Forest Management Act of 1976 -- or at least against the Forest Service planning process mandated by that act. If the agency continues to try to impose the computerized FORPLAN process on the national forests, it is possible the 1976 Forest Management Act will join the 1944 act in the limbo of lost laws -- and for basically the same reason -- because each law might have been too naive and extreme in its commitment to one vision or the other.

This being the situation, it seems important not to dismiss Camp Grisdale as the passing of another bit of Americana, but to look at the story behind that story, which is about an America that did not happen.

World War II was a watershed in the history of both the national forest system and the timber industry -- by which I mean the large timber-converting companies that serve regional or national markets. Before World War II, virtually all timber management on the national forests was small-scale

and local. The Forest Service is credited with keeping the "timber interests" out of national forests before World War II; it is closer to the truth to say that the Forest Service cooperated with industry by not making national forest timber available on a large scale. The big timber companies were already flooding the market with lumber from their own lands; the last thing they wanted was new entrepreneurs using federal timber to further depress the industry.

But everyone knew the situation could not continue. By the 1930s, most of the major companies had begun to grow out of the worst cut-out-and-get-out practices of the timber mining era. They had begun to hang onto their cutover lands rather than abandon them to the tax collector. Some were even hiring foresters to plan for transitions to the newfangled "sustained yield management" Gifford Pinchot and his disciples had been preaching.

But it was also clear that their conversion was too little and too late. Most companies were going to be logging off the last of their old growth well before their second growth was merchantable. At that point, it was conceded, the national industry would need access to the "forest reserves."

World War II hastened that day. The overriding priorities of wartime production made it as much a war on nature as on fascism. When the timber companies looked up in the early 1940s from the fervor of patriotic and profitable cutting, many saw they were within a decade or so of being logged out. It was necessary then for the Forest Service and Congress to delay no longer in determining the policies and priorities that would govern the more active and intensive management of national forests.

The timber interests had reason to be uneasy about that. From the

In 1946, the Forest Service and a large Washington timber company signed an idealistic agreement. Its goal was to keep logging towns economically stable by keeping their forests healthy and stable. The decline of the plan, the forests and the communities tells a great deal about how the Forest Service managed the nation's forests during the post-World War II decades.

beginning of the setting aside of forest lands, Pinchot had set the tone for an aggressive conservation approach for which there was a great deal of public support. By the early 1930s, the social and political climate in America was such that a strong faction even within the Forest Service could talk openly about putting all the nation's forest land under integrated (Forest Service) management with the timber industry reduced to carrying out timber management activities decreed by the Forest Service.

That was too radical for America, but there were still indications that the Forest Service would try to make national forest access a tool for leveraging the timber industry toward conservation practices. An interesting precedent had been set in 1920, when a California orange-growers' cooperative which produced its own orange crates in northern California ran out of timber on its own land between Shasta and Mt. Lassen national forests. It asked for a contract to log national forest timber adjacent to their land. Forest Service Chief William Greeley saw opportunity not just knocking but standing on his doorstep with hat in hand. He personally oversaw the contract negotiations with the cooperative: "Striking while the iron was hot, I proposed selective logging and slash disposal on company lands exactly as the government required on the national forest. (The orange growers) finally agreed..."

That was a modest but important precedent, and the idea of using national forest cutting privileges as a means for "converting" the forest-products industries to state-of-the-art forestry was the philosophical foundation for much of the important forest-related legislation passed between the two world wars.

The man who played the most important role in converting that idea into legislation was a senator from Oregon, Charles McNary -- "the Forest Senator" to his colleagues and constituents. McNary, a progressive conservationist who lived all his life on a family homestead in the Willamette Valley, worked hard and effectively both to help the timber industries so important to his home state and to increase the federal presence in the forest regions -- two tracks not always regarded as convergent or harmonious.

Most forest landowners and managers are familiar with his best-known effort, the Clarke-McNary Act of 1924, which established cooperative programs for fire prevention and control on public and private forest lands. The Clarke-McNary Act also expanded the guidelines under which land could be purchased for the national forest system. In 1928, the McSweeney-McNary Act established the Forest Service's research program in forestry and forest utilization. Taken together, those forest laws of the 1920s sketched a vision of the Forest Service and national forest system as a kind of supraeconomic entity for reforming and rationalizing the way we used our forests, as much through education as through edict.

That vision emerged more fully in what proved to be McNary's last effort, his proposed cooperative sustained yield forest management bill, which became -- a few weeks after his death in 1944 -- Public Law 273. It was basically the "orange-crate

forest" gambit expanded. In order for a land-owning timber company to get access to national forest timber until its own second growth matured, the company would have to put up its own land as part of a joint private-and-public "working circle" of forest land, to be managed in rotation according to the best available sustained yield forestry practices. In exchange, the company could buy the federal timber at an appraised price without going through the usual bidding process.

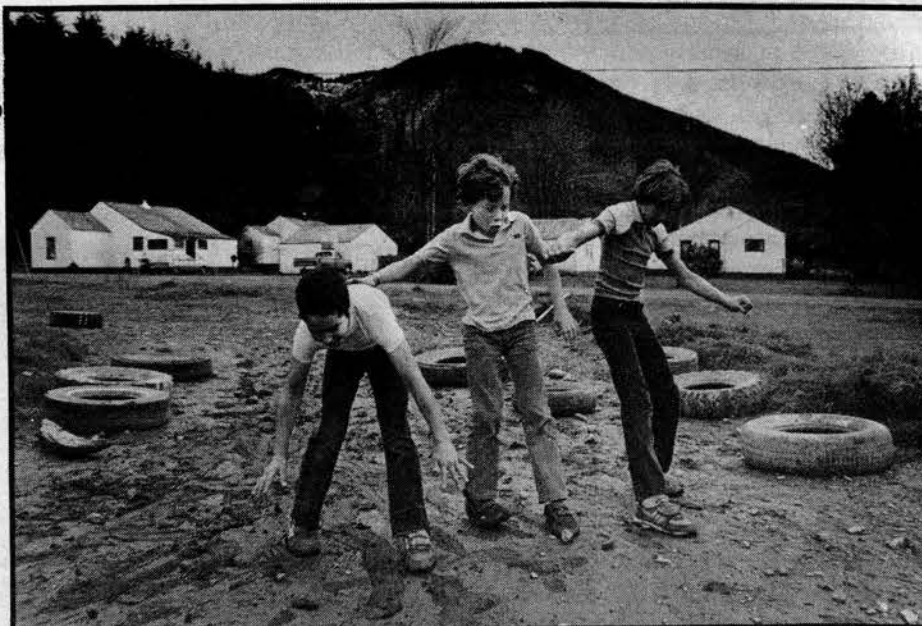
Chief Greeley's primary motive was to advance the cause of forestry in industrial practice. Sen. McNary had an even larger mission in mind for the national forests. He wanted them to stabilize the whole forest-based economy. He was basically a "Jeffersonian ecologist," if that isn't redundant, and believed that the well-being of the forests and of the human community dependent on the forests were inseparable. He believed that good sustained yield management would bring stability and security to the forest-dependent communities.

To this end, three purposes were listed in the act: 1) to stabilize communities, forest industries, employment, and taxable forest wealth; 2) to assure continuous and ample supplies of forest products; and 3) to secure the benefits of forest influence on streamflow, erosion, and climatic and wildlife conditions.

The act was controversial. From one point of view, it appeared to give a single company a monopoly on a large body of public forest land. From another, it looked like the government was telling private industry how to run its business. Small-mill owners and contract loggers -- Pinchot's "little man," whom the Forest Service had been nurturing with small local contracts -- feared they would be squeezed out. The forestry profession, however, endorsed the act enthusiastically. An article in the *Journal of Forestry* called the act "a sustained yield magna carta" and "an important milestone in the history of federal forest management."

On a deeper level, the act tapped into a debate as old in America as the Constitutional Convention. This was best summarized by a timber-industry journalist named James Stevens. He saw the question as whether

Greg Lehman



After a day at the schoolhouse last year, Brian Endsley, left, Mike

Walker and Jimmy Jones slide on a winter pond.

"American national policy on management of natural resources under federal ownership should put community rights, community stabilization and home benefits ahead of traditional business rights and freedoms."

McNary literally had to die for his ideas. The sustained yield bill did not pass Congress until shortly after his death early in 1944, when sentimentality was probably a factor. From another perspective his death may have been merciful; it spared him the pain of seeing Public Law 273 die from disuse.

In the waning years of World War II and immediately after the war, the possibility of a cooperative sustained-yield agreement with the Forest Service under McNary's law was kicked around in many company-town communities of the West. But gradually the Forest Service began to make timber available with less binding commitments from companies and communities. So, out of all the debate and controversy, only one signed agreement emerged: between the Secretary of Agriculture and the Simpson Timber Company for the "Shelton Cooperative Sustained Yield Unit" made up of 159,000 acres of Simpson's second-growth timber and 111,000 acres of old-growth on the Olympic National Forest in Washington.

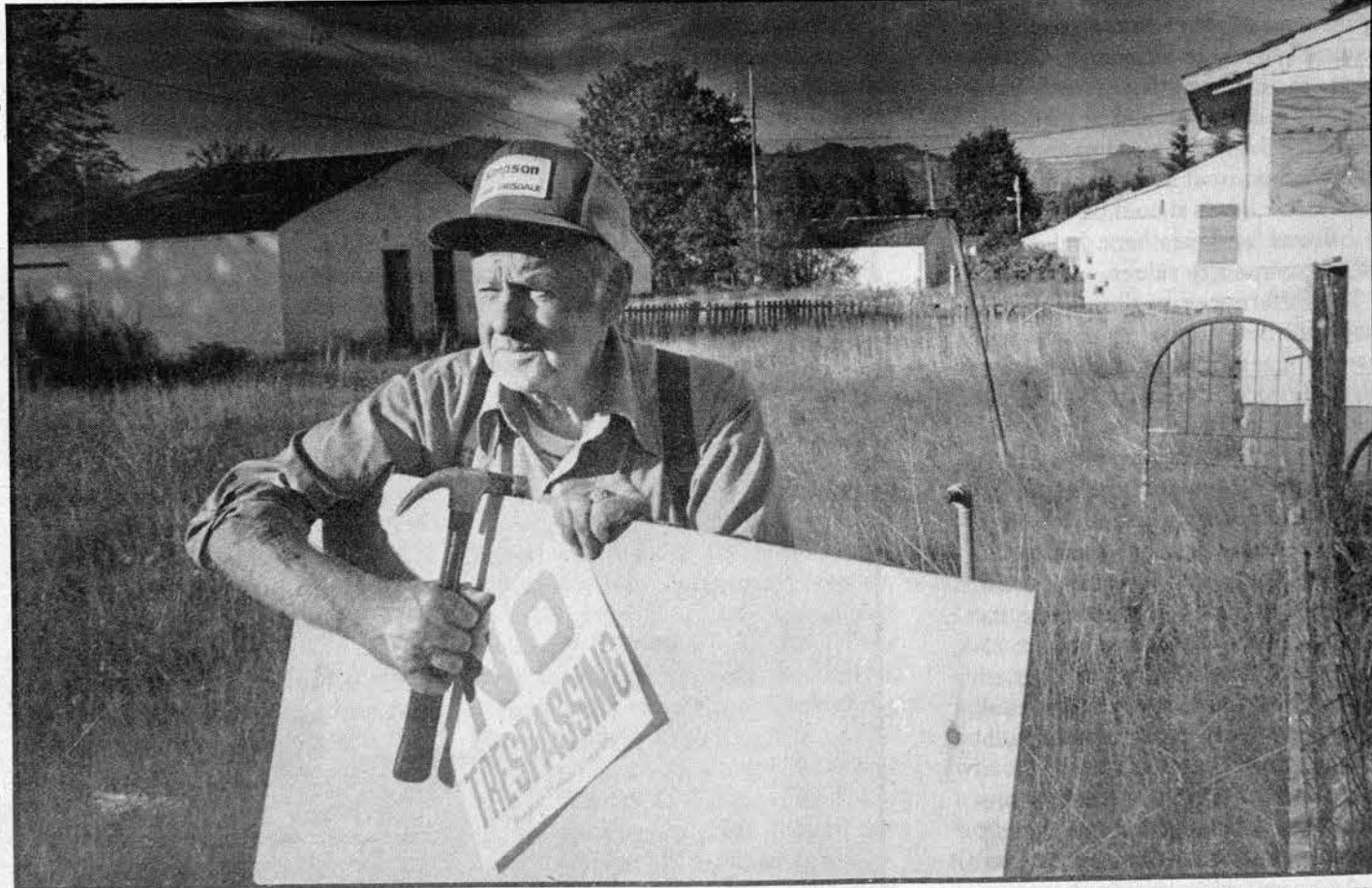
Public Law 273 might have been written with Simpson in mind. One of the biggest companies operating in the rainforest of the Olympic Peninsula, Simpson in 1944 had big sawmills, two plywood plants, a pulp mill, a door plant, and assorted other facilities in the towns of Shelton, on Puget Sound, and McCleary, inland from Shelton. Altogether, Simpson employed around 1,400 people -- far and away the largest employer in the area.

Simpson was also progressive. Under the leadership of Mark Reed, Sol Simpson's successor, the company had begun to hang onto its logged-over land even before World War I; they had invested in their own fire-control measures, and had many thousands of acres of second-growth coming on.

But not fast enough. At the time of the passage of Public Law 273 in 1944, Simpson had only about five years' worth of old growth left. So the commitment to sustained yield forestry was there -- and so was the need for a cooperative venture with the Forest Service for harvestable timber from the Olympic National Forest to the north of Simpson lands. It took two years to work out the details, but in 1946 the 100-year agreement was signed. "Jobs and trees for 100 years," proclaimed

(Continued on page 10)

Greg Lehman



In the end, the houses were boarded, signs posted and the streets were

empty. Longtime maintenance man Jack Wilson was the last man to roam

the empty streets of Camp Grisdale when logging ended last winter.

An America...

(Continued from page 9)

William Greeley in an article for *American Forests* in 1947.

The first physical evidence of Simpson's commitment to McNary's program for community stabilization was the construction of Camp Grisdale, even as the final details of the agreement were being worked out: a permanent camp for loggers who would be cutting first the old growth in the Olympic National Forest, then the northern and western sites in the long-term sustained yield rotation.

Now, only 40 years into the 100, Simpson has closed Camp Grisdale. At about the same time as the Camp Grisdale announcement, the company said it plans to cut no more timber in the Olympic National Forest at all. Instead, it will harvest only its own lands, through a considerably more intensive cutting plan than the Forest Service could ever permit for public lands. So, while Simpson spokesmen still speak of the agreement in the reverent tones reserved for Bibles and Magna Cartas, the firm does not plan to use its privileged access to the public forest land, and it does not plan to cut its own lands according to national forest management criteria. It is hard to see how they are even paying good lip service to the agreement.

This should not be automatically construed as bad faith. Over the past 40 years, there have been major changes within the forest industry and in the relationship between American society and the American forests that should have resulted in major reworkings of the cooperative agreement. Some changes have been scientific and technological shifts in forest management methods; others have been changes in the way people value forests.

Together they have taken the management of private and public forest lands in opposite directions. While forest scientists and foresters have been making tremendous progress since World War II in their ability to goose nature to grow more wood faster in orderly, agricultural forests, there has been a countervailing demand from society at large for "natural" forests. Common sense seems to decree that forest land owned by industry should be managed more intensively for wood production, while the national forests and other public forest lands should be managed for cultural and aesthetic values as well as commodity values.

The differences in these management priorities are not so minimal as some managers -- many of them in the Forest Service hierarchy -- like to pretend. The rotation on industrial forests in the northwest today is 40 to 50 years, a rotation age based as much on accounting as on forestry. The forest Service, on the other hand, is bound by the National Forest Management Act of 1976 to base its rotation on a biological maturity of 75 to 90 years. Even this does little to appease the demand for real old-growth maturity in stands with trees 200 to 300 years old.

This widening gap makes it more difficult to put together a working circle of public and private lands, but it is by no means impossible. A more cogent reason for Simpson's present

U.S. Forest Service



The rugged foothills of the South Olympics near Camp Grisdale are scored by logging roads and years of harvesting.

de facto disaffiliation from the 100-year-long agreement is probably that the agreement did not do what it was intended to do: It did not stabilize "Communities, forest industries, employment, and taxable forest wealth."

Like virtually every other timber company in the Northwest, Simpson has been heavily affected by the tectonic upheaval in the Northwest's forest-products industries these past five or six years. The company has seen a large part of its market

disappear, captured by the burgeoning industry in the southeastern states (where the rotation to "financial maturity" is now down to about 25 years) and by imports from Canada.

Simpson officials say the company has not been so hard-hit as others in the Northwest. Nevertheless, Simpson has shut down some mills, and about 20 percent of the workforce has been laid off since the early 1980s. The presence in Shelton and McCleary of the Northwest's ubiquitous centers for the retraining and relocation of

loggers and mill-workers testifies to the long-range prospects for the industry there.

Simpson's story today, in short, is not enough different from the general sad story of the industry in the Northwest to be able to say that 40 years of life under Public Law 273 created any unique "stabilization." But when we take a closer look at events, it becomes obvious that "stabilization" is another

Greg Lehman



With annual rainfall of 150 inches, rain was the usual weather for work.



one of those tricky words -- a word that, like Humpty-Dumpty said to Alice, "means just what I choose it to mean -- neither more nor less." Any effort to derive an operational definition of "stabilization" out of the agreement leads one to the conclusion that the word didn't mean very much at all to either Simpson, the Forest Service or the people of the region.

In an ecological sense, the third priority of Public Law 273, "stability," has to do with the steadiness and resilience of a system, its ability to recover from disruptions, and to keep changes in the system incremental, checked or balanced by other changes initiated by the system. But to a materialistic human community, whose communicants believe with religious fervor that "if you aren't growin', you're dyin'," it is difficult to distinguish ecological stability from economic stagnation. Difficult enough so that mostly we have not even bothered to try.

What the sustained-yield agreement seemed to mean for the company and the people of Shelton and McCleary in 1946 was summarized 25 years later by a Shelton businessman interviewed for an article in *American Forests*:

"The town's whole attitude changed. New businesses came to Shelton. Instead of a pessimistic glumness, a positive attitude was promoted. We began to march ahead. The company, with its own confidence renewed, made large investments in its own expansion. The signal was 'go.'"

Simpson's large investments in its own expansion included, over the 40 years of the agreement, a complete rebuilding of most of its existing facilities -- two big-log mills, two plywood plants, and the McCleary door factory -- plus the addition of three new mills designed for the second-growth timber as it became usable. Simpson's employment increased from around 1,400 employees during World War II to almost 2,500 before the disastrous 1980s. Payroll went from \$5.7 million at the end of the war to a high of more than \$60 million a year. There was a corresponding multiplier effect in the Simpson communities as the assessed valuation in Shelton went from less than \$4 million in 1947 to more than \$224 million.

From the conventional American perspective, that is a pretty picture of growth -- at least through the late 1970s -- but it would be wrong to credit the agreement with causing that growth. All the agreement did was provide the company with wood; the rest was due to the greatest period of economic expansion in human history. Rather than trying to look at how McNary's ideas about stabilization contributed to the prosperity of Simpson and its communities, it is more to the point to look at what that prosperity did to the idea of stabilization.

The growth Simpson and its communities experienced was not nurtured by a "stabilized" supply of timber from the Unit lands. In the 1946 agreement, the allowable annual cut for the 280,000-acre Shelton Unit was set at 100 million board-feet per year for the first decade. According to figures obtained from Simpson, the cut averaged just about that, with only a little over half of the timber coming from the Forest Service's old-growth on the Olympic National Forest, since Simpson was also finishing off its own old-growth. During that first decade, Simpson obtained, and added to the Unit, another 77,000 acres of cutover land -- about a 28 percent increase in the Unit area.

For the second decade timber contract, they asked for, and were granted by the Forest Service, a 35 percent increase in the allowable annual cut, to 135 million board-feet a year. Considering the progress the forestry profession was making in forest management, this was probably not a "destabilizing" request -- at least not for land with a timber-management priority. And so far as the national forests in the Northwest were concerned, the "multiple-use" can of worms was barely beginning to be opened. No additional increase was requested for the third decade of the agreement, 1967-1976. Simpson's figures indicate that through those two decades, the harvest averaged about 92 percent of the allowable cut, with more than three-fourths of the timber coming off the national forest, while Simpson's young trees stayed in the bank.

For the fourth decade, however --

the contract negotiated in the early 1970s for the 1977-1986 period -- there was what can only be regarded as a radical jump: from 135 million board-feet a year to 207 million board-feet.

This kind of jump was common throughout the national forest system for the 10-year timber plans initiated from the mid-1960s to the late 1970s. For those who believe the national forests are a big national treefarm, the heavy cutting is at least justifiable on paper, although such intensive practices have hardly proven themselves even over a single forest generation. For those who believe the national forests exist first for the fulfilling of non-commodity cultural needs and demands, the heavy cutting has been out of balance and destructive.

What the particular instance of the sustained-yield agreement offers, however, is another more clear-cut perspective for evaluating the 50 to 75 percent jumps in allowable annual cuts. The Forest Service was committed by Public Law 273 to see that the Unit was managed in a way that would -- first priority -- "stabilize communities, forest industries, and employment." The agency's failure to do so, by permitting a 66 percent increase in the Unit allowable annual cut, is hardly just a matter of opinion. Instead, it is documented by the over-expansion of the company, which resulted on the rebound in the loss of 500 jobs, the closing of facilities, and a negative multiplier effect rippling through the local economy.

It can be argued that, even if the Forest Service had stuck with the spirit of Public Law 273 and made the stability of the Unit a firm priority, keeping all changes incremental, Simpson would still have been "destabilized" by this decade's chaotic decline in the industry.

That is true. But the fundamental problem is that the Forest Service never tried to implement Public Law 273 in a general way. In the rotten depths of World War II, when the law was passed, a stable situation in which everyone lived happily ever after sounded pretty good. But by 1946, before the ink was even dry on the sustained yield agreement, the Forest Service had joined the nation in abandoning the idea of economic and cultural stability to embrace a full-tilt growth and expansion for "peace through prosperity." Had the Olympic National Forest managers enforced the spirit of the law in administering the Shelton Unit, it would have been grossly unfair to Simpson. It would have held them to ecological sanity while the agency was allowing the rest of the industry to run hog-wild in the other national forests.

The question now is what to do with, or about, the Shelton Cooperative Sustained Yield Agreement. Perhaps all three participants, the Forest Service, Simpson, and the people of the Shelton and McCleary communities, should sit down together and take a second look at the ideas and intentions underlying the sustained-yield agreement.

Today Simpson, along with the rest of the industry in the Northwest, has been "stabilized" -- not through any rational efforts like Public Law 273, but by the only thing that ever seems to "stabilize" anything in the market

economy: old Adam Smith's invisible hand turning into a fist and beating everything back down to fitting size. In 1986, the problem is not how to achieve stabilization, but to learn how to live with it, in an economic environment where it is necessary to find some alternative to economic "growin'" other than "dyin'."

Like most of America's more idealistic efforts at governance, Public Law 273 was conceived out of an intuitive appreciation of a need that was naively and incompletely expressed. Healthy living environments require a healthy measure of stability. But it can be legitimately argued that a situation in which people know that they and their children and children's children will be able to count on the same old jobs in the same old mills in the same old towns is probably not the healthiest of living environments for humans. More is needed -- a lot more. The more one thinks about "stability," the more one sees what a dynamic, complex and diversified state is implied.

How do we keep or make our lives interesting and rewarding in a "steady-state" environment that is imposed by nature whether we vote for it or not? How can we grow when our traditional economic outlets for growth are limited by the consequences of our excesses, if not by our good sense?

It is increasingly obvious that such questions are the essence of the challenge to manage and govern for "the greatest good of the greatest number over the longest period of time" -- not just for the national forests but for any aspect of a free and democratic society. In that respect, Public Law 273 -- our first real national forest management act -- tried to articulate and come to terms with the issues that today's "grass-roots rebels" are insisting be incorporated into the planning process.

□

George Sibley is a freelance writer in Fort Collins, Colorado.

The draft is out

The Forest Service recently released the draft 50-year plan for the Olympic National Forest. One alternative examines the effect of terminating the agreement with Simpson, but the agency's preferred alternative assumes the agreement will continue, whether or not Simpson chooses to harvest Olympic National Forest timber. The plan can be obtained from Olympic National Forest, Box 2288, Olympia, WA 98507 (206/753-9534).

Water wars...

(Continued from page 1)

For decades, the "old," aggressive, single-minded Denver Water Board has gone to court and Congress in fruitless attempts to wrest control of Green Mountain. Now a "new" Denver Water Board, appointed by Mayor Federico Pena over the past three years, has reached voluntary agreement on Green Mountain. Denver will be allowed to build a pipeline from Green Mountain Reservoir along a state highway to Dillon. Water from Green Mountain will be pumped into Dillon for shipment via Roberts Tunnel to Denver.

By itself, that would leave the West Slope and Northern without 150,000 acre-feet of water. Right now, Green Mountain is used by the West Slope, out of its 100,000 acre-foot share of the reservoir, to keep the Colorado River full enough in summer to meet water needs of irrigators near Grand Junction. Northern also releases water downstream out of its 50,000 acre-foot share of Green Mountain so it can simultaneously take water through the Colorado-Big Thompson transmountain diversion project to water farms around Greeley and Fort Collins. If it didn't have Green Mountain water to release downstream, it couldn't divert water east out of the headwaters without depriving "senior" water users on the West Slope of their water.

To replace these functions of Green Mountain, Denver will build a large reservoir or several smaller reservoirs downstream on the Colorado or its tributaries. The replenishment function of Green Mountain will be filled by reservoirs deep in western Colorado, leaving Denver free to drain Green Mountain near the Continental Divide.

The Green Mountain Pumpback plan has two attractions. First, it saves the Front Range money and eliminates the damage the construction of canals, pumps and tunnels would cause. Second, it protects the Eagles Nest Wilderness. Denver has rights to water flowing off the east side of the Gore Range; early in the 1980s it lobbied Interior Secretary James Watt for Presidential permission to build a collection canal along the flanks of the Gore Range within Eagles Nest Wilderness. The canal would have caught water as it came off the mountain and led it, by gravity, into Lake Dillon. Now, however, water will continue to flow down into the Blue River and then into Green Mountain Reservoir, from whence Denver will pump it back to Dillon.

The saving of Eagles Nest was one force behind the creation of the Green Mountain exchange plan. Bob Weaver recalls that the ski city of Vail was disturbed back in the early 1980s by Denver's plans to move into the Eagles Nest Wilderness, which is part of Vail's recreation appeal, and by its other plan to tap the Eagle River as part of its Eagle-Piney and Eagle-Colorado diversions. (See map.)

Denver's water rights on the Eagle River tributaries were older than Vail's; Denver filed its rights back when Vail was still pasture. The taking of that water by Denver would stop Vail's growth. There is ample

precedent for that. Summit County has been largely dewatered by Denver, and Summit County's tourist industry, based on Breckenridge, Keystone and A-Basin ski areas, must struggle for each new drop of water. Vail, working through a variety of people -- Weaver, Fred Huff, Denver attorney Jim Bailey, then mayor Rob Slifer, Ed Drager, Chuck Ogilby -- put together the Green Mountain exchange plan.

Vail's idea surfaced just as Gov. Lamm founded his Metropolitan Water Roundtable in 1982 to negotiate the water wars. Lamm feared the water struggles would embroil him in a lose-lose political situation, and he saw the Vail plan as savior: "This idea is so exciting it takes my breath away." Colorado Springs Mayor Bob Isaacs, intent on his city's Homestake II incursion into the Holy Cross Wilderness, also near Vail, said he wished it would have taken Lamm's breath away a little longer. (Isaacs has kept Homestake II out of the metro-wide negotiations, thus defeating Vail's hopes of using Green Mountain as a way to pry Colorado Springs and Aurora, as well as the Denver metro area, out of its turf.) Isaacs was not the plan's only enemy. Summit County was not pleased; the pumpback shifted impacts away from Vail and back to its already depleted ski valley.

The River District, which is governed by a 15-person board from its 15 West Slope counties, and whose mission is to protect West Slope water, was threatened for institutional reasons. The old-line organization had no West Slope-wide policy other than suing Denver, and it feared Vail's plan and the way the Lamm-appointed Western Slope Water Advisory Council was usurping its role. The Advisory Council adopted the Vail plan and, in the fluid, ad hoc days of spring 1983, presented it to the Metropolitan Water Roundtable as part of an overall West Slope negotiating position. It is basically that plan, without the opposition to Two Forks, that forms the basis of the tripartite agreement signed earlier this month.

Because of the initial opposition from various parties, and because of the history of confrontation and litigation, it took over three years for Vail's plan to be implemented in this tripartite agreement. For those interested in symbolism, the agreement comes just as the U.S. Forest Service approves the first phase of an expansion for Vail that could almost double the resort's capacity, to 25,000 skiers a day.

So expansionist Vail has protected its interests against the expansionist Denver area. In addition, during this period the idea of building small, high-elevation reservoirs in western Colorado has taken priority over the large irrigation-industrial projects the River District pushed for decades. Implicit in this plan is a recognition that the West Slope's economy lies in the high-elevation ski towns, which are urban in nature, rather than in the still rural low-elevation agricultural valleys.

It is interesting that Vail is never mentioned in connection with the plan. It has willingly disappeared from view, neither receiving nor asking for credit.

The agreement creates other potential winners and losers. It may represent a setback for

the environmental movement's goal of stopping Two Forks. The Environmental Caucus, a loose coalition of Front Range environmental groups, had chosen to work within the \$36 million environmental impact statement process on the metro area's water needs and Two Forks. It had official standing and funding within that process, with Weaver, the Environmental Defense Fund's Dan Luecke and attorney Bob Golten being members of the Roundtable. They served, with great success, as a technical truthsquad, and all sides in the EIS process have come to depend on them for analysis. They forced downward revision of Denver-area population growth projections, encouraged inclusion of various alternatives to Two Forks, convinced the others to emphasize conservation, and so on.

Their hope is that accurate costs and inclusion of alternatives such as Green Mountain will reduce the appeal of Two Forks to those who will ultimately make the decisions. But the tripartite agreement brings that reasoning into question. Maggie Fox, the regional Sierra Club representative and a member of the Environmental Caucus, says:

"We have focused on negotiations and expertise. It has been very valuable and created a climate of respect. But we haven't done the organizing we're good at, as we've done, for example, on the Utah BLM wilderness study areas." As a result, she says, Two Forks has strong political momentum. The Metropolitan Homebuilders (developers and real estate people) have done a good job of saying 'the sky is falling' and of crying foul over the cost of the EIS. "The EIS is now seen as a boondoggle instead of the project." However, Weaver and Luecke say the agreement, which requires conservation and small projects before Two Forks, could put Two Forks off for decades, or forever.

But Gregg Hobbs, attorney for Northern, says, "I think it accelerates Two Forks. This agreement obligates Denver to develop its South Platte River water first." To capture that 30,000 or so acre-feet that now flows unused to Nebraska requires at least a small Two Forks -- 200,000 acre-feet or so of reservoir. But if Denver and its partners are going to build a small Two Forks, they may as well build a large one to capture 67,000 acre-feet of Western Slope water Denver has rights to now, out of the Colorado River headwaters. Denver has let that water flow down the Colorado River because it had no reservoir space for it.

Even so, conservation and various exchanges may be cheaper than Two Forks. But engineers and economists don't build water projects -- politicians do. And the hostility between Denver and its water-dependent suburbs creates a strong push for Two Forks. The suburbs around Denver are paying for 80 percent of the cost of the EIS, and will own 80 percent of Two Forks. As they see it, Two Forks will give them control over their future. Right now, Denver controls their future.

Denver has been stuck at 500,000 population for two decades, and the water it is seeking is for the suburbs. Its ownership of a large water system and undeveloped water rights on the West Slope gives it a controlling interest in metro area water matters. This tripartite agreement, which was reached without consultation with its suburban partners, shows that Denver

continues to call the shots despite two detailed cooperative agreements with Englewood, Littleton, Thornton, and 40 or so other counties, communities and water districts.

Denver has said it is willing to share its system and its water rights, but wants the suburbs to help it with libraries, hospitals, museums and other facilities used by the entire metro area. Thus far, the suburbs have resisted a joint solution to any metro-wide problem except water.

The Corps of Engineers' \$36 million Metropolitan Systemwide EIS, which includes Two Forks, will be out in 1987. Two Forks will probably be permitted. Whether it gets built, or when it gets built, probably depends on what happens in the metro area. There are two major factors acting on the decision. One is the splintering of the Front Range on the agricultural water question. Until the 1980s, the Denver area cities kept their hands off Front Range agricultural water, preferring instead to dry up the Western Slope. Denver especially was insistent on preserving Front Range agriculture.

Now that discipline is gone. Led by Aurora's forays into the Arkansas Valley and Thornton's to the north, the Front Range towns are wolves among sheep, buying up farms and entire ditch companies at Depression-era prices. In many cases, they are solicited by desperate farmers, who see their irrigation water as a last crop. If enough cities buy Front Range irrigation water, it could destroy the need for Two Forks.

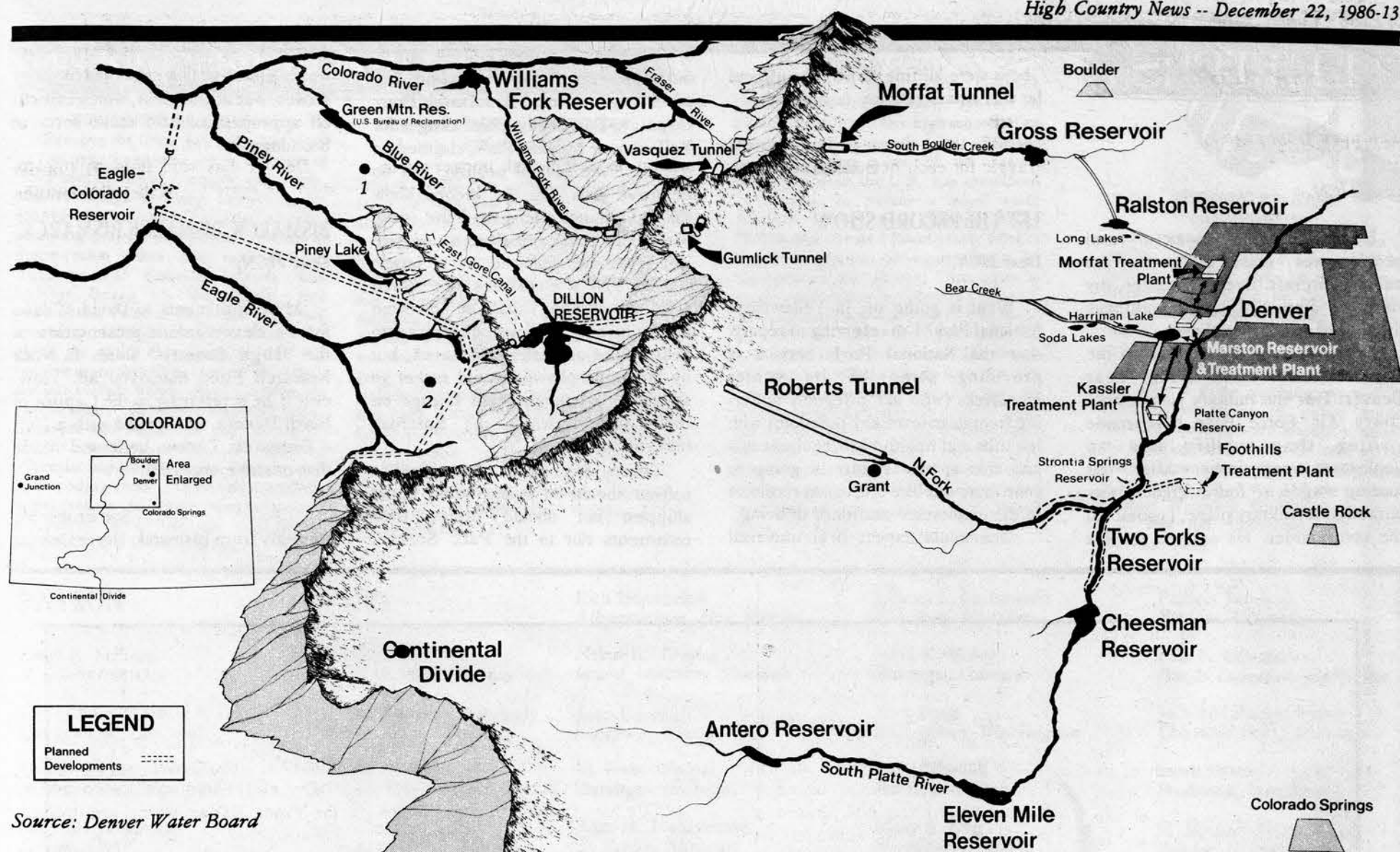
The other factor is the stoppage of growth on the Front Range. Downtown Denver, with its 30 percent office vacancy rate, feels deserted even on workday mornings. The suburbs are also hurting. The area depends in part on high tech and in part on oil and gas, mining, and agriculture in the rural Rockies to the west and the high plains to the east. Both economies are hurting terribly. The Front Range's economic problems will make it think several times before making a massive commitment to Two Forks.

The uncertainty implicit in the agreement cannot be overemphasized. On the one hand, the River District makes out like a bandit financially in the agreement. It will have an income of about \$3 million a year as a result of water Denver will buy from it out of a small West Slope reservoir. In effect, that 25- to 50-year lease represents the "compensatory storage" the West Slope has demanded from Denver for its transmountain diversions.

The money will give the River District, which has become relatively progressive over the past few years, the cash flow it needs to build small reservoirs to provide water for snowmaking, for communities, for wildlife, etc. The agreement also guarantees existing West Slope water rights and knocks out the long Eagle-Colorado pumpback project, although Eagle-Piney remains alive. In addition, Denver has reduced some proposed diversions which would have yielded 240,000 acre-feet annually to 120,000 acre-feet.

But if the Denver area keeps growing, the agreement also gives it the power to remove an estimated 200,000 acre-feet of water from the mainstem of the Colorado through the Eagle-Piney transmountain diversion

(Continued on page 13)



Source: Denver Water Board

The West Slope - Denver compromise will allow Denver to build a pipeline from Green Mountain Reservoir upstream to Dillon Reservoir. The pipeline will allow Denver to capture water

flowing off the Gore Range (1) without building the East Gore Canal in the Eagles Nest Wilderness. A new reservoir, to be built at Wolcott (the Eagle-Colorado Reservoir) will take over Green Moun-

tain's replenishment function. The Eagle-Piney system (2) can still be built. It water would be stored at the proposed Two Forks Reservoir, which would also capture water now 'escaping' down the South Platte.

Water wars...

(Continued from page 12)

and other projects and exchanges. That 200,000 acre-foot diversion could dewater the upper Colorado, possibly destroying the rafting industry right down to Glenwood Springs.

Working against that possibility is the more constructive, more cooperative attitudes that now seem in place. It appears that the Denver Water Board has become sensitive to the metro area's dependence on the health and beauty of the Western Slope. The old Denver Water Board saw Denver as a world unto itself, and thought it beneath them to negotiate anything. This attitude was reinforced by their longtime attorney, Glenn Saunders, who expressed contempt for water flowing in streams while extolling the beauty of reservoirs.

A very different tone has been set on the board by new members such as Monte Pascoe and Hubert Farbes. The Denver Water Department's new top staff member, Charles Jordan, who had been a Pena appointee to the Board until he resigned to take a staff position, has close ties to the environmental movement. There has also been a change at the West Slope's River District, personified by a more knowledgeable board and by staff member Eric Kuhn and negotiator Andy Williams. Interestingly, the longtime head of the Denver Water Department, William Miller, and of the River District, Rolly Fischer, have been nimble enough to survive massive changes in their boards and organizations.

The Homebuilders, the suburbs and the Metropolitan Water Providers will continue to push for Two Forks and the largest diversions that can be built. But so long as Denver remains in charge, as it is now, and the economy is less than booming, events will move slowly.

Conversationists split on wilderness water

The Colorado environmental community remains quietly but deeply split on the issue of wilderness reserved water rights. It is unable to decide whether the Sierra Club lawsuit that raised the issue was a terrible mistake that is stopping creation of wilderness in Colorado and the West generally, or a masterstroke that has created great opportunity.

The issue was debated, in a low-key way, at a wilderness and wild river leaders meeting in Glenwood Springs, Colorado, Dec. 5-7, sponsored by the Colorado Environmental Coalition. The problem, or opportunity, was created by Federal Judge John L. Kane, Jr., in November 1985, when he ruled that wilderness areas come with implicit, "reserved" water rights attached. The suit had been brought against the Forest Service by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, which feared the dewatering of wilderness.

Kane's decision galvanized the West's water interests into furious involvement with wilderness creation. The most immediate effects were felt in Colorado, where Sen. William Armstrong, R, and Rep. Michael Strang, R, opposed a second Colorado wilderness bill until the water issue was settled.

At the Glenwood Springs meeting, Sierra Club regional representative Maggie Fox argued that reserved water rights remain the best way to protect wilderness water. She also said, "Reserved water rights are important because they give conservationists a place at the bargaining table." She opposed any congressional changes in the Wilderness Act to deal with the water matter because of fear that there might be "other tampering with the act."

Panel member Darrell Knuffke of The Wilderness Society stayed out of

the debate, saying, "We're in danger of drowning in this water issue. There are plenty of competent people dealing with it. Let's set that aside and get on with the business of a wilderness bill for Colorado." His statement won the audience's applause.

The third member of the panel was Andy Wiessner. Until recently, Wiessner was Ohio Rep. John Seiberling's assistant on the House Public Lands Subcommittee, and he participated in the creation of millions of acres of wilderness around the nation. Now a private Denver consultant, unaffiliated with any conservation organization, Wiessner called the issue the "biggest threat to come along since the Wilderness Act was passed 20 years ago." He said reserved water rights could exhaust the wilderness movement by forcing it to participate in water rights adjudication on 400 existing wilderness areas all over the country.

Wiessner urged a trade. Wilderness advocates would give up any

claim to reserved water rights, and developers would give up the water development exemption built into the 1964 Wilderness Act. That exemption lets the president permit construction of water projects in wilderness. The result would be that everyone would know, when a wilderness unit is created, what water rights and development potential exist and what does not exist.

Water project developers argue that Kane's decision has created the possibility that wilderness comes with large but unspecified water rights, so they appear to be holding some new wilderness hostage until that uncertainty is removed. The 1964 Wilderness Act has always had the uncertainty that a city or irrigation company could ask for, and get, a presidential exemption and thus start building ditches and pipelines in a wilderness area.

Settlement of the issue requires a united environmental position that is not yet in sight.

--the staff

Flowing in a circle, toward money

It is often said that water flows uphill toward money. On Dec. 2, the U.S. Forest Service on Colorado's White River National Forest approved a plan to pump water in a circle toward money.

Under the plan, water flowing out of Public Service Company's Shoshone hydroelectric plant on the Colorado River will be captured in a pipe and pumped several miles back upriver. The pumps that move the water upstream will be powered by Shoshone's electricity.

Physically, the project is nonsense. But legally, it allows the satisfying of

Shoshone's right to a certain amount of water, even as six ski areas upstream take water out of small tributaries to the Colorado River in order to make snow.

In theory, if the project proponents, Tye Gulch, built a pumping system as big as Shoshone, the same batch of water could be circulated continuously, allowing the ski areas to dewater the Colorado. In fact, they need only a relatively small amount of water. Forest Service approval was needed because some of the pumping system will be on national forest land in Glenwood Canyon.

14-High Country News -- December 22, 1986

LETTERS

ALL FINE MEN

Dear HCN,

I can share the despair of rural people over noise pollution from military aircraft. Even in Boulder, my sleep is disturbed by the ominous droning of planes overhead.

I used to take my students to the Plains Conservation Center near Denver. But the military planes from Lowry Air Force Base have made visiting that wildlife area an unpleasant experience. After our touring wagon of fourth graders was buzzed by a military plane, I contacted the commander. He assured me his

"boys were all fine family men," and he was amazed by my complaint.

June Howard
Boulder, Colorado

LET THE RECORD SHOW

Dear HCN,

What is going on in Yellowstone National Park? I'm referring to reports that the National Park Service is providing some of its winter employees (who are allegedly suffering from near-terminal boredom) with hot tubs and health club equipment -- and that a rich Texan is going to contribute satellite television receivers to the employees' standard of living.

One would expect near universal

outrage to greet this revelation, but according to a Dec. 5 *Associated Press* dispatch, Dan Sholly, chief ranger for Yellowstone National Park, claimed he had received several positive but no negative calls. Let the record show that 10 minutes after I read the story, Mr. Sholly's office received a negative call from me, followed by a letter: "If YNP's employees are bored silly, the situation should be corrected not by turning employee quarters into health spas and television caves, but by hiring people who would rather go skiing by moonlight than lounge on their duffs watching the Saturday night videos."

Those who agree that Sholly's softies should be straightened up or shipped out should direct their comments not to the Park Service,

which has obviously taken leave of its senses, but at Congress, which can cut off appropriations for these sorts of boondoggles.

James R. Conner
Kalispell, Montana

BISMARCK BISMARCK BISMARCK

Dear HCN,

My compliments to David Wilson for the clever artistic presentation of the "High Country" states in your Research Fund thank-you ad. However if he's referring to the Capitol of North Dakota, it's spelled with a "c" -- Bismarck. I know, because I made that mistake once, too.

Sue Froeschle
formerly from Bismarck, North Dakota

Dale Reed



From HCN's goat and staff

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PUMPING ISN'T ENOUGH

Because the Great Salt Lake has risen 12 feet over the past six years, the state of Utah commissioned Creamer and Noble, Inc. to design a diking project as an emergency backup to the current pumping project. The project consists of three main dikes that will connect Antelope and Fremont Islands with Saltair Beach on the south, and Promontory Point on the north. This will create a 400,000-acre freshwater bay along the entire east shoreline that will receive more than 60 percent of the lake's annual surface inflow. Also planned are two auxiliary dikes and a pumping plant. Creamer and Noble, Inc. has asked for public comments by Dec. 23 regarding potential impacts the project may have on surrounding areas. The comments will be addressed in an environmental impact statement. Write Creamer and Noble, Inc., P.O. Box 37, St. George, UT 84770.

AGRICULTURAL MARKETING STRATEGIES

A conference titled "Shaping Our Future" will be held in Bozeman, Mont., Friday and Saturday, Feb. 6 and 7, to discuss agricultural marketing strategies. Organized by the Alternative Energy Resources Organization, the conference will examine crop diversification and specialty market options for the Northern Rockies and Great Plains. It will include over 25 resource people in workshops, panels, informal discussions and formal presentations. Categories include Regional Agriculture, Small Grain and Seed, Livestock and Dairy, Specialty Crops and Produce, and Crop and Market Development. The conference fee is \$35. For information on registration, day care, lodging, and transportation, contact AERO at 324 Fuller C-4, Helena, MT 59601 (406/443-7272).

SISTER CITIES?

Why would a small western Colorado town such as Crested Butte sponsor an essay contest in the five high schools of an arid, eastern Colorado city? Perhaps because Aurora, one of the fastest growing cities in the U.S., has announced its intention to pursue a major water diversion project near Crested Butte. That caused Crested Butte Mayor Mickey Cooper to propose an essay contest for teenagers on the theme: "Strategies in water conservation in Colorado's future." Winning essayists will receive a weekend ski vacation for four and will be announced Jan. 20 in Aurora. The essays will also be presented to Aurora's city council. As part of its effort to educate Aurora, Crested Butte has already given gift subscriptions of *High Country News* to three Aurora high schools. For information on the essay contest, contact Myles Rademan, Director of Community Development, P.O. Box 39, Crested Butte, CO 81224.



WYOMING WILDLIFE SYMPOSIUM

A symposium on the privatization of wildlife and public land access will be held on Jan. 9 and 10 in Casper, Wyoming, sponsored by the Wyoming Wildlife Federation, Wyoming Game and Fish Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit. The major topic is the pros and cons of game ranching, as well as problems of access to public lands. Wildlife enthusiasts are invited to attend the meeting, which will be held at the Casper Downtowner Motel. Registration is \$40 before Jan. 1 and \$50 after Jan. 1. Contact Wyoming Wildlife Federation, P.O. Box 106, Cheyenne, WY 82003 (307/637-5433).

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GUEST OPINION

Post mortem on FOE

by Gordon Anderson

With the closure of Friends of the Earth's western Colorado office in Palisade and its branch offices in Tucson, Arizona, Crested Butte, Colorado, and Moab, Utah, FOE's 17-year conservation program in the intermountain West is now history.

In the late 1970s FOE fielded over a dozen regional representatives and volunteer branch coordinators in the West. With little financial support they made a difference in the environmental battles fought over Colorado's oil shale, Montana's coal, Wyoming's wilderness and southern Utah's panoramic vistas. In the 1980s, they have fallen victim to a power struggle between FOE's San Francisco idealists and its Washington, D.C., power-brokers.

Two years ago, I joined the ranks of FOE field representatives fired for "insubordination" -- collective opposition to the restructuring of FOE as a Washington, D.C., lobbying group at the expense of field offices and branch program. Soon afterwards I became the first candidate nominated by members' petitions to be elected to the board of directors and returned to FOE. As a director, I soon learned that our entrenched struggle over FOE's future had charted its course, like a doomed ship, to an inevitable collision. All during my term and since 1979, the year FOE founder David Brower voluntarily stepped aside as president, the anti-Brower majority had dominated board meetings in an attempt to cover up their own inabilities as leaders while FOE experienced escalating administrative and financial problems. These directors also loaded an increasingly frustrated and polarized staff with an endless series of task-force meetings charged with redefining FOE as something "marketable."

Meanwhile, the FOE debt soared while its membership sank. While eight directors wanted to force the ouster of board chairman David Brower, the San Francisco staff and their labor union by shutting down the San Francisco national headquarters, there were seven directors, myself included, who forced the issue to a vote by the membership.

In that recall election, marred by controversy over who had or had not the opportunity to vote, the pro-Washington, D.C., majority survived by just 181 votes out of 5,613 cast. Now the battle for control of FOE is finally over, leaving the organization with a disclosed \$627,000 debt, an absence of its most experienced staff and valuable programs, the departure of 18 of 21 branch leaders and a significant loss of members, including its most visible and charismatic one. What is left in Washington, D.C., is a shell of what was once a vital and influential environmental organization.

The power struggle at FOE was accurately described in the August issue of *Outside* as "...a clash between two increasingly irreconcilable factions of the modern environmental movement; those grass-roots environmentalists who, like Brower, are most comfortable on wilderness trails; and the professional environmentalists, managers, lobbyists, and attorneys for whom the movement is less a passion than a career...Ultimately, the showdown at FOE says as much about the environmental movement today as it does about David Brower."

In a November *Mother Jones* article, "The Forest for the Trees, Can Today's Environmentalists Tell the Difference?" author Kirkpatrick Sale wrote of "...the passion of a new and growing movement that has become disenchanted with the environmental establishment and has in recent years mounted a serious and sweeping attack on it

-- style, substance, systems, sensibilities and all...A new spirit of defiance and urgency is abroad, as activists and theorists alike seek to propel the nation's environmental consciousness in what can only be called a more radical direction."

Sale describes these emerging groups that number some 100 different organizations as the "new ecologists," who "differ from the environmental establishment most profoundly in their sense of direction, of purpose."

These new ecologists, according to Sale, are also particularly critical of the mainstream conservation organizations for "turning their backs on the grass-roots support and idealism that gave the movement its initial momentum."

Those of us former FOE staffers, volunteers and directors who opposed the Washington, D.C., takeover did so not out of a lack of respect for the importance of an effective environmental lobby on Capitol Hill, but rather out of concern that the centralization of power and authority within an elite of "professional" environmentalists has led to pursuit of the trappings of political power rather than environmental ideals.

Anticipating this trend, David Brower founded Earth Island Institute in 1982 to be, among other things, a "lifeboat" for the conservation programs that an autocratic FOE board was unwilling to support. Those programs reflect the evolved priorities and concerns of the new ecologists: Green Politics, Fate of the Earth Conferences, Rainforest Action, Indigenous Peoples, Nuclear Energy and Appropriate Technologies. The San Francisco-based organization already boasts some 5,000 members and seeks to fill the gaps left by FOE's scuttled programs and its Washington, D.C., reorientation.

□

Gordon Anderson is a freelance writer and photographer in Colorado Springs, Colorado.

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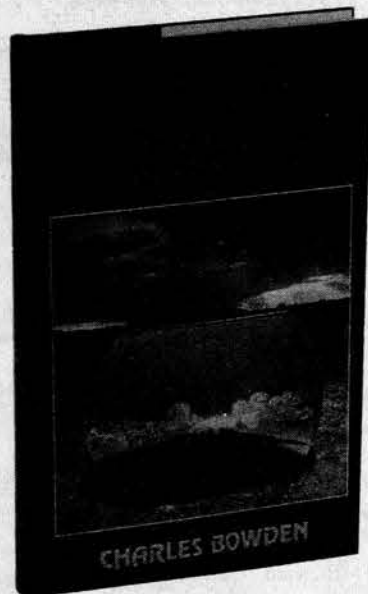
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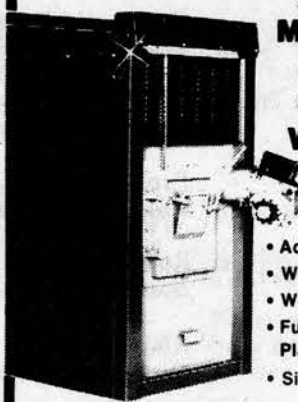
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