

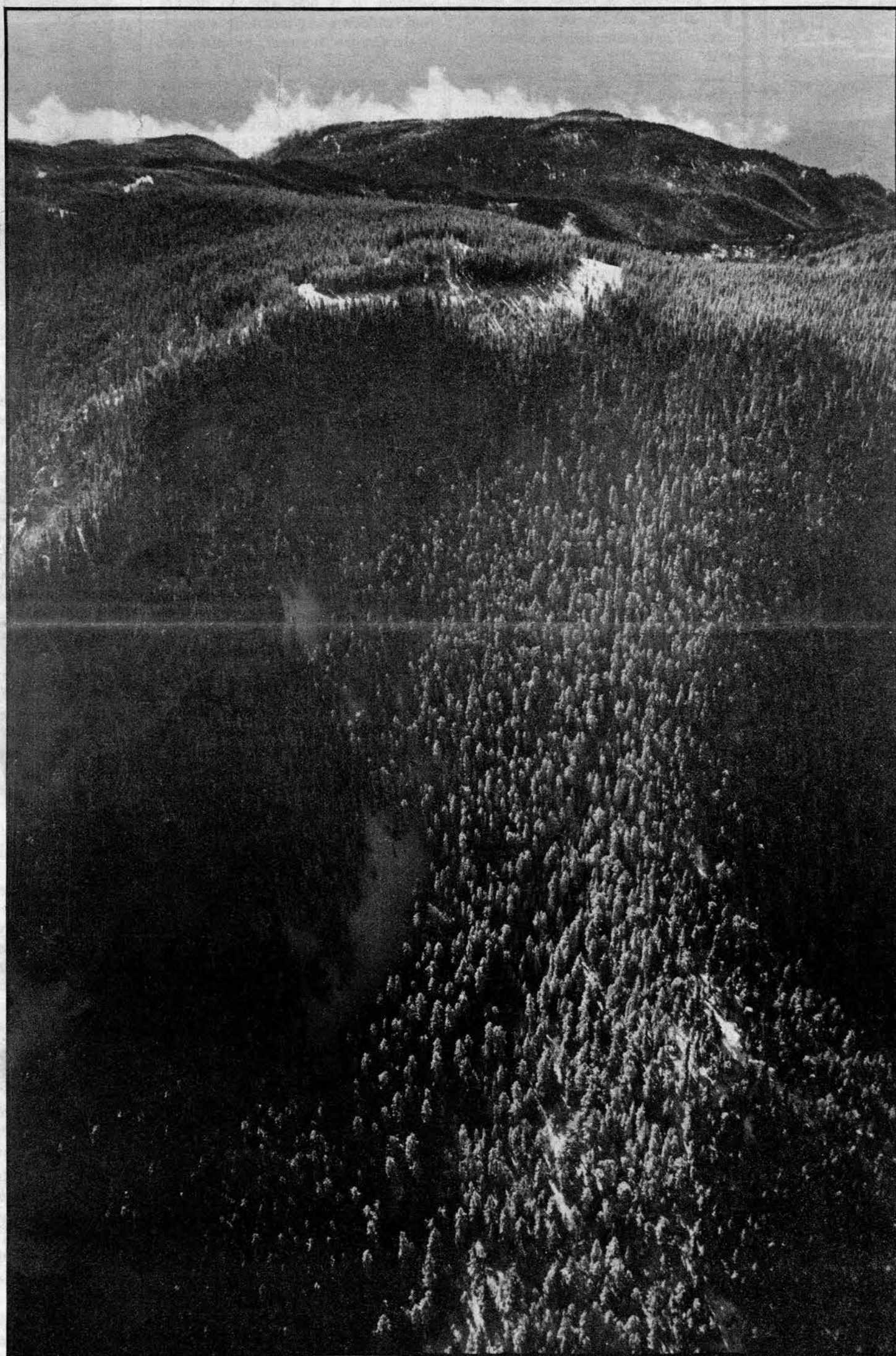
High Country News

May 11, 1987

Vol. 19 No. 9

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One Dollar



Duquid Bremner

Mt. Graham

A struggle for an Arizona peak

✓ See page 10

Dear friends,



High Country News

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Although staff feels as if it has just recovered from the winter board meeting, the spring board meeting is upon us. It will be held on Saturday, May 30, in Aspen, Colo. Almost certainly, there will be a blizzard in the Roaring Fork Valley.

As is customary, the meeting will be followed by a party to which all readers are invited. Such events are usually potlucks. This time, thanks to the generosity of reader Ted Goudvis, all we ask is that you bring yourself to a picnic dinner starting at 5:30 p.m., directly following the board meeting. If you can come, please let us know and get directions by calling Judy Moffatt at 945-0121 or by writing her at Box 604, Glenwood Springs, CO 81602. If you can't make this one, plan to join us after our next board meeting in southern Idaho on September 26. These events, by the way, are always friendly and relaxed.

We are getting a good return on the 20,000 letters we sent out last month seeking new subscribers. It appears we will hit the 1 percent return (200 new subscribers) that is our minimum goal. We are especially surprised at how many of those responding had already heard about HCN. Surviving to a ripe old age of 17 has its benefits.

During past direct-mail drives, we could count on 20 or so letters from present subscribers asking why we were wasting our money sending them letters. They were often further annoyed because the solicitations offer a free month if the solicitee pays upfront rather than asks to be billed.

This time, we spent some extra money and compared our subscriber lists with the sample lists we used. The vetting worked -- only two readers have written to say they received solicitations. Col. and Mrs. G.S. Peterson, who have been with the paper since its founding, got a letter because our zip code for them in Casper differed from the sample list's zip code. Robert Benson of Missoula got one because there are lots of subscribers in the 59802 zip area and we missed his name.

Circulation manager C.B. Elliott is amazed at the number of new subscribers coming in from tiny communities in the region. "There are places," she says, "where everyone in town must be getting High Country News."

C.B. and the mail crew were especially busy with this issue because they sent out 3,000 sample copies in addition to the 5,600 copies to subscribers. The 3,000 samples all go to former subscribers, and the size of this lapsed subscriber list illustrates why HCN must continually search out new subscribers. Each year, for a variety of reasons, 25 percent of HCN's subscribers fail to renew. The 75 percent renewal rate is very high, but it still means HCN must find 1400 new readers each year just to stay even.

HCN now has 11 Canadian subscribers and six outside of this continent. The two latest foreign subscribers are Don Hunley of Auckland, New Zealand, a new subscriber, and C. Petsonk of Nairobi, Kenya, who moved there from Philadelphia. Other nations with subscribers are Australia, France, Singapore and Switzerland.

We asked Bruce Farling, our

"micro-bureau" reporter in Missoula, Mont., to tell us something about himself. Reluctantly, he complied:

Like most people, I started out as a child. Home was southeast Pennsylvania, west of Philadelphia and 65 miles downwind of Three Mile Island. Around 1974, I discovered that the West seemed less crowded. After a summer and fall of hitchhiking with numerous forays into the bush, I landed in sodden western Oregon. It is now time to discuss rain, mildew and 8-inch-long slugs.

In Oregon it's said, people don't tan, they rust. Well, that's something of an exaggeration, especially if you're from the eastern part of the state. Not totally, however. Imagine the gloom of the McKenzie River valley on a November day when five inches of rain pelts your leaking rooftop.

Living in Eugene, I attended the University of Oregon for five years and occasionally went to class. During a momentary lapse of good sense, the university slipped me a degree in geography/environmental sciences. Employment for a number of years came in the form of working as a printer. The last honest job I had. I now work for the Forest Service.

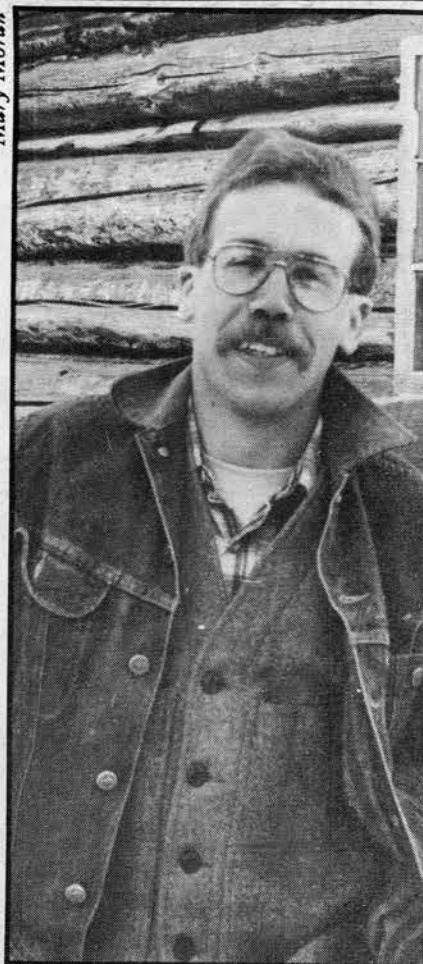
In Oregon, it's true, people actually "eat" tofu. These folks wear Birkenstock sandals and speak in tongues, saying things such as "for sure" and "way radical, man." More importantly they also voted -- like many burger-eaters and wearers of loggers' caulks -- for conservation-visionaries such as Tom McCall and approved good laws for recycling and statewide land-use planning. California and Colorado notwithstanding, the West's best and most effective environmental work was, and still is, found in Oregon.

During the 1970s, I worked for several conservation organizations, eventually becoming a RARE II, early forest-planning-burnout victim. My defection started in 1979, with a Forest Service fire-crew job in northeast Oregon. It opened up new career horizons. I learned how to wash trucks and fire hose. During an October project fire in the Washington Cascades, I was assigned the job of "fuel depot manager." Great. No dirty fireline for me. The assignment, however, led to a 12-day, night shift, 12-hours-a-day zombie stint pumping gas and changing air filters on the various trucks used on the fire. This was not my calling.

A wilderness ranger job with the Forest Service's only all-wilderness ranger district came along in 1980. So did a permanent move to Montana. The two most important aspects of the job are: A) to try and protect a chunk of wild country from looking like everywhere else, and B) to look like a cowboy.

I hear a lot of "Boy, I wish I had your job," or "Harrumph... some of us have to work for a living, you know!" I won't comment on either. However, I will say that the Selway is not a "wilderness heaven" nor does it have great fishing and elk hunting. These are lies. The Selway is a treacherous place filled with impenetrable brush and dangerous animals from hungry ticks, rabid wolverines and rattlesnakes to cranky wilderness rangers. And it always rains. So do not go there. The Bob Marshall and San Juan Mountains are the places to go.

Mary Moran



Bruce Farling

When not in the backcountry, a 6- to 8-month occupation, I occasionally work for friends bending nails or doing odd jobs. Or I travel around the West and Alaska. This winter and spring involved some graduate work in journalism at the University of Montana, in Missoula. An internship at HCN in Paonia, Colo., in 1985 led to semi-regular contributions to the paper. My work has also appeared in Forest Service publications, conservation journals, the *Missoulian* and on the walls of restrooms in several Missoula bars.

Our "Rebottling the Nuclear Genie" article of Jan. 19, 1987, by HCN staffer Steve Hinchman, has been reprinted three times. The article on contamination of New Mexico's Grants Uranium Belt was reprinted in its entirety by *Native American Self Sufficiency*, a bi-monthly paper put out by the Seventh Generation Fund in Forestville, California, and by the Southwest Research and Information Center in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Excerpts recently ran in *Manas*, a journal of independent inquiry published by Henry Geiger in Los Angeles.

Ted Baker, a longtime reader from Cheyenne, Wyo., stopped in at the High Country News office to say hello. Retired from the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Baker said he plans to build an energy-efficient solar home some 60 miles northwest of Phoenix, Ariz.

Linda Hasselstrom's *Windbreak: A Woman Rancher on the Northern Plains* will be published in June by Barn Owl Books, Box 7727, Berkeley, CA 94707. The cost is \$12.95 postpaid.

Her newest book, *Going Over East*, a chronicle of Hasselstrom's life on the family's ranch in the Dakotas, will be published in July by Fulcrum Inc., which also awarded her its 1987 Writing Award of \$2,500. For more information about the annual award write Fulcrum Writing Award, Fulcrum Inc., 350 Indiana St., Ste 510, Golden, CO 80401.

--the staff

WESTERN ROUNDUP

Economic development comes to Colorado

If all goes as planned, the Colorado Army National Guard will conduct day and night tree-top helicopter flights in the heart of Colorado's recreation country.

Home base for the flights will be Eagle County, also home to Vail and Beaver Creek ski areas, and prospective home to Adam's Rib ski area. The 700,000 acres of White River National Forest and Bureau of Land Management lands in western Eagle County and Garfield County that are proposed for flights attract heavy use by summer and winter recreationists drawn by the area's streams, 14,000-foot peaks and easy access from the Denver Front Range via the Eisenhower Tunnel and I-70.

The high-altitude forested mountains that make the area attractive to fishermen and hikers also make it desirable to the National Guard. At a public information meeting in Eagle in January, Lt. Col. William Westerdahl explained, "There's a need to train at these altitudes because we will do battle at these altitudes if we ever go to war. The aircraft perform differently at these altitudes than at sea level."

The uneven terrain of the public lands will allow the helicopter pilots to practice concealment from the enemy. They will fly at "nap of the earth" or at or below tree level. "That's the way wars are going to be fought from now on," said Guard pilot Don Rice. "It's not going to be like Vietnam. If the enemy can see your aircraft, they're going to shoot you down. The ground soldiers in communist nations now carry hand-held surface-to-air missiles."

In addition, Eagle and Garfield counties offer vast space. Rice said, "You're looking at 700,000 acres-plus that you can utilize for training. You don't find that in New York or California."

Once there is final approval from the chief of the National Guard in Washington, D.C., the Combat Support Aviation Company, a unit of 30 full-time and 140 to 200 part-time members of the Colorado Army National Guard, will be stationed later this year at the Eagle County Airport -- along with 23 helicopters.

Plans are for two morning, two afternoon and two evening flights during 1987-1988, increasing to a maximum of six morning, six afternoon and six evening flights by 1990. Flying in pairs for safety reasons, the helicopters will travel about 18 mph and cover about 35-40 miles in their two-hour flights.

While rural people in some other parts of the West have organized to fight military use of airspace (HCN, 12/8/86), Eagle County actively sought the National Guard unit. On a visit to Washington, D.C., County Commissioner Dick Gustafson petitioned the Director of the Army National Guard for an armory. Lt. Gen. Herbert Temple told Gustafson at their 1985 meeting: "You're the first county commissioner to ever ask for an armory. And, as long as you're the first, you're going to get one."

Gustafson sees the facility as a way to diversify the county's economy, which has been hard hit by declines in mining and agriculture, and to wean it away from its

Colorado Army National Guard



OH-6 Cayuse light observation helicopter

dependence on the ski industry.

Representatives of the National Guard, state Division of Wildlife, BLM and White River National Forest have spent more than a year developing a Memorandum of Understanding that spells out agreements to minimize impacts on other uses.

At the Eagle meeting, where officials easily outnumbered a handful of ranchers, Westerdahl stressed the Guard's commitment to respond flexibly to any conflicts with recreationists, wildlife or ranchers. "If we bother somebody, then we'll change something," he said. "We want to get in bed with everybody here. We want everybody to be happy."

The primary tool for minimizing impacts is the agreement that helicopters will fly only over BLM lands in summers, when elk, cattle and recreationists are using higher-elevation Forest Service lands. In winter, when animals and people presumably retreat to lower elevations, the flights will be over Forest Service lands.

Other agreements include avoidance of ski areas, firewood cutting areas, the 10th Mountain Trail and other recreation areas; flights no lower than 500 feet over river corridors; avoidance of riparian,

nesting and hunting areas for raptors and goose and duck migration routes; avoidance of winter elk calving grounds and cattle grazing areas; seasonal restrictions in sage grouse strutting areas; and no flights during hunting seasons other than archery.

Matt Mathes, public information officer with the White River National Forest, reiterated the Guard's assurance that pilots will avoid recreationists and wildlife. He said, "If they see wildlife or people in the distance, they have said they will take evasive action." He continued, "This will be part of the practice of evading the enemy."

The plans have stirred no visible opposition from recreationists. Pat Carlow, former Eagle Town Council member, said, "It's the quietest big project that ever came into this valley."

Carlow said in contrast to the Adam's Rib ski area proposal, which was emotionally debated for years in the county, people don't seem to feel strongly about it one way or another.

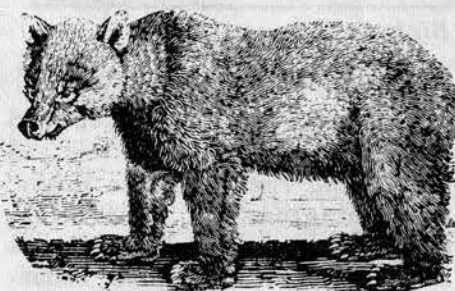
Carlow added, "By the time they put somebody's bull through a fence, they may decide it was an issue."

--Judy Moffatt

HOTLINE

Interior angers tribes

Indian tribes in the Northwest are angry at policies developed by the Interior Department's top Indian official, reports the *Missoulian*. The Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, representing 36 tribes, charged that Ross Swimmer, Assistant Interior Secretary for Indian Affairs, is working against tribal self-determination. At a recent meeting, leaders of seven tribes said they would work to oust Swimmer from his job. At the heart of the disagreement are four of Swimmer's recent initiatives: closing BIA-operated schools on reservations and turning them over to state and local school administrators; contracting banking and accounting services of nearly \$2 billion in Indian assets to the Mellon Bank of Pittsburgh; privatizing timber management on Indian reservations; and developing a work-fare plan that tribes say would force welfare recipients to work at jobs that don't exist.



Recidivist grizzlies

Grizzly bears that come into a conflict with humans, usually over food, almost always get into trouble again. That's what Yellowstone National Park officials said about all of the 16 female grizzlies that have been either removed from the park or have a history of conflicts. Park officials told AP they may scrap the relocation program since the bears always return to the park. "We have little ability to manipulate the bears. We try to fool them, but it doesn't work," said Chris Servheen, grizzly bear coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Should wolves return to Yellowstone?

The Wyoming Wildlife Federation's convention last month focused on the Rocky Mountain Wolf, an endangered species proposed for a controversial re-introduction in and around Yellowstone Park.

Biologist Renee Askins of Moose, Wyo., director of the Wolf Fund, said wolves would prey on the park's large ungulates, and "boost the integrity of the ecosystem." They would not cause the same park closures as the grizzly because they don't attack people, she added.

Alaskan wolf biologist Vic Van Ballenberghe estimated that Yellowstone could easily support up to 300 wolves. He said hunting groups often oppose Alaskan wolves because of a perception that they deplete moose,

caribou and Dall sheep herds, but he said research shows that many other factors are at work to influence big game populations.

Carolyn Paseneaux, executive director of the Wyoming Woolgrowers Association, talked about her constituents' fear that wolves will become an excuse to "lock up more public land." She said stockgrowers would not oppose wolves within Yellowstone Park so long as private citizens could hunt and trap wolves anywhere and anytime outside the park.

Because the Yellowstone wolves would be considered an experimental population under the Endangered Species Act, the recovery plan could include provisions for killing troublesome wolves, said Tom France,

attorney with the National Wildlife Federation. There can also be compensation, paid from private funding sources, for proven livestock losses from wolves, he said.

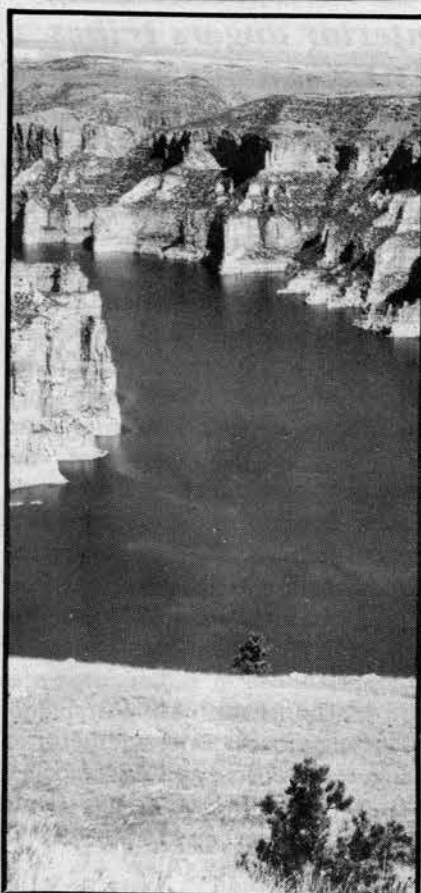
The Wyoming Wildlife Federation chose the topic of wolves because the organization has not yet taken a position on the recovery plan, but some speakers focused on other issues. Wyoming Gov. Mike Sullivan called for an end to fighting over the proposed Bridger-Teton Forest Plan, adding that his earlier recommendation to permit mineral exploration in critical grizzly bear habitat was meant to be taken on a "case by case" basis. He asked Wyoming people to work together without making administrative appeals in the forest planning process.

On the other hand, Tom Luspig, director of the Rocky Mountain Natural Resource Law Clinic in Denver, urged members to stay in the trenches on forest plans because they may be the only thing standing between "the timber industry and wildlife."

--Dee Oudin



HOTLINE



Bighorn Canyon

A dammed resource

One of the most threatened resources in the U.S. is the wild and free-flowing river. American Rivers, a Washington, D.C.-based river advocacy group, recently published a list of the nation's ten most endangered rivers, four of which are in the West: the North and South Forks of the Platte River in Colorado, Wyoming and Nebraska; the Little Bighorn in Wyoming; the Klamath in Oregon; and the Verde in Arizona. All 10 rivers are currently targeted for big dam projects, and in response, American Rivers is kicking off a major campaign to obtain wild and scenic or other protection status. Chris Brown, vice president of the group, says that of the nation's 3.5 million river miles, 17 percent are covered by dams and reservoirs and only 0.5 percent are protected.

Radiation victims go zero for two

Back-to-back rulings from the 10th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals have once again broken Westerners' hopes of compensation for radiation-caused deaths and illnesses from above-ground atomic testing and government-sponsored uranium mining in the 1940s and 1950s. One ruling overturned a 1984 federal court decision giving nine downwind families \$2.6 million because of federal negligence in the 1950s at the Nevada Test Site. The second ruling sustained a lower court decision rejecting uranium miners' claims that the government failed to give adequate warning of radon hazards to miners employed in the 1940s. The three-judge appeals panel held that the federal government cannot be held liable for negligently failing to warn downwind residents or miners of radiation hazards. The government has sovereign immunity from claims suffered as a result of official government policy, the judges said. In the case of the uranium miners, federal attorneys argued that the Atomic Energy Commission made a deliberate decision not to warn miners because officials feared the men would flee the mines, thereby threatening the nation's uranium supply. Judges said relief can only come through action by Congress.

Congressman floats a wilderness bill

After two months of delays, Montana Rep. Pat Williams introduced in early April a long-awaited Montana wilderness bill. He says it will provide jobs and "still protect this green and flourishing estate for our children and grandchildren."

Of Montana's 6 million roadless Forest Service acres, Williams proposes protection for 1.3 million as wilderness. His bill also creates five national recreation areas and provides interim protection in three areas. The bill releases the remaining 4.1 million roadless acres for activities such as timber cutting, oil and gas development and motorized and primitive recreation use. The legislation also includes "soft release" language, which means that areas released for possible development may not be considered for wilderness again until forest plans are revised in 10 or 15 years.

The Democratic congressman hopes his legislation will help resolve Montana's acrimonious forest wilderness debate. There has been no resolution partly because the state's four-person congressional delegation was unsuccessful in developing a unified wilderness bill. The delegation's much-ballyhooed three-year attempt to reach consensus finally died last summer, largely because eastern Montana Rep. Ron Marlenee stubbornly resisted wilderness designation in contentious areas such as the Rocky Mountain Front.

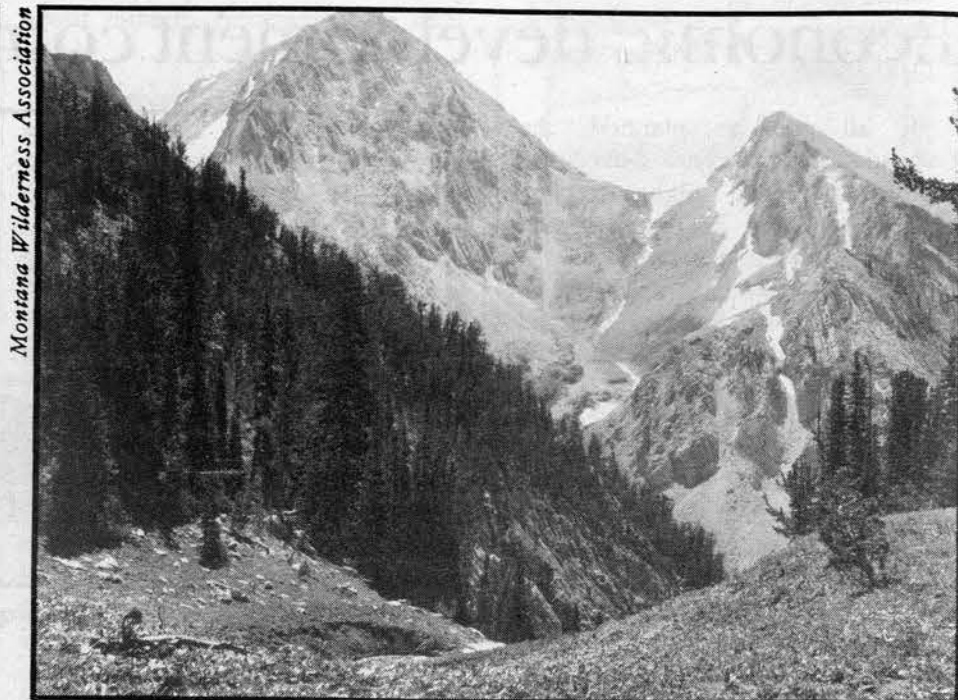
Williams said in a recent speech that he is through making deals with Marlenee on wilderness. The consensus process failed because "it turned democracy on its head," he said, by allowing one member of the congressional delegation to scuttle agreements reached by the other three members.

Williams' bill, however, received a lukewarm reception from many conservationists. Keith Hammer, a spokesman for northwest Montana's Swan View Coalition, said although the bill protects many of the roadless acres on the Flathead Forest he is most concerned about, "it still leaves a heck of a lot of other areas in the state out."

John Gatchell, program director of the Montana Wilderness Association, said Williams deserves credit for a number of the bill's specific features, such as the protection it offers for many areas surrounding the Bob Marshall Wilderness. But he is "disappointed with the overall product" because the legislation would release over two-thirds of Montana's roadless areas for possible development. The association proposes 2.7 million acres of new wilderness.

Gatchell is especially disappointed that Williams has recommended no wilderness protection for two major areas surrounding the scenic Big Hole Valley in southwest Montana.

According to Williams' bill, the West Big Hole roadless area would be protected only until a watershed study on it is completed. At that point it could be considered for either wilderness or development. The West Pioneers area, which abuts the valley's east side, is a proposed national recreation area, a designation Williams said prohibits timber harvesting but not off-road vehicle use. Wilderness protection in the Big Hole areas is a major priority for



Peaks in the Rocky Mountain Front proposed for wilderness addition

Gatchell's group as well as some local ranchers and outfitters.

Members of the Badger-Two Medicine Alliance complained bitterly to Williams after the bill's introduction because it provides no protection for the 102,000-acre Badger-Two Medicine area on the Rocky Mountain Front. They said without immediate protection, roading and natural gas exploration will occur in the area as early as this spring.

Timber industry spokesmen are also unhappy with the bill. Rem Kohrt, manager of the Stoltz-Conner mill in the southern Bitterroot Valley, said the "proposal scares me a little bit." He said his mill gets 98 percent of its logs from Forest Service land and that any new wilderness designations will severely hurt the industry. He predicted that if Williams' bill is approved "one of the mills will be gone in this valley."

Doug Crandall, a spokesman for the Brand S mill in Livingston, in central Montana, opposes new wilderness designations and wants language in the legislation that will block all released lands from ever being considered for wilderness

again. He said the industry needs an assurance it will have a future timber supply.

Larry McGone, a spokesman for Plum Creek Timber Company in northwest Montana, said he hadn't studied the bill yet but added he was "concerned with the exchange of lands" proposed in the bill. Plum Creek is a subsidiary of Burlington-Northern Railroad -- a company with extensive land holdings, some of which are included in Williams' land consolidation proposal for roadless tracts in southwest Montana.

Williams' bill is likely to be the first and perhaps most influential Montana wilderness bill introduced in Congress this year. The congressman said he expects Montana Sen. Max Baucus, R, will introduce a wilderness bill sometime this May. Fellow Democratic Sen. John Melcher has already tossed a wilderness bill in the hopper -- a bill that would designate 1 million acres of wilderness. Introduced last summer, that proposal was roundly condemned by conservationists.

--Bruce Farling

HOTLINE

Killer solvent

Nearly 2,000 gallons of a toxic chemical spilled from a ruptured pipe in an industrial park at North Salt Lake, Utah, last month. One man was killed, six were injured, and some 1,000 people were evacuated from the area. Emergency crews from seven local and state agencies worked around the clock to contain the spill of trichloroethane, a solvent used in liquid resins, at the Hodson Laboratories. Workers fought to keep the chemical from eating through the warehouse's concrete floor and entering the sewer system, officials said. The death occurred when manufacturing chief Lee Hodson tried to stop the spill without proper protection. Hodson, who was the owner's son, was overcome by fumes.

A long shot in Utah

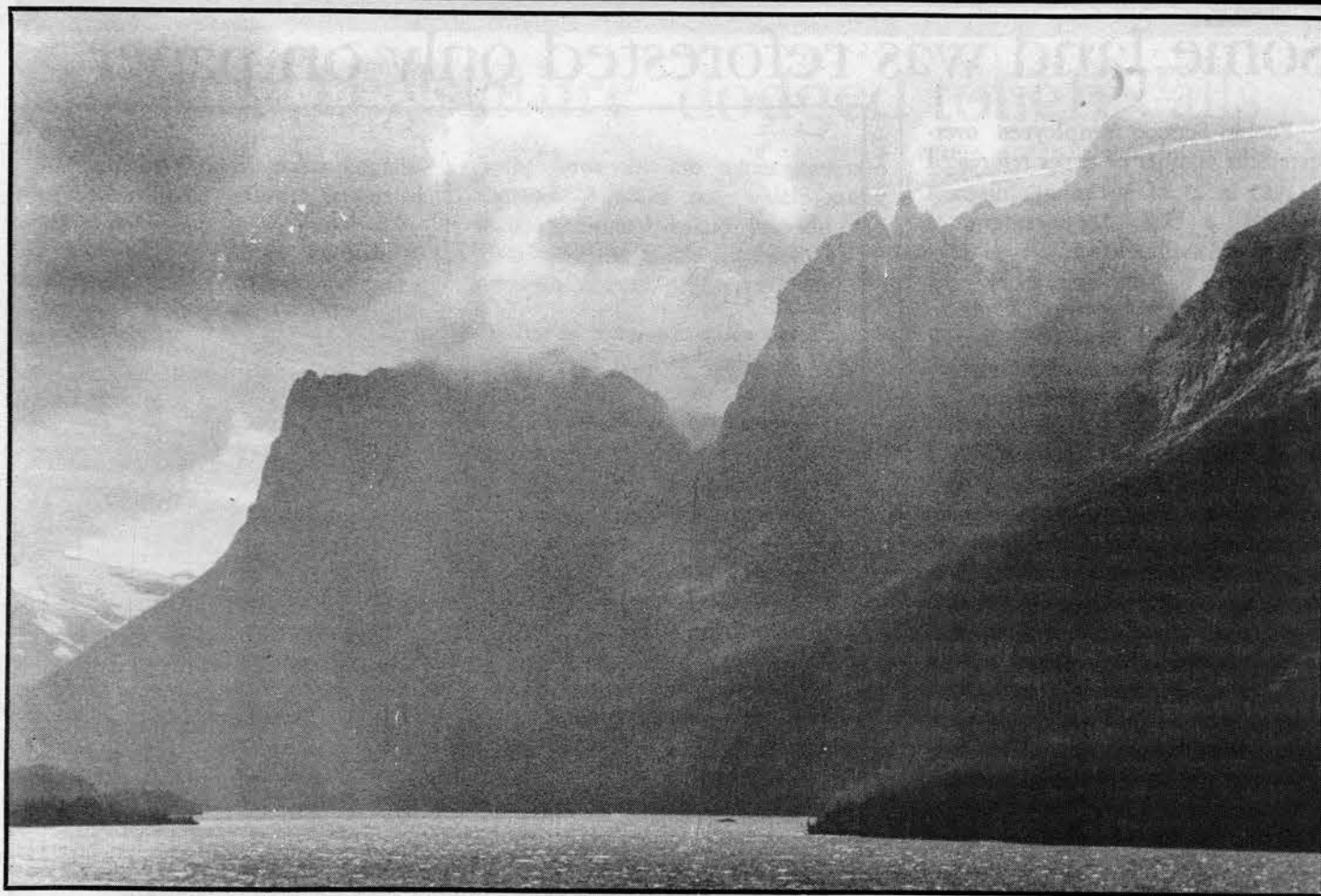
The re-opening of the closed USX steel mill in Provo, Utah, under new ownership is a long shot, according to a Wall Street analyst. The Geneva Works plant was initially closed in July 1986, idling 2100 employees. In February 1987, USX (formerly U.S.

Steel), said the closure would be permanent unless a buyer was found (HCN, 2/16/87). Analyst Peter Marcus of Paine Webber Inc. said it would take a \$23 million capital investment over the next eight years and a lot of luck in the marketplace to reopen the plant with 1000 employees. As recently as 1980, it employed 5000 directly; another 550 supplied iron ore to the plant out of Lander, Wyo., and approximately 700 miners in two mines near Paonia and Carbondale, Colo., kept the mill supplied with coking coal. Some workers at the plant charged in 1984 that USX was neglecting routine maintenance (HCN, 3/18/85), let alone upgrading, while it squeezed the facility for maximum production. That neglect may now be adding to the expense of re-opening the mill.

BARBS

Well, rip it up and get it out of the way.

A British land development firm courted by Colorado Gov. Roy Romer says its motto about Colorado is: "Land in the path of progress."



Klamath River

Rafters battle dam builders for Oregon's Klamath River

From its headwaters on the high plateau of eastern Oregon, the Klamath River tumbles through the southern Cascades and Siskiyou mountains to meet the sea near the California town of Requa. High in its canyon walls nest osprey and eagle; to its banks come cougar, black bear and ring-tailed cat.

Residents of the high Klamath basin will sometimes follow the steep canyon down if their vehicles can handle the rocky road. Below, they escape from winter winds to find the Mediterranean climate of the lower levels. It's a little piece of California in their own backyards.

The Shasta, Modoc and Klamath Indians called this canyon home. They gathered into large villages when the salmon ran thick as a Denver traffic jam. Artifacts found at some locations in the Klamath Canyon have been radio-carbon dated at over 7,000 years, making them the oldest continuously occupied sites in Oregon. Even today, these fishing villages survive in the memory of some elders.

In 1895 the first hydroelectric project was built on the Klamath -- the Link River powerhouse near the city of Klamath Falls, Ore. Others soon followed: the Keno and Copco, with their murky reservoirs. In 1924, Herbert Hoover and Stanford University President R.L. Wilbur, avid anglers and frequent visitors to the river, convinced the California Legislature to prohibit any further dam construction on the lower Klamath.

Oregon looked the other way. Over the next half-century two more projects were built: the Irongate and the JC Boyle, whose controlled release of water was responsible for the Klamath becoming a white-water rafter's paradise, beginning in 1979.

The 18 miles below the Boyle's powerhouse, now the last Oregon stretch of the river yet unaltered by bulldozers and cement mixers, is "one of the top 10 white-water rivers in the country," according to one commercial outfitter's brochure. Even in summer, Klamath rafters are guaranteed a bountiful supply of crashing foam from Pacific Power and Light, Boyle's operators, who

time their releases to organized river expeditions. But there are plans to halt the white water.

In 1985, the city of Klamath Falls applied to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for permission to build a sixth dam on the Klamath River, near a site known as Salt Caves. Besides flooding some 34 archaeological sites, their proposal would have divided the 18-mile-wide stretch into a 470-acre reservoir above, and several miles of concrete chute running alongside what would be left of the river below.

Klamath Falls Mayor George Flitcraft searched up and down the West Coast for financing for the project but eventually found it in his own neighborhood. A Klamath Falls company called Trendwest provided the \$2.5 million for preliminary studies in exchange for free fire protection on one of their developments and 12 percent of the dam's net revenues for the period of the federal license -- about 25 years. It was, says Klamath County Commissioner Roger Hamilton, "a pretty sweet deal."

It was so sweet that Flitcraft, together with some council members and staff, drew the scrutiny of the state ethics commission, which looked into a Trendwest-sponsored trip to New York. Then Klamath Falls City Manager Harold Derrah left his position to take a job with Trendwest, and the city issued \$250 million in revenue bonds to underwrite the costs of the Salt Caves Project.

Predictably, the proposal ran into opposition. White-water adventurers were particularly outraged at the impending loss of their new-found treasure. Local residents like Commissioner Hamilton agreed, saying the dam would destroy the area's only world-class recreational attraction. To mitigate such concerns, project managers proposed the development of two other recreational sites: an already begun "Sportsman's Park" featuring rifle ranges and four-wheeler courses; and nearby 8,036-foot Pelican Butte as a winter ski area. Critics suggested that only in the Orwellian world of regulatory mitigation could develop-

ment of one wild area be offset by the development of another.

Fishermen also reacted strongly to the Salt Caves proposal. Salmon had long since been eliminated on the upper Klamath by the two downstream dams without fish ladders, but steelhead and rainbow, drawn by the abundance of nutrients flowing from Klamath Lake, had turned the river into a fine trout-producing stream.

State Fish and Wildlife officials feared the open concrete canal would prove fatal to many of the deer drawn to the canyon by its warm winter climate. In the long canal above the John Boyle powerhouse, their drowned carcasses are frequently found.

Others objected to the destruction of sites sacred to Native Americans. Elliot Gehr, archaeologist in charge of the preliminary excavations of the area, says "building a dam there would be like driving a bulldozer through a church."

Many also doubted a need for the dam's electricity in a regional power-grid already operating at surplus. "They're not going to use the power," says Commissioner Hamilton. "They're just going to go into the power business." Although it's an 85-megawatt capacity dam, the average annual production would only be about 45 megawatts. "No one's interested in dams anymore when our geothermal resources have such tremendous potential," Hamilton says.

In the face of such resistance, the project managers withdrew their FERC application and returned to the drawing board. Last July, Resource Management International, a Sacramento, Calif.-based firm now in charge of the project, unveiled its new proposal. It calls for only a 70-acre reservoir, flooding only two known Native American sites. The seven miles of concrete canal would be covered by 100-foot-wide, naturally landscaped deer crossings. Project communications manager C. Michael Hartfield says the new proposal can increase both wildlife habitat and fish population. "It will ruin the white-water rafting," he

Fighting for the basement.

The *Denver Post* reports, with a touch of pride, that Denver violated the federal standards for carbon monoxide on only 59 days in the 1983 to 1985 period. By comparison, Provo, Utah, had 73 violations, Phoenix had 85 violations and New York City had 112 violations.

Wheel-spinning of a very high order.

For every \$1 bet, the Colorado State Lottery spends 20 cents on administration, returns 50 cents as prizes, and spends 30 cents on state and local parks and other projects.

From yippies to yuppies.

In an attempt to move back in time for "hippie day," students at a high school in Kansas mixed up their symbols, confusing the peace symbol with the logo of Mercedes Benz. One of the students who helped paint the sign said, "I guess we were kind of ignorant about that," according to a newsletter published by the Wilderness Institute.

says, "but help the economy and help the environment."

Proponents of the Salt Caves Dam see it as a matter of economic necessity for a severely depressed region. The \$3 to \$10 million annual revenues from the dam would fund an "Operation Bootstrap," which would help bankroll new businesses and create jobs.

"We're losing thousands of people a year -- over 150 businesses over the last couple years," says Hartfield. "This is one heck of a good project to pump money into a region that desperately needs it."

Before any dam is built, it must clear many regulatory hurdles, including FERC, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, the Water Resources Commission, the state Energy Facility Siting Council and others. November's elections, which saw three of four pro-dam Klamath Falls City Council members defeated by their anti-dam opponents, haven't helped the cause. Project managers would like to see it on line by 1994, but nobody's betting the ranch on that. For now, Oregon's last stretch of wild Klamath, home to otter and ancient spirits, flows uninhibitedly to the sea.

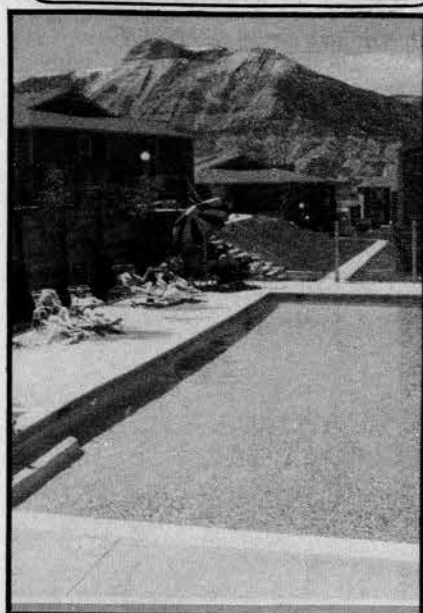
--Jim Stiak

HOTLINE

The spreading lake

The Great Salt Lake pumping project, under way since April 13th, has sent some of the lake's salty brine more than 25 miles into Utah's desert. But West Pond, as the newly formed lake is called, is having untoward effects. It is submerging for the rest of this century, and perhaps longer, a tiny freshwater marsh in the midst of the salt flats at Lemay. Overlooked in the Bureau of Land Management's survey of the area to be flooded, the Lemay oasis is one of the last remaining waterfowl habitats in Utah's desert. If the pumping project is successful in lowering the Great Salt Lake, however, one result might be the resurgence of freshwater marshes.

HOTLINE

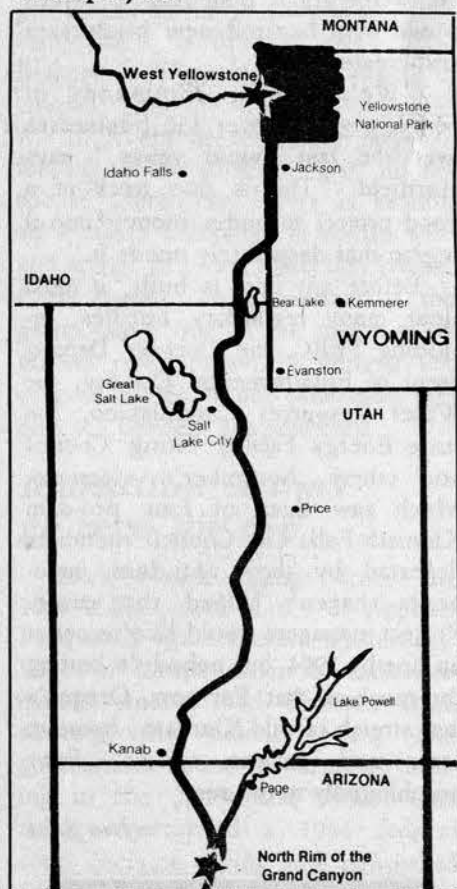


Battlement Mesa Inc.

Pool at Battlement Mesa

An unexpected bounce

An oil company that came to western Colorado to mine oil shale may have found a gold mine in retirees. With a current population of 1,500 that includes 600 retirees, Battlement Mesa is expanding. The wholly owned subsidiary of Exxon says it will add a \$5 million, 18-hole championship golf course, a \$6.5 million upgrade of an activity center, a 12-acre recreational-vehicle park for tourists and five more miles of biking and hiking trails. Exxon had hoped to fill Battlement Mesa with oil shale miners and their families, but in 1982, on "Black Sunday," the company shut down its multi-million dollar project.



An interstate trail

A "Great Western Trail" that would connect Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming to Grand Canyon National Park in Arizona is gaining support. That support comes mainly from Utah where some 90 percent of the trail already exists as dirt road or track. Monroe Gallier, a retired school principal in Utah, is spearheading the volunteer effort with the help of Lyle Gomm of the Uinta National Forest. A similar effort has begun in Arizona, with volunteers working to map a route from Mexico to the Utah border. Persons interested in working on building the trail segments for hikers, horses or off-road vehicles, can contact Monroe Gallier in Utah at 801/373-4400 or Dale Shewalter in Arizona at 602/779-4320.

Some land was reforested only on paper

Forest Service employees overstated the number of acres reforested in 1985 in 23 of 39 ranger districts studied, a U.S. Department of Agriculture audit shows.

The audit, conducted by the USDA inspector general's office, randomly studied how well Forest Service staffers were meeting agency requirements for reforestation of harvested areas. The report concluded the Forest Service "does not have a significant problem in which field staff intentionally misrepresent reforestation attainments." But the audit identified two ranger districts on Oregon national forests where employees intentionally overstated reforestation in 1985.

In 21 other districts reforestation overstatements due to errors were discovered. Problems included clerical errors, computer errors, reforestation claims for 1985 but not done in that year, surveying mistakes and other technical errors.

Inaccurate reforestation reports were found in 31 of the 39 statistically selected districts. The audit did not statistically project its results to predict how many inaccuracies could be expected on the agency's entire 668 ranger districts.

James Ebbitt, USDA assistant inspector general for audits, said, "We consider the number of ranger districts involved in the questionable reportings are significant, and the conditions themselves requiring some corrective efforts." The Forest Service should require "second party" verification of reforestation claims, Ebbitt said in the audit report.

Staffs on the Clackamas Ranger District in Mt. Hood National Forest and the Republic Ranger District in the Colville National Forest in Oregon claimed to have reforested 234 acres in 1985 that had not been planted or prepared, the audit report said. Republic staff also had no documentation to support claims that it had burned an area to prepare for regeneration in 1984. The district ranger said the acres were claimed because the forest supervisor's office had told them to carry over the acres to 1985, the audit report said.

The Clackamas staff told auditors it had claimed 12 clearcut units, which were prepared for planting, as areas prepared for natural regeneration to meet the annual reforestation target.

"The ranger district reforestation forester said that he claimed the units because the Forest Supervisor's office was inflexible about changing targets," the audit report said.

Randal O'Toole, a Eugene, Ore., forest economist, said the pressure to meet reforestation targets starts at the top of the agency. Each level of the bureaucracy uses money set aside from timber sales for reforestation, for its own budget.

"When reforestation is accomplished, the higher levels of the Forest Service bureaucracy are allowed to take money out of reforestation funds," said O'Toole. "For every dollar spent on reforestation in the field, higher-level bureaucracies are allowed 25 cents to 40 cents for overhead and other expenses."

No decision has been made whether to reprimand the employees involved, said Lamar Beasley, Forest Service vice deputy chief for national forest systems.

"We need to know a little more

Bob Schweiger



A logged lodgepole stand on the Targhee National Forest, Idaho

of the circumstances around those actions," he said. "We don't condone people misrepresenting anything."

The agency has a group working on an action plan to implement the auditors' recommendations, said Beasley.

The report also studied how well the agency was meeting the requirement to reforest a logged area within five years of cutting. It concluded the agency was meeting the requirement on most timber sales.

But it found areas on four of the 35 ranger districts where acceptable stands of timber had not been established. Most were due to lack of oversight by staff and planting failures.

The audit found one national forest, the Medicine Bow in Wyoming, where staff were using rules allowing a seven-year rather than the required five-year limit.

The five-year requirement comes from the 1976 National Forest Management Act. It states that the Forest Service has to ensure that it would not harvest timber unless

"there is assurance that such lands can be adequately restocked within five years after harvest."

Sam Naughton, of the USDA inspector general's office, said the Forest Service does not consider the five-year limit a strict rule. That interpretation was used by the auditors when assessing whether legal requirements were met.

"Initially, we had written stronger language, but after talking with the Forest Service, we decided we were using too strict an interpretation," Naughton said.

Beasley said the agency strives to meet the five-year requirement. But in some instances, such as drought and fire, that is not possible.

The Medicine Bow policy, extending the requirement to seven years to save money, might be appropriate, Beasley said. "But I think those ought to be exceptions rather than the rule."

--Rocky Barker

The writer works for the *Post-Register* in Idaho Falls, Idaho.

BARBED WIRE

America's export drive kicks into high gear.

Because there was no room at home, the town of Islip in New York sent a 3,000-ton barge loaded with garbage out to seek a dump. The garbage-barge was turned away from North Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, Mexico and Belize, and was last seen anchored in international waters in the Gulf of Mexico.

Beam the senator up, Scotty, he's one of us.

A *Denver Post* article on the proposed \$4.4 billion Superconducting Super Collider reported that New Mexico's Sen. Pete Domenici objected to the requirement that the winning state help pay for the facility. He said the states would start bidding against each other. "We're going to vulcanize the whole process of major facilities."

Montana Legislature dodged tough calls

When the 50th Montana Legislature convened in January, it carried with it some ominous baggage.

Not only did lawmakers have to wrestle with a \$100 million deficit for state government, but they also had to solve the fiscal problem with less revenue. In the end, bedraggled from 90 days of bitter partisan bickering, the Legislature borrowed from Peter to pay Paul and applied mirrors and sleight-of-hand trickery to the state budget to stave off Montana's fiscal crisis. Momentarily.

By shifting \$60 million from the state education trust fund to the general fund, and creating a 10 percent income tax surcharge, legislators were able to balance the budget. However, lawmakers went home after the biennial session with the uneasy feeling that though they took care of the immediate crisis, their inability to provide lasting economic stability, as well as voter-mandated property tax relief, may come back to haunt them in a special session within 12 months.

Gov. Ted Schwinden, musing over the results of the 1987 session, said, "I feel like a football coach whose team just got into the playoffs with a tie, rather than a clear victory."

Facing Montana's worst economic crisis in decades because of precipitous declines in oil, gas, agriculture and coal revenues, legislators not only had to find new revenue, but they also had to address a legal directive to lower property taxes.

Without much controversy, the state did raise its gasoline tax and created a 4 percent accommodations tax on hotel and motel rooms, with proceeds going to tourist promotion.

Both, however, are minor revenue sources. A sales tax, which many legislators said would provide the state with a stable revenue base, narrowly failed.

The acrimonious sales tax debate almost ended when both the Senate and House passed pro-tax bills. However, last-minute parliamentary maneuvers and disagreements over whether the tax should be put before voters killed the proposal.

Property tax relief also never materialized. Bugged down in disputes over the sales tax, coal taxes and business tax breaks, lawmakers never tackled property tax reform. Now, because of a referendum passed in November, property tax levels will be frozen July 1. Many local government officials say the freeze, coupled with the Legislature's inability to create a major new funding source, will be devastating. Local governments are already scheduling cutbacks. Several western Montana counties are slashing such services as law enforcement, while school districts are scheduling layoffs.

The Legislature, which is almost evenly split between Republicans and Democrats, did provide some tax relief for industry. The state's coal severance tax will be lowered from 30 percent to 15 percent by 1992, provided coal producers increase their production. The production incentive is Schwinden's "put up or shut up" answer to coal-men who have long complained that the tax, the nation's highest, is stifling production. Opponents of the cut argued that because of loopholes, the effective tax is actually only 19

percent, and it hasn't affected production.

Lawmakers also lowered property taxes for the Columbia Falls Aluminum Company in northwest Montana. The plant's management, which employs over 700 workers, said the cuts were necessary to company survival. Local residents and county officials now face severe cutbacks in schools and services.

Despite attacks on many environmental laws, conservationists made some modest gains in the session. Pushed largely by House member Bob Ream, D-Missoula, the state set up a funding mechanism for Superfund-type toxic cleanups. Regulation of temporary hazardous waste facilities also passed.

Though the oil and gas industry pushed hard for a law to exempt drilling from state environmental review, conservationists were able to force the industry to compromise and accept a large-scale programmatic environmental impact statement on all state-regulated drilling.

According to Jim Jensen of the Montana Environmental Information Center, a lobbying group, one of the biggest environmental disappointments of the session was the lowering of air quality standards in the Billings area. Montana's standards are higher than federal levels. But Billings-area lawmakers, at the behest of several refineries and a power plant, were able to convince the Legislature and governor that unless the standards were lowered to federal levels, the local plants could be cut back or closed.

--Bruce Farling

A Montana tribe asserts its sovereignty

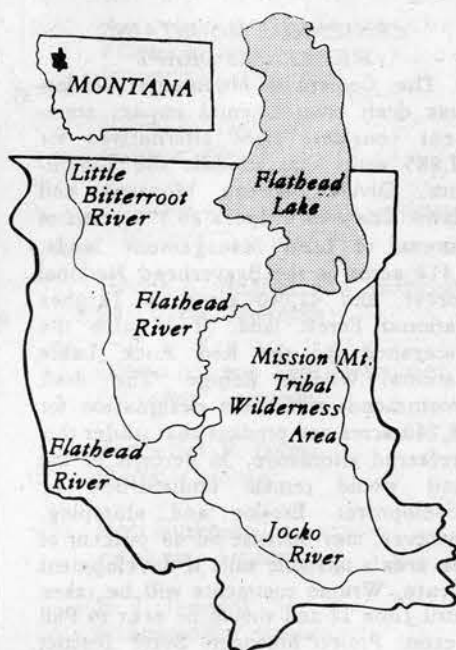
Another fight over control of resources on an Indian reservation has erupted, this one on the Flathead Reservation in western Montana where whites outnumber Indians 15,800 to 3,800.

The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Indian tribes are seeking to take over management of the reservation's streams, shorelines and wetlands from the local county commissioners. The tribes also want complete control of hunting and fishing on the 1.2 million-acre Flathead Reservation.

The Tribal Council enacted two controversial ordinances this year. One requires landowners on the reservation to apply for permits from the Tribal Shoreline Protection Board for any construction that would alter streams or wetlands; the other requires non-Indians to pay up to \$25 for a hunting and fishing license. Under tribal rules, both county commissioners and Montana fish and game officers lose authority on the reservation.

The tribes' rules brought protests from Lake County Commissioners and the conservation district, which had regulated the reservation's waters and riparian zones. Some called the new regulations "government without representation." Two commissioners staged a "fish-in" last month, fishing on state-owned land within the reservation without tribal licenses.

Montana has not fought the



FLATHEAD INDIAN RESERVATION

tribes' initiatives, but in order to work out the state's position, Montana Gov. Ted Schwinden convened a meeting of representatives from the state Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Health and Environmental Services, and the Reserved Water Rights Compact Commission.

The group is currently in closed negotiations, and until an agreement is reached, both tribal and state hunting and fishing licenses will be required on the reservation. Lake County and tribal officials have also notified landowners that permits will be required from each before any stream alteration work is done.

Tribal Chairman Mickey Pablo says exclusive hunting and fishing rights were guaranteed the tribes in an 1855 federal treaty. Channelization, diversions and irrigation have seriously harmed the world-class fisheries on the reservation, he says.

A recently completed five-year study showed a loss of 90 miles of fish spawning habitat on the Flathead Reservation, Pablo points out. Likewise, a snorkle count in reservation streams last summer found less than 10 fish per mile, compared to a normal carrying capacity of 300-400 fish per mile.

Income from hunting and fishing licenses presently covers less than a third of the tribes' fish and game costs. Pablo says the new fees will help to even those figures out and also support a fisheries reclamation project and management of the 90,000-acre Mission Mountain Tribal Wilderness Area.

As for the tensions created when the Salish and Kootenai tribes asserted their jurisdiction, Pablo says: "Some people don't want to admit that this is still a reservation." He adds that negotiations over the jurisdiction issue are proceeding favorably and that the state has already relinquished fishing rights on the south half of Flathead Lake on the reservation. Pablo says, "This shows we can take control of our own destiny without some federal program to do it for us."

--Steve Hinchman

HOTLINE

Three eagles killed

A bald eagle shot in Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming was destroyed by lethal injection at the Raptor Rehabilitation Foundation in St. Paul, Minn., April 23. The eagle's beak was so badly damaged by a bullet from a small caliber weapon that officials said surgery or an artificial beak was not possible. The eagle would have starved to death if kept alive. The person who shot the male eagle also killed two eaglets, still in their eggs. The babies died after the injured eagle's mate left the nest to obtain food, interrupting incubation.



A sporting majority

More than half of all Americans feed, observe or photograph wildlife. A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service study found that one in four adults fished, one in 10 hunted, and Americans spent a total of \$14 billion in 1985 on equipment. The agency also said that most sportsmen are male, white, 18-44, high-school educated and have an annual income over \$25,000. The survey, which is the seventh in a series conducted every five years, showed that the number of fishermen and non-consumptive users increased substantially from 1980.



Dotted area is proposed park

Clashing economies

A proposed Siskiyou National Park in southwest Oregon is meeting stiff opposition from the timber industry. Along the crest of the Klamath Mountains, the 700,000-acre area has been twice rejected by Congress for wilderness designation. Promoters such as the Oregon Natural Resources Council say a park would stabilize local economies from the boom and bust cycle of logging, remove only 238 logging jobs, and add up to 5,000 tourist-related jobs. They also point out that logging has declined by 21 percent since 1972 and that retired people are now the largest income-producing part of the local economy. The timber industry says up to 2,000 workers would lose their jobs if the new park is created, and they say the proposal is merely a scheme to decrease logging.

8-High Country News -- May 11, 1987

BULLETIN BOARD

WESTERN COLORADO CONGRESS

Colorado's Democratic Sen. Tim Wirth will kick off the seventh annual Western Colorado Congress meeting by speaking May 29 on how trends in natural resources are affecting the state. A 6:30 p.m. reception precedes his speech at the Colorado Ute Conference Center, 1845 S. Townsend in Montrose. Conference activities continue the next day at the Community Center in Ouray with registration at 8 a.m. A banquet and dance follow Saturday's full schedule of speakers and workshops. Call 303/249-1978 for more details.

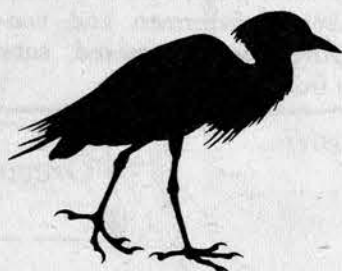
DOWN THE YELLOWSTONE

Over the last 10 years, *Pinedale Roundup*, Wyo., reporter and photographer Dean Krakel II has rafted, walked, hunted and thought about the 700-mile Yellowstone basin. The result is *Downriver: A Yellowstone Journey* that profiles his delight in our last major free-flowing river. "Only the Yellowstone remains free, roaring down out of the Absaroka as clear and cold and wild as the day it thawed from Pleistocene ice," Krakel notes that the river flows along the largest strip-minable coal in the world.

Sierra Club Books, 730 Polk St., San Francisco, CA 94109. Cloth, \$19.95 postpaid. 272 pages. Map.

MUDPOTS AND FOSSIL FORESTS

Now in its 12th season, the Yellowstone Association offers classes on geysers, fossil forests, mudpots, hot springs and other unique aspects of Yellowstone National Park. Lectures are held at the Buffalo Ranch bunkhouse in the northeast corner of the park and participants stay in rustic cabins overlooking the Lamar Valley. There are 38 courses of two to five days from June 2-Aug. 28. College credit is available. The Yellowstone Association was founded in 1933 to assist in educational programs for park visitors. For a free 16-page catalog write Yellowstone Association, P.O. Box 117, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190.



MAPPING COLORADO BIRDS

Colorado is the first Western state to start field work on a statewide bird atlas that will provide information for wildlife management. During the five-year study that starts this spring, regional coordinators will direct volunteers to identify and count breeding birds and habitats. Sponsors of the project include Colorado field ornithologists, several government agencies, the Denver Museum of Natural History and local Audubon societies. Twenty-three states, four Canadian provinces, and several European countries have similar projects underway or completed. For more information write Zoology Department, Denver Museum of Natural History, 2001 Colorado Blvd., Denver, CO 80205 (303/370-6336).

A FAMILY'S STRUGGLE

"I look into my father's eyes
I see a man
An extension of the barren earth
Ripped open like the wasted crops..."

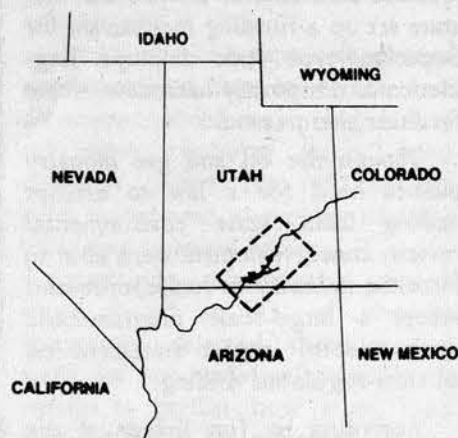
--From *Dustbowl Okie Exodus*

This collection of poetry commemorates the struggles of Dorothy Rose's family as they traveled from the Arkansas Ozarks to an Oklahoma farm, and later to the San Joaquin Valley of central California. Her poems tell the stories of farming through years of drought, dust storms and blizzards; of roadside living when the family of nine traveled West in a \$30 Graham-Dodge truck; and of the shame associated with being an "Okie" during the Great Depression. Rose's *Dustbowl Okie Exodus* is illustrated by Morine Stanley.

Seven Buffaloes Press, P.O. Box 249, Big Timber, MT 59011. Paper, \$6.95, 65 pages.

EMERGING WATER LAW

"Water as a Public Resource: Emerging Rights and Obligations" is the title of the eighth annual summer program sponsored by the Natural Resources Law Center at the University of Colorado School of Law in Boulder, Colo., June 1-3. Participants will examine the legal basis of the public's interest in recreation, fish and wildlife protection and water quality, and hear speakers on wetlands protection and access to shorelines and beaches. Registration by May 19 is \$480; \$530 after, and continuing legal-education credit is available. Write Natural Resources Law Center, University of Colorado School of Law, Campus Box 401, Boulder, CO 80309 (303/492-1286).



Boxed area is Lake Powell

THE PLACE SOMEONE KNEW

As construction began on the controversial Glen Canyon Dam on the Colorado River in 1957, a Utah history professor began documenting the treasures that would be buried beneath hundreds of feet of water. The result is C. Gregory Crampton's vivid *Ghosts of Glen Canyon: History beneath Lake Powell*. With the help of hundreds of photographs, he tells the story of Anasazi Indians and their rock art, promoters who envisioned a railroad that would run from Grand Junction, Colo., to the Gulf of California, abandoned mining camps, early 1900 tourists, and the first commercial river-runners who floated the river after World War I. "Better than memories, perhaps, and not so heartbreaking, we have the historic record... of what was lost when we allowed the flooding of Glen Canyon," says writer Edward Abbey of the book.

Publishers Place, 95 E. Tabernacle, Suite 201, St. George, UT 84770. Paper, \$14.95. 136 pages. Illustrated with maps, black-and-white photos, and sketches.

DESIGN A LOGO

The Park Service and Nevada Commission on Tourism are looking for an official logo for the new Great Basin National Park in eastern Nevada. The park was established on Oct. 27, 1986, and includes Wheeler Peak, Lehman Caves and bristlecone pines, some of America's oldest trees. Logo designs should be black and white and submitted on 8 1/2-by-11-inch paper by July 1. The winning design will be displayed on all official signs and stationery, and the Nevada State Park Service will award special prizes to top winners. Send your entry to the Nevada Commission on Tourism, State Capitol Complex, Carson City, NV 89710.

LOOKING FOR FALCONS

Serious birders can join summer surveys of peregrine falcons in southeast Utah through the Four Corners School of Outdoor Education, which is based in Monticello. The research program will survey a half million acres for nests during the next three years, an effort cosponsored by the school, the Utah Audubon Society, Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. These are the first raptor studies on public lands in the canyon country of Utah. Participants will work in teams under biologist Clayton White of Brigham Young University and share costs. Expeditions cost \$790 each and are set for June 22-July 1 and July 4-13. For more information, contact Janet Ross, East Route, Monticello, UT 84535 (801/587-2859).



Robert Spanning

YELLOWSTONE COALITION MEETING

Park Service Director William Penn Mott will be keynote speaker at the fourth annual meeting of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition at Lake Lodge, Yellowstone National Park, May 29-31. Participants will tour grizzly bear habitat, explore thermal areas and learn more about the local geology as the conference focuses on management of the park's ecosystem. The coalition now has some 1,000 individual members plus 47 conservation organizations. Lodging and camping are available on a first-come, first-served basis and registration is \$30 per person and \$50 per couple. Write Greater Yellowstone Coalition, P.O. Box 1874, Bozeman, MT 59715 (406/586-1593).

HIGH DESERT COURSES

You can learn about native fiber arts, primitive pottery and wetland ecology this summer at Malheur Field Station in Oregon's high desert. A consortium of over 25 northwest colleges offers credit and non-credit classes in the natural sciences at the wildlife refuge, 35 miles southwest of Burns. Classes run for 7-14 days and tuition costs start at \$130. Write Malheur Field Station, Box 260-E, Princeton, OR 97721 (503/493-2629).

FOR RURAL EDUCATORS

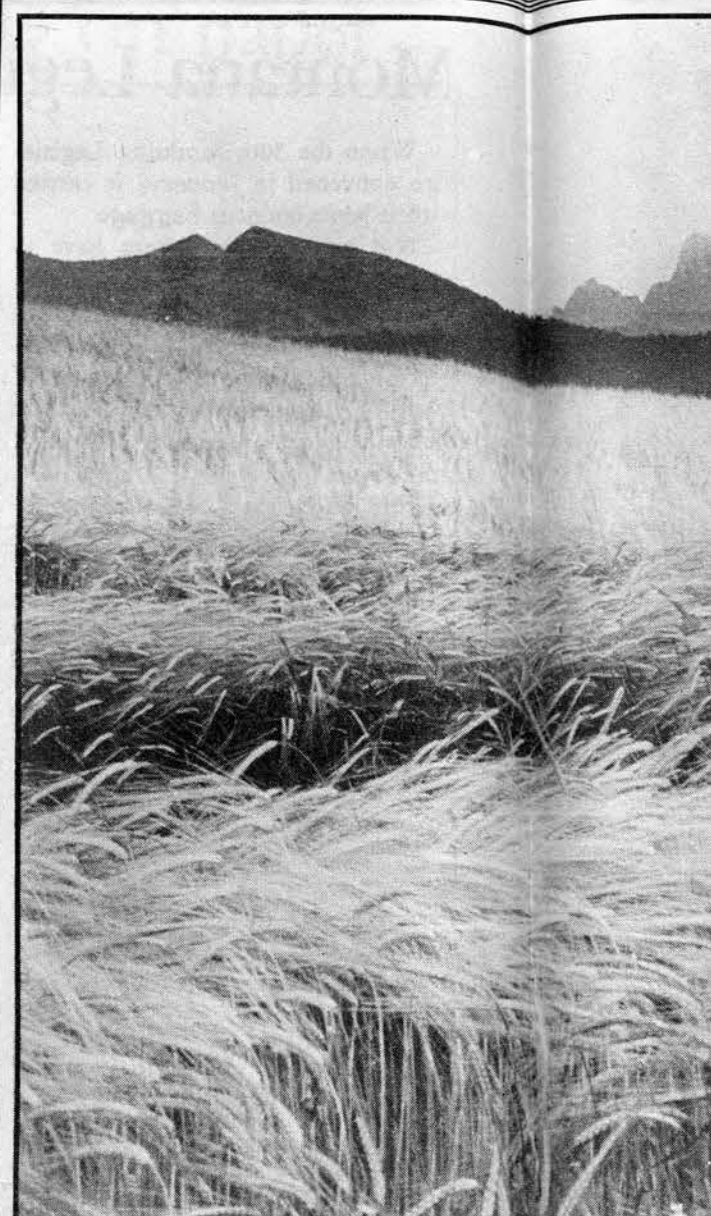
Eliot Wigginton, founder of the Foxfire teaching program in Georgia will run one of the workshops at the Aspen National Institute for the Enrichment of Rural Teaching in Aspen, Colo., July 21-26. Rural and small-school educators will explore new teaching techniques in one- and two-day sessions, plus tour the surrounding area in an attempt to find ways to incorporate the natural world into the classroom. Sponsors are the Aspen Center for Environmental Studies and the National Rural Education Association; fees are \$295 with graduate credit available. Register by June 15. For more information write Rural Teaching Institute, P.O. Box 8777, Aspen, CO 81612.

CENTENNIAL MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS DRAFT

The Centennial Mountains Wilderness draft environmental impact statement considers eight alternatives for 72,885 acres that straddle the Continental Divide between Montana and Idaho. The area includes 26,371 acres of Bureau of Land Management lands, 4,474 acres on the Beaverhead National Forest, and 42,040 acres of Targhee National Forest land. It is also the watershed for the Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. The draft recommends wilderness designation for 26,248 acres and predicts that under this preferred alternative, 36 percent of the land would remain undisturbed by development. Erosion and slumping, however, may increase on 48 percent of the area's unstable soils if development occurs. Written comments will be taken until June 12 and should be sent to Phil Gezon, Project Manager, Butte District Office of the Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 3388, Butte, MT 59702.

NATURAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS

You can learn about butterflies, plant ecology and animal evolution at the new Pikes Peak Research Station this summer in Florissant, Colo., by taking one of several five-day workshops beginning June 19. Located at 8,800 ft. in the Colorado Rockies next to Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument, the station features life zones ranging from 5,000 to 14,000 ft., and also houses collections of plants, insects, fossils, and rocks and minerals. Workshops are \$350 and include lodging and meals, but not textbooks or transportation to and from the station. The station is a non-profit affiliate of the Colorado Outdoor Education Center, also based at Florissant. For more information write Dr. Boyce Drummond, Pikes Peak Research Station, Florissant, CO 80816 (303/689-2025).



Les Trois Tetons from near Driggs, Idaho

Thank you, Research Fund

From New
to Sherr

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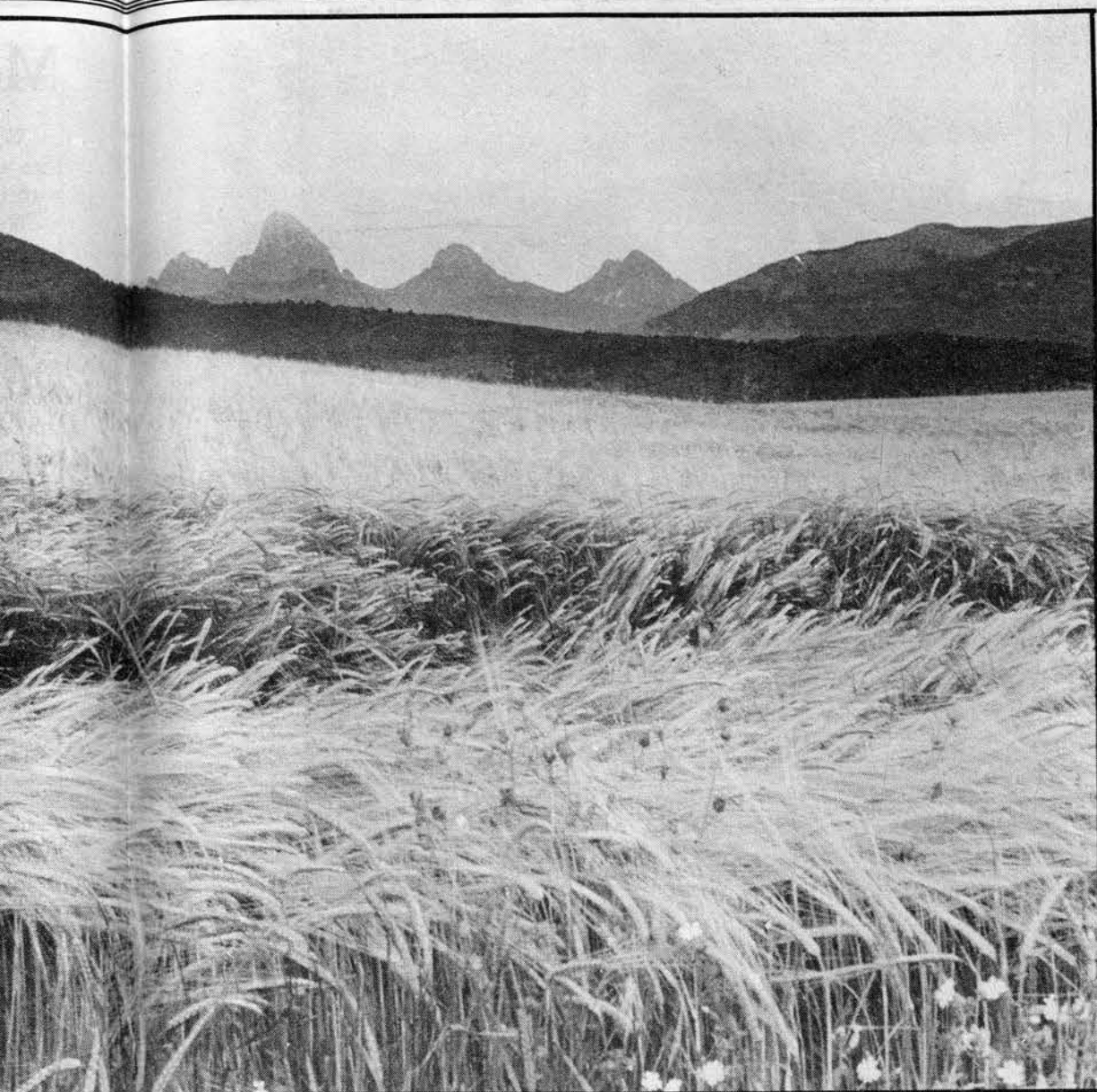
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10-High Country News -- May 11, 1987



Suzi Moore

Summit of Mt. Graham, Arizona

A struggle for an Arizona peak

by Carol Ann Bassett

From the air, the summit of Mount Graham appears like a jagged crown floating on a sea of clouds. Along the sheer northeast face, glacial craters remain from the Ice Age. From the parched desert floor in southeastern Arizona, Mount Graham rises two miles to its summit, a sky island isolated in time and space for 11,000 years. This primitive mountain, little touched by man, is home to dozens of species so unique that many have yet to be identified. Biologists call the mountain ecology "a cradle of evolution."

In winter, the spruce-fir forest at the summit becomes a silent, crystal world. At 10,720 feet the air is thin; snow sprawls across the ridgeline in giant white drifts. There is a ringing clarity to the air.

This light and space has attracted astronomers from the University of Arizona's Steward Observatory, who view the summit as a base from which to explore the universe.

The astronomers have already set up test equipment on High Peak to study the quality of the atmosphere. The university wants to clear a 60-acre expanse of dense spruce-fir forest here to construct a \$261 million observatory for 13 world-class telescopes, one of them rising 11 stories. These instruments would be designed to study what gave rise to the stars, planets and galaxies, and whether life exists elsewhere in space. Without this observatory, university scientists contend, astronomy in southern Arizona could seriously decline.

But preservationists have drawn a battle-line around this mountain, saying the early discoveries on Mount Graham rival those of the stars and should be protected. Furthermore, they argue that the astronomers already have five mountaintops in southern Arizona, a region billed as "the astronomy capital of the world." Development in the heart of a biological sanctuary, environmentalists contend, would forever destroy the mountain.

"This is a great Pleistocene museum, one of the most unique biological mountains in North America," said Thomas E. Waddell, a wildlife biologist with the Arizona Game and Fish Department who has studied the mountain for 20 years. So intimate is Waddell's knowledge of the mountain that he is often referred to as "Mr. Mount Graham."

"Essentially, everything up here is hanging on from the past," he explained. "Now that we've realized what we've got, someone's got to rise up and say, 'We have the wrong mountain for an astrophysical site.' That's the bottom line."

The question of which side will win -- the conservationists or the astronomers -- has placed Mount Graham at the center of one of the most heated environmental debates in Arizona history. So bitter is the battle for the mountain that it has pitted astronomer against astronomer and has sharply divided the residents of Safford, who live beneath the mountain. It has also forged a coalition of odd bedfellows, from conservative big game hunters to

radical environmentalists in Earth First! who specialize in civil disobedience and covert "monkey-wrenching."

"We have people who normally wouldn't give each other the time of day sitting down together and working toward stopping this development," said Paul C. Pierce, a Tucson businessman and director of the Coalition for the Preservation of Mount Graham, a group of 30 conservation, wildlife, hunting and outdoor organizations.

"We're all riding on the same bus. We might argue about the color of the paint, but the compelling thing is that we do not want to see the top of Mount Graham urbanized and ruined."

The arbiter of this dispute is the Forest Service, the agency that controls the land where the observatory is being proposed. Based on a series of detailed studies, the Forest Service issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) last October permitting limited astrophysical development at the summit. In reaching its conclusion, the Forest Service considered seven alternatives. Three of them recommended no development. Four recommended observatory construction.

The long-awaited decision angered astronomers and environmentalists alike. "It's been called a compromise that pleased no one," said Lee Poague, a spokesman for Coronado National Forest in Tucson. "In my 27 years with the Forest Service, this is the most complex, sensitive, emotional situation I've

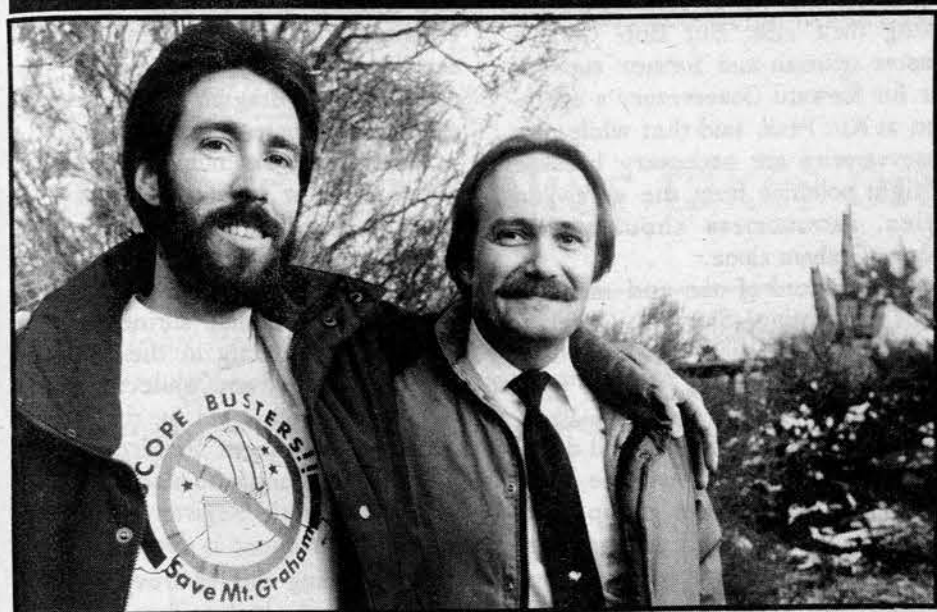
ever dealt with. There is so much social, economic and political influence involved in it that it's really become complicated."

In the DEIS, the Forest Service recommended that only five telescopes be constructed on seven acres at High Peak on Mount Graham. It also recommended against construction of the \$125 million 600-inch National New Technology Telescope, saying it would be too big and would cause too much disruption of wildlife in the area. As of this March, that telescope is destined for Hawaii's largest volcano, Mauna Kea.

Forest Service officials said a significant factor in the decision was the fate of the Mount Graham red squirrel, a proposed endangered species, whose densest habitat lies in the heart of the proposed site. So fragile is the species -- only about 280 exist today -- that even without the observatory, Forest Service biologists say the red squirrel faces a 20 percent chance of extinction.

Astronomers had hoped the red squirrel would not become to Mount Graham what the snail darter was to Tellico Dam in Tennessee: a big stumbling block. It was believed that the squirrel had died out on Mount Graham until biologist Waddell discovered one on High Peak in the late 1960s. The small creature lives on caches of seed cone, which it stores in piles called middens in hollow logs on the wettest slopes of the mountain.

Mount Graham in the Pinaleno range is the highest sky island in southern Arizona. Rare spotted owls live here, as do elk, twin-spotted rattlesnakes, goshawks and peregrine



Suzi Moore

From left, Paul Hirt, Sierra Club spokesman in Tucson, and Paul C. Pierce, a Tucson businessman and

director of the Coalition for the Preservation of Mt. Graham

falcons. The black bear population on the mountain is the densest in the western United States. Eight species of plants and four species of snails are native here; 12 species of insects are so rare they have yet to be identified. It was the red squirrel, however, that created the biggest controversy.

University astronomers reacted with mixed emotions to the Forest Service report. "We're delighted the Forest Service recommended an observatory for future land decisions," said J.T. Williams, head of an international astronomy task force that is pushing for the telescopes. "But we're disappointed that the level of that recommendation does not meet the observatory threshold for making it worthwhile." One of the biggest blows was the exclusion of the New Technology Telescope.

"Apart from that," Williams said, "there's a full agenda for Mount Graham as a national-international facility. That's nothing new. That's always been the case."

Alarmed that any telescopes were recommended for Mount Graham, environmentalists called the plan a boondoggle and a red carpet for future development. "Everybody knows that if you get a foot in the door, that opens the door for everything else," said Paul Hirt, chairman of the Sierra Club Mount Graham Task Force in Tucson.

"If five telescopes go up there on seven acres, 12 years down the road, who's going to say, 'Well, you can't put another one up there,'" Hirt said. "This society seems to believe for the most part that land that does not serve mankind in some way is useless land. We believe it's finally time to say, 'Look, that's enough.' These lands belong to the public. There are other appropriate uses for the top of Mount Graham besides astronomy."

At least two prehistoric Indian shrines, believed to be Mimbres culture sites, lie at the mountain's summit. In addition, elders from the San Carlos Apache Tribe, unrelated to the Mimbres culture, say they still make pilgrimages to the mountain top to pray.

Astronomers want Mount Graham for its isolation and atmosphere, which guarantee minimal light pollution and clear dry air, critical factors for any observatory. Williams says the site is among the best in the country. But in 1984, two Kitt Peak National Observatory astronomers compared dozens of continental sites and rated Mount Graham 38 out of 55. A subsequent study by the

argue that the mountain has already been damaged by loggers and firebreaks, and is not pristine. They say that they, too, are environmentalists who will cooperate with any plan to protect the red squirrel. Furthermore, the astronomers claim that an observatory at the summit will help stabilize the ecology there.

"I personally don't like being lumped as one of those astronomers out to rape a mountaintop," said John McGraw, an associate astronomer at Steward Observatory. "An appreciation of nature doesn't stop at the tree tops. It extends up into the night-time sky."

With Arizona political forces aligned against them, environmentalists appeared to be involved in a David and Goliath battle. But in a surprise move on Jan. 7, the Arizona Game and Fish Department sent a 23-page report to the Forest Service, charging that its DEIS favored the "special interests" of the Steward Observatory.

The report questioned the legality of the document under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and lambasted the Forest Service for not examining the cumulative effects to the entire ecosystem. The report also questioned the legality of a powerline corridor that would cut across a proposed wilderness area on the fringe of the development site. And it suggested that the Forest Service was "seriously compromising a very limited and irreplaceable resource."

The state report said that "Mount Graham, in the Pinaleno Mountains, represents one of the last relatively undisturbed high mountain peaks in the arid Southwest... The astrophysical project, during its short, expected lifetime, will inflict long-term damage to Mount Graham."

University of Arizona astronomers at first argued that the astrophysical center proposed for Mount Graham would last about 40 years, mainly because of the threat of light

pollution from the expanding cities. But after considerable outcry from preservationists over the short lifespan of the project, and after new light pollution controls were put into effect for southern Arizona, astronomers claimed the facility would last up to 100 years.

Opponents argue that when such observatories are no longer useful, they often end up as museums on isolated mountaintops.

"The rush to build these big mirror telescopes (on Mount Graham) is not only short-sighted but premature because of what astronomers will be able to see with space-based telescopes," said coalition director Pierce. "We believe it's too much of a trade-off to trash an ecosystem that it took tens of thousands of years to create for such a short-lived project."

About a week after Arizona Game and Fish issued its stinging criticism of the Forest Service, the Interior Department's Office of Environmental Review, in a report prepared by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, pointed to "serious deficiencies" in the Forest Service's draft EIS. The report cited the unique ecology of Mount Graham and warned that by not evaluating other sites, "the (Forest Service's) preferred alternative could constitute a major unresolved resource conflict of national significance."

"If the government plays by the rules that have already been established, there won't be any development on Mount Graham," said Ned Powell, a spokesman for Earth First!, referring to environmental protection laws. "If they violate those laws, we will probably violate a few ourselves" by engaging in acts of civil disobedience. Asked what Earth First! might do, Powell replied, "I

(Continued on page 12)

Suzi Moore



J. T. Williams, head of Mt. Graham Task Force, international astronomy team based at University of Arizona

Mt. Graham...

(Continued from page 11)

really couldn't give details about that until about an hour before it happens. That's the way we do things."

To the residents of Safford, pop, 7,600, the issue has been emotionally charged. Unemployment in this ranching and farming town is 13 percent, and the promise of an international observatory came to the town as a beacon of hope. Town leaders envisioned a visitor's center that would attract up to 50,000 people a year. Motels and restaurants would boom with more business than ever before. In addition, residents were told, the 30-year construction of the observatory would create hundreds of jobs a year for the ailing economy.

But studies on the socio-economic effects to Safford differed wildly. One report, prepared by the university's Office of Arid Lands Studies, concluded the observatory would have little impact on employment and recreation/tourism in Safford. Another, prepared by the university's Roy P. Drachman Institute for Land and Regional Studies, concluded the observatory would dramatically improve the local economy, transforming Safford into "a vibrant and diversified cultural center." The Drachman report stated that up to 280 jobs would be created for Graham County residents during construction of the observatory.

But a third report, released by the University of Arizona's College of Business and Public Administration confirmed the earlier study. It stated that only 2.4 jobs would be created per year over a 25-year period. With the New Technology Telescope and visitor's center both excluded from the proposed development, the Forest Service concluded in its draft EIS that any new jobs created from the project "are not considered a significant contribution to employment."

Gov Aker, mayor of Safford, remains optimistic. "We have been shown the scale of employment that's going to be on that mountain, and a \$2 million payroll is going to be quite a boost to our economy here in the valley," he said. "We're talking about outside dollars coming into this valley and we don't care who brings it, as long as it gets here."

At the request of Steward Observatory and to save energy, Aker said, the town of Safford converted its lighting system to low-pressure sodium to prevent light pollution. Total cost: \$240,000. The town also expanded a runway at the municipal airport, part of a planned \$750,000 facelift to accommodate anticipated air traffic.

"It stands to reason," said Aker, "that if we are going to have the telescopes up there and visitation by scientists from all over the world, we would need something for them to land here. We feel that once we get nationally and internationally known, we're going to attract an awful lot of retirements, snowbirds and what-have-you into this valley. We think it (the observatory) will be a hell of an attraction worldwide."

Plans for the observatory did not stop here. The Safford City Council has given Steward Observatory -- free of charge -- water rights to Deadman Canyon, one of Mount Graham's perennial streams. In

addition, the Graham County Board of Supervisors agreed to use county taxes to provide police and fire protection for the astronomers.

"People here are not dumb," said Wayne Woods, who heads the opposition to the observatory in Safford. "Any really rational person who takes a look at this in any depth has to agree that it's a boondoggle, that it's a fake, and that the citizens of Safford and Graham County have been used by the University of Arizona in a rather ruthless scheme to support this type of development."

This winter, a group of Safford businessmen placed a half-page ad in the local newspaper. It was headlined: "What the Astronomers Haven't Told Us About Mt. Graham." The ad urged readers to oppose the development by contacting the Forest Service.

At an emotional and divisive public hearing sponsored by the Forest Service soon after, Safford residents clashed over the observatory. One citizen who supported the telescopes suggested that a way to avoid further controversy was by "caging these little red squirrels." A cowboy told the astronomers to "put your dern telescopes out here on the flats. Seven thousand feet higher, I don't see, is going to make any difference when you're looking at millions of miles through them scopes anyway."

Even University of Arizona astronomers have mixed feelings about the proposed observatory, although most refuse to comment for fear of

losing their jobs. But Bob Goff, a master optician and former supervisor for Steward Observatory's operation at Kitt Peak, said that while new observatories are necessary because of light pollution from the sprawling cities, astronomers should leave Mount Graham alone.

"The record of use and management of existing (Steward Observatory) facilities is such that they have not cared sufficiently about what they already have." At Kitt Peak, Goff explained, "there's an oil dump around the west side of the solar telescope," and another dump nearby for "anything that's not going to be used, including wrecked vehicles." In addition, said Goff, dangerous chemicals, used to wash and re-coat the large mirrors used in the telescopes, drain into leaching fields on the mountain. "You just go down that gully on the southeast side of the mountain and I bet you can find all kinds of stuff left over from the cleaning process."

Steward Observatory has proposed a similar mirror re-coating facility atop Mount Graham, which would involve hauling the chemical wastes down a winding mountain road. Environmentalists say such a facility could threaten the endangered Apache trout in nearby side canyons, as well as rare mountain wetlands that are federally protected.

As the debate over the observatory continues, it is unclear when the final decision on Mount Graham's future will be made. The Forest Service's final

environmental impact statement isn't expected until summer, and the decision could drag on indefinitely as each side prepares legal challenges.

Meanwhile, a number of proposals for the mountain remain in limbo. A proposed wilderness area at the edge of the observatory has been on hold since 1984. At least one of the prehistoric Indian shrines at the summit lies directly in the path of the observatory, and while the sites are federally protected by the Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, they cannot be placed on the National Historic Register until the fate of the mountain is decided.

"One thing this controversy has done is to make it clear that the very tops of mountains are unique," said Peter Warshall, a biologist at the University of Arizona's Office of Arid Land Studies and the principal researcher on environmental impacts to Mount Graham. "They have always been unique in history, and they should be given special attention."

Biologist Waddell agrees. "What's odd to me is that the astronomical claims have been taken at face value. They have not received the bright light of scrutiny that the biological claims have. I've always said that if the truth of the mountain can come out, that side will win."

Carol Ann Bassett is a reporter with Desert West News in Tucson, Ariz., an independent news agency.

LETTERS

HEAP LEACH COMMENT

Dear HCN,

Thanks for the very good article on heap leach gold mining. My ranch sits about 10 air-miles from one newly completed gold mine and 35 miles from another under construction near Jefferson City.

A friend of mine was curious enough to walk around the one near me, east of Whitehall, and after recognizing the smell of cyanide, discovered the stuff leaking from a 55-gallon barrel.

She notified state authorities, who did nothing, and notified the company, which subsequently bought the adjacent ranch, having ruined its water. Where the cyanide eventually leaches is one problem, the other is the air pollution from the dust and spraying of the cyanide, as you mentioned.

I was unable to find an address to the two groups you mentioned now opposing heap leach mining in South Dakota. Could you please send me that information.

Joe Newman
Boulder, Montana

Peter Carrels tells us the following organizations are concerned about heap leach surface gold mining: the Citizens Law Center, Box 9084, Rapid City, SD 57709; Black Hills Group, Sierra Club, Box 1624, Rapid City, SD 57709; Surface Mining Awareness Coalition, Box 3404, Rapid City, SD 57709; Citizens Against Destructive Mining, Box 172, Deadwood, SD 57732

TOUCHING AND ELOQUENT

Dear HCN,

The story by Linda Hasselstrom (HCN, 4/13/87) was one of the most touching and eloquent I've ever read. It was so simple and interesting. Some of the best people I've met are ranchers, and as much grief as I repeatedly give subsidized ranching, here's to a lady and her family. They obviously enjoy both nature and natural things, and each other.

Dave and Lauren Naslund
Edgewater, Colorado

INDIANS AND CONSERVATIONISTS

Dear HCN,

Peter Carrels' lead article (April 13, 1987) depicting a not atypical Anglo-Indian (mining vs. natural environment) clash in the Black Hills was well-written and arresting.

Carrels may have overlooked one significant footnote.

It is open to the Forest Service, which controls much of the land in the Black Hills subject to hard rock mining, to protect the land by requiring mining companies to "mitigate" the harm caused by their operations. If the price of mitigation pushes the cost of mining beyond profitability -- as well it might, given the rather substantial mess that mining often makes of nature -- the company would not have a "valuable" deposit of mineral, and would lose its right (and desire) to mine.

In the past, Indians and conservationists have too rarely pulled together to protect natural systems. Perhaps in the future these two

communities, in concert, might be able to persuade the Forest Service to require mining companies to "internalize" the heavy environmental costs their activities place on the land, water and airsheds appurtenant to mineral lodes, and in so doing help save the resources that have made the Black Hills the national heirloom Carrels describes.

Robert J. Golten
Boulder, Colorado

ACCESS

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An Idaho profile

Rancher-lawmaker takes on the establishment

John Peavey proves that a legislator can win major fights against the West's power triangle -- big business, utilities and the farm-ranch establishment.

by Pat Ford

In 1969, Republican John Peavey was appointed to fill the unexpired term of his mother in the Idaho state Senate. Mary Brooks had just been named director of the U.S. Mint by President Nixon, and so she returned to the city where her father and second husband had both served in the U.S. Senate. One former Idaho legislator remembers Peavey in 1969 as "almost a knee-jerk conservative, saying 'no' to just about any change."

In 1987, things were different. Democrat John Peavey ended his 14th year in the state Senate, where he was caucus chairman of the Senate Democratic minority and some say the most radical legislator. A colleague and friend calls him "the conscience of Idaho Democrats."

Peavey straddles contradictions. Born into a powerful Republican family, he switched parties in mid-career. He owns one of Idaho's largest ranches, a sprawling operation that shuttles sheep among three states; yet he is an outspoken, often angry opponent of Idaho's business-agriculture establishment.

He is a sheep rancher -- John Muir called sheep "hooved locusts" -- who has been in the front rank of Idaho conservationists. His district contains the conservative farm families within Gooding and Lincoln

counties as well as the cosmopolites of Ketchum and Sun Valley. His old friend and fellow state senator Mary Lou Reed captures his political presence in a phrase: "John has one foot on the earth, the other in the future."

Peavey's grandfather John Thomas was a senator from Idaho for 12 years, and his stepfather, Wayland Brooks, a senator from Illinois for eight years. His mother has been assistant chairwoman of the Republican National Committee, an Idaho legislator and director of the Mint.

"John was raised in politics," she says today. "I don't see how he could have missed it himself."

After graduating from Northwestern University in civil engineering and a stint in the Marine Corps, he returned to the family ranch in 1960. He was active in his mother's legislative campaigns, replaced her in 1969, and then won as a Republican three two-year terms himself.

His maverick populism is not readily visible in the family history, but it emerged in the Legislature. "The lobbyists for the big companies had tremendous power then," Peavey recalls. "The joke was that Idaho was named for the Idaho Power Company. It bothered me that there weren't rules disclosing who lobbyists worked for, what they worked on, what they spent."

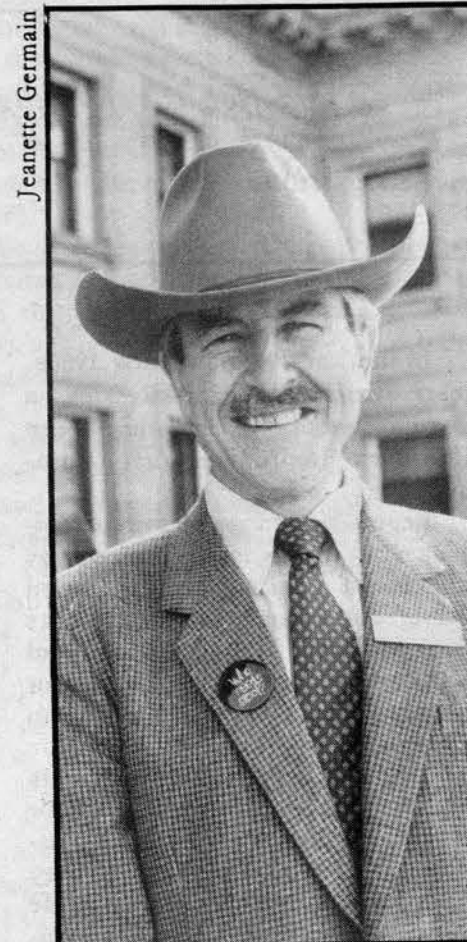
In 1974, against his party's opposition, he joined with the year-old Idaho Conservation League,

the League of Women Voters and others to put the "Sunshine Initiative" on the ballot. It required reporting of campaign contributions and registration and reporting by lobbyists. It passed overwhelmingly.

But it is Idaho's water-energy nexus that dominates his career. In 1974, Idaho Power, which serves two-thirds of Idaho, announced plans to build a 2,000-megawatt coal-fired power plant called Pioneer 20 miles southeast of Boise. Before anyone else in Idaho agriculture or in the Republican Party, Peavey understood the implications for Idaho's farm economy. As a result, he became Pioneer's most active political foe.

For five years, in hundreds of speeches and conversations with farmers, Peavey repeated his argument: The survival of southern Idaho's barely competitive irrigated agriculture depended on the low-cost hydroelectricity that pumped water from rivers and canals to the fields. Rapid new irrigation development, encouraged by Idaho Power and the agriculture establishment, must soon destroy that cheap hydro base. Expansion would work its destruction by reducing river flows available to generate power and by then requiring enormously expensive thermal projects like Pioneer to make up the hydro deficit and to meet increased energy demand. The resulting rate hikes would eliminate the one competitive advantage Idaho farmers had.

Neither the Farm Bureau nor the Legislature's farm bloc listened, but Peavey reached enough farmers directly to spread scepticism. That contributed much to Idaho Power's first major political defeat. The Idaho Public Utilities Commission rejected Pioneer in 1976 and a modified version two years later. Against its



State Sen. John Peavey

will, the company thus avoided the coal and nuclear construction binge of the 1970s that led to WPPSS and other disasters, and today its hydro base is intact.

Peavey paid the price for his foresight in the 1976 primary. Republican leaders recruited an opponent; Idaho Power and its allies poured in dollars and Peavey lost. That experience capped a radicalization four years in the making.

"I just kept finding myself more and more disillusioned with the trust

(Continued on page 14)

1987 was an excellent year for the Idaho Legislature

Last year, the 1986 Idaho Legislature's contrariness, ineptitude and arrogance were the talk of Idaho. The headline on the HCN story on the session read: "Goodbye dear Idaho legislators, goodbye." But by consensus the recently adjourned 1987 Legislature was about as good as last year's was bad.

A new governor, many new legislators, and a more pragmatic Republican majority restored the image and substance of lawmaking. Education funding jumped, perennial powderkegs such as day care licensing and a state lottery were more or less dealt with and economic development programs were more than doubled.

Conservation shared in the positive feeling. "We did really well," says Lill Erickson, a lobbyist for the Idaho Conservation League. "The Democrats were solid and we got more support from Republicans than we've ever had before."

Key Republicans were particularly helpful where conservationists have rarely done well -- budgets. The state's hazardous waste materials

program gained four new staff positions, air quality two, and water quality four. Erickson particularly credits Boise Republican Herb Carlson, a member of the Senate Resources Committee, for steering these budgets through the powerful Joint Finance-Appropriations Committee, after which passage was virtually assured.

Republicans supported increased hazardous waste budgets due to grass-roots pressure, general industry support and the legislators' own widening awareness of waste problems in Idaho. The water quality increase stems from a delicate compromise on new non-point source pollution standards reached in December among conservationists, the timber industry, and the state over the effect of logging on water quality. ICL and other groups made a convincing case that the compromise will only work with adequate monitoring, which means new staff was needed to do it.

The Legislature also ratified a state hazardous-waste management plan drafted by a citizen-industry

committee, and passed separate legislation regulating PCB disposal. The PCB bill was hotly debated, largely on the question of stringency: Should Idaho have authority to regulate PCBs more stringently than current federal regulations? The final legislation allows state regulation of PCB incineration at all amounts (federal rules only apply above 50 parts per million), requires incinerators to comply with local land-use plans and employ best available technology, and bans incineration in narrow, inversion-prone valleys. Democrat Marti Calabretta, who represents a narrow valley with a proposed incinerator, and Republican Denton Darrington fashioned the compromise bill.

Sen. Laird Noh, R-Twin Falls, steered to passage two bills regulating the withdrawal and use of warm groundwater resources. Three minimum flows were approved on the Big Wood River, on nearby Silver Creek and on the Henrys Fork of the Snake River. Rep. Stan Hawkins, R-Idaho Falls, who is also a hydro-power developer, convinced

the House to pass a bill making future enactment of minimum flows much harder. Noh and other Republicans, however, helped kill the bill in the Senate. Then the Legislature passed a resolution setting parameters for a citizen-industry-agency committee now working on a non-degradation policy for state waters.

Two water bills didn't get out of committee but will be back: A bill by Sen. Mary Lou Reed, D-Coeur d'Alene, to allow creation of lake management districts by lake property owners, and a bill by Sen. Karl Brooks, D-Boise, to create wild and scenic river systems for the state. Both senators were laying groundwork for next year.

Finally, two important bills sought by the state Fish and Game Department passed. A \$5 upland game-bird stamp was approved, with proceeds for habitat enhancement. And starting next year, the department will be allowed to auction one bighorn sheep permit to the highest bidder over \$30,000. The proceeds will help re-establish bighorns in empty habitat.

--Pat Ford

14-High Country News -- May 11, 1987

*An Idaho profile***Laird Noh sets a high standard for the Idaho Legislature**

Laird Noh is reforming the Idaho state Legislature by setting a very high standard for openness and education.

by Pat Ford

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, there existed in the Rockies a floating anomaly called the Sheep Producer-Environmentalist Committee.

Begun by Montana environmentalist Bill Bryan and financed by dribbles of grant money, it convened woolgrowers and conservationists from Montana, Wyoming, Idaho and occasionally Colorado and Oregon for "dialogs on issues of common concern."

Twice a year its 10-15 members would meet to talk about predator control, wilderness, grazing practices, the Snake River Birds of Prey Area, the Charles Russell Wildlife Refuge and whether to seat Defenders of Wildlife on the committee, as well as similar issues. Business meetings were often followed by lamb barbecues and relaxed fraternizing among people with different backgrounds and different ways of making a living.

There were abstainers. Both the Idaho Wildlife Federation and Mon-

tana Woolgrowers Association stayed away. Some who joined stayed on the edges. But a core few were committed to dialog across boundaries, to reduce polarization by reasoning and fellow feeling. Idaho rancher Laird Noh was one of those, and he became co-chair of the committee. That same attitude, exhibited in another chairmanship, makes him the Idaho Legislature's most influential member on conservation issues.

Ten years ago the Idaho Senate's Resources and Environment Committee was an archetype of the Legislature's "old boy" methods. Chaired by an Idaho Falls rancher and run by a few ranchers, it was impermeable to conservationists or even to citizens generally.

"I don't recall anything we ever favored which that group supported," remembers Boise attorney Jeff Fereday, who back then directed the fledgling Idaho Conservation League. "More important, they never understood or took the time to learn or had any interest in learning about the issues before them," he said.

In 1978, Fereday's successor was

grabbed and shoved against the wall in his first conversation with one of that ruling bloc. Bills would disappear and others surface without notice. Citizen witnesses were branded and bullied and "How long have you lived in Idaho?" was always the first question.

Laird Noh (pronounced "nay") is also a rancher, but he looks and acts more like the studious and reserved college instructor he once was. He joined the Legislature and Senate Resources in 1981, becoming chairman in 1983. In four years he has transformed that committee's substance and tone to set a standard for the entire body.

His family has ranched in Idaho since 1908; his father bought their present home-ranch, east of Twin Falls, in 1944. After getting a master's degree in business at the University of Chicago, Noh taught economics for two years at Boise Junior College, where he met his wife, Kathleen, then returned to the ranch full-time in 1965.

Running his own operation led to an active role in the troubled sheep industry. He has been president of the National Lamb Feeders Association, helping direct its national marketing program. He was chairman of the predatory animal committee of the National Woolgrowers Association for five years during what he calls "the coyote wars." He is still president of the Rocky



State Sen. Laird Noh

Mountain Sheep Marketing Cooperative.

His experience in national groups, unusual in the Idaho Legislature, lies behind the changes Noh has made in Senate Resources. "Laird was the first chairman over there to really pursue the education of this committee on issues from all sides," says Renee Quick, the Conservation League's lobbyist from 1980 through 1986. Since Idaho's legislative committees have no staff except a secretary during the ses-

(Continued on page 15)

Peavey...

(Continued from page 13)

Republicans put in big business," he recalls. "Then when the party power-brokers decided I was expendable, I decided to change." He became a Democrat.

"People often find themselves in making changes like that," observes Perry Swisher, a former legislator and now president of Idaho's PUC. Swisher made the same switch a few years earlier. "That 1976 defeat was the making of Peavey," he says. Peavey won his old seat back in 1980, and has held it since, the only Democratic legislator from central Idaho.

"John has become a missionary for the Democrats," says Mary Lou Reed. "His commitment to keeping us the 'party of the people' is total." He and his wife, Diane Josephy, have worked hard to build the Democratic Party and strengthen Idaho's tenuous "progressive coalition" of labor, education, conservationists, peace groups and elements of agriculture.

Although the Pioneer victory temporarily stopped a trend, Peavey wanted to reverse it. In 1977, he and others began an initiative campaign, uniting conservationists and electric rate-payers, to establish a minimum-flow law in Idaho. As a result of the pressure, the 1978 Legislature for the first time set a minimum flow on the Snake River.

That same year, Peavey and a few others filed a petition with the PUC, seeking to force Idaho Power to start defending its ignored 1906

water right at its Swan Falls Dam on the Snake. Since that right was for more water than the river now holds, the petition asked that ratepayers be compensated for all the water, and the thus foregone cheap hydropower, the company had surrendered. The petition eventually reached the Idaho Supreme Court and also created the most complex, politically charged debate about water the Idaho Legislature ever faced.

It was a major political risk, since the court action attendant on the petition threatened the water rights of thousands of Idaho farmers, including most in Peavey's district. The issue almost cost him his seat in 1984, when he was re-elected by only 56 votes.

But the accomplishment was remarkable. Back in 1978, Idaho Power actively promoted the new irrigation diversions that were inexorably eroding its hydro base and cheap rates. By 1985, when the Legislature ratified a negotiated Swan Falls agreement, Idaho Power had come to agree with John Peavey. The economic threat of the petition had joined with the force of events to make the company a powerful ally of conservationists and rate-payers in resisting new withdrawals from the Snake River. The compromise raised the Snake's minimum flow and began an overdue adjudication of all Snake River water rights.

"Peavey's contribution was epic," says Perry Swisher. "He was the first ag person to take the hard look. If any single person gets responsibility for starting the Swan Falls cycle, Peavey does." In 1986, a top Idaho Power official who fought

Peavey bitterly through the 1970s said publicly that Pioneer's opponents had been right.

Through the 1970s, Peavey constantly told fellow ranchers and farmers that they had far less in common with the corporate establishment -- Idaho's or the country's -- than mainstream farm groups told them they did. With the water-energy issue more or less tabled, he is now focusing on the farm crisis and delivering much the same message.

"I have been eyeball-to-eyeball with my banker the last four years," he says about his own ranch. "It is a tough son-of-a-bitch. Livestock prices finally seem to be coming around some, but I see a bloodbath out there for people raising hay and grain. The administration's blind faith in free enterprise won't work. The winners are the grain cartel, the big poultry raisers, the big banks."

This year Peavey co-sponsored a farm foreclosure mediation bill modelled on Iowa's. It passed the Senate but to the frustration of a minority legislator, it was too late for House action. "Real solutions have to come nationally," he believes. "I want to get people like Jim Hightower and Tom Harkin here to talk to Idaho farmers about who's winning and who's losing. I support Harkin's approach (the Iowa senator's farm bill includes production quotas and tariffs), and I think it's possible to convince Idaho farmers of that. But it's like Pioneer -- we have to convince the farmers before their leaders or legislators will change."

That emphasis on the people is central to both his political style and strategy. Peavey combines disparate

qualities, from courtliness and mischievous wit, to aggressiveness and empathy, in a compelling personal style. A political maverick of substance, he plays the part with a panache voters respond to. He and his cowboy hat are instantly recognizable over much of southern Idaho.

His legislative actions are aimed as much at the people as at fellow legislators. He is on television often. "That's what you have to do on issues you know are going to take several years," he says. "I'm elected to lead."

The style has not endeared him to the Legislature's Republican majority. More than one House Republican has said he'll vote against anything with Peavey's name on it, and his friends sometimes weigh whether his support will help or hurt a bill's immediate chances.

This doesn't bother Peavey. "I like to deal with the tough issues, to do the early work," he says. "I'd rather be effective in the long run on important issues than carry a dozen mundane bills through. If you look at the '87 session's agenda, which the Republicans did pretty well on, you'll see it's the agenda Democrats set four to five years ago." He is proud that a yearly survey of reporters and lobbyists rated his district's delegation the Legislature's most effective from 1984 through 1986.

Though he says his legislative and party work is increasingly at odds with the full-time demands of his ranch, he intends to continue the juggling act. "I like the perspective you have trying to lead on tough issues. You are alone, and you've got people to deal with strung out over the landscape. I like that challenge."

GUEST OPINION

Trampling on the Constitution

by Andrew Melnykovych

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Before he became assistant secretary of agriculture for natural resources and the environment, George Dunlop spent 14 years as an aide to ultra-conservative Sen. Jesse Helms of North Carolina.

That ought to tell you everything you need to know about Dunlop's political background and orientation.

Everything you'd want to know about Dunlop's approach to his new job -- which he has held for less than a year -- could be learned last week at House hearings on the Forest Service budget.

Dunlop's performance showed once again that the Reagan administration's public lands policy remains the same as it was in the days of former Interior Secretary James Watt. Only Watt, and the public attention and controversy he generated, are missing.

One of Dunlop's chief responsibilities is the U.S. Forest Service. He came to Capitol Hill to testify before an appropriations subcommittee headed by Rep. Sid Yates, D-Ill., a leading critic of Reagan administration environmental policy.

But rather than running afoul of Yates, Dunlop ran into a bipartisan buzzsaw wielded largely by Rep. Ralph Regula of Ohio, the panel's senior Republican.

Regula wanted to know why the Reagan administration has refused to spend nearly \$5 million appropriated to buy additional land for the Wayne National Forest in southern Ohio. Some of the money had gone unspent for as long as three years, Regula said.

He pointed out that not only had Congress appropriated the money, but President Reagan had signed the bill authorizing the land purchases.

Rather than answering the question, Dunlop lectured Regula and the other subcommittee members on the Constitution, the separation of powers between the legislative and executive branch, and the procedures that the executive branch can use to attempt to override or delay congressional spending decisions.

Not surprisingly, Regula was unimpressed by Dunlop's knowledge of civics. Congress had made it clear several times that it wanted the money spent to buy the land, he said.

Dunlop finally admitted that the Reagan administration simply does not think that buying the land is a good idea.

"You're really substituting your judgment for that of the Congress," Regula told Dunlop.

After contemplating Regula's charge for a moment, Dunlop said, "Yes, I think that's fair to say."

That is the last thing any member of the House or Senate wants to hear from an administration official, and it brought a predictable response.

"Well, what's the point of us making policy if you're going to ignore it?" Regula shot back.

"We think we can find better uses for the money," Dunlop said, launching into a recitation about budget constraints and federal deficit.

Regula cut him off.

"It's our judgment that you can't or we wouldn't have put it in there in the first place," he said, adding that the subcommittee had heard administration officials testify against the land purchases. "After we've listened to your testimony, we make a decision."

If Reagan didn't like the land purchases, he should have vetoed the spending bill containing it, Regula said.

Dunlop, in an injured tone of voice, answered that he "would like to work with you in my own little area, which doesn't have to do with vetoes and all that."

The obvious insincerity of Dunlop's response was too much for Rep. Les AuCoin, an Oregon Democrat. The administration's bias against land acquisition is not secret, he said.

Congress has nevertheless responded to the wishes of many constituents in deciding to spend money from several trust funds to enlarge the public estate, AuCoin said.

"Who elected you?" he demanded of Dunlop.

"I have been appointed by the president," Dunlop began, only to be cut off again, this time by Rep. Norm Dicks, a Washington Democrat.

Dicks finished Dunlop's statement for him.

"To faithfully execute the laws of the country," he said, making it clear that he does not think Dunlop is meeting that obligation.

"This administration has an arrogance about it that I find disgusting," Dicks said, summing up Dunlop's performance.

Regula came in with a final blast.

"You don't have the prerogative to substitute your judgment for that of Congress and that of the president," he told Dunlop.

Dunlop, by now far less self-confident and smug than when the hearing began, could do no better than a largely incomprehensible statement about working with Congress to "set up a matrix" for future land acquisitions.

After that lame response, the subcommittee moved on to other topics.

Although they draw little public attention, arguments such as that between Dunlop and the appropriations subcommittee occur regularly on Capitol Hill.

They bear witness to the fact that the Reagan administration's public lands policies are out of tune with the wishes of Congress and most of the American people. In that respect, nothing has changed since the early days of Reagan's first term.

What has changed is that Watt was a very public point man for the Reagan policies. His abrasive and controversial style focused attention on the administration's repudiation of principles that had become national policy during the conservation revolution of the 1970s.

Watt's penchant for offending the public eventually drove him from office. But the stewardship of our public lands remains in the hands of people who differ from him only in style, not in substance.

With the possible exception of Interior Secretary Donald Hodel, most of them are complete unknowns. They do their work -- and their damage -- quietly and out of public view.

Like Dunlop, they are political appointees who were selected less for their abilities as land managers than their conservative political credentials and their commitment to managing the public lands not for the benefit of all, but for the profit of a select few.

They include Hodel, his assistant secretaries Steven Griles and William Horn, and Bureau of Land Management Director Robert Burford. Dunlop and his deputy, Douglas MacCleery, are cut from the same Wattian cloth.

The politicization of federal land management agencies has hit a new peak in the Reagan administration. Political appointees have been given jobs that have traditionally gone to men and women who have worked their way up through the agencies.

Even the Forest Service -- the ultimate apolitical agency -- has not been immune. It took protests from members of Congress to head off a

(Continued on page 16)

Noh...

(Continued from page 14)

sion, there is no institutional memory beyond what legislators themselves bring.

"It's the committee's responsibility to be knowledgeable in all natural resource areas," Noh says. "We try to look down the road each year as well as deal with crises."

He holds regular informational and oversight meetings on issues such as mining regulation, groundwater, management of particular rivers and the operations and budgets of state resource agencies. These are often joint meetings with the House Resources Committee, and all interested groups participate. As a result, he has perhaps the most expert committee in the Legislature. Its one rival is the Senate Education Committee, on which Noh also serves. "Laird's practice is taking hold in other committees now," says Quick. "It's become the standard."

Second, Noh is said to be fair, which is not always usual in the Idaho Legislature. Bills are processed the same whether he supports or opposes them, whether proposed by Republican or Democrat. Agendas

are posted and stuck to, citizen witnesses welcomed and heard out. Party line votes, once the rule in Senate Resources, are now the exception.

Noh forcefully promotes consensus resolution of issues, both within the committee and among the interest groups that contend before it. In the past few years, he has served on or been patron to various formal and informal task forces that produced consensus legislation on mining law reform, water quality standards and groundwater regulation. In each case the consensus became law. This approach is not always comfortable for antagonistic groups accustomed to drawing lines and fighting it out. But it is what Noh believes lawmaking is about: "pragmatic problem-solving." His approach will be put to work this summer on state scenic rivers legislation.

The result? "Senate Resources is so much better now," says Democrat John Peavey, whose intelligence and insight were buried by the previous chairman. "More and more the committee is taking the long view, which almost guarantees greater sympathy for conservation," says conservation league lobbyist Lill Erickson.

Water is the committee's dominant issue. From 1982 through 1984, it was the major arena for the epic Swan Falls water rights struggle, whose resolution in 1985 set the parameters for all future management of the Snake River (HCN, 12/9/85).

Noh was an active partisan in that often bitter struggle, but he nevertheless saw to it that all sides of the issue were heard by his committee. "So we have the expertise and the confidence in ourselves to make tough judgments about water," Noh says. As a result, the committee's old paranoia about minimum flows is gone, since the members know how to assess any proposed flow's effect on existing and future uses.

The price for his conscientiousness is less time for his ranch, which he calls "a typical mid-size range operation. The sheep follow forage to the mountains in the summer and winter on the desert. If I didn't have a very capable wife and foreman, I couldn't do both jobs."

Half of Idaho's sheep operations disappeared in the last decade; Noh sold one-third of his sheep and grazing rights to survive the 1979-81 bottom. Today the business is in good short-term shape, but the increasing concentration in the pro-

cessing end of the industry worries him. Only two companies are left west of Denver that slaughter lambs.

He doesn't hesitate when asked about the tough issues he sees ahead for his committee: "the increasing dollar value of recreation experience. How do we cope with the rapidly escalating demand for a limited resource, the large dollar amounts flowing in the direction of big-game hunting and recreation? Do we rely on the marketplace to allocate those experiences, or devise some way to keep them available to all our citizens?"

Noh points to this session's approval for Idaho Fish and Game to auction a single bighorn sheep permit for \$30,000 minimum. He opposes the concept but says he understands the fiscal argument for it. He sees the same issue in recreation fees and permits, the allocation of hunting rights between commercial outfitters and private citizens, and steadily increasing fishing and hunting license fees. "It costs \$20 today to hunt ducks," he says. "That's a lot of money for some people. Where's that going in 20 years?" One understands without asking that there will be some committee meetings devoted to that question next year.

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Endangered names

by Arthur Roth

The Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service recently announced the addition of 46 foreign and native species, including China's Giant Panda, to the endangered list.

As a writer I naturally worry that a species will disappear, because with it disappears the species name. Wouldn't it be tragic if the name "Perdido Key beach mouse" were to be lost? Incidentally, "Perdido" means "lost" in Spanish, adding a poignantly reiterative note to the whole business of this threatened species. (There are only 24 of the little rascals left.)

How about the smoky madtom? Suppose it were to vanish, never to be seen again? I never heard of the smoky madtom until I read the Fish and Wildlife list, but I have a vision of what a smoky madtom fish looks like. It swims upside down, madly chases its tail, has a Salvador Dali moustache, and only surfaces to bark mournfully when there's a heavy mist on the river. As a novelist I fully intend to describe one of my characters some day as a "real smoky madtom."

Never mind the disappearance of species, it's the disappearance of names that troubles me. Where would we be without the Modoc sucker, the rhizome fleabane, the last chance townsendia -- oh, say it's not the very last -- and Bulmer's

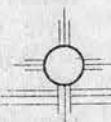
flying fox fruit bat. What comic misidentifications and wild guesses are contained within that final name.

How impoverished our language would be without such names as the beautiful shiner, the desert pupfish, the clay loving wild buckwheat, the crenulated lead plant and the Miccosukee gooseberry, all endangered.

Just the Miccosukee gooseberry alone, how could we bear to lose it? Try rolling it around on your tongue, let its crisp tartness freeze your cheeks for just an instant, the Miccosukee (hard c, I believe), gooseberry. Why it's absolutely delicious.

□

Arthur Roth lives in East Hampton, New York, where he writes books and freelance articles.



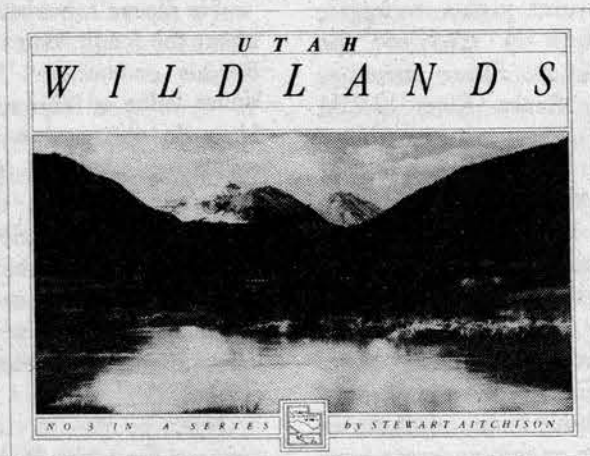
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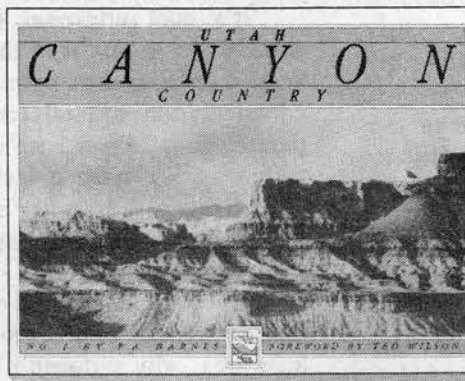
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move to give MacCleery a newly created post as deputy chief for forest planning.

In a few cases, a Reagan political appointee has veered from the political straight-and-narrow and simply attempted to do what is best for the public lands. National Park Service Chief William Penn Mott is the best example.

Largely with the help of Congress, Mott has achieved several notable victories. But many of the bold ideas he brought to office with him have faded away, done in by Horn and Hodel.

Fortunately, many of the ideas Watt and his successors brought to office with them have also faded away, done in by public opposition and congressional resistance.



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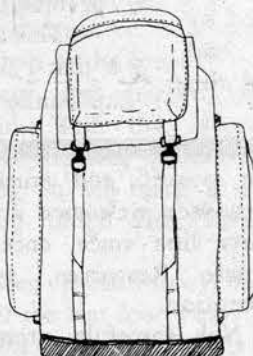
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But the Reagan administration's desire to neglect, destroy or dismantle much of this nation's priceless natural heritage has not abated.

It will continue for as long as our public lands are entrusted to the care of people like George Dunlop. Let's hope we keep electing people like Ralph Regula and Sid Yates to keep an eye on them.

□

Andrew Melnykovich writes for the *Casper Star-Tribune*, which printed this column April 27.

DON'T LET THE GRIZZLY DIE



For over a hundred years, wild grizzly bears were indiscriminately killed by any means available. They were poisoned, shot on sight, trapped without restriction. The intent was to destroy them completely. It nearly succeeded.

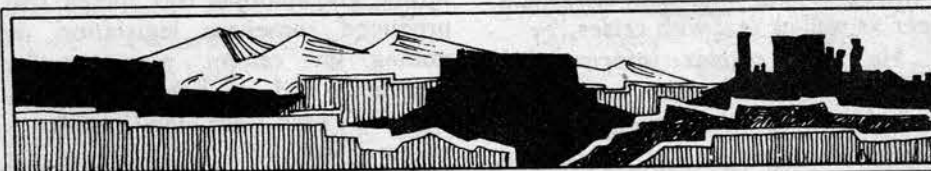
As many as 50,000 to 100,000 grizzly bears once roamed wild and free in the lower 48 states. Today, only 1000 or fewer remain. Their last footholds on existence are but 1% of the vast lands they once occupied.

There has been a recent change of heart about the grizzly bear. As the American People learn more about this intelligent and wary animal, they realize that their world would be a shrunken and less valuable place if they were to let the grizzly die. Has this change of heart come in time to save the grizzly?

The American people and the grizzly bear are at a common crossroads. It is a crossroads where the people will make the choices, and the bear will take the consequences. If we are going to save them, now is the time to begin.

The grizzly can be saved. Don't let the grizzly die. Write the Great Bear Foundation, P.O. Box 2699, Missoula, Montana 59806.

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