

High Country News

August 15, 1988

Vol. 20 No. 15

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One Dollar

Norm Shrewsbury

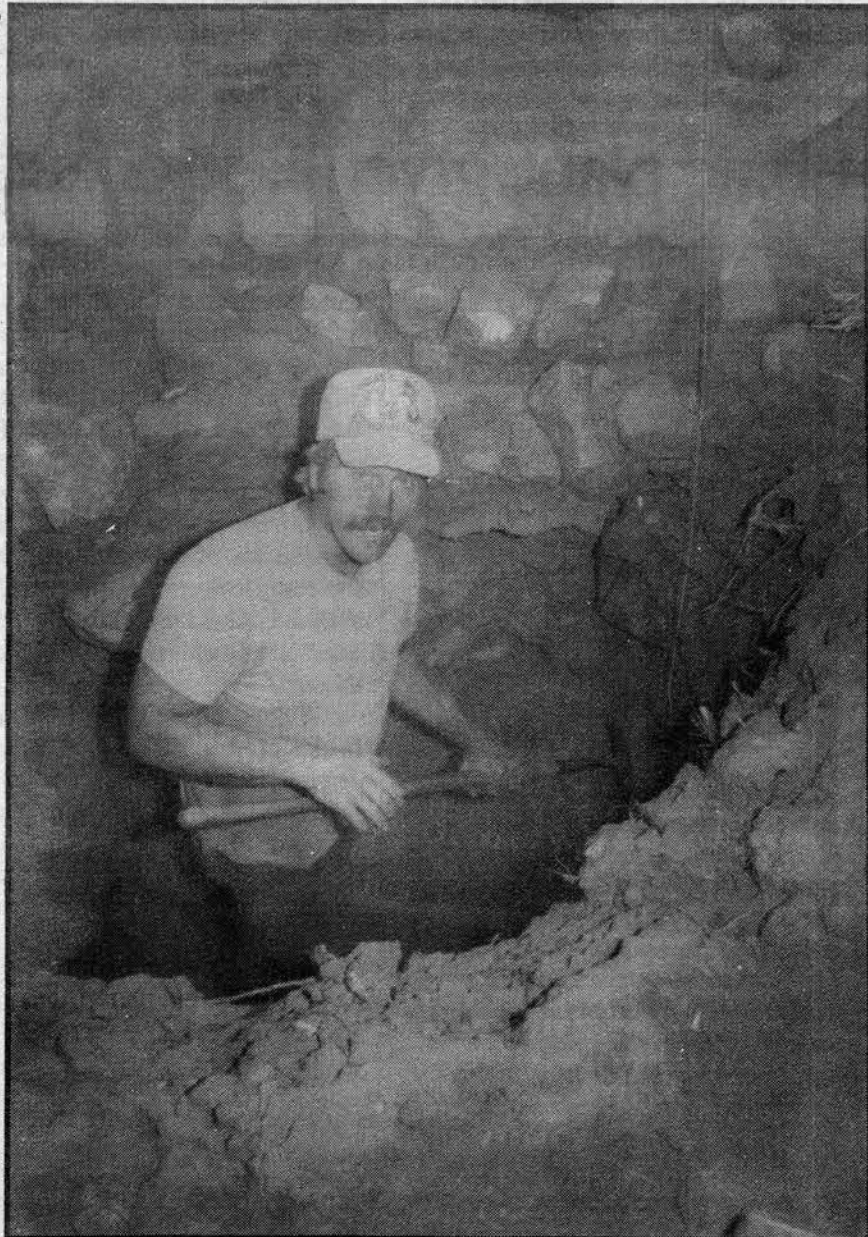


South entrance to Blanding with the Abajo Mountains in the background

Blanding, Utah

Growing up among the ruins

Norm Shrewsbury



Kelly Laws at Rattlesnake Ruin



Anasazi bowl, ladle and sandal

Norm Shrewsbury



Tourists in Blanding

✓ See page 11

High Country News - August 15, 1988

Dear friends,

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Next month in Jackson

Readers who live in the Northern Rockies will, we hope, want to be in Jackson, Wyo., on Sat., Sept. 10, to attend an evening gathering of supporters of the Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning, the Jackson Hole Land Trust and *High Country News*. There will be a speaker -- conservationist, writer and professor Michael Frome -- as well as excellent food and conversation.

These gatherings, held three times a year in various parts of the region in connection with meetings of the board which governs this paper, are always enjoyable. Details will follow.

Passing through Paonia

This winter, *HCN* had five interns at one time, which is a bit like a football team having three quarterbacks. Despite their experience with doubledecker bunk desks and fierce fights for the word processors, the class of winter 1988 seems to have enjoyed journalism.

Michael Crawford, whose moniker on the Paonia public radio station was "the New Yorker," is now a reporter for the West Side *Spirit*, which covers a New York City neighborhood of a million or so. Gus Wilmerding, also a New Yorker and an alum of the same class, is leaving an internship at the *Aspen Times* and is 99 percent sure of a job on a community weekly in Long Island.

Intern Dan Cohen from the class of '85 and his friend Bill Callihan dropped in on their way to performances -- they call them gigs -- in Los Angeles and San Francisco. They do a droll comedy act as Felicity and Lee, a granola-loving gal and a cowboy. Dan, who is essence of New York, plays the cowboy. Bill, who is essence of the Deep South, plays Felicity. At a staff gathering, we suggested they make up t-shirts with the legend: Felicity and Lee: Tour '88, Paonia, L.A. and San Francisco. Perhaps Paonia can become a try-out town for the West Coast, filling the role Philadelphia played for Broadway. You can catch their act in New York City at the Gusto House by calling 473-2148.

Non-intern visitors have also been arriving in Paonia in a steady, welcome stream. Larry Smith cycled through on a trip to celebrate completion of his Ph.D. in geology at the University of New Mexico, Albuquerque. He peddles up to 100 miles a day, which still allows him to enjoy the beautiful country and to notice all the "for sale" signs in the small communities along the way. Had we just finished a Ph.D. in geology, we would avoid anything that reminded us of the field, but Larry insisted on continuing on to the Grand Tetons.

Others visitors were Chris Cummins of Arvada, Colo., and Nels Borg, who camped out at the nearby Black Canyon of the Gunnison. *HCN* is a long way from becoming an L.L. Bean, but we do offer discounts on t-shirts to visitors, as well as a free armload of recent issues for those who have been away from their mailboxes.

Visiting earlier this summer were subscribers from Pasadena, Calif., Ruth and Chuck Powell, who had spent the last seven weeks exploring the West, including Grand Teton, Yellowstone, Sequoia and Rocky Mountain national parks. They also found time to attend the annual meeting of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition while they were in that group's neighborhood. They were in town to visit Opel Harber, a retired staffer with the Western History Division of the Denver Public Library.

Reader DeeDee Decker, owner of the

True Grit Cafe in Ridgway, Colo., also stopped by with two draft horses, Harry and Herschel, in tow. The Belgians waited in the trailer while DeeDee, whose husband, Pete, is Agriculture Commissioner of Colorado, visited the offices. It is a sign of the times that the Ag commissioner of a Western state has draft horses rather than a chemical supply business.

Filtered light at HCN

In Philip Roth's novel, *Portnoy's Complaint*, the hero says of his mother's purchase of venetian blinds: She felt we had arrived at a social pinnacle.

So it is at the offices of *High Country News*, which now have blinds to keep out the intense morning sun. The blinds have turned what passersby could see was a sloppy, crowded office into something that -- hidden -- looks almost elegant. Mrs. Portnoy was right.

In other news...

Staff wrote a letter to *World Watch* magazine, a new magazine produced by the Worldwatch Institute, congratulating it on an excellent first issue. *WW* printed the letter in its May-June issue. We were a bit embarrassed to read that our congratulations had included the line that we "can't help but see it as a sort of *High Country News* of the globe."

David R. Newton has a request of our readers:

"I have recently been commissioned to write a book on *Taking a Stand against Pollution*, one in a series of 'Taking a Stand Against...' books intended for junior and senior high school readers. It is designed to tell them how they can fight pollution."

HOTLINE

Park fee exemption

What goes up may come down. Earlier this year Yellowstone National Park officials won congressional approval to increase park entrance fees for motorized vehicles from \$5 to \$10 a day (*HCN*, 2/29/88). But now park officials are asking for an exception to that increase, the *Casper Star-Tribune* reports. After heavy lobbying by local



Bill Callihan, left, and Dan Cohen

If you know of teens who have fought a good fight on pollution, Newton would like to know about them. He can be reached at: 297 Addison St., San Francisco, CA 94131; 415/334-8005.

--the staff

residents and Wyoming's congressional delegation, the park wants to reduce the fee for snowmobilers. Otherwise, critics say, the rate is inequitable. They say a family of four in a car pays only \$10 to enter the park while that same family entering on snowmobiles pays \$40 a day. Park Superintendent Robert Barbee sent the request to the Denver regional office, where it awaits approval before heading to Washington for Park Service Director William Penn Mott's signature.

Shale plant given last chance

With former Unocal chief executive officer Fred Hartley retired, the oil firm is taking a hard look at its \$1 billion investment in Hartley's pet: the \$1 billion oil shale facility in western Colorado.

An article in the Aug. 5 *Wall Street Journal* quotes new Unocal president Richard Stegemeier as saying that because of the firm's massive debt, the shale plant and other assets are on a "watch list" for possible sale or closure. Spokesperson Carol Scott told the Grand Junction (Colorado) *Daily Sentinel*, "The plant has got to pay its own way, like everything else in the Unocal organization."

The plant, located near the small town of Parachute, has a design output of 10,000 barrels per day, and needs to reach 8,000 barrels a day to have a positive cash flow, the *Journal* said. It is now at 6,000 barrels per day.

Workers at the plant interviewed by the *Sentinel* were of mixed minds. One said, "Why should we worry when we've got a government contract for another three to four years?" The contract, a remnant of the Carter administration's \$88 billion synthetic fuels effort, subsidizes Unocal's production, paying the difference between the \$15 or so per barrel market price and a formula share of the \$70 or so it costs to produce. The federal

government has guaranteed Unocal up to \$400 million in subsidies. Unocal has thus far collected \$28 million.

But the facility's low rate of production and the debt Unocal took on to fend off oil company reorganizer (the oil firms call him a raider) T. Boone Pickens -- who thought oil shale was Hartley's folly -- have reduced Unocal's options. The *Journal* said the plant "may be given until the end of the year to hit that (positive cash flow) target. If it doesn't, however, the plant that Mr. Hartley championed through years of failure is doomed."

A copy of the *Journal* article went to the plant's 500 employees, in an apparent attempt to rouse them to greater productivity. Meanwhile, on the front page of the same Sunday, Aug. 7 issue of the *Sentinel* (the threat to the plant was on the front page of its third section), Exxon announced it had cut the cost of producing oil shale from about \$70 a barrel to about \$35 a barrel. The firm did not say how it had achieved the breakthrough, which still leaves oil shale at double the cost of today's crude oil.

Exxon's closure (technically, the facility is on standby) of its giant Colony operation adjacent to the Unocal plant in May 1982 symbolized the collapse of the West's long energy boom.

--Ed Marston

WESTERN ROUNDUP

Hikers versus telescopes versus squirrels

The squirrel is out of the bag in Arizona, so to speak. After two closed-door sessions with agency heads, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service released its *Biological Opinion* on the effects of telescopes on the Mount Graham red squirrel, an endangered species.

The opinion restricts the Forest Service, which manages the land on Mount Graham, to three options -- no one of which satisfies everyone (*HCN*, 5/7/87).

The first option is to leave the mountain as it is, disallowing any telescopes. That is supported by environmentalists, who for years have fought the University of Arizona's plans to build a large observatory on the mountain.

A second option would limit construction to three telescopes on the 10,713-foot summit of nearby High Peak. Public penalties would be severe. All hiking, hunting, camping and picnicking would be prohibited in the red squirrel's critical habitat above 10,200 feet. All roads except for 1.8 miles of the Swift Trail would be closed, and travel to High Peak would be limited to astronomy personnel in shuttle buses.

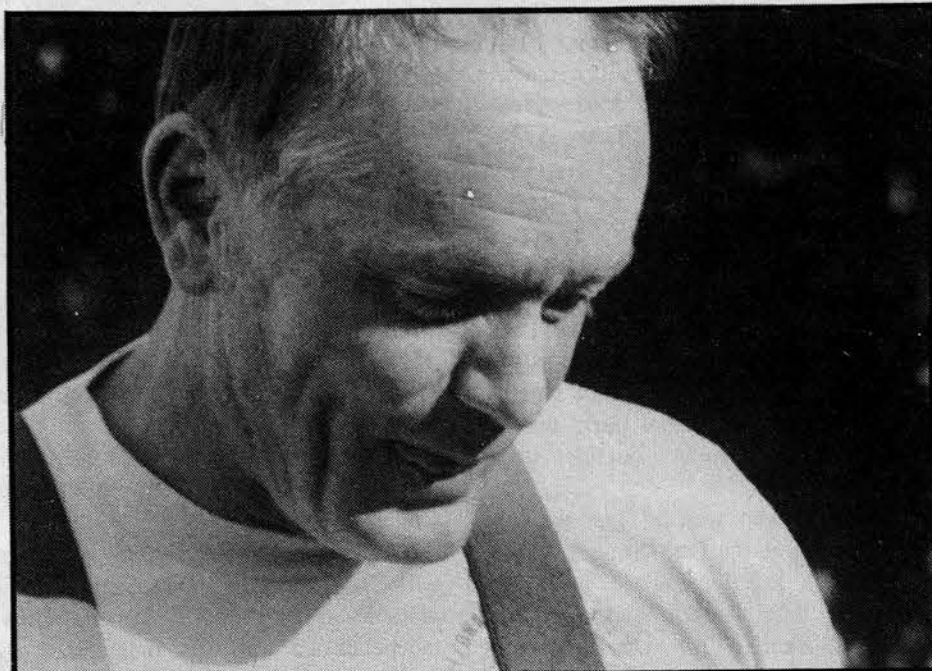
Finally, summer home leases at nearby Columbine would be cancelled, and a Bible camp and at least one campground would be disbanded. The Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that "human intrusions" are more dangerous to the squirrel than habitat loss.

Option three would allow three telescopes on Emerald Peak, Mount Graham's second highest peak at about 10,500 feet, with the possibility in four years of adding six movable receiving dishes and nine stationary pads. Two miles of new road would connect the Emerald Peak astrophysical sites with the Swift Trail.

As with the second option, all public entry in the squirrel's critical habitat would be prohibited. All other existing roads, special use permits and campgrounds thought to be detrimental to red squirrels would be retired. If no reduction in squirrel numbers is detected, additional telescopes could be authorized on High Peak within five to 10 years.

None of these "reasonable and prudent alternatives" is acceptable to all of the involved parties. As Jim Kolbe, congressman from the Mount Graham area, says, "None of these choices makes me want to stand up and cheer." Paul Pierce, leader of the broad-based Coalition for the Preservation of Mount Graham, terms the opinion "an unmitigated sell-out to the university."

The third alternative is the one astronomers say they can live with, provided more acreage is added. It is the result of a private meeting in late May, when the Fish and Wildlife Service was reminded how important Emerald Peak was to the proposed \$60 million



Tom Waddell, opponent of development on Mt. Graham

Columbus Project -- the world's largest binocular telescope.

The third option allows astronomers to proceed with their plans for a massive 11.3 meter telescope and an 8 meter companion. At least \$1.2 million has already been spent on the project and two other telescopes, the Max Planck Institute's and the Vatican telescope, are already funded. The University has said that its bottom line is seven telescopes and their support facilities.

Arizona Game and Fish Director Temple Reynolds says his commission is steadfast in its unanimous resolve to oppose astrophysical developments on Mount Graham. He says the whole summit should be maintained as an "ecological preserve." The 34 organizations in the Coalition for the Preservation of Mount Graham agree.

The Emerald Peak option is sure to draw fire from those who will be denied access to Mount Graham's loftier reaches. Hikers and sportsmen are expected to protest being locked out of public lands they enjoy.

Tom Waddell, who has worked as the Mount Graham wildlife manager for 20 years, hopes the debate will build up enough political pressure to keep the telescopes off his mountain. Some say that is what the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hopes, too.

A legal battle appears certain. The Coalition for the Preservation of Mount Graham has accumulated a modest war chest and engaged a law firm in Tucson. Legal grounds may be the speed with which the Fish and Wildlife Service devised its Emerald Peak alternative -- two weeks.

Biologists Barry Spicer and Peter Warshaw, who were assigned to evaluate the squirrel's status, say they have not had time to evaluate the full effects of the Emerald Peak proposal. Only last

year the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said no telescopes should be built on Emerald Peak as it was "extremely important red squirrel habitat."

Within the next two months the Forest Service will have to issue a final environmental impact statement on the effects of the three proposals on the summit of Mount Graham. A law suit could also ensue if the Coronado National Forest elects to only amend a Preliminary Environmental Impact Statement issued last year.

Astronomers and the Arizona congressional delegation will not sit by either. Arizona Rep. Morris Udall plans to introduce an Arizona Wilderness bill sometime this year or the next, and observers say language permitting telescopes on Mount Graham may be part of that or other legislation. Congress is not bound by the National Environmental Policy Act and removing 3,500 acres from the summit of Mount Graham for an Astrophysical Reserve could effectively sack any court battles initiated by citizens. This battle isn't over yet.

--David E. Brown

HOTLINE

Grizzly hunt

Introducing a grizzly bear hunt in Wyoming may not produce as much opposition as anticipated. The state's Fish and Game Department is working on a federal regulation that would allow nuisance grizzlies to be hunted outside Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. Chief Game Warden Dale Strickland told the *Casper Star Tribune* he anticipated heavy opposition nationwide on the proposed hunt. So far he hadn't received any. Defenders of Wildlife representative Hank Fischer said he didn't feel strongly about the hunt, and both the Wyoming Wildlife Federation and Wyoming Outdoor Council took no position on the issue. Fischer said the bears usually have to be removed anyway, and criteria for determining a nuisance bear are fairly stringent. Wildlife managers consider a bear's threat to human health and safety, property damage and history of behavior before declaring it a problem. A wildlife officer must also accompany selected hunters in their attempt to kill a problem bear. A similar program exists in Montana, and Strickland said Wyoming's program should be established by September when the regulation appears in the Federal Register.

HOTLINE

The germ's in the mail

The Army's proposal to upgrade its biological warfare lab at Dugway Proving Grounds in Utah sparked more than just local opposition and concern from the state's congressional delegation (*HCN*, 4/25/88). After the Army revealed in its environmental analysis that it routinely shipped biological agents through regular mail, the Postal Service reacted by proposing a ban on such shipments. Although infectious material has been shipped for years, the increased shipping of blood for AIDS testing and the Army's disclosure have raised concern about the practice. Several private labs and researchers say the ban would force them to use expensive courier services, putting a strain on marginal budgets. The Postal Service is currently reviewing comments on the proposed ban.

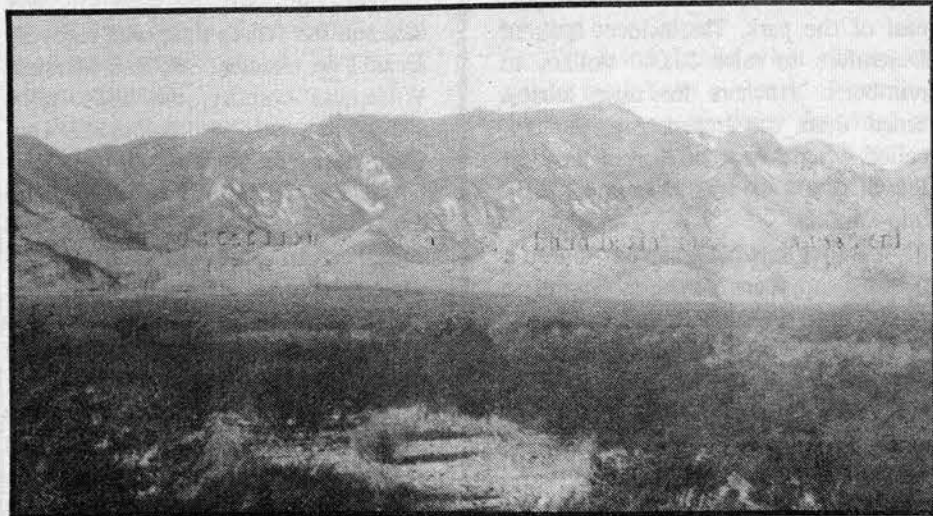
Don Miller



Sandhill crane

Crane hunt is debated

The Utah Division of Wildlife's announcement this summer that it would issue 100 permits to hunt sandhill cranes sparked enough opposition for a reconsideration. The board will decide Aug. 11 (past *HCN's* deadline) whether to allow the hunt for two weekends this September. Sandhill cranes have helped fight the extinction of whooping cranes by playing surrogate parents to the endangered species, and the fear is that whoopers will be killed along with sandhill cranes. Opposition to the hunt has come mostly from the Utah Audubon Society, but Gov. Norman Bangert also asked the board to reconsider the hunt. State waterfowl coordinator Tom Aldrich, however, says, "There is not a biological argument against the sandhill crane hunt." He says 100 permits will harvest only about 30 cranes from the 18,000 sandhill cranes in the Rocky Mountain region, and that the birds eventually benefit from the hunt. Habitat protection is a priority for hunted species, he points out. The agency will protect whooping cranes, Aldrich adds, by scouting for them before and during the hunt; if endangered cranes show up, the hunt will be stopped. But Clat Braun, a researcher for Colorado's Division of Wildlife, says whooping cranes have been shot at and crippled during similar hunts in New Mexico and Wyoming. Braun also says the Utah hunt worries Colorado officials because the sandhill crane is on Colorado's endangered species list. Aldrich says that not hunting the birds in Utah will not save them. Other states in the region that allow sandhill crane hunts can merely increase their permits to pick up Utah's allocation, he adds. He also notes that the National Audubon Society did not oppose the Utah hunt.



The tallest peak in the range is Mt. Graham

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HOTLINE

**Proposal attacked as unappealing**

If the Forest Service gets its way, the public's say in critical forest management decisions will be unduly limited, says Sen. Tim Wirth, D-Colo. The agency has proposed limiting the number of protests the public can make, while those with Forest Service contracts would have more appeal privileges (HCN, 6/6/88). In a letter to Chief Forester Dale Robertson, Wirth says the different treatment of appeals by public groups and contractors is inequitable, leaving a fair hearing for the public to the courts. The Forest Service is "threatening a long tradition of public-government partnership that has served us well in managing our public lands," says Wirth, who serves on the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. The senator's response to the agency is one of more than 900 the Forest Service has received since the public comment period for the changes ended July 15. Kathy Hauser, a Forest Service consultant, says the letters will generate more than 7,000 comments on the proposed changes.

Agency is praised

Bridger-Teton National Forest spokesman Fred Kingwill says it's nice to know the forest planning process is not "way out in left field." Kingwill's remarks came in response to a consultant's report that endorsed the way Bridger-Teton planners determine timber harvest, road building and other management decisions. The report was requested and funded by Wyoming Gov. Mike Sullivan, who had urged forest officials to increase timbering and to allow some oil drilling in vital grizzly bear habitat (HCN, 4/25/88). Sullivan told the *Jackson Hole News* that the report by Dennis Knight of the University of Wyoming answered his questions about the accuracy and adequacy of information for the controversial Bridger-Teton Forest Plan. But in a letter to forest supervisor Brian Stout, Sullivan asked forest planners to consider Knight's recommendation to split the forest into north and south sections for planning. Louisiana-Pacific's lumber mill in Dubois is in the north section, which typically also receives heavy recreational use. Sullivan also asked planners to consider more flexible road standards. The report, *An Assessment of Timber-related Planning on the Bridger-Teton National Forest*, is available from the Bridger-Teton Forest Supervisor, P.O. 1888, Jackson, Wyo., 83001.

BARBS

It's tough to be spiritual when you steal.

Forest Service agents recently confiscated dozens of rare quartz crystals from three Albuquerque, N.M., stores. The crystals were mined illegally from the Lincoln National Forest for sale to "New Age" people who believe they bring harmony and healing.

BOOK NOTES

One general's view of a long, long war*Battling for the National Parks*

George B. Hartzog Jr. Moyer Bell Limited, Colonial Hill, Mt. Kisco, N. Y. 10549. 1988. 284 pages. \$19.95.

Review by Michael J. Robinson

George B. Hartzog Jr., the widely respected director of the National Park Service from 1964 - 1972, called for formation of a national register of natural places to preserve national parks threatened by development outside their boundaries.

Hartzog, who worked his way up from a ranger in the Park Service, made his remarks in a telephone interview coinciding with the publication of his memoirs, *Battling for the National Parks*.

Transferring national forest land surrounding parks to the Park Service is not a politically feasible way to protect park wildlife, Hartzog said. One area often mentioned for such park additions is Yellowstone. Hartzog said there is room in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem for "sensibly managed multiple use," but not for "cheek to jowl" resource exploitation on the park boundary. He said a natural areas register could protect crucial grizzly bear habitat outside Yellowstone National Park without additions to the park.

Such a register, Hartzog explained, would be similar in structure and purpose to the National Register of Historic Places. Administered by the Park Service, the register was created to preserve areas of cultural and historic importance. A council advises the President and Congress on additions to the National Register and successfully serves, Hartzog said, as a mediation and arbitration body when conflicts over use occur. Its members are presidentially-appointed but have staggered terms to protect the council's mission from political interference.

In an increasingly familiar refrain, Hartzog joined the chorus of critics accusing the Reagan administration appointees of damaging the parks for political and ideological ends. He said the Department of Interior has tried to "micro-manage the resource" at the cost

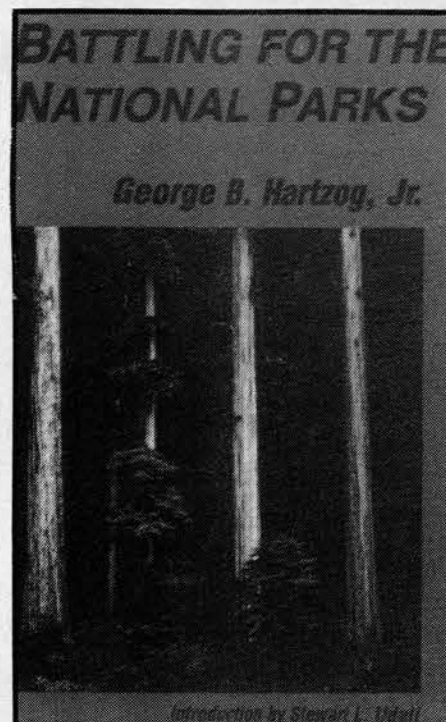
of professional park management. "The whole political ideology of this administration in the Department of the Interior has been commercial exploitation." He praised current Park Service Director William Penn Mott, who he said would be a distinguished leader if not for political interference.

Hartzog's book recounts a career spent carefully balancing political imperatives from Congress with his own judgement of what was best for the parks. In those conflicts he generally had the support of his various bosses, Interior secretaries Stewart Udall, Wally Hickel and Rogers Morton.

Political interference did not start with Reagan, Hartzog recounts in his memoirs. The Park Service's traditional independence was first undermined by the Nixon administration, he says, which appointed to a prestigious Park Service advisory board someone (unidentified) who drunkenly boasted of having paid \$125,000 for his seat.

Hartzog says that appointment was outdone by Interior Secretary James Watt's appointment, "in a matchless gesture of contempt," of Charles Cushman, head of the National Inholders Assoc. Cushman opposes acquiring private land nestled inside the parks (HCN, 6/20/88). Hartzog says scuttling the Land and Water Conservation Fund, used to buy up private inholdings in the parks, is the most damaging legacy of Reagan's Park Service policy.

Hartzog also criticized the traditional Park Service encouragement of visitation. "The Park Service needs to re-examine the purposes of these national parks. Is it to preserve them unimpaired for future generations? Or is it to manage them as the largest travel promotion agency in the world?" He said commercial concessions in the parks have a mandate only to provide services "necessary and appropriate for public use and enjoyment." He recounts unsuccessfully trying to remove concession facilities from Zion National Park in Utah. That was blocked by Utah business interests and their political supporters, who said travellers would avoid Zion if the facilities were removed. Hartzog writes, "Remarkably illuminating: The throngs of visitors to America's



national parks do not come to see the parks but to stay in the concession accommodations!" But the Park Service's dichotomous mandate to preserve the parks unimpaired for human enjoyment, said Hartzog, is not inherently irreconcilable.

Hartzog predicts a groundswell of concern for the national parks in coming years, heralded by continuing revelations and reports of park deterioration, to which his memoirs add grist. He says the public spotlight on environmental issues will accompany scrutiny of social and "quality of life" issues, because "the preservation of wildlife lies with the urban population."

Battling for the National Parks is a reminder that the National Park Service used to operate relatively free of partisan meddling. Though it has always faced political threats to its operational integrity, and consequently to the parks' ecological integrity, the agency usually prevailed. Visionary leadership combined with the autonomy granted to respected professionals enabled the Park Service to protect millions of acres of threatened land while fostering public appreciation of the natural world. Hartzog points out that not only are the parks now endangered, but so is the agency. This is a timely book.

Group to pay a bounty to keep wolves alive

Ranchers in the Northern Rockies who lose livestock to wolves may soon be compensated by a fund created by Defenders of Wildlife.

Hank Fischer, the group's Northern Rockies representative, says the program could turn over the economic liability of occasional predation "to the millions of people who support wolves."

Fischer says compensation will begin once the fund reaches \$30,000 and an agreement is reached with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on how the agency will disburse the money. So far, Defenders says it has raised \$15,000 for the privately-financed fund, with another \$5,000 on the way.

Wolves were largely extirpated from the West early this century, but in the early 1980s wolves from Canada repopulated the country in and around Glacier National Park in northwest Montana. The population was estimated

at one time last summer to be between 20 and 30 animals. That was before a small pack acquired a taste for beef and mutton.

In a move that made headlines (HCN, 11/23/88), wildlife authorities either killed or trapped and removed six wolves that had been attacking livestock on the Blackfoot Reservation, just east of the park. The incident spurred Defenders to raise \$3,000 dollars to reimburse ranchers for their losses. Since then, researchers say, the so-called Magic Pack of wolves has left the Glacier park area and moved back into Canada.

Fischer says his group has "taken a positive approach" by establishing a stable fund to cover future predation incidents. He says the fund, which will top out at \$50,000, removes the need for government-subsidized reimbursement, reduces fraudulent claims because kills must be positively veri-

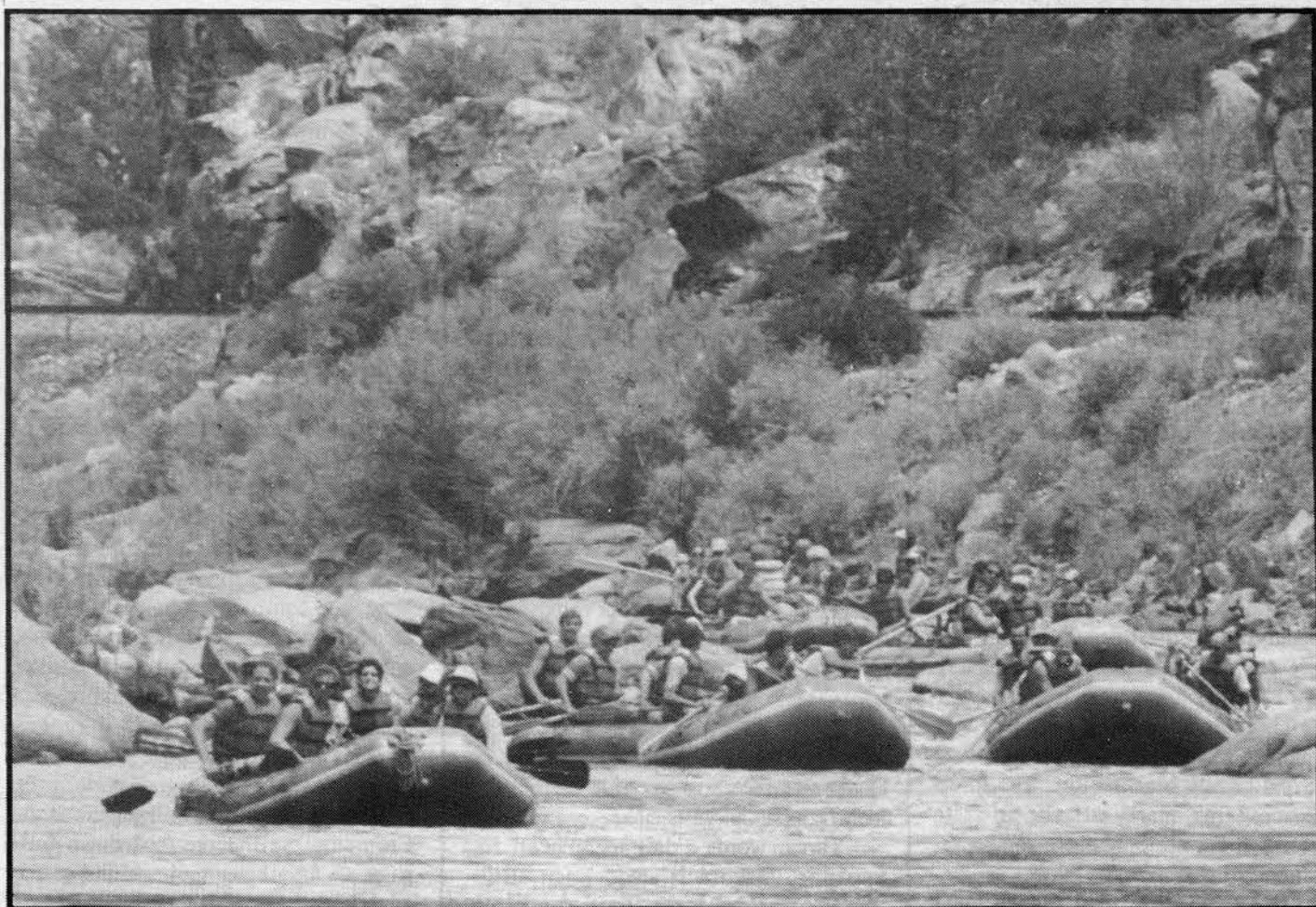
fied, and makes conservationists more sensitive to the concerns of stockmen. "It's a pretty Republican idea," Fischer says.

A few members of the Montana Stockgrowers Association, however, reacted to the program by calling it a public relations ploy.

The fund will be used to cover losses in the West's three wolf recovery areas: The Glacier Park-Bob Marshall Wilderness country, the Yellowstone ecosystem and the Salmon-Selway-Clearwater wildlands of Idaho. Reimbursement will stop when wolf populations have recovered enough so that the animal can be removed from the endangered species list and then hunted legally, Fischer says.

For more information, contact the Wolf Restoration Fund, c/o Defenders of Wildlife, 1244 19th St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

--Bruce Farling



Chas. S. Clifton

Crowded commercial rafting on the Arkansas River

Critics splash water on Arkansas River plan

CANON CITY, Colo. -- Conservation groups say a draft management plan for the planned 120-mile Arkansas River State Recreation Area favors commercial rafting. Nearly 70 companies float tourists on this crowded stretch of river.

The draft plan, due for public release Aug. 15, is based on a cooperative management agreement signed late last year by the Bureau of Land Management and the Colorado Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation. Under the agreement, the state would take over recreation management on BLM lands along the river.

Throughout the spring, an advisory committee chosen by the state met to formulate a management plan for the river corridor park, composed of scattered campgrounds, boat landings and the water surface itself. Forty percent of that corridor between Leadville and Canon City is on BLM land.

Groups such as the Colorado Wildlife Federation, Colorado Trout Unlimited and the Colorado Environmental Coalition, although represented on the committee, were outnumbered more than 2-1 by boating industry representatives picked by the state.

As Marcy Kelly, the representative of the Colorado Wildlife Federation puts it, the committee's product will make the river a "commercial waterslide" to the detriment of trout, bighorn sheep and other wildlife. She says it will also drive fishermen away from the largest undammed river on the Front Range.

Kayakers are also not happy with the proposal. A recent article in *Currents*, a newsletter published by the Colorado Springs-based National Organization for River Sports, described the proposed management plan as "an orgy of over-regulation."

While that group urged its members to take their fight to the federal level to try to put congressional pressure on the BLM to cancel the cooperative management agreement, other state conservation groups favor the river park in principle and back what is called the "reduced development alternative."

Prepared with help from the Colorado Division of Wildlife, Trout Unlimited, Audubon Society, Colorado Environmental Coalition and Colorado Wildlife Federation, this alternative sets launch "windows" to limit the number of

boats on the river, both private and commercial.

The reduced development approach also calls for scaling down the state's plans for fee-use campgrounds and other facilities and calls for more concentration on improving the biological health of the Arkansas. The river is threatened by mining pollution from the Leadville area and water diversions by Colorado Springs and Aurora.

The reduced development alternative rejects the state's projections of increased boating from the current 139,000 "floater days" a year to more than 600,000 by 1997. The premise is that the years of explosive growth are over.

According to this alternative, limiting boat launches to 9 a.m. - 2 p.m., with all craft off the water by 4 p.m., would leave the early morning and evening fishing times undisturbed by the passage of splashing raft-trippers, says Leo Gomolchak, resource director of Colorado Trout Unlimited.

It would also permit the river's rainbow and brown trout to feed with less disturbance in shallow water, where they naturally tend to move when the sun is low in the sky.

Supporters say that limiting rafting could also benefit the outfitters' expressed desire to offer "quality river trips."

BLM surveys reveal that the number of commercial rafting customers bothered by overcrowding in the popular Brown's Canyon area rose from roughly 30 percent to about 53 percent between 1981 and 1987, even as the rafting industry boomed.

The BLM will take public comment on the different park-management proposals through Oct. 1. A final recreation management plan will then be presented to the State Parks Board, with a final public review and protest period scheduled for Nov. 1-Dec. 1.

If the plan is approved, the Division of Parks and Outdoor Recreation would become the river's recreation agency on Jan. 1, 1989.

To receive a copy of the Arkansas River recreation management plan or to comment, write: L.M. Berta, Area Manager, Royal Gorge Resource Area, BLM, P.O. Box 311, Canon City, CO 81212 (719/275-0631).

--Chas. S. Clifton

HOTLINE

Captive sturgeon spawns

A native Idahoan has produced a first for the state. A 6 1/2-foot female sturgeon, captured a year ago from the Snake River near Bliss, Idaho, is the first sturgeon to spawn in a state hatchery. The fish weighs 110 pounds and is 20-30 years old. The state Fish and Game Department and the College of Southern Idaho induced the fish to spawn by using pituitary gland extract. The successful spawning raises hopes of increasing the stressed sturgeon population with hatchery-raised fish. Damming on the Snake has reduced habitat and caused population decline among sturgeon, which can live for 60 years.



Endangered timber wolf

Endangered act survives

The 1973 Endangered Species Act is no longer threatened with extinction. The Senate passed a strengthened Act in late July, clearing the way for negotiators to work out differences between House and Senate versions of the bill. This would be the bill's first reauthorization since 1982. Renewal expired in 1985 and funding has remained at that year's level of \$39 million. The new version of the Act would raise funding to \$56 million for next year and includes amendments requiring more intensive monitoring of species proposed for the list and better protection of endangered plants. Environmentalists report that some 80 species have become extinct while waiting for placement on the list, which currently protects about 400 species in this country. The renewal also ends a four-year struggle with several senators, including several from the West, who have attempted to block the act. The Western senators wanted the act to include provisions for hunting threatened species that wander onto ranchlands.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Wyoming turns (briefly) into New Jersey

CASPER, Wyo. -- "It looks like New Jersey out here," a colleague observed this week, casting a depressing eye at the now-familiar forest fire smoke hanging over Casper.

The haze turned what otherwise would have been a classic Wyoming sparkling-clear, blue-sky day into an eerie yellow twilight zone. About the only consolation is the striking pink-and-red sunsets.

It looks a lot like smog -- that unsavory byproduct of civilization which is a mixture of industrial chemical and particle emissions blended with vehicle exhaust. It is the price we pay for all the nifty conveniences and "progress" we enjoy.

But not so in Wyoming, where our few numbers and moderate, controlled development has left our air, water and

land mostly pristine. It is those qualities, of course, that attract us and others to the state, either to live or visit. It is why Coloradans regularly flee Denver for the high country of Wyoming.

So far, that is. Because not everyone would like to see things remain that way.

Not that many years ago, utilities were laying out grand plans for dotting the plains and deserts of Wyoming with power plants. Multinational corporations were talking about fancy coal gasification and synfuels projects, and coal mines were popping up all over the state.

But, thankfully, the grandest dreams of the industrialists never came true. And folks in Wyoming stood fast on demanding relatively hard-nosed siting and air, land and water requirements for those resource development facilities that did materialize. Surprisingly, we managed to

escape fairly unscathed with still-clean surroundings and our trademark, clean air.

Still, it could have turned out differently. The yellowish tint at mid-day we are now seeing from the Yellowstone and Teton forest fires should give us some pause for thought, about what a fully-developed Wyoming might -- and still could -- look like.

The smoke should also prompt renewed vigilance to insure our air and skies stay clear, and to avoid the current temptation to relax our standards to lure developers and snake oil projects and turn loose uncontrolled industrialization on our landscape.

--Paul Krza
Casper Star Tribune

HOTLINE



Gasping in L.A.

Southern California's automobile culture may come screeching to a halt if the EPA approves drastic measures designed by the area's air quality agencies. A proposed 20-year plan for the Los Angeles area would:

- ban gas-powered cars, replacing them with cars powered by "clean" fuels, such as methanol and electricity;
- require more mass transit;
- stiffen pollution controls on vehicles, refineries, and industrial plants within five years; and
- ban or change the chemical make-up of pollutants such as paint, solvents and hair spray. The initial changes would cost an estimated \$9.4 million daily through 1993, but without changes, Los Angeles and nearby local officials say noxious air quality will only get worse. Air quality officials estimate that bad air cost the region \$13 billion a year in health costs and millions of dollars in crop damage and visibility degradation. Still, Norton Younglove, chairman of the air-quality district, says these measures will only get Los Angeles close to attainment of federal standards.

An Oregon road fight

Controversy has escalated in the Siskiyou National Forest of Oregon. An environmental impact statement released last month called for "salvage logging" of the vast North Kalmiopsis Roadless Area, burned in a fire last summer. The EIS calls for clearcuts up to the boundary of the adjacent Kalmiopsis Wilderness, and completion of the Bald Mountain road, which was halted in 1983 by Earth First! protesters and a subsequent court injunction. Recently, three tree-sitters evaded a Forest Service enclosure of the area and occupied trees at the end of the road. Two tree-sitters were arrested and one evaded police. Three more protesters took their places but were removed when tree climbers deputized by the local sheriff removed the food and water of one tree-sitter. The three trees were cut down after that, but the road has not yet been built, according to Mary Beth Nearing, one of the original tree-sitters. Nearing said the protests "will continue until the road is stopped. There will be a variety of blockades and tree sits." The protests have drawn people from as far away as Montana, Colorado and New York, as well as from the Pacific Northwest. Nearing said the issue has drawn widespread interest partly because the North Kalmiopsis "is the last and largest unprotected roadless area on the West Coast."

Timber wars flare in Idaho and Montana

After 18 months of relative calm, the familiar images of timber jobs vs. the environment returned in early summer to the TV screens and front pages of northern Idaho.

The cause was a stay on a timber harvest in Panhandle National Forest roadless areas, granted by the Forest Service in April at the request of 19 conservation and sportsman's groups. But the moves and countermoves since have more to do with a running quest for political advantage than with the stay itself.

The Panhandle Forest's 2.5 million acres reach from the Clearwater Divide north to Canada. The forest produces more timber -- 233 million board-feet annually for the past decade -- and has more roads -- 6200 miles -- than any other in Idaho.

There is no wilderness; the few remaining roadless areas contain critical elk and grizzly bear habitat. The forest also contains nearly all the in-state watershed for north Idaho's top recreation/tourist attraction, its lakes.

The Panhandle's final management plan, approved in October 1987, establishes a 280 million board-foot allowable annual sale quantity, and projects 5,000 miles of new roads. This January, 19 conservation, sportsman's, and tribal groups filed a joint 500-page appeal. Its basic contention is that the roads and logging proposed will illegally degrade other multiple uses.

Every final Idaho forest plan has been appealed, but this was the first to request a stay on all roading and logging in roadless and riparian areas. "We want to prevent irreversible commitments before the merits are judged," says John Osborn, a Spokane physician who organized the appellant coalition and wrote most of the appeal.

On April 14, the Forest Service granted the stay in roadless areas while denying it in riparian zones. The Forest Service said the stay would reduce annual timber offerings by 54 million board-feet. Since similar requests nationwide have usually been denied, conservationists were surprised but modestly pleased. "It's a reprieve," Osborn told reporters.

Joe Hinson, lobbyist for the Intermountain Forest Industry Association, called the stay request "an irresponsible, selfish action" and warned that "unless these sales are allowed on a timely basis, we will see layoffs by 1990."

Not true, Osborn responded: "The Forest can still offer 220 million board-feet, just slightly below the average since 1978 and above the average since 1983. There's also a 750 million board-foot backlog of sold but uncut timber on the forest, and most timber for area mills comes from state and private lands anyway."

In Bonners Ferry, a small town 15 miles from Canada, the stay became the latest counter in a decade-long quarrel between timber and conservation factions. The Boundary Backpackers, the town's feisty conservation group, joined the appeal without realizing the stay request covered three timber sales, totalling 15 million board-feet, which the group had agreed not to challenge.

The Backpackers first heard of the error from Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus and agreed to back off. But in the two weeks it took to get consent from the other appellants, the Backpackers came under assault.

"The Environmental Balance Committee (their local pro-timber antagonist) used it to inflame the town," member Will Venard says, with the tone of

one who's been through it before. "They started a boycott of our members and generated the usual nasty press. They're calling us a secret society and demanding our membership list."

In mid-May, Hinson's group asked Andrus to convince the 19 appellants to back off the stay entirely. Its letter to Andrus was given to reporters with a news release mentioning his "well-established relationship with environmental groups." The news release was clearly a political jab.

Andrus jabbed back. "What they're asking me to do, I did two weeks ago," he told a Spokane reporter. "Where have they been?"

But he also hit conservationists, specifically John Osborn: "Osborn ... is a representative of those people that want it all. These people who live in Spokane and use us as a playground. Fine, their money spends well, but they should not have the power" to override decisions Idaho conservationists make.

Those words didn't spend well in Spokane. Osborn is an Idahoan. But Spokane residents were most stung by the implication that they should stay out of federal management of public lands 30 miles away in Idaho.

"That's as ludicrous," the Spokane *Spokesman-Review's* outdoor editor wrote, "as if Osborn" -- who works at the Veterans Hospital there -- "were to refuse to treat old soldiers who come from other states." The paper's cartoonist drew a childish Andrus carving "John Osborn is an outside environmental extremist" on a tree.

Hinson and Osborn then exchanged public letters. Hinson, decrying the blanket nature of the stay, offered to identify which roadless areas were "of immediate importance to the timber industry," so the appellants could consider allowing sales in them to proceed. Osborn attacked Hinson for "trumped-up fears of mill closures and layoffs," and asked that Hinson's list also document public costs of harvesting the sales listed, and tell how much timber affected sawmills already have under contract.

This public duel has now petered out, but Osborn's name, and the label of outside agitator, seem to have taken hold. Doorknocking legislative candidates are finding high negative response to his name.

In late May, citing the stay, a new loggers' and millworkers' group, the Panhandle Natural Resources Council, organized in Sandpoint, 40 miles south of Bonners Ferry. The council's first action was a June 2 rally that drew 600 people and extensive media. "The giant is waking up," Hinson told the crowd, "and it's about time." Speaking from Washington, D.C., by telephone, Idaho Republican Rep. Larry Craig said timber sale appeals will cost hundreds of jobs.

The council copies efforts just across the border in Montana. This spring, as part of a wider ruling on a Missoula conservationist's lawsuit, the 9th Circuit Court ordered a halt to about one-third of the Kootenai National Forest's timber program until effects on grizzly bear habitat were considered. Bruce Vincent, an independent logger in Libby, Mont., responded by organizing a massive anti-appeal, anti-wilderness rally in Libby. Over 1,000 people attended.

Montana and Idaho loggers then organized a well-publicized log haul to a sawmill in Darby, Mont., just over the border from Salmon, Idaho. The mill had announced it would close due to conservationists' appeals, it said; conservationists said it was due to competition from

the other Darby mill and poor management. In any case, some 100 loaded log trucks from north Idaho and Montana caravanned to Darby, leaving the logs as a gesture of solidarity. (The mill closed anyway.)

These "grassroots" tactics by timber workers rather than management could have major political effect in both states if sustained. But for the moment, they are not. Instead, workers' energies, and the timber headlines, have turned to strikes, which have shut sawmills throughout the Northwest.

Northwest millworkers accepted big wage and benefit cuts to help their beleaguered industry through the recession. Now, with company profits at record levels, the workers are trying to get those cuts back. Strikes and sympathy strikes are in progress all over Idaho and Montana.

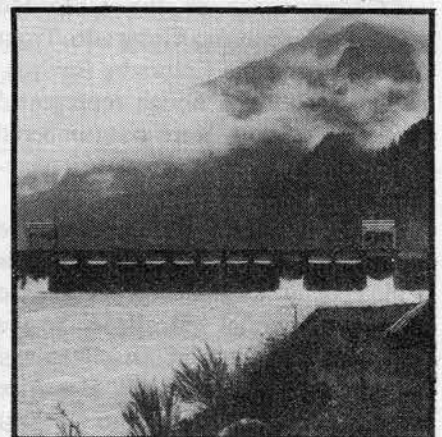
On the same day Bruce Vincent held his latest event -- a "loggers' pride" rally in Missoula July 19 -- millworkers at the Champion mill there took out a full-page ad attacking their employer for avarice and bad faith. Overall, in late July there were 8,000 on strike throughout the Northwest, including 960 in Idaho and 1,925 in Montana.

There will certainly be more opportunity for grassroots actions in Idaho. The Forest Service, which promises expedited review of the coalition appeal of the Panhandle plan, will likely deny it. The appellants will take it to federal court and may well ask the court to extend the stay on roadless area activity. A court-ordered stay, especially if it comes before the election, could be exploited to dramatically raise the political heat.

The scope and tenor of these public polemics will crucially affect how Cecil Andrus -- Idaho's dominant political figure -- views the combatants. Whether Andrus supports one side or the other consistently will substantially influence the outcomes. His choices will in turn be based firmly in his reading of the public mood in north Idaho.

--Pat Ford

HOTLINE



Spillway at the Bonneville Dam on the Columbia River

Most endangered

The impact of Western water projects is easily seen in a list of the nation's 10 most endangered rivers compiled by the Washington, D.C., group, American Rivers. Most of the seven Western rivers that made the list are threatened by proposed dams. The group, which works to preserve the nation's free-flowing rivers, listed as endangered Colorado's South Platte and Animas, Oregon's Kalamath, Wyoming's Little Bighorn, Nebraska's Platte, Washington's Columbia and California's American. Rivers completing the list are the Greenbrier in West Virginia, the Susquehanna in Pennsylvania and the Black in New York. These rivers are fighting off hydroelectric projects.

Hodel casts reserved water out of wilderness

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- A Reagan administration move to keep the presence of downstream wilderness areas from blocking water development will have little immediate impact, critics and backers of the new policy agree.

But translation of the policy into practice could eventually affect some existing national forest wilderness areas and have enormous implications for Bureau of Land Management tracts being considered for wilderness protection. The contentious question of wilderness and water has already led to opposition of the creation of new wilderness areas in many Western states, including Colorado.

Under the new rules, wilderness areas would no longer be considered to have a reserved -- or vested -- federal right to the water flowing through them.

Interior Secretary Donald Hodel announced the policy in late July, saying it culminates more than a year of legal research by department officials. The policy has been reviewed and approved by outgoing Attorney General Edwin Meese.

"No legally sufficient basis exists for an implication of federal reserved water rights for wilderness purposes," Meese says in a July 28 letter to Hodel. "Accordingly...we will not assert reserved wilderness water rights under federal law in any further litigation."

Instead, where appropriate, the federal government will attempt to obtain water for wilderness under state laws, Meese says. If Congress wants to reserve water for wilderness areas, it can do so "by forthright statutory reference when it designates lands for wilderness protection."

Meese and Hodel reject the contention that Congress implicitly reserved water for wilderness when it wrote the Wilderness Act of 1964, the law which governs the federal wilderness preservation system. The law "neither claims nor denies" a reserved water right specifically for wilderness Hodel says in a letter to Meese conveying the Interior Department lawyers' opinion.

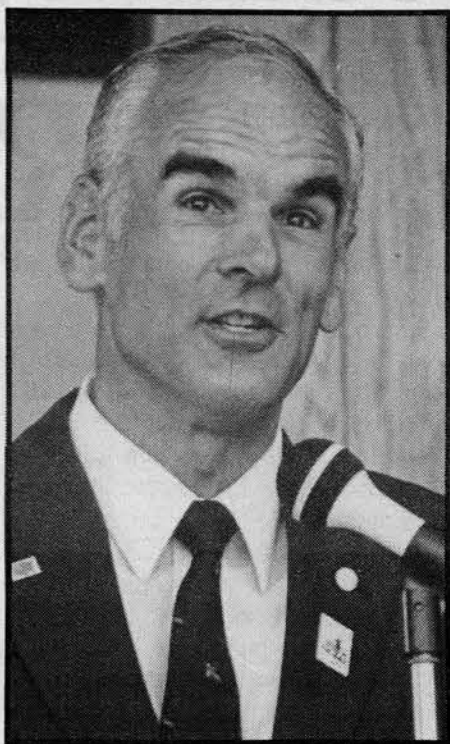
The 1964 law reserves only those water rights already attached to the land from which the wilderness area was created, Hodel says. Given the ambiguity in the Wilderness Act, it is impossible to imply a reserved water right for wilderness, Hodel says.

That conclusion is in accord with a recent decision by a U.S. District Court in New Mexico, but is counter to one reached last year by a U.S. District Court for Colorado. In a case brought by the Sierra Club, the Colorado court ruled that wilderness designation carries with it a reserved water right.

The court in Colorado should be advised of the new legal interpretation reached by the administration's lawyers, Hodel says in his letter to Meese.

But the Colorado court relied on more sources than the Wilderness Act of 1964, according to Lori Potter, the Sierra Club lawyer who argued the case. The new policy "flies in the face of established law and smart policy," she said.

Most wilderness areas lie in the headwaters of drainages, and thus are not susceptible to diversion of water from upstream, she said. Although there are some high-altitude areas that could be affected, the real impact of the new policy could come when Congress begins considering BLM tracts for wilderness designation, Larry Mehlhaff, the Sierra Club's representative in Wyoming, said. BLM lands that contain significant surface waters are generally at lower eleva-



Interior Secretary Donald Hodel

tions, although "only a handful of (wilderness) areas might ever be impacted," he said.

While agreeing that the long-term effects of the new policy are hard to predict, water development advocates see the Hodel-Meese decision as a victory.

"It is clearly important," Connie Brooks of the Mountain States Legal Foundation said. "It stands as an agency interpretation of the laws it is charged to administer." The MSLF argued the Colorado case which ruled that wilderness water rights exist on behalf of several agriculture and water development groups.

Brooks said the new interpretation of wilderness water rights is based on a more exhaustive review than an earlier, opposite conclusion reached by Interior lawyers during the Carter administration.

The legal reasoning behind the new policy could "provide substantive guidance to the courts," she said.

While saying that some water rights disputes could be immediately affected, Brooks agreed that the greatest impact is likely to come in the future, as Congress begins wrestling with BLM wilderness legislation.

"As people want more and more wilderness, there is more potential for conflict," Brooks said.

Wilderness boundaries in some states have already been drawn to exclude potential conflicts with existing or planned water projects, she said. The Wyoming Wilderness Act of 1984 specifically exempted a water project in southern Wyoming from challenges tied to its effects on stream flows in three new wilderness areas in the Medicine Bow National Forest.

Brooks said the wilderness versus water issue has been at the "top of the (Reagan administration's) list" for several years. The announcement was not timed to boost Vice President George Bush and other Republican candidates in the upcoming election, she said.

"I don't think it's that simple," Brooks said. "It's not simply ideology."

National Wildlife Federation lawyer Chris Meyer termed the timing "interesting," noting that it coincides not just with an election but also with the worst drought in half a century.

The conflict between water rights and wilderness is a "political tempest in a teapot," Meyer said. "The conflict is virtually non-existent."

"I feel that ultimately Hodel will be proved wrong both legally and politically," he said. "I don't think this is going to sell."

--Andrew Melnykovych

HOTLINE



Oilers beat EPA

The EPA decided not to classify any oil and gas drilling wastes as hazardous because of political pressure from oil-state senators, says Hugh Kaufman, assistant to the agency's hazardous site control division. He and another staff member, who would not be named, talked to the press after the Environmental Protection Agency declared it would not regulate "associated wastes." They are the 1 percent of drilling wastes that contain highly toxic materials such as benzene, heavy metals and corrosive acids, AP reports. The agency's draft report to Congress estimated that the costs to industry if these wastes were regulated would range from \$200-\$500 million a year. "It would have been a fly in the economic health of that industry," says Kaufman, who has blown the whistle on his agency before.

BARBS

There are a few other good things, too.

Vice-president George Bush, upon emerging from a four-day fishing trip in Wyoming's Absaroka Wilderness, said: "The good thing about the absolute wilderness is you don't have to listen to Ted Kennedy."

Wyoming tribes use drought to gain clout

This summer's drought has put a recent landmark Indian water rights victory to the test, and pushed tempers on Wyoming's Wind River Indian Reservation to a boiling point. Yet, while the fighting over scarce water supplies has damaged crops and community relations, the end result may be improvements to an irrigation system that has been decaying for decades.

On July 6, the Bureau of Indian Affairs shut off all non-Indian water in the Crowheart area of the Wind River Reservation after Shoshone and Arapahoe tribal officials requested the agency to "assert our priority water rights." Those rights are dated 1868 and were guaranteed to the tribes this spring by the Wyoming Supreme Court following 11 years of court battles (HCN, 3/14/88).

The BIA action, backed by the U.S. Justice Department, caught state officials and non-Indian irrigators by surprise. Over 30 non-Indian ranchers growing barley, oats and hay lost their irrigation water at a critical time. One rancher claimed in early July, "Over \$20,000 worth of grain will burn up if I don't get water on it soon."

In response to the water shut-off, non-Indian ranchers, represented by Lander attorney Sky Phifer, sought an injunction, saying there was enough water for all. The request was denied by Washakie County Judge Gary Hartman, but he also said that "a settlement must be made by the end of the week." The tribes agreed to negotiations, but they have taken much longer than a week.

On the reservation, people say the problem is really the old, crumbling irrigation system (HCN, 10/27/86) and confusion following the Supreme Court decision. The tribes were awarded 477,000 acre feet of water from the Wind River drainage, or about half the total flow in a normal year, with the remainder to be split among other irrigators.

However, there is an administrative catch. On the reservation there are no weirs to measure water levels and hence no legal way to measure how much water any one rancher is using. The final stage of the Wyoming court decision, adjudication of water rights, is still "pending," and up to July no changes had been made in the distribution of water on the reservation.

The lack of weirs has made negotiations very difficult. After several meetings, tribal, state and BIA officials finally agreed on a plan for the rest of the summer. Under the August agreement, all water users on the reservation will receive one cubic foot of water per second for every 70 acres of irrigated land. Excess water will then go first to Indian users or non-Indians who have bought out tribal 1868 rights, and then to the senior non-Indian water rights, most of which have a 1906 priority date.

The plan seems to have defused the situation, at least on paper. But on the farms lacking weirs, no one is sure how water will be distributed. If the pattern of earlier agreements is followed, every farmer will be allowed to turn on one

headgate, which means they will be simply be scraping by.

The agreement seems barely acceptable to Indian ranchers, who have sacrificed some of their priority rights. Kaye Stoll, a Shoshone rancher says, "We need a long range plan so we can deal with this situation in the future instead of just fighting over our water rights."

This summer's water fight and its shaky solution may actually have been part of the tribes' long range plan. The fight quickly got the attention of Wyoming's congressional delegation and Gov. Mike Sullivan's office, and revealed how bad the reservation's irrigation system is. Shoshone council member Dr. Frank Enos says, "We have asked the BIA for help in upgrading this inadequate system for years, but Congress has refused us the necessary funding. Maybe now they will listen to us."

Some impacts are already being felt. John Vinich, the Democratic challenger for U.S. Sen. Malcom Wallop's seat, has proposed a \$500,000 project to upgrade the existing irrigation system and increase its water storage capacity. The fight has also strengthened the tribes' claims that they, through the BIA, should regulate water on the reservation, and not the state.

The price has been increased tension between the Indian and Anglos.

One Indian, who preferred to remain anonymous, said, "People are fighting over water now, but it's old hostilities."

-- Meredith Taylor

8-High Country News -- August 15, 1988

(But it's probably good news)

THE WEST IS BURNING

by Geoffrey O'Gara

LEWIS LAKE, YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo. -- Over 110,000 acres of the national park have been scorched, motel owners in gateway communities are moaning about the smoke and cancelled reservations, and the politicians have begun the inevitable second guessing of a park policy that allows lightning-caused fires to burn.

But within the confines of the park, and behind the barricades that keep tourists out of the burn areas, Park Service observers share little of the hysteria ignited in the media by the Yellowstone fires. Rather, veteran rangers and park managers seem excited by what they see as an ecological rebirth unfolding.

On July 26, Interior Secretary Donald Hodel, pressured by Sen. Malcolm Wallop, R-Wyo., flew over the dozen or so fires in the park, including two that have wandered, respectively, within miles of the historic Old Faithful Inn, and into the vicinity of Grant Village, the multi-million dollar hotel/campground complex on Yellowstone Lake. Hodel said afterward that any new fires in the park would be immediately suppressed by firefighters, and launched into a somewhat Orwellian explanation of how current park policy allowed "prescribed" natural fires to burn, but not "wild fires."

Hodel mildly defended the natural

burn policy that he was abandoning when he noted that "what we enjoy here today is a result of this kind of historic happening," but concluded, "We have had enough fire activity for a fire season."

In this highly unusual year -- a season of severe drought which park experts estimate occurs an average of once every 200, or even 400, years -- officials in charge of fighting fires in and around Yellowstone acknowledge that regardless of Hodel's reasons for "try(ing) to nip in the bud" any new fires, there simply aren't the resources on hand to monitor and control any more large fires if they were to threaten human safety or property.

"It's just difficult right now to get the people or the equipment," said Shoshone National Forest District Ranger Tom Portice in Cody, as the huge Clover Mist fire began slipping over the park's east boundary and into his forest.

Yet here in the park itself, among Yellowstone Park Service veterans who have been monitoring and, in places where human habitation was threatened, fighting the fires of this "tinder box" year, there was an unmistakable giddiness about this extraordinary fire season.

"You have to realize," said Terry Danforth, the park's emergency operations specialist and a 25-year Yellowstone employee, "that Yellowstone is on this high plateau, with

a short summer, and it doesn't really get enough fire."

Two weeks ago, during a crucial hot week of growing fires, Danforth drove along the paved road that follows the eastern shore of Lewis Lake down toward the South Gate, which had been closed since the 10,000-acre Red fire entered the area.

On either side of the road, an occasional stump crackled with orange flame, and fallen trees smoldered and burned. Danforth, who had gotten little sleep since the Shoshone Fire made a "run" at Grant Village the night before, smiled as he passed three elk grazing among burn scars by the Lewis River.

"We've inconvenienced people," Danforth said, "but they'll come back in next year and see the fireweed come in, and all the woodpeckers. The whole scheme of the vegetation changes, your species diversification really takes off."

This is the traditional argument for a natural burn policy, whether it's in a national park or a wilderness area like the Teton Wilderness, south of Yellowstone. There, the Mink Creek fire was allowed earlier in July to burn through Pacific Creek and into Yellowstone Meadows, a backcountry area famed for its fishing and hunting. Particularly in national forests, the natural burn policy has come under sharp attack by outfitters whose camps have burned and by timber company officials, who can't stomach

what they see as a waste of valuable board-feet.

Fire management is an evolving science, and in fact it has changed so quickly in recent years that scientists are cautious about evaluating the various approaches.

Before the 1940s, there was a de facto natural burn policy in remote wilderness areas like Yellowstone's backcountry because it was simply too difficult to get to them. After World War II and until the 1970s, smokejumpers came into vogue, and forest fires were attacked like the beaches of Normandy to snuff out the fires.

The "natural burn" approach was first tried in national parks in California, where it was discovered that the giant sequoias benefited greatly from the effect of natural fire. It has been a part of Yellowstone's management plan since 1972, but fire seasons have been relatively mild over the last 15 years, and the policy has not had a serious impact on the public's enjoyment of the park before this year. In 1981, a "banner year" to Danforth because 29,600 acres in the park got a healthy burn, the Park Service put out its biggest fire when the smoke started to bother folks in the Teton Valley.

"We suppressed it because of the smoke problem and for political reasons," said Danforth. "It was a new program and we did not want to jeopardize it."



Robert Bower, Post-Register

Deer finds refuge from the fire at Grant Village in Yellowstone National Park. The building is a tourist lodge.

Neighbor hot over

YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK -- A spokesman for a controversial church group which shares a six-mile border with the northeastern part of Yellowstone National Park charged Tuesday that the park's fire management policy "borders on pyromania."

Edward L. Francis, vice president of the Church Universal and Triumphant and manager of the group's 15,000-acre Royal Teton Ranch, said park officials are doing "too little too late" to control the Fan fire, which was within one-quarter mile of ranch property.

Park fire managers, meanwhile, launched slurry bomber air strikes to contain the man-caused 17,700-acre North Fork fire and keep it from again threatening Old Faithful.

As of Aug. 2, fires burning in Yellowstone had grown to 149,000 acres, or about 7 percent of the total park area.

The largest fire was the Clover Mist fire in the northeast corner of the park, which officials said had charred nearly 74,000 acres.

At the Fan fire, high winds and low humidity within the past two days caused flames to move rapidly to the northeast, threatening the Royal Teton Ranch and the Gallatin National Forest.

Three hundred church members live at the ranch, which they bought in 1981. Ever since the church moved onto the ranch in 1986, Park officials have complained that land-use plans of the church are incompatible with park values and

Angus M. Tbuerner, Jr., Jackson Hole News

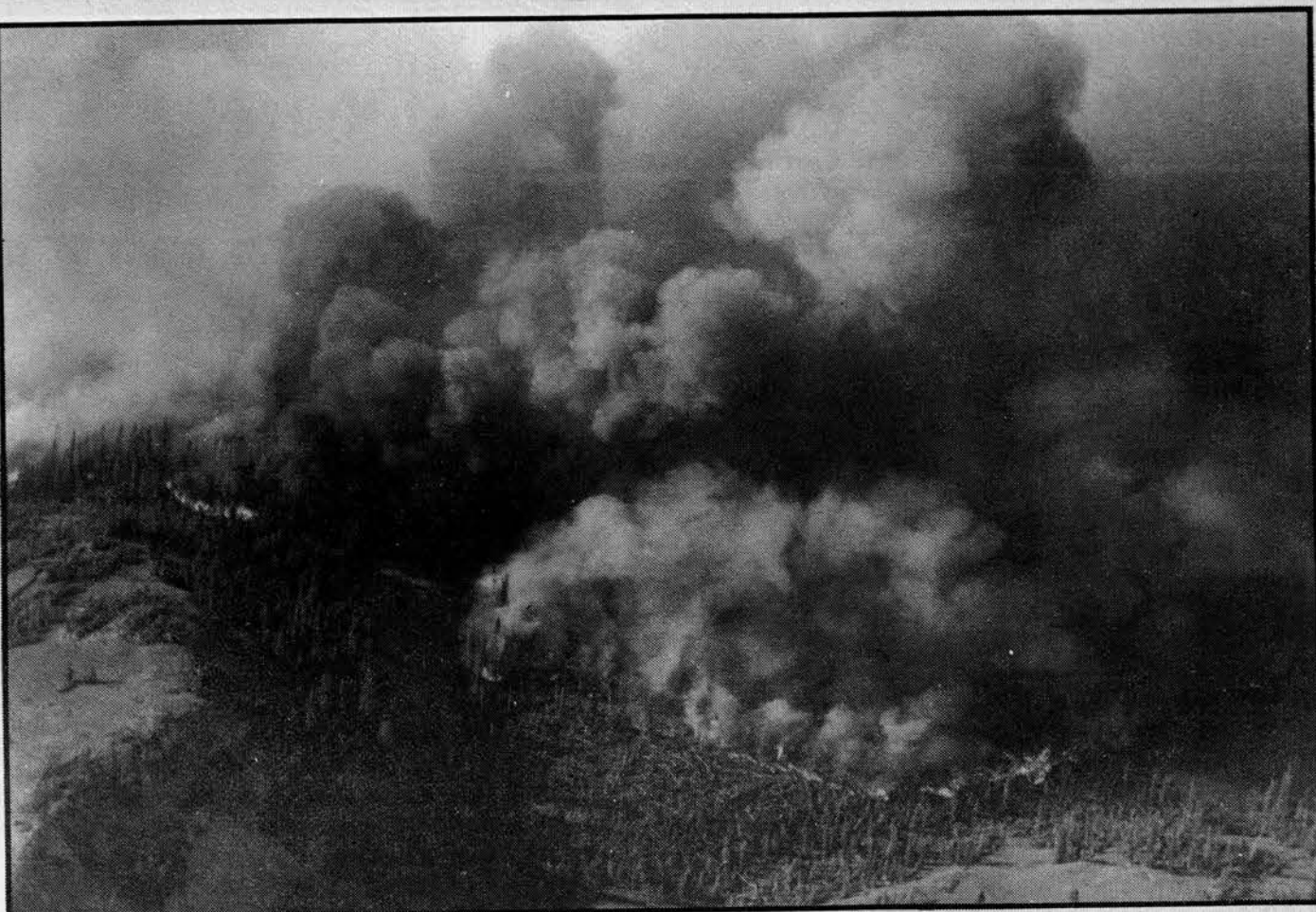
The same attitude has emerged in this year of record fires. The morning Hodel toured the park, helicopters began spraying burning fuel to backfire the North Fork fire west of Old Faithful, and slurry planes were dropping a mixture of chemical and fertilizer on selected hot spots.

But rangers and park officials on the ground remained unperturbed about the impacts of the fires themselves as they dealt with the complexities of mobilizing and organizing almost 3,000 firefighters. It was the anticipated "political" reaction to the fires that caused them discomfort.

"We'll get shot at because we didn't have control," said Gary Brown, the assistant chief ranger and the park's bear specialist. He sat in a pickup looking at the haze on Yellowstone Lake near Grant Village.

"Some of them are sitting out there with cannons pointed at us, at all times. We've provided them with some ammunition: We lost control and we'll be shot at."

So far, the shots have come from businesspeople dependent on the tourism industry; the timber industry and groups such as the Wyoming Heritage Society have aimed their salvos more at wilderness management on national forests than at the Park Service. Frank Rigler, who ranches north of the park, presented Hodel with a petition from 313 Gardiner residents demanding that the fires be put out, but Rigler is a well-known gadfly of



Fire sweeps through the Teton Wilderness blowdown

park policies, and he does not seem to worry park officials.

Bridger-Teton National Forest officials, on the other hand, have been deluged with complaints for letting the Mink Creek fire burn in the area south of the park where an enormous blowdown of timber was caused by a high-altitude tornado in the Teton Wilderness a year ago. Timber industry officials pushed last year to be allowed to enter the wilderness and harvest the downed timber -- up to 100 million board-feet, but much of it splintered and damaged -- while forest officials were unsympathetic, noting that such a harvest would require an act of Congress to overrule the Wilderness Act of 1964.

"We predicted fire would be a problem," said Hubert Henderson, a Dubois resident who heads a group supporting the local sawmills. "The blowdown would have fit very nicely in the timber products industry."

Whether or not such a harvest was ever practical, an I-told-you-so tone has crept into the angry local reactions to the fires in forests around Yellowstone. In addition, television broadcasts and media reports have emphasized the huge clouds of smoke and towering flames, rather than the enormous amount of the park -- roughly 95 percent -- that is untouched by fire and still open to the public. Then

cooler temperatures and higher humidity late in July slowed the fires down and sent some of the firefighters home.

But a few day's respite has not lessened the concern, even among natural burn advocates, that this year's conditions are extraordinary and the fire season is far from over. Danforth pointed to fallen lodgepole pine, aged white, strewn amidst the patchwork burn scars of the Red fire, and said, "That 'thousand hour fuel' has been carrying the fire." A 'thousand-hour fuel' is a piece of dead timber over three inches in diameter, and such fuels are plentiful in a forest where many trees are 300 years old. Normally, it would be mid-August before such timber had dried out enough to ignite. The problem is that once such fuel dries out, it stays dried out, and "only a significant, really significant, amount of moisture would change that," said Danforth.

The Park Service has a fairly comprehensive monitoring system to determine how combustible the forest is in various parts of Yellowstone. At 25 different sites in the park, rangers monitor daily the moisture level of typical fuels. These provide a "burning index" to predict fire behavior. Right now, the moisture levels are extremely low, around 8 percent, making the fire danger extremely high with months of fire season still to go.

Still, there is that unmistakable undercurrent of excitement among the men and women who have worked most of their adult lives in Yellowstone. "Mostly, these are good fires," said Danforth. "By and large, it's not a big blast of fire -- they're mosaics, creeping around, torching up, laying down, creeping around again ..."

"We've destroyed a lot of nice habitat," said John Varley, who oversees scientific research in the park. "But in another year or two it's going to be glorious." Varley and Gary Brown noted that the grizzly bear -- rumored to be on the way to extinction in Yellowstone a few years ago -- has been reproducing abundantly in recent years, with 74 cubs counted in 1986-87. Varley said there were at least 14 females with cubs this year, and "anything over nine is great." "And we find, interestingly, that cub bears born in poor food years seem to have better survival, perhaps because their mother has to teach them more options."

Even to the untrained eye, it was clear that moose, deer and elk in the Lewis Lake area tolerated the spotting fire calmly. "But I hear that 'Bambi' has just been re-released in theaters," said Brown. "I think the Bambi-Smokey the Bear syndrome will get us shot at."

ver park policy

possibly threaten geothermal features within the park.

"The park has miscalculated on every fire this summer," Francis said. "They let them sit there and burn. Now the fires are conflagrations totally out of control."

"I've called and complained and begged them to do something. The Fan fire went dormant a week ago and they had a good chance to suppress it and they didn't do anything."

"Their attitude borders on pyromania. More and more fire is all they want."

Francis said that while the park's "let-burn" policy has some merit "the egghead biologists that conceived the policy operate in an intellectual vacuum and only interact with one another and never listen to outside opinion."

Francis said he has looked into federal law on tort claims and believes that the U.S. Government is liable for negligence on its land, just as a private landowner would be if he allowed a fire to start on his land and spread to a neighbor's land.

Dan Sholly, the park's chief ranger would not comment on any discussion he has had with Francis about legal liability.

He said as neighbors, the park and the church have had their "ups and downs."

--Katharine Collins

Bob Marshall fires test wilderness policy

by Bert Lindler

GREAT FALLS, Mont. -- The forest fires in and around Yellowstone National Park are burning on a national stage -- a stage that will put wilderness fire management policies developed during the past two decades to a severe test.

While Yellowstone is getting most of the attention, forests are burning with less fanfare in other wilderness areas. In western Montana, the fire burning at Gates Park will stock the grocery store-shelves for the Sun River elk herd.

Those shelves haven't been stocked since 1910, the year that 360,000 acres burned in what is now the 1.5 million-acre Bob Marshall Wilderness complex. During the 50 years from 1930 until 1980, the Forest Service was able to put

out fires on all but a few thousand acres in the Bob Marshall. Their job was made easier by the young lodgepole pine forest, called an "asbestos forest" because it's so difficult to burn.

But the forests of the Bob Marshall are aging. In many areas, trees have replaced grass and shrubs favored by big-game. In others, trees have died and fallen to the ground, providing fuel for the fires that will establish new stands of lodgepole pine.

Forests don't rot in the Rocky Mountains. They go up in smoke. When lightning strikes old forests during dry years, large acreages may burn.

During the early 1980s, fire management plans were completed for the Bob Marshall. The plans established guidelines under which lightning-caused

fires would be allowed to burn, so long as they didn't threaten human life and wouldn't affect resources outside the wilderness. The intent was to allow fire to play its natural role.

Since then, about 6,000 acres have been burned by about a dozen lightning-caused fires. This year, three fires within the wilderness have already burned an area including 37,000 acres, or 2.4 percent of the Bob Marshall.

Although 37,000 acres in a single year may seem like a lot, it's less than was burned in all but three of the six big fire years from 1880 to 1930. In addition, because the 37,000 acres include wet areas and areas skipped by the fire, only about 20,000 acres have actually burned, with only 11,200 acres burned so

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Bob Marshall...

(Continued from page 9)

severely that none of the existing trees will survive.

But much of this year's fire season lies ahead. No one can say how much land might be burned by the Canyon Creek fire in the Scapegoat Wilderness north of Lincoln and the Gates Park fire in the Bob Marshall Wilderness west of Choteau. Outfitters, who have already been forced to reschedule trips because of the fires, are worried. Jerry Nypen, manager of the Greenfields Irrigation District, is worried. And Forest Service fire managers are themselves apprehensive.

Because of the extremely dry conditions, no new lightning-caused fires are going to be allowed to burn in the Bob Marshall, said Sonny Stiger, who helped write the wilderness fire management plan and now works as a consultant for Forest Service officials managing the fires. Plans are being prepared to slow or stop the Canyon Creek fire if it reaches the Continental Divide. Since fires aren't supposed to burn outside the wilderness, they have to be stopped inside its boundaries where natural features, such as the rocky ridges of the Continental Divide or the wilderness boundary itself, allow it, Stiger said.

Meanwhile, Forest Service hydrologists are studying how much of the Sun River watershed could burn without seriously affecting runoff stored in Gibson Dam and other smaller reservoirs to irrigate 120,000 acres of farmland in the Fairfield and Fort Shaw areas. While fire will increase the total runoff, it will also tend to make the water run off more quickly. Since Gibson Dam can't store all the Sun River's runoff, late-season flows are crucial, Nypen said. He's also concerned about silt that may collect in Gibson Reservoir after the fires, reducing the reservoir's storage and shortening its useful life.

Stiger said he expects potential effects on irrigation to set the upper limit for the acreage that can be burned by the Gates Park fire before the Forest Service will try to stop it.

Jim Posewitz, who helped prepare a draft wildlife management plan for the Bob Marshall, said the Forest Service deserves a gold star for its efforts in monitoring the wilderness fires. "I don't think we can preserve the wilderness system in perpetuity unless we allow nature to do these things," said Posewitz, resource assessment unit leader for the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks in Helena.

"When Lewis and Clark walked through here, they didn't see seas of charred stumps," Posewitz said. "There were beautiful forests in all stages of development, including some charred stumps. This notion that without our manipulation we will have a wasteland out there is clearly wrong."

However, Max Barker, who operates the JJJ Guest Ranch west of Augusta, feels the Forest Service has forgotten that the wilderness areas were set aside for people. Burned areas might be beautiful in five years, "but in the meantime you're going to be riding some people through some areas that are pretty ugly," he said.

Elk already leave forage up to a person's knees in the Bob Marshall each fall, so fires alone can't increase the elk herd, Barker said. "I don't care if you burn every doggone tree, you can't have any more elk if you don't have anymore winter range," he said.

Barker would like to see fire in the Bob Marshall, but only if the Forest Service sets it in the fall, controls it and puts

it out. "We've got state-of-the-art fire control," Barker said. "Let's use it."

Dick Klick, whose family operates the K Bar L Guest Ranch at the head of Gibson Reservoir, says he can smell and taste smoke in the Sun River at his lodge, 10 miles south of the fire. Smoke lifts out of valley during the day, but settles in during the evening, stinging the eyes of his guests. He's worried his facilities could be threatened by the fire, or flooding that might follow.

"There's a lot of adverse impact to this let-burn policy," Klick said. "Control-burn it and hang that natural aspect."

Chuck Blixrud, who operates the 7 Lazy P Guest Ranch west of Choteau, has two camps in the area where the Gates Park fire is burning and a hunting camp several miles north of the fire. He's scared, but he supports the Forest Service.

"If we don't ever let that country burn back there, someday we're going to have a fire so hot that we'll never stop it," Blixrud said. "I think they're doing what's right for the country. If we're just looking at that country for us and our lifetime, then all right, keep it the way it is. But we've got kids coming up and in 50 to 60 years it might be back again. I know it's never going to be the same for us, and that's a very sad thing as far as I'm concerned."

Bill Cunningham of Missoula spends several weeks each summer guiding backpackers in Montana's wilderness. On the evening of June 25, Cunningham was watching sheet lightning flash between clouds while he camped near the mouth of Canyon Creek. Then a

Robert Bower, Post-Register



Firefighter Gary Wagner near Yellowstone Park's Grant Village

bolt flashed into rocks one-quarter mile away.

The fire was burning in dry, peaty material in an area surrounded by rocks on three sides. Cunningham could have put it out by himself.

The following morning, a wilderness ranger came and radioed her supervisors on the Lolo National Forest. They told her the fire would be watched under the guidelines of the wilderness fire management plan. It smoldered for 26 days without burning an acre. Now it has burned an area of 22,000 acres.

Last week, Cunningham had to take his guests over a 7,500-foot pass, instead of the 5,500-foot Dry Fork Pass which had been burned by the Canyon Creek

fire. "As I was puffing over that thing, I couldn't help reflecting on the irony of the fire I had seen start, markedly increasing the difficulty of our trip," Cunningham said. "I'm supportive of wilderness fire, but I recognize what can happen when human objectives such as ours can be damaged or interfered with by a fire that's allowed to burn."

Bob Casey, the Lewis and Clark National Forest's district ranger in Choteau, has managed similar fires in wildernesses in Oregon and New Mexico. "Almost in every case the metamorphosis of public opinion has been very similar to these," he said. "People at first look at them with alarm, then when the fire's over, people are very supportive again."

LETTERS**ARID LANDS GRAZING**

Dear HCN,

Having formerly lived and worked in the Moab, Utah, area, I know of no evidence indicating that native grasslands at Canyonlands National Park are in worse shape now for having grazing curtailed (Kirk Gadzia letter to HCN, 5/23/88). Any failures of experiments underway there to promote healing of grasslands only show the difficulty of restoring a climax plant community (as native grasslands and associated cryptogamic crusts constitute), rather than the need for even more grazing. Once natural homeostatic elements of the grasslands have been eliminated (such as cryptogamic crusts) and soils which required thousands of years to evolve have been compacted and eroded, reestablishment of a healthy community is extremely difficult.

In contradiction to Mr. Gadzia's claim that grasslands in Canyonlands National Park are deteriorating due to the absence of large hooved animals, we have the example of Chesler Park. The native grassland there was lightly grazed until 1962. The result has been invasion of weedy plants and "pedicellation" of the native bunchgrasses -- clumps are left high on an eroded pinnacle, while the soil between plants has been deeply eroded and left bare by the loss of fragile cryptogamic crusts.

In sharp contrast, just one mile away is a geologically and biologically identical area which has never been accessible to cattle. There the virgin cryptogamic soils are in place and the bunchgrasses are lush and healthy. (See the article by Kleiner in *The Journal of Range Management*, 1983 Vol. 36 NO. 1 January, p. 114, for a report on this contrast.)

Mr. Gadzia's apparent assumption that cryptogamic crusts are an impediment to reestablishing grasslands is contrary to fact. These crusts (composed of blue-green algae, lichens and mosses) are an essential feature of the climax plant community, holding in moisture, preventing erosion, and fixing nitrogen. In arid grasslands of the intermountain West their importance is equal to or greater than that of grasses as agents of erosion control and ecologic stability. In the undisturbed area mentioned above, cryptogamic crusts cover 38 percent of the total ground area, whereas in Chesler Park the area covered by by cryptogamic crusts was only 5 percent of the total area in 1967 (five years after cessation of grazing) and 11 percent in 1977. Cryptogamic crusts are the first victims of grazing.

Mr. Gadzia makes the assumption that the grasslands of the canyonlands area evolved under the influence of large herds of ungulates. In fact, the only large herds of ungulates in this country over the past several thousand years have been those of bison. In contrast to the Great Plains, bison have never been numerous in the intermountain region, and cannot be said to have had a significant influence on the evolution of species of bunchgrasses (such as *Stipa* or *Oryzopsis*) nor of intermountain grassland ecosystems.

Climatic differences between the intermountain zone and the Great Plains are thought to be responsible for both the relative exclusion of the bison and for the evolution of bunchgrasses. For an excellent article by Richard Mack on this topic and on the disastrous impacts of grazing and introduced weedy species on intermountain grasslands, see *Natural History*, 1984 Vol. 93 No. 2 (February), p. 40.

Randolph Jorgen
Fort Collins, Colorado

**JUST WON'T WORK**

Dear HCN,

I might be wrong. It's been a long time since I've even seen a forest of anything but cement and steel. But it seems to me that Randal O'Toole's ideas for forestry reform (HCN, July 18, Bruce Farling's review) are more than a "little tricky." They remind me word for word of the reforms suggested several years ago by Libertarian economists.

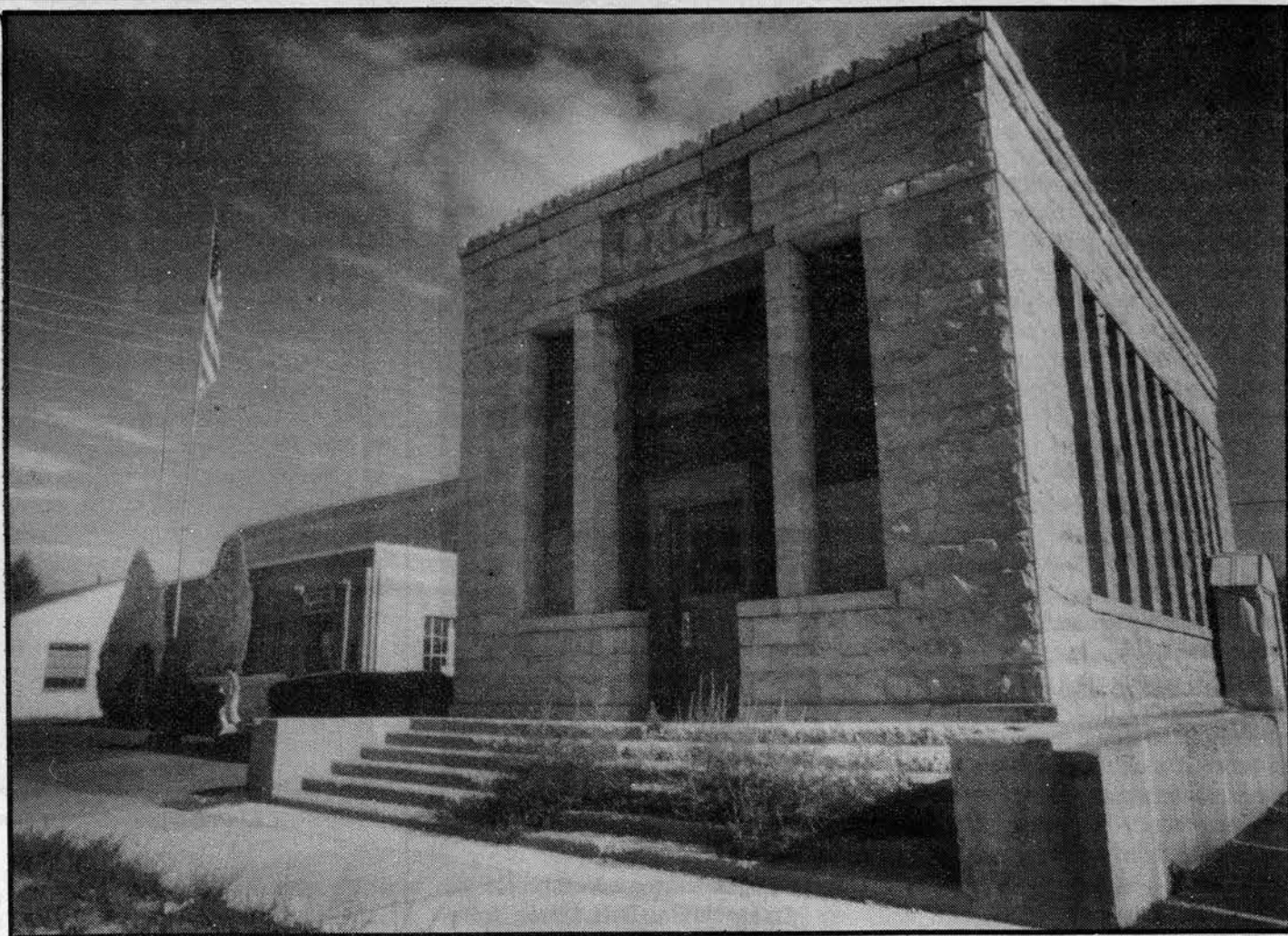
The scene was a 1981 conference in Montana for a group of journalists, hosted by a Bozeman-based Libertarian think-tank. And the roundtable had led to exactly the scenario O'Toole seems to proffer in his new book: that special interests should be required to compete in a free market for natural resources. Everyone would simply bid -- timber cutters, miners, and hikers. Somehow the Sierra Club was to find the budget to buy and then manage acreage for recreationists.

But eventually, someone realized -- or maybe it occurred to me later as we headed for cocktails and I only wished it'd been said -- that it might prove impossible for non-economic interests to bid against economic enterprise. Then the whole experiment would come full circle when someone would realize we needed something special to represent the public interest at large, not to mention the forest itself for itself, and they would re-create a governmental protector.

Solutions by Libertarian economists aren't tricky. They just don't work in a world that wants to respect and value things of absolutely no economic value.

Michael Moss
New York, New York

Norm Shumway



Blanding office building left, historic bank next door

Blanding, Utah

A tiny town amidst a sea of ruins

by K. C. Benedict

Blanding, Utah -- On the surface, little has changed here since 1984, the year of Earl Shumway's indictment for illegally removing 30 Anasazi baskets from a dry cave on public land.

By the time Shumway came to trial for violating the Archaeological Resources Protection Act, the Blanding resident was already serving a term in Utah state prison for burglary.

For the artifact looting, the judge sentenced him to five years' probation, a verdict U.S. Attorney Brent Ward said was little more than a slap on the wrist.

Then in 1986, federal law enforcement agents seized dozens of prehistoric artifacts from seven homes and businesses.

Authorities said the artifacts were stolen from public land, and searches resulted in the well-publicized indictment of Allan "Buddy" Black, son of a county commissioner (HCN, 8/18/86).

Black was charged with helping to arrange the sale of stolen artifacts in Blanding. The man who actually dug the artifacts claimed Black knew the illegal origins of the prehistoric materials. Black denied it, the jury believed Black, and Black was acquitted.

Earl Shumway was paroled from prison in July 1987. New indictments failed to follow the acquittal of Buddy Black. Artifacts seized in Blanding are still being held by the U.S. attorney until owners provide proof they were not collected from public land.

But beneath the surface, things are different in Blanding, population 3,000. People who once talked openly about what it is like to grow up among the ruins in southeastern Utah have become cautious about talking to strangers.

How do you explain what it is like to be able to walk five miles in any direction from town and find a rubble mound or masonry ruin? Indian ruins seem to be everywhere.

Settled by Mormons in 1905, Blanding sits on a plateau 200 feet above the

desert floor. A series of red rock canyons runs through the plateau, with names as colorful as Recapture and Montezuma, while on the canyon floors lie the ruins built by Anasazi Indians who grew corn, squash, melon, cotton and beans from the time of Christ to 1300 A.D.

While the mystery of the ruins and the treasures they contained beckoned, some residents never spent their Sunday afternoons searching for artifacts.

Kay Shumway, associate dean at the College of Eastern Utah, says, "Many of us think it's wrong to dig. Most of those who think it's okay to dig, don't dig

themselves. There are very few people in Blanding who dig."

Kay Shumway's cousin, Glen A. Shumway, doesn't dig for pots but tolerates those who do. Through surface collecting, trading and buying, Shumway has amassed one of the largest arrowhead collections in the southwest. He says, "I don't dig in graves. I don't condemn anyone for doing it, but I don't do it myself."

It is known locally that rancher Boyd Laws refused to sell digging rights to a 50-room ruin on his ranch to "General Hospital" TV star Chris Robinson. Riverrunner Frank Wright, who guided

tours down the Colorado River through Glen Canyon during the 1940s and '50s recalls: "People sometimes wanted to carry artifacts out of the sites in Glen Canyon but I wouldn't let them. I said this belongs to the public -- to someone who is just as interested in it as you."

Glen Shumway maintains that most people in Blanding who have a piece of pottery in their homes found it on top of the ground or on their own land. Harvey John Kartchner, one of the town's early

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Archaeologists began rip 'n run pothunting

Everyone knows pothunting exists in southeastern Utah, but few know how it began.

Sometime in 1885, Wetherill brothers Richard, John, Wynn, Al and Clayton began excavating the dry caves and cliff dwellings in southeastern Utah for sales to individual collectors, exhibitors, and museums. For the Wetherills, collecting became good business.

Others followed, including Platte D. Lyman, Jacob Adams and Kumen Jones of Bluff City, Utah, who dug up Indian treasures and formed their own Anasazi collections. In a journal entry in 1893, Lyman tells of collecting mummies, skulls, stone and bone implements, corn, beans, cotton, squash seed, pottery and basketwork. But Lyman, Jones, and Adams were unsuccessful in reaching the artifact market the Wetherills had created and quit commercial pothunting after two or three years.

Lyman's journal is one of the few existing documents describing the digging habits of residents of southeastern Utah between 1885 and 1950. The record of archaeological activity during the same years was much better documented.

Private individuals often underwrote expeditions to make collections for

museums and universities. Local people were hired to assist in these excavations, and their digging habits were reinforced by archaeologists using dated methods.

"Archaeologists taught my father and his brothers to dig," Kay Shumway recalls. "There was very little digging going on before archaeologists began excavating in southeastern Utah." Shumway's father Lee and uncles Areah, J. Glen, Harris, and other local men, including Alma Palmer, Zeke Johnson, and Silas Kartchner, were hired in 1930 to make a prehistory collection for the University of Utah under the supervision of Professor Andrew A. Kerr.

Curator Winston Hurst says Kerr did not use archaeological methods of the 1930s; he used the methods of the 1890s -- digging for treasure. "Had these local men worked with a number of other archaeologists, they would have had an idea of what archaeology was about," he says.

Archaeologists now refer to collections made during 1885-1950 as the discovery period. Collections and records gathered in southeastern Utah during this time are at the Peabody Museum, Harvard University; Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Pittsburgh; American Museum of Natural History, New York;

Heye Museum of the American Indian, New York; Utah Museum of Natural History, Salt Lake City; Museum of Anthropology, University of California, Berkeley; Museum of Northern Arizona, Flagstaff; Colorado State Historical Society, Denver; and Mesa Verde National Park, Cortez, Colo.

As archaeologists took artifacts and scientific information out of southeastern Utah, ambivalence towards archaeologists grew. Locals began to complain, "We get the same thing when an archaeologist digs as when a pothunter digs: a hole in the ground." They accused archaeologists of being elitists interested in building their reputations and the collections of eastern museums and universities. For some residents this became an excuse for some indiscriminate collecting of their own.

Peter Pilles, archaeologist with the Coconino National Forest, compares the discovery period in archaeological history to buying a car. "Just because archaeologists once owned and drove an old car does not mean they have to keep that car through their lifetime. Archaeology is not driving the same car it drove in the 1930s." Pothunters, however, cling to the methods of the 1890s, he says.

--K.C. Benedict

Blanding...

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residents, made an amazing find on his land 70 years ago.

When Kartchner was about 13, his father bought the property where Edge of the Cedars Museum now stands.

"I was the first man to plow that field. I went out with a horse and plow pulling what we called a wood rack," Kartchner recalls. "As I plowed, artifacts kept turning up. There was so much of it, I didn't stop the plow to pick it up. But my nieces, Pearl and ArDell, and nephew LaVell, got busy and put a whole heap of arrowheads and pottery in the wood rack.

"I plowed through a pot two feet tall with corn inside," he continues. "The top was stuck in so tight it stayed in after the pot broke. I took the corn home to my mother. She planted the corn and it grew. We found more bowls that day than the museum has found in two years."

For those who continue to dig for artifacts, the last decade has forced some changes. After being indicted for illegally digging on public land a few years ago, Blanding residents Dave Lacy and Casey Shumway now dig on private land with a landowner's permission.

A find last year proved to be important. It was in an alfalfa field where they discovered a human effigy on March 14, 1987. The 8 1/4 inch black-on-white Pueblo II effigy is shaped like a bottle, has Egyptian eyes and intricate clothing, including a painted necklace.

Just like the skeleton nearby, it is missing the right forearm. It is not one of a kind, however; other effigies have been documented in Chaco Canyon and exist in private collections in the Four Corners area.

When the two men showed the effigy to Winston Hurst, curator at the Edge of the Cedars Museum in Blanding, Hurst accompanied them back to the site, gave it a Smithsonian site number and showed Lacy how to draw the area. Before Hurst's visit, Shumway had taken a few photographs and Lacy documented the location of artifacts by measuring from a stake driven into the property line.

Hurst says, "Though their attempt to document was crude, it was at least a gesture. Dave and Casey are very good at finding things. Now they need to get good at documenting."

Hurst says getting amateurs to document is the first step towards overcoming indiscriminate collecting. Later, Lacy assisted an archaeologist who analyzed the skeleton found with the effigy. Lacy, his brother Jim, Casey Shumway and Norman and Richard Nielson are now joint owners of the effigy, which has been on display at Edge of the Cedars Museum in Blanding for over a year.

Norm and Richard Nielson, who own the land where the effigy was found, were at first reluctant to allow a dig.

"In the past people have come on our land with backhoes and really made a mess for us," Norman Nielson says. "I let Dave dig because I trust him. I told him he could dig on condition he reburied the human remains."

One million dollars is now said to be the top market value of the effigy, and the price was arrived at by chance.

When Lacy and Shumway took the effigy to the Edge of Cedars Museum to show it to curator Hurst, he was hosting an arrowhead symposium attended by



Pueblo II male effigy

archaeologists and some local people.

Archaeologist Bill Davis, from Bluff, Utah, upon hearing Hurst tell the men to insure their find for as much as they could afford, agreed, adding, "Sure, insure it for a million dollars if you can."

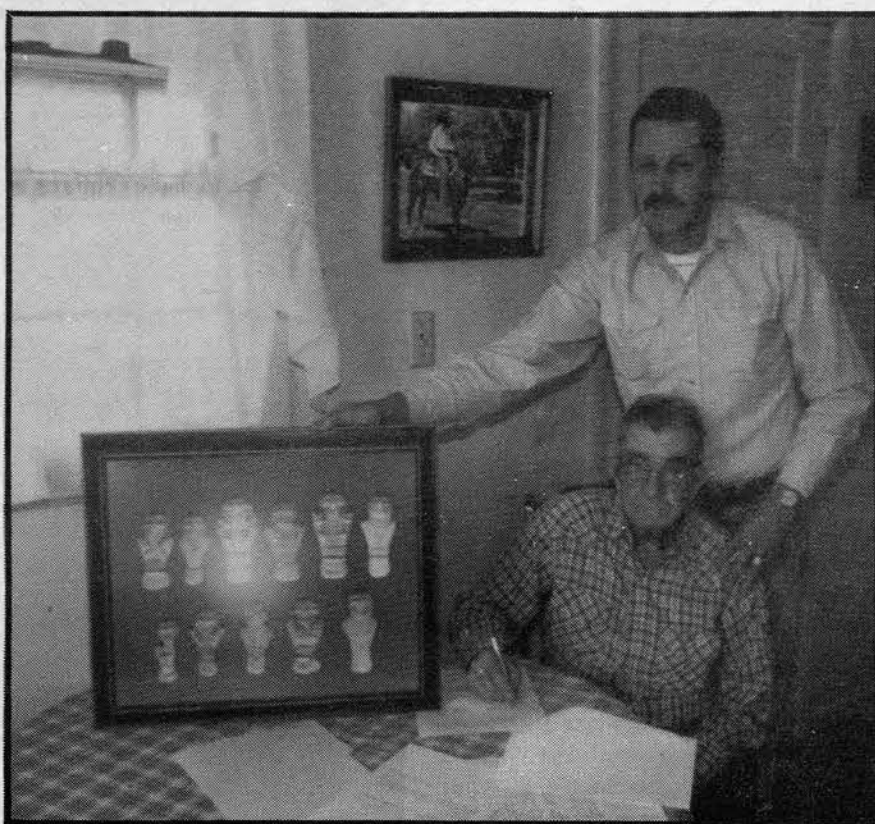
Later, Hurst did some research on the find, discovering an effigy pot in the possession of the Southwest Museum in Los Angeles. It "appears to have been made by the same potter who produced the Nielson Man effigy," he says.

The Los Angeles pot was collected in the 1920s in east-central Arizona, almost 200 miles south of Blanding. It is formed and molded in a manner almost identical to the Nielson man and painted with an identical heavy black mineral paint. The designs differ but represent the same ceramic style. "The left arm of each effigy was broken off at the elbow after the vessel was fired," Hurst adds.

Hurst was also called in as a consulting archaeologist after his cousin, Kelly Laws, uncovered a pit on his land that was filled with what appeared to be the remains of cannibalized humans. Laws found the skeletal remains while clearing a hayfield.

Laws says he knew the find was

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Clarence Pilling, seated, and son, Bud, who holds the "Pilling Figurines"

An amiable settlement

More than 30 years after he uncovered and removed them from Bureau of Land Management land in Utah, Clarence Pillings has returned 11 ancient Indian figurines to the agency. Even though taking archaeological material from public lands is a felony, the BLM met the rancher with praise and thanks.

The case of the Pillings figurines may mark a turning-point in the battle to save our archaeological heritage, says Bruce Louthan, the BLM's regional archaeologist in Moab, Utah. The intent of the BLM's law is to preserve the public interest and not to hang people by the nearest tree," says Louthan. "The overwhelming majority are positively disposed to cooperate."

Under the Antiquities Act of 1906, artifacts found on federal land belong to the government. But the law has seldom been enforced and is difficult to prosecute (HCN, 8/18/86).

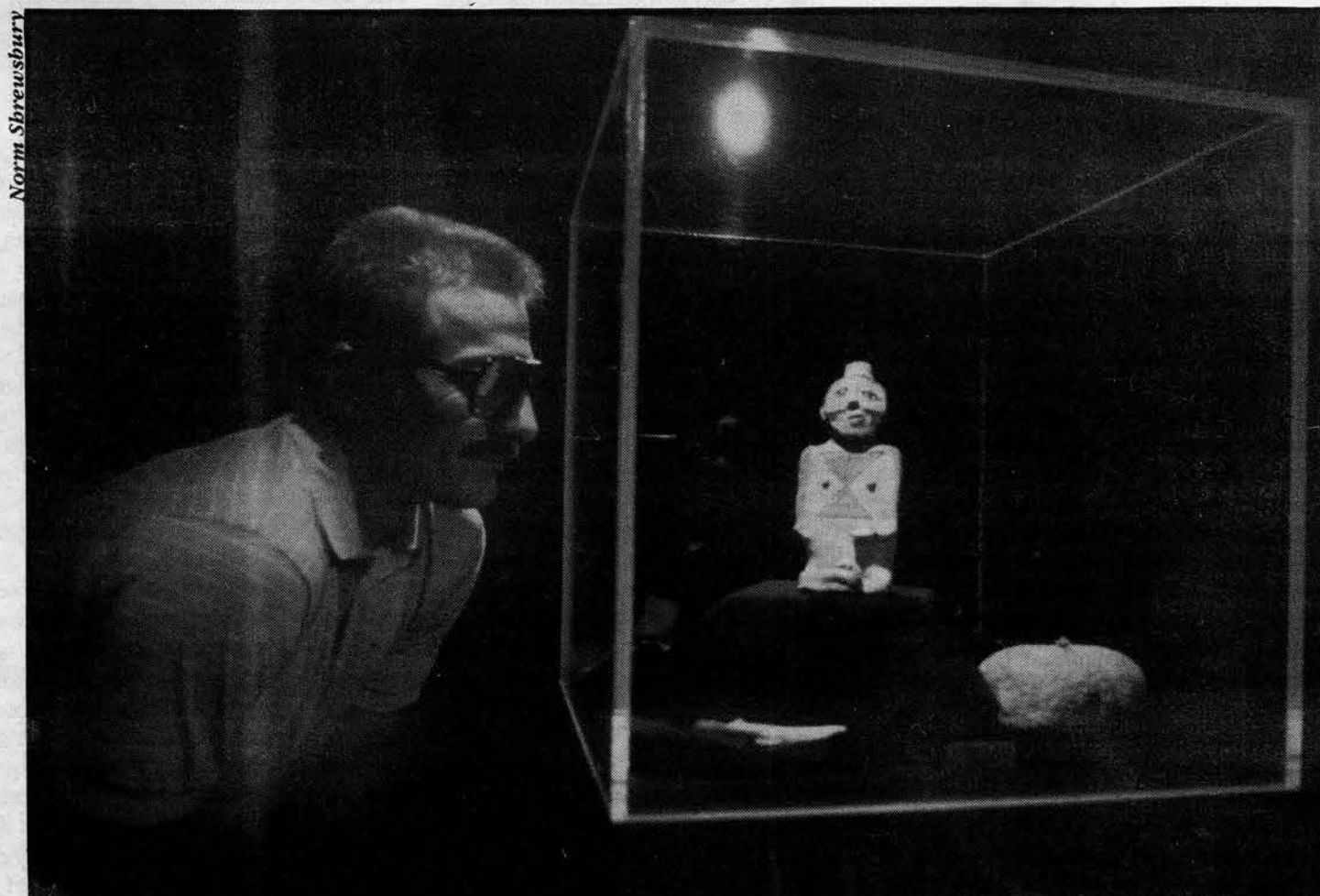
Pillings discovered the 11 figurines in a cave while he was ranching on BLM land near Range Creek, east of Price, Utah, in 1950. The figurines are consid-

ered by archaeologists to be outstanding examples of the Fremont Culture, which flourished in Utah and Nevada between 600 and 1200 A.D. The figurines, which are four inches tall, highly decorated and painted, are considered remarkable both for their artistic and their archaeological value.

Scientists know little about the Fremont Indians but say that the artifacts may help them unlock the secret of a mysterious people. The Fremont Culture ceased to exist as a way of life around 1200 A.D., but it is believed that the Utes and Paiutes are their present-day descendants.

After Pillings discovered the figurines, he loaned them to the College of Eastern Utah Prehistoric Museum in Price. Pillings withdrew the exhibit once for 18 months, and it was this that spurred the BLM to move towards taking official possession of the artifacts. As part of the agreement, the BLM agreed to keep the artifacts in Price and to notify Pillings or his family before moving them.

--Sasha Cole



David Lacy with the Nielson man effigy at Edge of the Cedars Museum

Blanding...

(Continued from page 12)

important and wanted the work done by experts. Hurst recorded the site in January 1987, and last fall and summer, Hurst, a friend, Shane Baker, and other archaeologists excavated the site.

What they found was a small house with a large living room and storage pit. The dwelling was occupied in late 1000 A.D., a time of abundance and prosperity among the Anasazi. As for the human bones, this was one of three cases of possible cannibalism documented on the Colorado Plateau last year.

Other cases were in a small dwelling in Cottonwood Wash and a kiva associated with a family-sized dwelling near Yellowjacket, Colo. Approximately 15 other cases have been formally reported throughout areas once inhabited by the Anasazi.

Baker is currently analyzing the materials from the Laws site. He says the site may be an example of ritual execution and cannibalism since the bones were carefully buried and the house dismantled at the same time.

Though the U.S. attorney's sweeping arrests alienated many local people, they did send a message and may have decreased pothunting. Land management agencies report less looting on public land since artifacts were seized from Blanding homes two years ago. Glen A. Shumway, a miner whose work takes him through artifact-rich canyons, agrees: "I never see anyone pothunting anymore," he says.

Community reaction to the arrests has been mixed. Local county commissioner Cal Black said the U.S. attorney's tactics resembled the *Gestapo*. Some said looters should pay the consequences; others said the government should spend more money preserving and protecting sites instead of raiding homes.

A local businessman, who declined to be identified, said in an interview, "I have sat in on meetings with Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service officials and asked, why don't you identify sites and protect them? This is a case of terrible management. As long as federal agencies are remiss in identifying, stabilizing, mapping, charting, preserving and protecting sites, I say let anyone who is interested dig them."

Dale Davidson, BLM archaeologist with the San Juan Resource Areas Office in Monticello, says that surveying, mapping and stabilizing all sites in southeastern Utah is physically and financially impossible. "What local people forget is public land belongs to everyone," he says. "Between 10,000 and 15,000 people visit prehistoric sites on BLM-managed land in southeastern Utah each year. Once the sites are gone, the reason for visiting southeastern Utah will be gone."

Some archaeologists who work in Utah are critical of U.S. Attorney Ward's methods. They say education is better than alienation and that communication between local collectors and archaeologists in southeastern Utah has nearly stopped.

"Four years ago, they came in and showed us what they found. Now they don't," archaeologist Bill Davis says.

Joel Janetski, director of the Museum of People and Culture at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, says the problem of looting is far bigger than amateurs in Blanding digging illegally and getting arrested.

"It's a problem wherever there are prehistoric sites," he says. "There is surface collecting along the shores of Utah Lake and Salt Lake. Collectors walk the shores of the lakes looking for artifacts

and out into shallow waters to screen the silt on the lake bottoms.

"Looting is a problem at Nine Mile Canyon, southeast of Price, at Fremont Indian State Park near Richfield, at the Field House of Natural History in Vernal, and at Anasazi Indian Village State Park at Boulder, Utah," Janetski says, "There are problems with looting in California, Texas, and in the east. Looting is not just a Utah problem, it is a national and international problem."

What would help, says U.S. Attorney Ward, is stronger law and better enforcement. This fall Congress will consider an amendment that will strengthen the Archaeological Resources Protection Act by making it a felony to illegally remove artifacts valued at \$500 from public land. The present felony threshold is \$5,000.

(Continued on page 14)

Norm Shrewsbury



Kelly Laws digging on his land with his family. K.C. Benedict watches, left.

Ancient Anasazi artifacts are coming home

For a century, Anasazi artifacts from southeastern Utah have been excavated and sent to major universities, the 1890 Chicago World's Fair, and sold to collectors. During this same century residents of southeastern Utah longed for a museum so Anasazi artifacts could be viewed and interpreted in their natural environment. Blanding's first museum, an informally displayed and undocumented collection of artifacts, borrowed from local collectors in the early 1960s, was housed in a building that has since been razed. Efforts to build a formal museum began in 1968, when the Blanding Chamber of Commerce bought the site where Edge of the Cedars Ruin stands.

The Utah Navajo Development Council, an organization formed to provide better housing, education and health care for Navajos living on the Utah strip of the Navajo Indian Reservation, contributed \$180,000 towards building the museum. The county paid for paving the road, parking lot and fencing the site.

Gaining a commitment from state legislators to allocate nearly \$540,000 to complete the museum was not a matter of luck but of local support and good

politics. Backers wrote letters, Native Americans traveled to Salt Lake City to lobby, and local businessmen donated motel rooms and meals when state legislators traveled to Blanding to appraise the need for a museum.

Local efforts paid off when the Utah State Legislature passed a bill supporting construction of the museum in 1976. The building was dedicated in 1979; and for the first time, artifacts taken from southeastern Utah are being returned.

"Edge of the Cedars is the first Utah State Parks Museum to function fully as a repository," says museum manager Steve Olsen.

But more volunteer staff, an additional building for storage and another curator are some of the things needed to ensure Edge of the Cedars' repository standing. "We must be able to show we are sophisticated enough to care for the collections being returned," says curator Winston Hurst.

In 1984, Energy Fuels Nuclear Co. returned the collection excavated when it built the White Mesa processing plant. However, several whole pieces from this collection remain in the company's Denver office. The Butler Wash archaeological collection excavated by the

University of Denver was returned in 1985, and included everything: artifacts, original manuscripts of reports and field notes. In 1986, Brigham Young University returned the artifacts and documentation from the Recapture Collection.

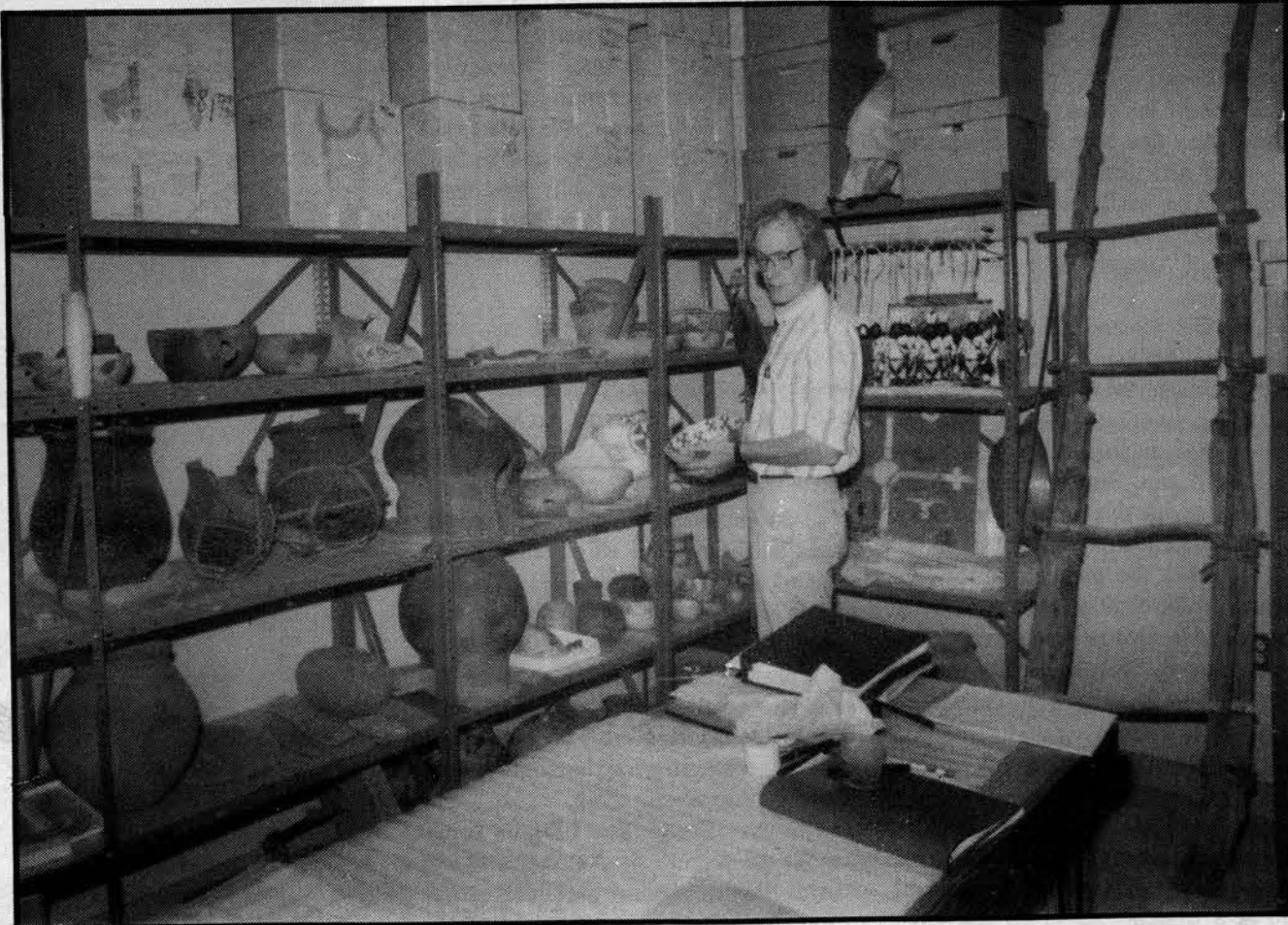
Hurst says, "Collections are being returned because it is a burden for the universities to take care of them. After excavation, collections must be stored in stable boxes and bags. Archival boxes cost \$2.50 each."

The Utah Bureau of Land Management is also participating in the return of artifacts to Edge of the Cedars. The BLM recommends that groups requesting permission to dig on BLM-managed land return any artifacts and scientific documentation to Edge of the Cedars.

Hurst believes enlarging Edge of the Cedars and establishing it as a research center will strengthen other museums such as the Anasazi Heritage Center at Dolores, Colo., and San Juan County Museum at the Salmon Ruin in Bloomfield, N.M. "People need to visit several sites to get a sense of the diversity of Anasazi life."

-- K.C. Benedict

Norm Shrewsbury



Winston Hurst, curator at the Edge of the Cedars Museum

14-High Country News -- August 15, 1988

Blanding

(Continued from page 13)

But at the Oct. 19, 1987, hearing for the Senate Oversight and Investigations Committee in Cortez, Colo., Ward said, "I realize that law enforcement is not the final answer to the problem of vandalism. In the long run we will need a public more sensitive to the archaeology of our region. I believe improved public education is the key to a greater sense of stewardship."

Bill Sundt, an avocational archaeologist from Albuquerque, N.M., says archaeological societies are one way to channel amateurs away from pothunting. "Often avocational archaeologists are called on to salvage sites when there isn't money or professionals available to excavate," he says. "Some amateurs drop out of the program and begin digging on their own again because they find the scientific method too slow."

"But in time, they quit pothunting," he adds. "They are too conscience stricken to continue indiscriminate digging."

What many Blanding residents agree about is that "outsiders" cannot understand what it was like growing up among ruins. Gary Shumway, Casey's uncle, left Blanding 20 years ago to teach history at the University of California, Fullerton. Gary Shumway says, "People living in southeastern Utah have a totally different perspective of prehistory than people who live in California

or Virginia, where you have to dig 30 feet to find artifacts."

"In southeastern Utah, there are ruins in every canyon," Shumway says. "We were genuinely curious about the Anasazi. We felt the ruins were our heritage. I'll bet you'd be surprised by how similar the feelings of a digger like Casey Shumway are to the feelings of an archaeologist like Winston Hurst."

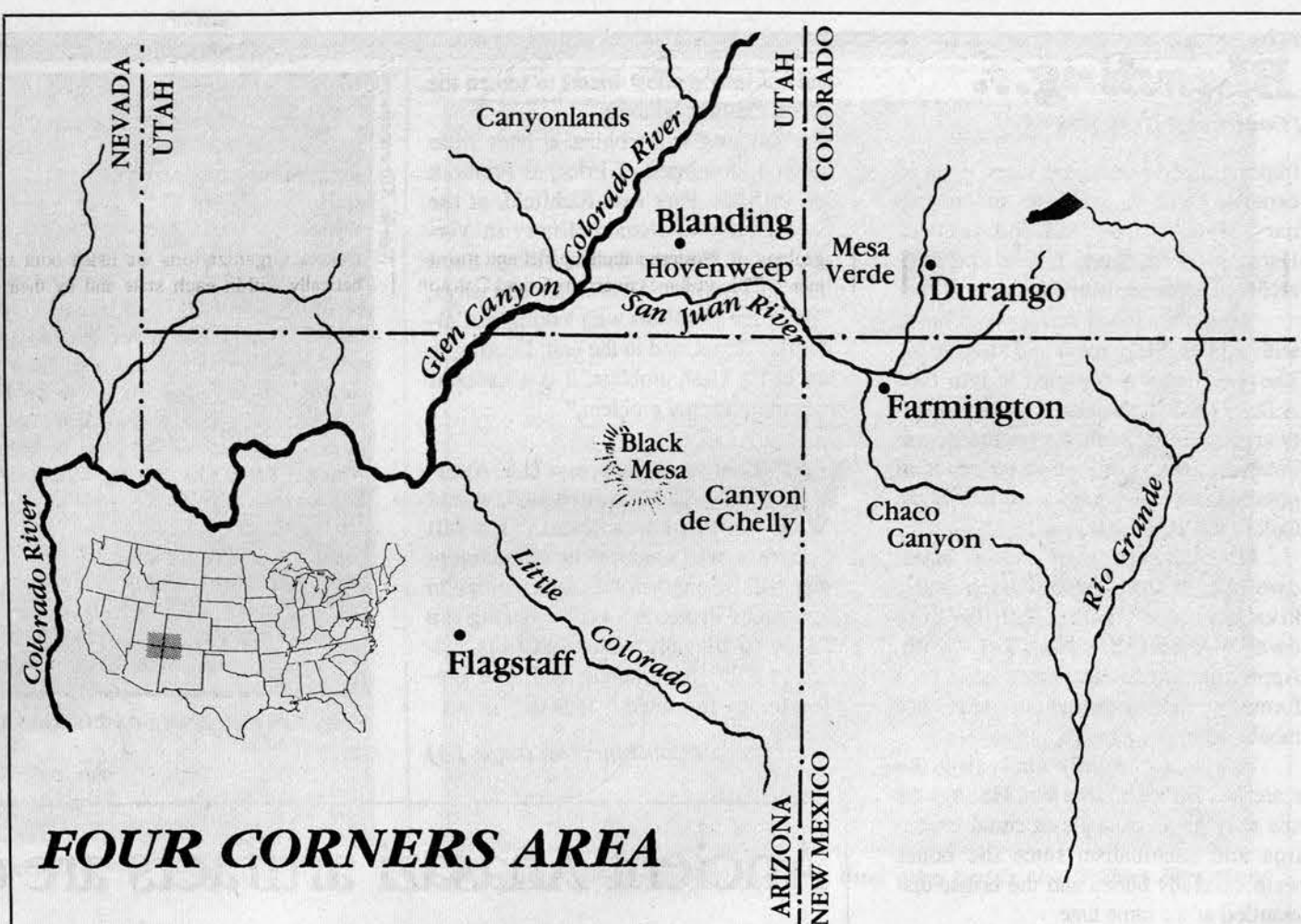
Shumway concludes, "I wish there were some way of working it out so local people could participate with professional archaeologists in excavation."

Hurst agrees that local collectors are genuinely interested in prehistory and says it is time for collectors and archaeologists to work together. "Archaeologists are not interested in personal collections or stuff already taken from the

ground. What we are interested in is uniting to preserve what is left."

□

After working for four years as a librarian on the Navajo Indian Reservation, K.C. Benedict moved to Blanding, Utah, in 1982, where she is a freelance writer.



Most Navajo Indians tread lightly among Anasazi ruins

Approximately 5,000 Navajo Indians live in southeastern Utah. Over the years, Navajo mothers warned their children not to pick up potsherds or play in the ruins while herding sheep. They explained that only witches took things out of the ruins.

Leo Platero, a high school art teacher in Montezuma Creek, Utah, remembers his mother teaching him to respect Anasazi ruins as he grew up on the reservation. "My mother explained the Anasazi to me in terms of mythology. She said the Anasazi were a highly gifted people. The gods told them to use simple designs on their pottery and to never incorporate the movement of the wind in their designs. As time passed, the Anasazi forgot this warning and began illustrating their pottery with the movement of the wind. When the gods learned they had been disobeyed, they sent wind and tornados to destroy the Anasazi. The winds blew and covered the Anasazi with dirt. This is why the skeletons of Anasazi are found in a sitting position."

Last fall, Platero took his family to Mesa Verde National Park near Cortez, Colo. He hoped the museum would buy some of his paintings. "For my wife and children who are anglicized, Mesa Verde was a field trip. But something in my head kept saying this is not a good place for an Indian to be."

"Besides the pottery, tools and weapons in the display cases, there were skeletons. Navajos believe when skeletons are dug up, their spirits are brought back. Putting skeletons into museum showcases is like putting spirits in limbo -- the spirits no longer have a resting place."

"Then I became angry. I thought, What would happen if I went into an Anglo graveyard, dug up bones, put them in a museum showcase and gave them a new name?"

According to Dennis Gilpin, staff archaeologist with the Navajo Nation Archaeology Office at Window Rock, Ariz., the overwhelming majority of Navajo Indians won't touch Anasazi artifacts. But Gilpin adds, "With nearly 200,000 Navajos living on the reservation, you will find a range of opinions regarding the ruins."

George Lameman's opinion regarding the ruins is at the opposite end of the scale from Leo Platero's. Lameman, a Navajo in his early 50s, lives off the reservation in Blanding. He doesn't remember being taught taboos about the ruins as a child. Recently, Lameman says he watched an Anglo friend loot a site.

"Why should the government have a monopoly on it?" he asks. "We already know just about everything there is to know about the Anasazi. We have found one of about everything there is to find. Artifacts still out there will only duplicate what is in museums. There is no application to today, to me, or to how I live."

Gilpin says he knows of only one site on the reservation that was vandalized by Navajos; it happened a few years ago. The Navajo Nation Archaeology Office investigated, but there were no convictions.

On the whole, Gilpin says Anasazi sites on the Navajo Reservation are in remarkably good shape. He says that when staff from his office visit local chapter houses -- the Navajo equivalent of a town meeting -- to talk about preservation, "We always find a group of people at the meeting who are concerned about archaeological resources and attempting to protect them."

What did Navajo Indians think about the seizure of Anasazi artifacts from Blanding homes? Platero says, "People in Blanding are avoiding the issue. They are only concerned with the

government's rights to enter homes and seize property. This is not the issue. The issue is do people have the right to own prehistoric pots?"

Museum curator Winston Hurst says the issue isn't who gets to dig or own

artifacts. "The issue is whether people have the right to destroy the only record we have of prehistoric Native American cultures."

--K.C. Benedict

Norm Shreusbury



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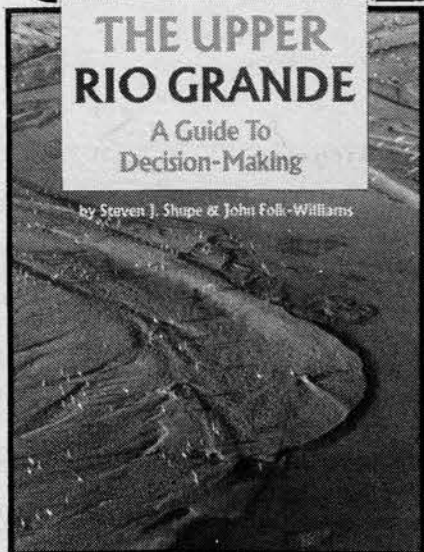
Native American potters

BULLETIN BOARD

THE UPPER RIO GRANDE

A Guide To Decision-Making

by Steven J. Shupe & John Folk-Williams



CONFLICT ON THE RIO GRANDE

In Texas, the Rio Grande is known as the big lazy river, but upstream it is neither big nor lazy. From its headwaters in Colorado to the southern border of New Mexico, the Rio Grande is a harnessed river: Each drop of water is carefully apportioned among competing users and often there is not enough to go around. While agriculture has long controlled the use of Rio Grande water, that is now being challenged by Hispanic and Indian communities, recreational users, municipalities and water quality problems. That gets complex fast, but to make it worse, those challenges must be worked out in a matrix of law ranging from aboriginal rights and Spanish grants to the modern Rio Grande Compact. In a nutshell that is the first chapter of a new handbook, *The Upper Rio Grande: A Guide For Decision-Making*, by Steven J. Shupe and John Folk-Williams. Published by Western Network, an environmental research organization, the 51-page study tells the story of water development on the river and the complex water law that surrounds it, describes how the system works in wet and dry years and surveys the various conflicts that are pressing for changes in the system. Also explained are the Rio Grande Compact, the law of prior appropriation, instream flows and water marketing.

Western Network, 1215 Paseo de Peralta, Santa Fe, N.M. 87501. Paper: \$15. 51 pages, maps, illustrations.

TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

In hopes of better educating Moab, Utah, residents about a proposed toxic waste incinerator, a Moab-based group will use a recently awarded grant to conduct an information project. The group, called Association for the Tree of Life, says it wants to blend sustainable economic development with sound ecological principles. It will inform people about the proposed CoWest Inc. incinerator at Cisco and its impact on other industries in the area (*HCN*, 2/15/88). The group is also asking the public what information it wants on the project. If funding allows, the group will distribute a fact sheet; otherwise its research will be available at the Grand County Public Library. Meanwhile, Tree of Life is trying to raise \$1,000 in tax-deductible donations. For more information, write Association for the Tree of Life, P.O. Box 86, Moab, UT 84532 (801/259-5095).

EDWARD ABBEY CONSIDERED

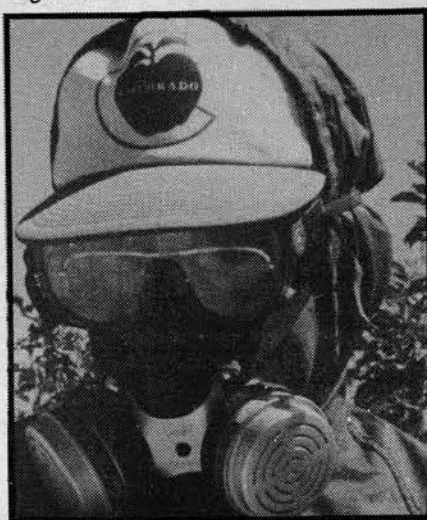
The New West of Edward Abbey, by Ann Ronald, is now out in paperback. The 1982 critical analysis of Abbey's writing defies Abbey's hope in *Desert Solitaire* that "serious critics, serious librarians, serious associate professors of English will if they read this work dislike it intensely." Ronald, an associate professor of English at the University of Nevada, likes Abbey's work, most of which she places in the genre of romance. She points out that Abbey's stylized characters serve to illustrate the detours, potholes and beauty attendant on Abbey's road. That road points to a new West retaining the best values of the old West, such as individualism and community, while rejecting the old rapacious attitude toward the land. Her analysis is scholarly and persuasive, but that approach also contains a weakness. She occasionally seems to deny Abbey's serious intent, which goes beyond literature to call for action.

The University of Nevada Press, Reno, NV 89557-0076. 1982. 255 pages.

PAGES OF STONE

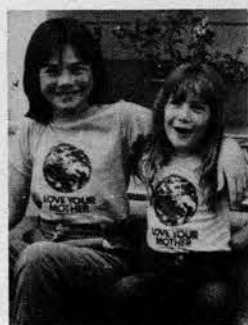
Volume four of *Pages of Stone* completes a series of books by Halka Chronic on the geology of Western national parks and monuments. This volume covers the Grand Canyon and Plateau Country of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico and Arizona, where the earth's crust is broken into a "grand staircase" of uplifts and mesas. Chronic blends a textbook-style format with guidebook simplicity, beginning with the definitions of geological processes. Individual guides to the area's 20 parks and monuments give practical information such as location, maps and addresses for information, as well as special features and history. Chronic, Ph.D. geologist from Columbia University, is noted for her easy-to-understand, lively writing. Other books in the series cover the Rocky Mountains and Great Plains, the Sierra Nevada and Pacific Coast, and the Southwest desert.

The Mountaineers Books, 306 2nd Ave. West, Seattle, WA 98118. Paperback: \$14.95. 153 pages. Illustrated with maps, photos and diagrams.



PROTECTING PESTICIDE HANDLERS

The Environmental Protection Agency has increased protection for the 2.5 million farm workers who handle pesticides. Proposed changes now are 55 pages long rather than the current one page; they specify protective clothing, cleaning procedures and training programs for workers in greenhouses, nurseries, forests and farms. The EPA also calls for blood testing if workers handle certain pesticides. Other provisions state that farm owners, contractors and supervisors are responsible for enforcing the new regulations and can be held accountable if mishaps occur. The new regulations extend protection to 300,000 workers currently not covered by existing rules and could cost businesses \$170 million in the first year to comply. The agency will accept comments on the proposed changes until Oct. 6 at the Document Control Officer (TS-757C), Program Management and Support Division Office of Pesticide Programs, Environmental Protection Agency, Rm. 236, CM#2, 1921 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington, VA 22202. All comments should include the code OPP-300164 on them. Contact a state EPA agency for a copy of the regulations.



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WHERE THE GROUPS ARE

The Environmental Protection Agency has compiled a useful directory of nonprofit environmental organizations within the six states of Region VIII: Utah, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota and South Dakota. Organizations are listed both alphabetically within each state and by their area of concentration. If there are errors, omissions or changes in a listing, the EPA says it will be glad to make corrections. For a copy of the 79-page directory, write EPA, Environmental Organizations Directory, 999 18th Street, Suite 500, Office of External Affairs, Denver, CO 80202 (800/332-3321 in Colorado; 800/525-3022 in other states).

EXPLORING UTAH

The Canyonlands Field Institute in south-east Utah has organized a variety of trips and workshops this fall. Ken Sleight, the outfitter and owner of Pack Creek Ranch, will lead a hike Sept. 25-29 through Grand Gulch, an area known for its well preserved Indian ruins. A canoe trip from Oct. 12-16 will follow John Wesley Powell's route through the Labryinth Canyon of the Green River, and writers Richard Shelton, William Kittredge, Terry Tempest Williams and David Lee will host a desert writers workshop from Oct. 14-17. The Canyonlands Field Institute is a nonprofit organization that educates the public about the natural and cultural heritage of Utah's canyonlands. For more information write Canyonlands Field Institute, Professor Valley Ranch, P.O. Box 68, Moab, Utah 84532, 801/259-7750.



GREENING THE WEST

Westerners interested in environmental politics are invited to a regional "Greening the West" gathering near San Francisco from Sept. 30-Oct. 2. The Green movement, which seeks to combine ecology, the struggle for social justice and non-violence, has become a political force among Europe's youth. The sponsor of this get-together at the Jones Gulch YMCA, 30 miles south of San Francisco, is a group called the Northern California Greens. They have scheduled panels on such topics as Saving the Coast and Local Self-Reliance, as well as guided walks, dancing, humor, ritual and music. The \$10 daily rate plus additional fees for room and board is flexible for those with limited incomes. For more information write: Greening the West, P.O. Box 3727, Oakland, CA 94609.



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16-High Country News --August 15, 1988

afield

Using muscle to stake claims to public lands

by Lynne Stone

Wet snow blanketed mountainous central Idaho in the late winter and spring of 1986. Rain sent avalanches sweeping down canyons and ripping through forested hillsides. Early-season hikers were startled -- and stopped -- by snow barricades intertwined with mazes of downed trees.

It was the same story on nearly every trail. Forest Service trail supervisors were forced to decide what would be cleared and what would have to wait until next year. So much work was ahead that the agency gave Jeff Bitton, an outfitter who runs packtrips in the Sawtooth Wilderness, crosscut saws to clear trails he needed to run his business.

That summer of the long melt was the year the Wood River chapter of the Idaho Conservation League began a volunteer trail project. Using volunteers for trail maintenance wasn't a new concept, but it was new for us.

The towns of Ketchum, Sun Valley and Hailey have some of Idaho's most active campaigners for wilderness. The Wood River chapter, for example, has some 250 members out of a total valley population of 4,500 or so. In 1983-84, we had burned ourselves out helping to defeat a 526,000-acre statewide wilderness bill offered by Idaho Sen. James McClure. In 1985-86, we were wading through and generating letters on the draft plans for the nearby Sawtooth and Challis national forests.

A trail project looked like a way to do something direct, plus get new people out and have fun. And if we didn't do it, a lot of trails were not going to get cleared for a year or more.

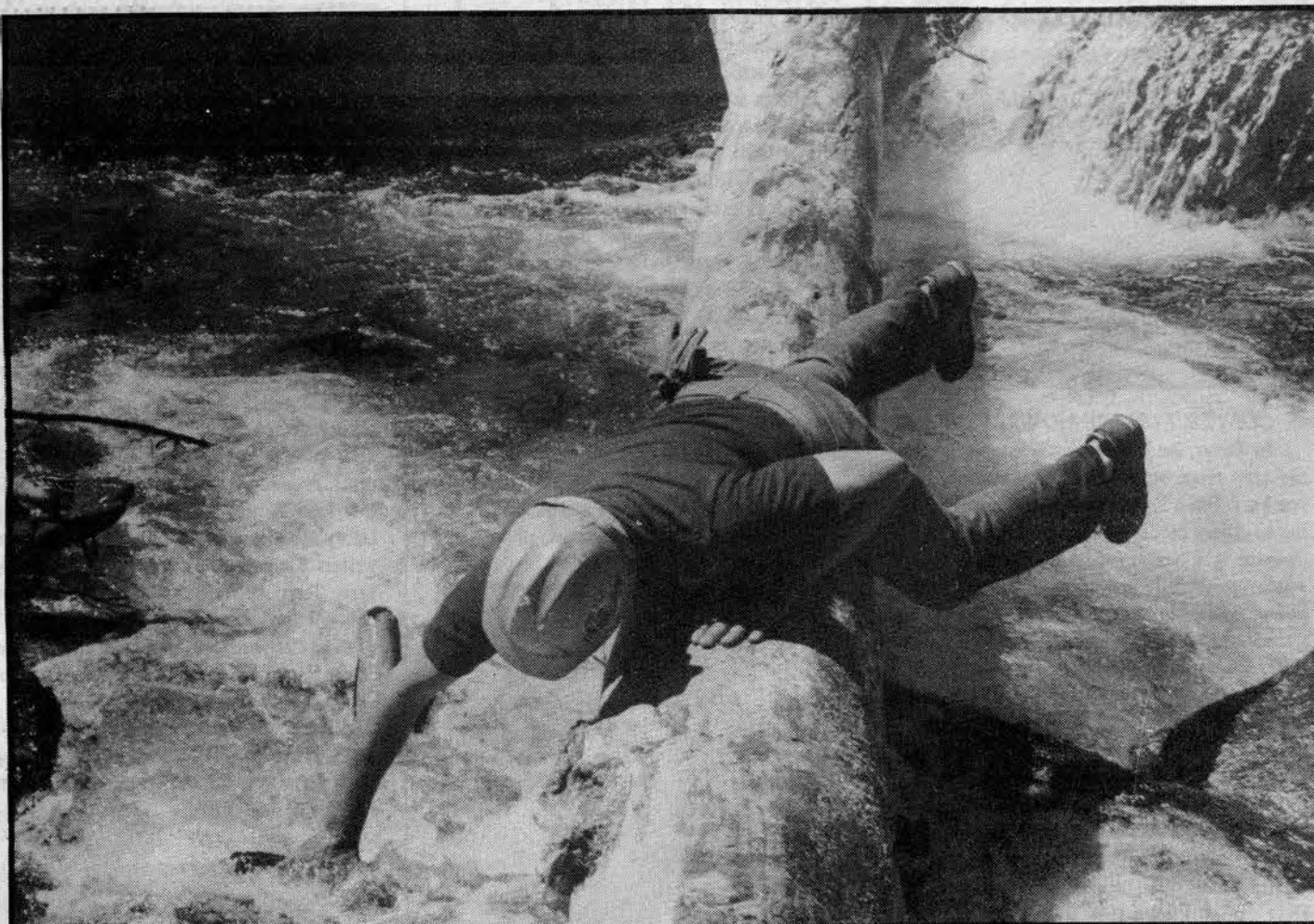
I became the first backcountry trail director for the Idaho Conservation League because I wanted an outdoor job and nobody else applied. The chapter agreed to pay me \$6 an hour plus expenses. My job description said I would meet with volunteers on Saturday and Sunday and lead them afield. That first year all trail work was coordinated with the Sawtooth National Recreation Area, headquartered nine miles north of Ketchum.

Mose Shrum, long-time trail boss in Sawtooth Country, was my mentor. He taught me how to wield a pulaski -- a hybrid axe and pick -- and how to build water bars to Forest Service standards. A water bar is a mound of dirt or log or rocks used to turn water away from a trail and prevent erosion.

But multitudes of volunteers did not rush to spend a day sweating and sweltering on Sawtooth trails. That first summer I usually had one or two helpers. Sometimes none; then I dug, shovelled, and sawed alone. Generally we worked on trails 1-5 miles long. Most of the trailheads were within 20 miles of Ketchum.

I learned quickly that scouting trails in advance was crucial to matching volunteers to terrain. Hearty men who showed up carrying their own chainsaws could be counted on for rigorous gorilla effort on thick clusters of avalanche-destroyed trees. Other days I'd survey my recruits and decide to concentrate on litter patrol, cleaning up over-used fire-rings, trimming branches and brush, sawing an occasional fallen log by hand, and, of course, building water bars, water bars, water bars. The day's work was halted by mid-afternoon, tools stashed, and we hiked to a nearby lake or ridgetop.

Lynne Stone



A trail worker clears obstructions beneath a log bridge in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area in Idaho

I planned one extended work trip that first year, a four-day outing in the White Cloud Peaks. After that experience, I wrote a pack mule into the budget. It still hasn't been funded.

The Wood River Trail project continued in 1987, with a new director, Susan Shay, and a budget around \$1,200. The rousing kick-off in June had a dozen ICL members and Forest Service men working side by side clearing a large avalanche on the Grand Mogul Trail at Redfish Lake. Susan had double the number of volunteers that summer, worked nearly every weekend plus one extended trip, and expanded work to adjacent forest lands. The program's growth was helped by local and regional press coverage.

1988's program will cost the chapter about the same, but it will cover even more country, hopefully involve more volunteers, and be combined with a series of hikes to introduce new folks to roadless areas we are trying to preserve. Now, in addition to doing trails the Forest Service suggests, we make many of our own choices. Where we began working with one Forest Service office, this year we will work with four.

And this summer a kindred group, the Boise-Payette Backcountry Coalition, is starting a project like ours in southwest Idaho.

What has it meant? First, it's work that wouldn't be done otherwise. The national forests in central Idaho are recreation, not timber, forests. But their trail budgets are woeful and probably still won't be adequate with a friendlier administration.

Many trails built years ago need major repair work. Deadfall causes more impact as hikers and horses take detours. When paid crews clear only limited miles, use becomes concentrated, causing crowding and over-use.

Wood River ICL has established a good relationship with local Forest Service people who caretake these public lands. We're on a first-name basis, and when we get together and debate Wilderness, overgrazing, or forest travel

plans, there's a spirit of cooperation and respect.

It's good for the volunteers. After muscling a pulaski for a day, a hiker knows what goes into building mountain trails and what it takes to maintain them.

It's also good politics. Part of our purpose from the start was to make visible how much hikers use and care about the backcountry of central Idaho, as a way of building support for wilderness designation, and in the interim, opposition to roads.

We are not the only ones thinking that way. Assorted interest groups are now pushing to "adopt" particular trails

as a way of claiming ownership or use rights. In central Idaho, the loudest opposition to wilderness is from off-road vehicle users. They have an advantage hikers don't -- up to \$800,000 of Idaho gasoline tax revenue can go to ORV trail work on public lands each year. ORV groups have begun aggressively seeking to spend that money on trails in areas we support for wilderness.

The result is an emerging "volunteer competition" between motorized and non-motorized users. Those of us working on the trail project don't like this competition. On the other hand, we don't intend to lose the race.

ACCESS

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