

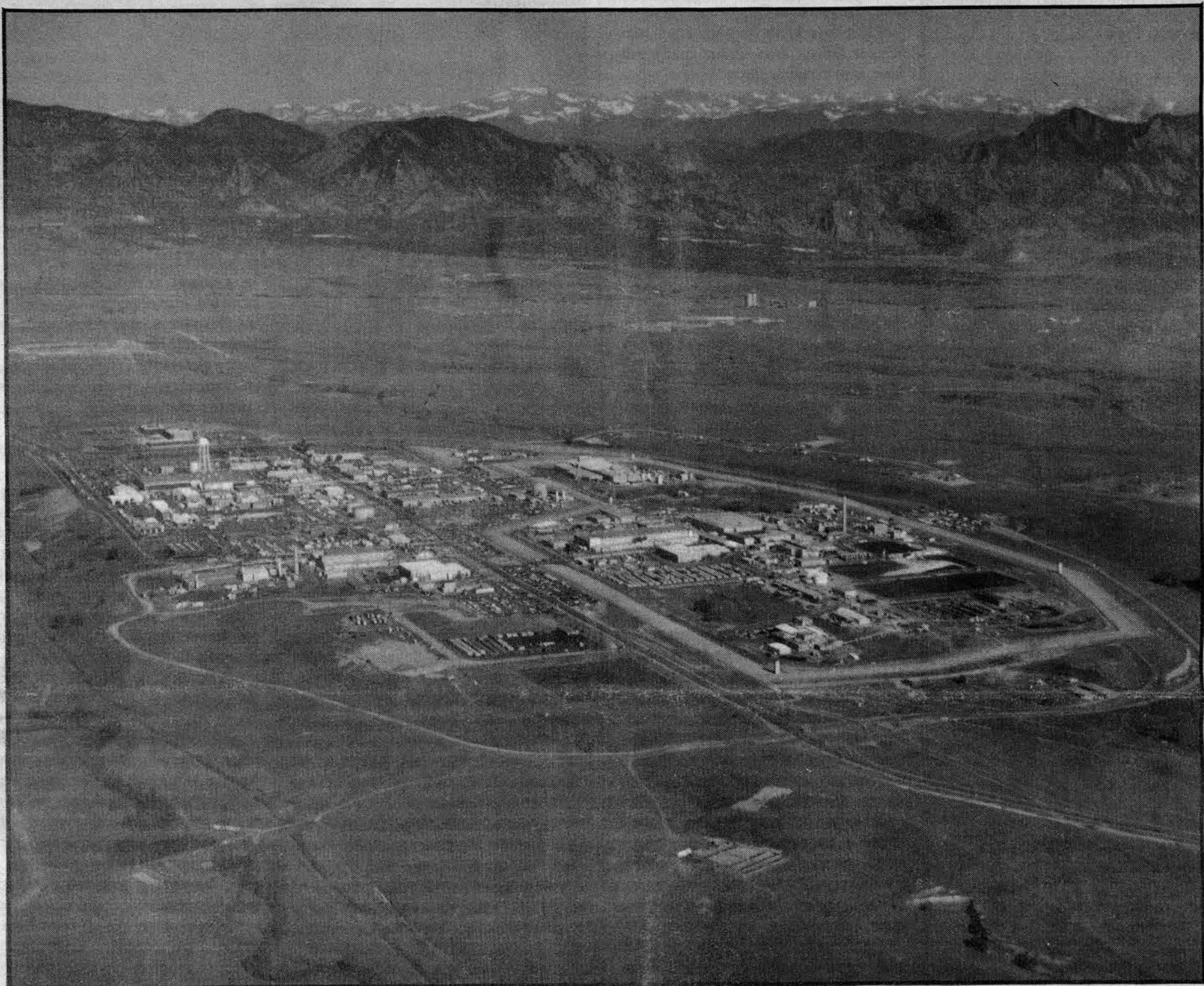
High Country News

July 31, 1989

Vol. 21 No. 14

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar



Aerial view of the Department of Energy's Rocky Flats nuclear bomb plant near Denver, Colorado

Nuclear plant's cover is blown

by Ron Baird

On June 5, 1989, the cloak of national security seemed firmly in place, effectively shielding a vast nuclear weapons complex from public, and even most governmental, scrutiny.

The next day more than 75 agents from a joint FBI-EPA task force raided the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant near Denver.

With lawsuits, investigations and monitoring groups being created almost daily, what was once one of the most secret segments of the military-industrial complex now seems likely to become one of the most scrutinized. And thanks to the empaneling of a "special" grand jury to consider the mountain of evidence gathered in the raid, 23 citizens will get a look firsthand at Rocky Flats and its questionable environmental practices.

This is the first time in the history of Colorado that a grand jury, which can

bring criminal indictments, has been called to consider just one case. Just who called the grand jury is unclear. But an aide to a Colorado congressman says the Justice Department in Washington, D.C., ordered its impaneling.

The grand jury is a logical move, according to George Johnson, a Boulder attorney who has defended scores of Rocky Flats protesters in the last two decades.

"The advantage of a federal grand jury is that you can subpoena people to testify. If they take the Fifth (Amendment), you grant them immunity. If they still refuse, you can put them in jail. It's a great investigative tool," he said.

Johnson said that grand juries are often used to gather evidence and information, and not necessarily to bring charges against large numbers of people. More often than not, he said, prosecutors are gunning for a few solid indictments.

What kind of citizen serves on these juries? The court says they are drawn from the rolls of eligible jurors on file.

Johnson said that the requirements of sitting on such a panel, which meets for up to 18 months at a time, often exclude low-income and working people, or people with young families.

"What's left are older people with independent incomes. They are often opinionated and conservative," he said.

Therein lies a potential problem, Johnson explained, "You sometimes end up with what is called a 'runaway' jury, which takes its own initiative. The U.S. attorney says, 'Thanks for the help. You can go home now.' The jury foreman says, 'Screw you, we're not done yet!'"

What kind of evidence will the grand jury hear? According to the affidavit filed by the FBI, jurors will hear evidence detailing environmental crimes, including burying medical wastes possibly produced in an effort to develop an oral antidote to plutonium ingestion.

They will likely hear evidence about alleged illegal disposal of hazardous and mixed wastes, and use of a supposedly shut-down plutonium incinerator.

Rockwell International, operators of the plant, are also accused of illegally mixing hazardous and radioactive waste to avoid compliance with the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act.

Finally, Rockwell is accused of lying and falsifying records to cover up these acts.

The investigation began more than two years ago, according to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, when a former employee brought a memorandum to Special Agent Jon Lipsky.

The memo, dated July 14, 1986, was to an assistant secretary at the Department of Energy, and stated, in part: "Rocky Flats is in poor condition, generally, in terms of environmental compliance ... We have no RCRA groundwater monitoring wells, our permit applications are grossly deficient (some of our waste facilities are patently illegal). We have serious contamination ..."

(Continued on page 10)

Dear friends,



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A crystalline sub

High Country News recently sent out 60,000 letters in search of new subscribers. Among the replies: "Very interested. Would you be into trading a sub for a crystal? There are particular stones (kunz) which affect publishing ..." If a certain airiness creeps into the paper in the weeks to come, you will know we have taken up the offer.

Freelance writer Sam Bingham, who lives in Denver, tells us his family will soon have to reduce the number of roosters they have due to complaints from a neighbor, who resents what he considers excessive crowing. The law is on the neighbor's side, Sam says. Chickens are considered livestock and are against the law. The law, Sam goes on, does not prevent another neighbor from having a pit bull. And someone else on the block used to have an animal that was 97 percent wolf.

Margaret Adams of the Montana Audubon Council writes to thank us for sending enough copies of the June 5 issue for distribution to all of the Montana Audubon chapters. The June 5 issue featured Forest Service employee Jeff DeBonis and his letter to the chief of the Forest Service. HCN has received requests for thousands of copies of that issue, and is thinking of reprinting the story by Jim Stiak and DeBonis' letter. We had hoped to include in that reprint the chief's reply, but as of July 19, the agency appears unable to formulate a reply.

David Bird, a subscriber from Cambridge, Mass., sent in his survey form with a note thanking us for helping his son find a job in Montana back in summer 1986. The personal ad in HCN, which started: "Strong, willing Eastern boy, 17, seeks summer job on Western ranch," brought a reply from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and a job with a forest fire crew at Loomis, Wash. Washington state land commissioner Brian Boyle is an HCN subscriber.

Visitors

Despite the drought in the West (national forests in western Colorado have a ban on all fires outside of campgrounds), visitors have been finding their way to HCN's office in Paonia. Subscriber Todd Perkins, who works at the state department in Foggy Bottom, came through with friends Kirby Sutton and George Bonet, all on their way to the vanishingly small town of Pitkin, Colo. Rhonda Gould, a painting contractor from Santa Barbara, Calif., spent 10 weeks in a mountain cabin in the nearby Ragged Mountains last summer, and this summer bought a house in Paonia.

Ken and Bonnie Cox came through on their way between Gunnison and Craig, Colo. Technically, they are not subscribers, but he is superintendent of a one-school district just outside Springfield, Ill. He told us the library for his 450-student district subscribes to HCN.

Pat Stokowski of the University of Colorado School of Business came through with a fellow academic, Bill Freudenburg of the rural sociology department of the University of Wisconsin. Bill first came to Paonia in the mid-1970s, as a graduate student studying boom towns. He comes back periodically to observe the bust and now the gradual recovery.

Hugh and Alice Young of Pittsburgh came by on their way to southern Utah. He's a physics professor at Carnegie Mellon University, a new subscriber to HCN and member of the Southern Utah



Shadows of the HCN staff above a streambed in Grand Gulch, Utah

Wilderness Alliance. We tried to tell them what southern Utah was like in July, but they pushed on.

Kate West, an elementary schoolteacher, and Alan McKnight, a graphics design artist, of Saugerties, N.Y., came through on their way to Mexican Hat, Utah, and the Colorado Plateau country. They welcome the heat, they said, because it will keep away the other folks (except for the Youngs). Last year, the two worked for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, helping prepare that organization's wilderness proposal.

David Wilson, HCN's favorite Durango, Colo., artist, stopped in for a few moments. It was his first visit, after years of sending us material. Denver radio producer Betsy Schwarm stopped by on her way to Creede to cover the town's repertory theater. It is a major deal, she says, hauling in \$3,000 for every resident of the town and proving that mountain towns can eat both the scenery and the sets.

Nina Johnson of the National Wildlife Federation in Boulder says her son is probably the only youngster in Japan to get his brownies wrapped in HCNs.

Nell Fletcher of the Alaska Conservation Foundation came the longest distance — 3,500 miles — to pick up an HCN T-shirt for the foundation's vice president, Jim Stratton. Unfortunately, we're out of everything but the tiniest sizes. Nell was most recently volunteer coordinator in response to the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

The last time HCN did a survey, several readers cautioned: Don't become like *Outside* magazine. The ones who wrote this were all subscribers to *Outside*. This time the dominant theme is: "Do you sell franchises?" Among those who asked that question was Mike Mueller of the economics department, Clarkson University, in Potsdam, N.Y. Staff would have to ask the High Country Foundation board of directors, but our guess is that we would give away franchises, were there any seekers.

Michael Crawford

The staff of High Country News regrets the untimely death of Michael Crawford, who was an intern with the paper in the winter and spring of 1988. Michael, who died of cancer on July 17 at a farm in upstate New York, had begun a career in journalism after leaving HCN.

People who ask how HCN gets its interns are usually met with a blank look. Interns materialize from any number of sources. Michael came to the paper via a Washington, D.C., subscriber, Theo Colborn. He was working

as a caterer in New York, in partnership with his wife, Patricia Decker, and living in that city's meat district, just below 14th Street. He had had a bout with cancer, which he had apparently beaten, and he was interested in changing his work. His few months with HCN appeared to open up a new career, and he began writing for several publications after returning to New York.

Michael's intern "class" was the most cohesive and spirited in the history of the paper. Part of that was Michael's culinary skill. Casual gatherings turned into feasts, thanks to his contributions. He was also well known throughout the community for his extensive volunteer efforts on KVNF, our local public radio station.

His time here still shines. Michael fell in love with the West, and he drew us in with him. His adventures included learning to cross-country ski, exploring the Colorado River by canoe and several trips to Hopi land. He instigated the one and only staff field trip since the paper moved to Paonia — a wonderful four-day vacation among the isolated ruins in southeastern Utah's Grand Gulch.

The cancer returned this spring, affecting both the brain and abdomen. Despite that, he set off on a train trip West with his wife Pat, and we were hoping for a reunion. However, complications from the disease forced him to return to New York.

At his request, Michael's ashes will be scattered from a high ridge in western Colorado. A memorial service — a Joycean-style "wake" day — will be held in New York City on Sept. 12, the day on which he would have been 32. He asked that those wishing to remember him plant a tree or contribute to Greenpeace. That address is P.O. Box 3720, Washington, D.C. 20007.

Someone can't count

Jeff Fereday of Boise, Idaho, writes: "I was glad to see the extensive discussion of the recent HCF board meeting in the July 3 HCN's 'Dear Friends' column. However, I noticed that the listing of the board members attending left out my name. At a time when the board 'batted 1,000 attendance,' and 'Sixteen of 16 members gathered,' I truly must have been the invisible man. Actually, I'm not usually associated with such high averages anyway. I was a passable infielder, but (except in softball where beer is available and more is consumed by the opposing pitcher than by me) a mediocre hitter."

"I look forward to attending the next meeting also."

— Ed Marston for the staff

WESTERN ROUNDUP

Protest turns bloody on Navajo Reservation

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — It was the worst riot on an Indian reservation since the bloody 1973 shootout at Wounded Knee, S.D.

It was also the darkest episode in the struggle for political control of the Navajo government since the Navajo Tribal Council placed Chairman Peter MacDonald on administrative leave in February.

By the time it ended, the July 20 siege by some 250 of MacDonald's supporters left two people shot dead by Navajo police and nine officers injured.

It began when MacDonald's supporters, now organized as a group called the Pro-Dineh Voters, attempted to take control of the tribal government. Their aim was to return MacDonald to power by seizing the Navajo administration and finance building here.

Tribal employees had been let off work at noon. The building was vacant when a mob of men and women, many carrying white two-by-four clubs and chains, drove to the building from their meeting place two miles away.

When a lone Navajo officer drove up to ask whether they planned a peaceful protest, the agitated mob produced a summons on tribal letterhead to place him under citizen's arrest. Then they attacked him.

As he retreated to his patrol car for safety, one of the car's windows was smashed. The officer was dragged out, handcuffed, maced and beaten. His handgun was stolen.

Then two other Navajo police officers arrived.

James Dixon, 47, a MacDonald supporter from Indian Wells, Ariz., was killed after he picked up the downed officer's handgun and tried to run away. As Sgt. Daniel Lee pursued him, he stopped, spun around and shot the officer once in the right thigh, dropping him.

Almost simultaneously, another officer shot Dixon in the chest, mortally wounding him. He died later at the Ft. Defiance Indian Hospital.

"It was a classic panic case because the cops were outnumbered," said Richard Sitts, a local reporter for the Gallup, N.M., *Independent* who said he happened on the scene before any shots were fired. "It was like Custer's Last Stand."

Even after the shooting stopped, the pro-MacDonald protesters got into a shouting match with their opponents, smashed a glass door to the finance building and remained there until sometime after midnight, ransacking a candy machine and stealing blank tribal checks.

How did this melee begin? Why did MacDonald's supporters arrive armed after weeks of peaceful protests?

The leaders of the Pro-Dineh Voters acknowledge that their group was out of control by the time it arrived at the building. It also seems clear that the Navajo Police Department was inadequately prepared to handle an angry crowd.

Tribal officials say the responsibility for confusion within police ranks rests solely with MacDonald.

Earlier that day, despite a tribal court injunction prohibiting him from exercising any authority, MacDonald issued an executive order. It directed fired Navajo Police Chief Wilbur Kellogg to resume his former post, reinstate those officers whose loyalty to him got them fired, and to "assist with the orderly restoration and transition of the administration of the Navajo government."

Police officials, meeting with Kellogg at the tribal fairgrounds, refused to relinquish control, and Kellogg was not insistent. But at that point MacDonald's supporters, who say their government was wrested away in a "military coup" with the assistance of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, became enraged.

Leonard Haskie, the Navajo Tribe's interim chairman, told a throng of reporters that he believed MacDonald was "the architect of the entire episode."

Unrest began on Feb. 17, 1989, when the flamboyant chairman was placed on administrative leave, after testimony before a U.S. Senate investigating committee revealed corruption within the chairman's office.

Following his suspension, MacDonald campaigned around the reservation, declaring his innocence. Then he lapsed into quiet until three days before the shoot out, when he resumed his defiant speeches at the larger reservation communities. He began the week by telling his supporters he would continue to fight allegations against him and try to regain his office. "There is no way I'm going to back down," he said.

(Although MacDonald is outspoken in public, he has been silent in both tribal and federal courts, invoking his Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination and refusing to answer questions about his involvement in the \$33.4 million Big Boquillas Ranch sale to the tribe in 1987, just after he returned to office.)

Later in the week, as his reservation tour began to gain momentum, MacDonald reportedly claimed to have a copy of a U.S. Justice Dept. letter to Haskie that said there was not enough evidence to prosecute him for his role in the Boquillas case.

The Justice Department denied the existence of such a letter. But it confirmed that MacDonald had tried to negotiate lesser charges against himself.

Although he was observed waving the purported letter over his head as he made the claim during his Shiprock, N.M., rally, MacDonald denied he had done so when questioned by reporters at a press conference following the bloody confrontation.

In a classic contradiction that typifies the confusion surrounding the controversy, his supporters continued to tell reporters that there is "black and white proof" that there is not enough evidence to convict their leader.

While suspended Navajo Vice

Chairman Johnny R. Thompson demonstrated remorse for the killings at a press conference, MacDonald steadfastly absolved himself of any responsibility for the deaths. He blamed the Bureau of Indian Affairs for recognizing the Haskie administration instead of him. He said the deaths were also the fault of the interim administration for what he called poor leadership in removing the "experienced" top police command that had remained loyal to him after he had been placed on leave.

MacDonald told reporters that "innocent protesters were the victims of a harsh, brutal attack" by police. He warned that unless there were negotiations to share government with his supporters, there would likely be more violence.

Any credibility MacDonald had with those not among his strong supporters is fast withering away. Even Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan said it would be better for MacDonald to leave the reservation to let things cool down.

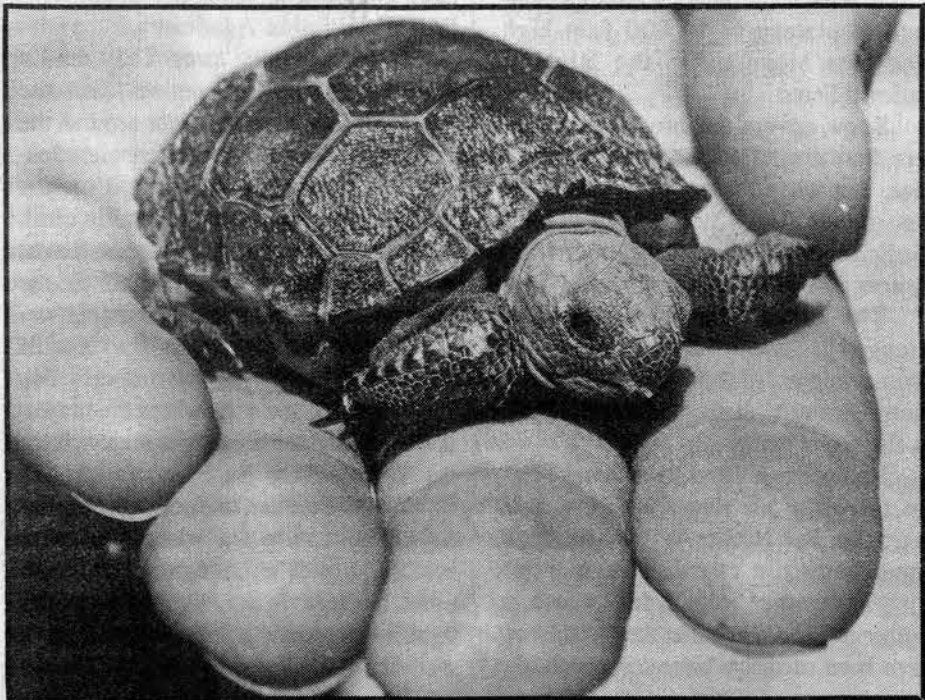
Arizona Rep. Morris Udall, D, compared the situation to something to be found in Honduras, calling MacDonald a "natural troublemaker."

Arizona Sen. John McCain, whose committee exposed MacDonald's corruption, also publicly blamed MacDonald for the riot and reportedly was infuriated by the arrogance he displayed.

There are several ironies to the dispute. First, MacDonald has emphasized the need for economic development on the reservation, but the violence he helped cause is bound to discourage outside investment. It is also striking that the long-term, often bitter Navajo-Hopi dispute over partitioned land never led to the bloodshed the MacDonald controversy has caused.

—George Hardeen

HOTLINE



Bob Miles, Arizona Game and Fish Dept.

New threat to desert tortoises

Three national environmental organizations petitioned Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan for an emergency listing of the desert tortoise as an endangered species. Desert tortoise populations in the Southwest have suffered dramatic population declines over the past

few years due to the outbreak of a contagious respiratory disease. In 1985, before the outbreak of the disease, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledged threats to the desert tortoise and listed one population in southern Utah as threatened. But the agency said it would take no action on the other populations because other animals were higher in priority and needed immediate action. Since this decision, however, the disease

has been discovered in the Desert Tortoise Natural Area in the western Mojave Desert, where one study population has suffered an average annual decline in numbers of 20 percent since 1985. It is possible that the disease was introduced into wild populations by the release of diseased captive tortoises, according to Dr. Walter Rosskopf of the Avian and Exotic Animal Hospital of Los Angeles County. If the desert tortoise is listed as an endangered species, it will raise the priority of funding for research, require federal agencies to consult with the Fish and Wildlife Service when their plans may have an effect on tortoise populations and provide for penalties for the killing of tortoises. The groups petitioning are the Natural Resources Defense Council, Environmental Defense Fund, and Defenders of Wildlife.

Courts reaffirm rights of grizzlies

The U.S. Supreme Court recently refused to hear the case of three Montana sheep owners who want the right to kill grizzly bears threatening their herds. Richard Christy, who lives near Glacier National Park, said that in July of 1982 grizzlies began attacking his sheep on a nightly basis. A government trapper was unable to trap the animals, and by July 9 the bears had killed about 20 sheep. That

night Christy shot and killed a bear that was attacking his sheep, AP reports. By the end of the month, grizzlies had killed 64 more sheep and Christy says he was forced to remove the remaining herd from his land. He eventually sold the sheep at a loss of more than \$10,000. The Department of the Interior fined Christy \$2,500 for killing the grizzly, which is protected in the lower 48 states under the Endangered Species Act. Christy and two other sheep owners then sued the federal government, saying the law unconstitutionally deprived them of their property. In its ruling, the Supreme Court let stand a 1988 U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals decision against them, denying them the right to kill endangered wildlife in defense of property.

Native American takes the helm

One hundred and thirteen years after the battle of Little Big Horn in Montana, a Native American will head the Custer Battlefield National Monument. Barbara Booher, a 20-year veteran of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Federal Aviation Administration, becomes park superintendent this month. The monument was named after Gen. George Custer, whose army was defeated at Little Big Horn on June 25, 1876. The battle is perhaps the most famous of the Indian wars and left no white survivors.



Medicine Wheel on Medicine Mountain, Wyoming

Dennis Davis

HOTLINE

Bigfoot researchers go ape

About 100 people exchanged more threats and insults than information at a recent conference on the elusive "Bigfoot" in Pullman, Wash. Mark Francis, director of the North American Bigfoot Information Network, said that "flakes" with no scientific merit turned the conference into a circus. Problems surfaced before the conference began when Jon Erik Beckjord, who claims that Bigfoot came from outer space, was arrested for charges stemming from death threats Francis says Beckjord sent to him. Beckjord said that Francis forged the letters. Beckjord, who spent one night in jail before he was released on bail, organized a counter-conference in his motel room, AP reports. Another participant making waves at the eighth annual gathering of the International Society of Cryptozoology was Jack Lapseritis, an anthropologist. He was questioned about a magazine article in which he claimed three Bigfoots astrally projected themselves into his bedroom in Milwaukee.

Is Wyoming's Medicine Wheel sacred or a curiosity?

Native American and white cultures are clashing over the future of an arrangement of rocks called the Medicine Wheel, which is on the Bighorn National Forest in northern Wyoming.

Several Indian tribes consider the wheel and mountain on which it stands sacred. They come there for religious ceremonies and fear that the Forest Service wants to limit their access in favor of tourists.

Last winter, the Forest Service circulated a draft environmental assessment of development plans for the wheel. The agency's preferred alternative proposed moving the parking lot and pit toilet — now at the wheel — a little farther north, while developing a visitor center about three miles away, says Bighorn Forest recreation officer Larry Thoney. Thoney says the preferred alternative also proposed a six-to-seven-foot-tall mound as a viewing stand for visitors.

Francis Brown of Riverton, a member of the Arapaho Language and Cultural Committee, wasn't satisfied with the agency's draft. He has led a petition drive asking the Forest Service to move the parking lot and toilet at least one-half mile from the wheel and to allow motorized vehicles no closer than a half-mile.

His petition also calls for keeping the two-and-one-half miles around the wheel undisturbed, including no timber sales such as those earlier discussed by the Forest Service.

Jerry Flute, acting executive director of the New York-based group, the Association of American Indian Affairs, says the Forest Service has failed to understand that to Indians, "this is a very spiritual mountain."

His group is developing legislation aimed at protecting Native American access to religious sites as well as return of skeletal remains and grave goods in federal possession to tribes. The problem, Flute says, is the agency's "widespread ignorance" about Native American religious beliefs.

To ensure privacy, Brown's petition also seeks exclusive access to the wheel for 12 days per year, consisting of three consecutive days at the solstices and equinoxes — the first days of each of the four seasons.

Recreation staffer Thoney says the Forest Service agreed to close the road to the wheel for three days at the time of the summer solstice in June.

But Thoney adds that 40,000 visitors each year come from all over the United States and several foreign countries to see the Medicine Wheel.

"We don't like to keep it closed to the general public for extended periods of time because they wish to view it," he says. "We're trying to keep everyone happy."

Ironically, efforts by a state agency to increase protection of the site may also conflict with Native American cultural and religious values.

Fred Chapman of the State Historic Preservation Office in Cheyenne thinks expanding the present national landmark boundary of the wheel would provide greater protection for the site. Chapman says if Indians can show that a cairn, say two miles from the wheel, is associated with the wheel, the historic landmark boundaries could be expanded to include it.

But some tribal leaders such as Mark Soldier Wolf, an Arapaho leader from Wyoming, oppose the idea of any boundaries. Speaking recently at a meeting of the Medicine Wheel Alliance, a tribal alliance dealing with Native concerns about the wheel, Soldier Wolf said, "We have lived in boundaries since the white man came." Even the fence around the wheel creates a boundary, he added.

Bill Tall Bull, a Northern Cheyenne from Montana, called the Medicine Wheel a shrine. The Medicine Wheel "houses the spiritual rulers of the universe," he says. "This is where they dwell." An archaeologist might find a rock, he adds, but wouldn't understand its spirit life as a Native American would.

Tall Bull says Native Americans "have a lot of convincing to do" in communicating to non-Indians the spiritual values of sites such as the Medicine Wheel.

Following last spring's public comment on the draft environmental assessment, Thoney said the state Historic

Preservation office was asked for additional comments. But he declined to say what, if any, changes were made in the draft. The Bighorn Forest expects to issue a final environmental assessment and decision notice in early fall.

Comments on the Forest Service plans may still be sent to Medicine Wheel District Ranger Peter Chidsey, P.O. Box 367, Lovell, WY 82431.

—Dennis Davis

□

The writer lives in Powell, Wyoming.

Wheel may be a calendar

A brisk wind blows across the timberline plateau of 10,000-foot-high Medicine Mountain in the Bighorn National Forest.

Snow covers the broad meadows here from about October until June each year. But when the gravel road opens, the mysterious, perhaps ancient, Medicine Wheel draws as many as 300 visitors each day.

The wheel consists of rocks arranged in a circle nearly 80 feet across. Twenty-eight "spokes" radiate from a central cairn, with six additional cairns on the rim of the wheel.

Radiocarbon dated to at least 1760, the origins of the ring are shrouded in antiquity. But Native Americans say it remains an active, sacred shrine to them.

Astronomer John Eddy wrote in *National Geographic* that the wheel may have been used as a calendar, much like Stonehenge in Britain. He said the sun rises on a line with two of the cairns on the summer solstice as does the star Aldebaran in the constellation Taurus. Rigel in Orion rises over another set of cairns 28 days later, and Sirius in Canis Major follows suit 28 days after that.

Other scientists see a resemblance between the wheel and traditional sun dance structures.

Visitors get out of their cars, per-

haps glancing at the white dome of a Federal Aviation Administration radar station about a mile away. They read a Forest Service sign warning them the site is protected, and wander around the chainlink and barbed wire fence enclosing the wheel. Many comment on the bits of brightly colored fabric or cloth tobacco pouches containing seeds, leaves or other items which are tied to the fence, perhaps as part of a ceremony.

Some visitors also walk to a cliff edge to look out into Wyoming's Big Horn Basin to the west, where the majestic Absaroka and Beartooth ranges form the skyline.

While Native Americans seek continued access to the wheel for ceremonies, former Wyoming state archaeologist George Frison has written that "given the highly conjectural nature of many past studies of the wheel and the sensational coverage given these theories, we face the real possibility that the Medicine Wheel is now of more lasting importance to the white man than it ever was to the Indian."

Leaning into the wind, tourists get back in their cars and head back down the mountain.

—D.D.



Tipi below the Medicine Wheel during a gathering of tribes

Dennis Davis

Yellowstone cult says: The end is near!

Elizabeth Clare Prophet, leader of the Church Universal and Triumphant in Montana, has been subpoenaed to appear before a federal grand jury Aug. 16 in Spokane, Wash., to answer questions about an illegal arms deal.

Longtime CUT member Vernon Hamilton, 42, was stopped in a CUT-owned vehicle and arrested July 7 on federal firearms charges. Agents from the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms charge that Hamilton possessed 15 semi-automatic assault rifles, including a sophisticated .50 caliber weapon which could be used against aircraft and armored vehicles.

Agents also confiscated 120,000 rounds of ammunition, \$19,000 in cash and \$7,000 in gold coins from Hamilton, who is paid \$150 a month at the CUT ranch south of Livingston, Mont., near Yellowstone National Park.

Agents say they also seized plans from Hamilton calling for the arming of 200 people.

Prosecutors found documents in Hamilton's vehicle linking him directly to church activity, and allege that he is the church's "head of security." Prosecutors also say Hamilton had memos to Ed Francis, CUT vice president and Prophet's husband, outlining the logistics of a false identification scheme and asking Francis for a checkbook and advice.

When buying guns and ammunition, Hamilton allegedly used the identification of a Reno, Nev., lawyer and real estate developer who died of AIDS last year. Hamilton's main transgression, according to a federal indictment, was using false identification to purchase guns.

Elizabeth Clare Prophet, also known as Guru Ma, immediately denied any

connection between CUT and Hamilton's arms scheme and promised an "internal investigation." She also said Hamilton is not in charge of church security.

Residents of the rural area near the church packed an "open house" at a CUT-owned cafe last week to voice their anxiety over the news of guns and about new fallout shelters on church land.

Prophet's daughter Erin, who has been acting as spokesman in the recent absence of Ed Francis, said the shelters are "there just in case of a nuclear war or a reactor accident or whatever could happen."

County officials who toured CUT's Royal Teton Ranch July 18 say they were shown earthen-covered fallout shelters in varying degrees of construction. CUT officials explained that the shelters would hold 756 people and house power generators and a small hospital. CUT staff at the ranch now numbers about 600. A members-only subdivision down the valley requires residential fallout shelters in its sales covenants.

After the tour, Park County Commissioner Larry Lovely said he received no satisfaction when he inquired about the church's attempt to accumulate weapons. In the event of a nuclear incident, Lovely said, "the ones with the biggest guns will get in (the shelters). I'd be surprised if that hadn't been thought out by the church. I'm like the rest of the people around here. I think their credibility is slipping, and it's time to get this out in the open."

Meanwhile, CBS and other network news teams were busy filming the CUT open house and interviewing county resi-

dents for their opinions about their neighbors. Ed Francis, traditionally the chief CUT spokesman, had not been heard from since the arrest of Hamilton. On July 19, Elizabeth Clare Prophet said she didn't know the whereabouts of her husband, but that she expected him to show up any day.

Among the church's neighbors, CUT's credibility is newly strained, as Prophet admitted in an interview with the *Bozeman Chronicle*. "I understand that we have a serious problem," she said.

The California Supreme Court recently upheld a \$1.5 million judgment for fraud, assault and breach of trust against Prophet and CUT by a former member's estate. And Rep. Wayne Owens, D-Utah, is pushing a measure in Congress to essentially condemn the CUT ranch and buy it for winter range for Yellowstone National Park wildlife.

Prophet, a vocal advocate of a strong U.S. nuclear deterrent, including the Strategic Defense Initiative, prophesied a message from one of her "ascended masters" in October 1987 that the U.S. had 24 months to install defensive measures to ward off a nuclear attack.

"My estimation is that the government has done nothing. Our government has not seen fit to have an ABM system in place. We are America the vulnerable. I think that after Oct. 2, everything is in a state of flux. We don't know what will happen." She said she has been vigilantly leading prayer sessions all around the country, but that her fellow citizens haven't held up their end.

— Patrick Dawson

HOTLINE

Governor tries to squelch critics

A threat by New Mexico's Governor Garrey Carruthers to deny state contracts to opponents of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant has drawn heavy criticism. "People are afraid to speak out because they'll lose state business," according to Richard Johnson, a Santa Fe clothing store owner and WIPP opponent. "It's like a fascist state when this happens." In an *Albuquerque Journal* editorial, Carruthers' threat was called crass and compared to censorship. "The governor seeks to wield an economic cudgel in the same manner less free governments use censorship to stifle the expression of opinion," the paper said. Carruthers' threat was made in response to increased opposition by small business owners, especially in Santa Fe, to a federal plan to store high-level nuclear waste in a salt cavern near Carlsbad. Carruthers defended his position: "My attitude is why not support businesses that support the state's positions?" In New Mexico, contracts for less than \$20,000 are awarded without competitive bidding procedures, although state officials, often appointed by the governor, are required to look for the best products at the best price.

Backpacking on the slide

Baby boomers are trading their packs and tents in for trailers and motel rooms, becoming what one observer called "the paunch corps," AP reports. Backpacking in national parks has declined from 2.4 million in 1979 to 1.6 million in 1988. In 1977, for example, there were 62,000 backcountry campers in Rocky Mountain National Park in Colorado, one of the most heavily used in the park system. Eleven years later, in 1988, the number had fallen to 34,413. Only Canyonlands National Park in Utah marked an increase in backcountry hikers, from 43,679 in 1983, to 54,278 in 1988. Observers note that the weight of responsibilities at home — mortgages, car payments, work and children — have kept former backpackers in the campgrounds and hotels. Yet backcountry travel may again become popular. The Sporting Goods Manufacturers Association's national figures from last year show that backpack sales rose 2 percent, and total camping gear sales increased 13.6 percent.

Amoco calls a halt

Plans for a controversial oil and gas well in the Bridger-Teton National Forest of Wyoming have been temporarily cancelled. Amoco Production Corporation announced that unstable oil and gas prices forced it to put its \$3 million Sohare Creek exploratory well on hold, reports the *Casper Star-Tribune*. Environmental groups applauded the decision, hoping that the Forest Service will now audit the region's ecological resources and impose limits on further drilling and logging. Amoco spokesman Ted Neptune was careful to point out, however, that if the market should revive, so might the well. Near Jackson, Wyo., the Sohare Creek area in the Mt. Leidy Highlands is critical grizzly bear habitat, north of the Gros Ventre Wilderness. Earlier efforts by environmentalists to stop the 11,000-foot well failed when the Department of the Interior and the Forest Service rejected their appeal and granted a drilling permit last fall. Bridger-Teton officials also opened non-wilderness acreage of the forest to oil and gas leasing (*HCN*, 12/5/89).

HOTLINE

Out to get poachers

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game is mounting an aggressive campaign to halt grizzly bear poaching in the state's panhandle region. In a recent case, the state expects to file charges against two out-of-state hunters who allegedly shot a grizzly in Idaho's Selkirk Mountains, reports the *Idaho Falls Post-Register*. Investigators found that in four of the seven latest incidents, hunters knew they were illegally shooting grizzlies during the spring black-bear hunting season. Since 1979, seven grizzlies have been killed in the greater Selkirk Mountains area, which includes Washington and British Columbia, Canada. Between 1985 and 1988, five of those seven shot were wearing Idaho Fish and Game radio-collars. Gregg Servheen, a wildlife biologist for Idaho Fish and Game, estimates that no more than 20 grizzlies live in the U.S. section of the Selkirks. Currently, two Idaho Fish and Game officials are in British Columbia capturing and releasing grizzlies with collars to determine the full extent of their range.

FBI uncovers oil thieves

Native Americans lost more than \$30 million to oil thieves from 1986 to 1988, according to a Senate investigating committee. "There is widespread and pervasive theft and these people are being horribly victimized," said FBI agent Richard James Elroy, who led the investigative team for the Senate Select Committee on Indian Affairs. Elroy and others spent months secretly monitoring oil taken from eight sites. They also subpoenaed 700,000 documents from 30 companies and took more than 50 sworn statements. The results, they say, show that Koch Oil of Wichita, Kan., and other oil companies systematically cheated Indians in Montana, Wyoming and Oklahoma. The companies allegedly underreported the quality and quantity of the oil they pumped from Indian land. Donald L. Cordes, Koch's vice president for legal and corporate affairs, denied the allegations, reports the *Billings Gazette*. "We do not steal oil. We are honest in our measurement," he said. Investigators also said that the Bureau of Land Management, the federal agency responsible for overseeing Indian leases, ignored complaints about the thefts.

Basin F Blues

A state inspection of a waste clean-up site at the Army's Rocky Mountain Arsenal near Denver, Colo., revealed leaks of toxic residues from rocket-fuel, pesticides and nerve gas. The wastes are from a site known as Basin F, a 93-acre pond first used by the Army, and then Shell Oil Company, to store hazardous wastes. The inspection in May by Colorado's Department of Health brought to light several Army violations of state law. According to the health department, the Army failed to inform the state when it detected leaks, failed to find out why leaks were occurring and didn't have a contingency plan that addressed the problem of leaks. The Army has resisted following Colorado's hazardous waste laws, but a federal district court ruled that the military must comply with state law. Judge Jim Carrigan said, "It is not inappropriate that the present and future victims of this poison legacy, left in their midst by the Army and Shell, should have a meaningful voice in (the Basin F) cleanup." As a result of its findings, the state issued a compliance order requiring the Army to take immediate steps to clean up Basin F hazardous waste.

BARBED WIRE

Several studies are needed to prove this.

In a *New York Times* article about the proliferation of books and journals, one person said, "There are people who have published 400 manuscripts in their lifetime ... It's hard to believe that anybody could do really important work at that rate."

The land of entrapment.

New Mexico State Sen. Les Houston thinks his state would be "outstanding" for out-of-state garbage, reports Santa Fe's *Radioactive Rag*, the newsletter of Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety. "It's as if the man upstairs made it for that purpose," he said.

Free markets and elections, Beijing-style.

The Sacramento Municipal Utility District voted to sell its Rancho Seco nuclear power plant, despite a public vote that called for its closure, reports the *New York Times*. A literal-minded spokesman said that only the utility was barred from operating the reactor.

The old growth fight and logging go on

The struggle over the Northwest's centuries-old forests continues.

Twenty-four people were arrested July 11 while protesting the logging of old-growth forests in southern Oregon's North Kalmiopsis area. Three had sunk their feet in cement in a road leading to the Lazy Bluff timber sale. That caused local police to spend much of the day extricating them with picks and shovels. Four other protestors buried themselves to the waist in dirt and rocks, then bound themselves with chains and locks to a gate in the road. Two more people chained themselves to logging equipment.

According to Karen Wood of Earth First!, 15 of the protesters had not intended to be arrested and were on the road only to protect their cemented colleagues from loggers who had threatened retaliation.

The watchman on the site, who said he hadn't investigated the previous night's activities because he assumed his dog had been barking at a bear, pointed a pistol at one woman who was lying with her neck locked to the arm of a log loader. The watchman fired the gun in the air and pointed it at another demonstrator before he was convinced to put it away, Woods says.

The demonstrations, which came six weeks after another protest that resulted in three arrests, attracted more than 40 people from as far away as Texas and Wisconsin. Most of those arrested spent over a week in custody. The three who cemented their feet were charged with felony criminal mischief and the rest were charged with misdemeanors.

Protests against the logging of the North Kalmiopsis, the largest unlogged area left in Oregon, are now in their sixth year. The Lazy Bluff sale is within the boundaries of the proposed Siskiyou National Park, as well as a previously roadless area into which some 20 miles of roads have been cut in the last few years. Many of the roads lead to salvage operations in the 96,000 acres burned by the Silver Fire two years ago, but many of the trees now being cut were relatively undamaged by that blaze.

"The North Kalmiopsis is being butchered right now," says Earth First!'s Barry Martin. "It's unfortunate that we don't have more people up there protesting because we're losing it."

The heat in southern Oregon's timber battles was also turned up a notch when saws at a Gregory Forest Products' mill hit more than a dozen metal spikes in June. Saw teeth were ripped off, sending shrapnel flying, but no one was injured. Metal detectors had failed to spot the spikes, which had been driven into trees on the contested Robinson Gulch timber sale.

That sale would have been halted by court injunctions against old-growth logging if it had not been sold just before the court's cutoff date. Gregory has offered a \$10,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of the spikers. No one has yet claimed responsibility.

Also in southern Oregon, appeals have been filed on the Forest Service's proposed long-range plan for the 1.1 million-acre Siskiyou National Forest. The Siskiyou plan, one of only three that have been completed in the Northwest, reduces planned cuts from 168 to 160 million board-feet a year, while protecting about 180,000 acres of old growth.

One appeal is from the timber industry, which objects to the logging reductions. Six other appeals are from environmental groups that say the plan allows cuts beyond the forest's capacity

to produce timber, further fragments the remaining stands of old growth and eliminates many of Oregon's remaining coastal redwoods.

In other forest-related developments in the Northwest:

- A plan hammered out at an unprecedented June 24 summit, which included Oregon's entire congressional delegation, Gov. Neil Goldschmidt and representatives from the timber and environmental communities, is muddling its way toward Congress. The plan was intended as a short-term solution to a timber shortage precipitated by court injunctions halting the sale of some two billion board-feet of timber in northern spotted-owl habitat. The plan would have reduced cuts on federal lands in the state by 10-20 percent below current forest plans (but considerably higher than the levels dictated by the court injunctions), and reduced fragmentation of old growth by clustering clearcuts instead of scattering them.

The timber industry "reluctantly" agreed to the plan, but many of the approximately 40 environmental groups involved balked at both the size of the cut and at a proviso that would have taken away their right to appeal any timber sales through the courts. Two weeks later, they announced a counter-proposal, which Forest Service Chief Dale Robertson quickly rejected as unworkable. At press time, the state's politicians were still hoping to offer some kind of proposal for Congress to vote on, probably as a rider to a Senate appropriations bill.

- By a 9-to-1 margin, Oregon voters approved a measure to ban the export of raw logs cut from state lands. The measure, however, cannot become law unless Congress passes a bill, now pending, which would allow individual states to restrict log exports — an activity currently regulated only by the federal government. Even if it does become law, the

ban will likely have a minor impact on the state's timber supply, since only about 8 percent of Oregon's exported logs come from state lands.

- The House approved an Interior appropriations bill that included a continued ban on the export of raw logs cut from federal lands. The Bush administration had proposed lifting the 25-year-old ban, which is included as a rider to the appropriations bill every year.

- The Washington State Board of Natural Resources recommended designating 230,000 acres of state forest on the Olympic Peninsula as an experimental forest featuring innovative forest-management techniques. One-third of the 60,000 acres of old growth there would be protected from logging for at least 15 years, and overall cuts would be decreased by 28 percent. This would provide a more stable long-term timber supply, the board says.

- One of the first northern spotted owls ever to be studied was given some breathing room. The female owl was banded in 1976 near Oregon's McKenzie River and is considered a valuable source of long-term information on the potentially endangered birds. But its habitat has been threatened by logging begun in April by Bohemia timber company. Under a recent agreement between Bohemia and the Forest Service, a 660-foot buffer of trees will be left around the owl's nest. Bohemia will be given timber elsewhere.

- Region 6 Forester James Torrence announced his retirement after three years as head of 19 national forests in Washington and Oregon. In a July 12 interview with the *Seattle Times*, Torrence criticized both sides of the timber debate. Industry has delayed adoption of forest plans 10 years in the making, he said, but environmentalists' demands would put too many people out of work.

— Jim Stiak

HOTLINE



Roasting the range

Scientists at Arizona State University in Tempe have concluded that overgrazing leads not just to erosion and desertification, but also to increased ambient air temperatures. Researchers found that overgrazing in Sonora, Mexico, just over the Arizona border, raised temperatures an average of four degrees, reports the *Arizona Republic*. Robert Balling, an Arizona State scientist, said that just crossing into Mexico was "like stepping from a playground onto pavement." The cycle of destruction begins when cattle and other livestock strip vegetation crucial for holding topsoil in place. Without protective cover, the topsoil is exposed to the elements, where it is carried off by wind and rain. The remaining soils absorb more heat and less water, setting the stage for erosion and desertification. State agricultural reports indicate that for the past century the Sonoran range has carried 300 times more cattle than it could support. Concurrently, temperatures over the past 40 years near Nogales, Mexico, have been on average 4 degrees warmer than U.S. temperatures. The \$1 million project is sponsored by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and includes scientists from Arizona State University, the University of Arizona, the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., and Mexico.

Grand Canyon hotel balked

Ruling that a new hotel planned for the Grand Canyon's North Rim could cause "irreparable harm" to the environment, a federal judge halted construction. The preliminary injunction, issued by U.S. District Court Judge Paul G. Rosenblatt in Phoenix, Ariz., prevents the Park Service from building the 100-room Ponderosa Lodge until it is determined whether the project violates federal law. The ruling is in response to a Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund lawsuit charging officials with ignoring a park rule that requires the preservation of the North Rim's "peaceful atmosphere and outstanding scenic appeal." The suit also says that the hotel was approved in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act and Park Service concessions policy. In his opinion, Judge Rosenblatt wrote that the plan for the hotel "constitutes a substantial change in the rustic, traditional setting." Fern Shepard, a legal defense attorney, said, "hopefully, the Park Service will now recognize that it violated the law when it approved this project." Jack Davis, superintendent of the park, was undecided about how to respond to the ruling. "We could appeal it," he said. The Park Service already has a contract with TW Recreational Services of New York to operate the hotel.

West is fired up again

High temperatures and drought have fueled forest fires in the West that have burned twice as much acreage as last summer.

As of mid-July only seven fires continued to burn on 21,000 acres in five western states, according to Arnold Hartigan of the Boise Interagency Fire Center in Idaho. The fire situation is "fairly calm, cool and collected at this point," he says. About 2,000 firefighters are on the job in the West, he says, down from 15,000 in early July when 44 fires were burning in nine western states.

Firefighters in northwest Nebraska successfully battled this summer's largest fire, but only after the state's newest and only wooded wilderness burned completely.

"This was a clean, hot burn," says Butch Ellis of the Nebraska National Forest. "There is no timber left."

The 48,000-acre blaze consumed all 8,000 acres of the Soldier Creek Wilderness in a mere five hours and blackened about half of nearby Fort Robinson State Park. Flames leapfrogged through rugged canyons destroying grasslands, large stands of ponderosa pine and groves of hardwoods, while driving wildlife into adjacent forested areas.

The fire was unfortunate "but nature's got to take its course," says Ted Hoffman, an environmentalist instrumental in getting the area protected. "I

guess somebody 100 years from now will get to enjoy it." Soldier Creek Wilderness, in the Nebraska National Forest, was dedicated this year on May 22.

In New Mexico, firefighters recently contained two large blazes: 5,700 acres near the town of Grants in the El Mapais National Monument and 10,000 acres in the Gila National Forest.

A fire in a canyon near Boulder, Colo., was controlled only after it destroyed 37 homes and 2,000 acres.

Two fires in Arizona, the last of seven that plagued the state, were recently contained. The largest of the two burned 1,750 acres just 18 miles from the North Rim of the Grand Canyon.

"Utah is currently the hot spot," according to Hartigan. "That's where the big fires are now." Two fires on the Dixie National Forest in southwestern Utah are burning on 8,000 acres while the Rattlesnake fire on the Uintah and Ouray Indian reservations has consumed 3,000 acres.

The fire center also reports that in southwest Colorado more than 400 firefighters battled a 3,000-acre blaze in Mesa Verde National Park.

In Nevada, 8,000 acres of rangeland are still burning in the BLM's Ely district, although the fire is almost contained.

— Richard Hicks

Earth First!: A group that isn't a group

JEMEZ NATIONAL FOREST, N.M. — A few hundred members of the radical environmental group Earth First! met west of Santa Fe in June for the group's 10th annual national rendezvous.

The attendees brought with them a sense that the recent death of writer Ed Abbey and the passage of a decade leaves Earth First! at a crossroads, desiring respect but shunning respectability. Just how organized the group should become was one of many subjects upon which members disagreed.

But there was unanimity about where Earth First! fits on the spectrum of environmental groups.

"The earth is going down the tubes," said Australian John Seed, "and we are on the cutting edge of the movement to prevent that from happening."

Cutting edge also recalls bolt cutters, blow torches and tree spikes. Those tools have helped forge the Earth First! image in the public eye, and on May 30, two men and a woman were arrested in Arizona in connection with their alleged attempt to cut down a high-voltage power line (HCN, 6/19/89).

The man federal authorities say bankrolled the group is David Foreman, one of the founders of Earth First! Foreman was arrested and released on bond but could not attend the rendezvous because of travel restrictions placed on him by a federal judge.

Destruction of private property in the name of the environment is called monkey-wrenching in Earth First! parlance. It is a practice supported by many members of the group, whose battle cry is "no compromise in defense of the Mother Earth."



At the 10th Earth First! rendezvous

Foreman's name surfaced at the many workshops on wildlife and wilderness issues and in conversations, yet Earth First! remains essentially leaderless. That point was underscored when a convert walked to an information table and asked to be directed to the group's director.

The request was greeted with laughter. For as Earth First!ers are proud of saying, it isn't a group that one can join or be kicked out of.

At the encampment, the lack of leadership led to some bickering. Some objected, for example, to belly dancing around a campfire, while others objected that some songs sung in camp had little to do with the group's ideals.

Scott Greacen, an Earth First!er from Oregon, said the group's lack of organization can be frustrating but that it also has its advantages: "There's less (legal) accountability, and that's really important."

If the group's tactics or lack of lobbyists in statehouses causes it not to be taken seriously, Greacen says that's part of the cost of doing business.

"You're trying to be the radical left of the environmental movement," he said. "You've got a stake in the status quo when you're in the Sierra Club. This is what Foreman and the others were talking about when they quit the Wilderness Society."

— Barry Noreen

Logging becomes Yellowstone Park issue

Yellowstone National Park visitors may have been surprised to find logging activity along park roads this summer. After last summer's fires, the park awarded a contract to Brand S Lumber of Livingston, Mont., to cut burned "hazard trees" marked by Park Service employees for removal from roadsides. The contract allows the cutting of from 4.8 to 9 million board-feet of lumber.

The logging spurred protests over the July 8-9 weekend in the park by Earth First!ers dressed as bears, wolves and mountain lions. Brand S logging equipment inside the park has also been vandalized.

Louisa Willcox of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition in Bozeman, Mont., acknowledges that trees burned in last year's fires pose a safety problem. She says the issue is "one of scale and appropriate levels of logging." Loggers are removing green trees, insect-killed trees untouched by last year's fires and burned trees too small or too far from the road to pose a hazard, she says. Park Service regulations limit timber harvesting to situations where human health and safety are in imminent danger, she adds, and trucks pose more of a risk to tourists than the trees.

Marsha Karle of Yellowstone's public affairs department says some unburned trees are marked for cutting because they become vulnerable to windfall when neighboring burned trees are removed. She says additional roadside trees need to be removed to create an "undulating effect" along the forest edge that is more aesthetic than a straight-edged forest boundary.

Willcox says Park Service employees marking trees have no clear policy to follow because the agency never con-

ducted an environmental assessment of the hazard-tree problem. At first, she says, individual trees were marked by the Park Service for cutting, but now whole blocks are marked as a group, with some trees within the block marked to remain standing. In many instances, she says, loggers are cutting trees within the blocks which are not supposed to be cut.

Willcox, whose organization represents a coalition of 60 environmental groups, wants to see a return to individual marking of trees, leaving as many trees standing as possible. The logging has been temporarily suspended for the height of the tourist season but is scheduled to resume in late August.

Meanwhile, Yellowstone officials have released a draft environmental assessment that would allow logging trucks to haul burned timber from the adjacent Shoshone and Gallatin national forests through the park for the next three years. Up to 36 logging trucks, each measuring over 60 feet and weighing up to 40 tons, could rumble along the 52-mile park road from Silver Gate to Gardiner, Mont. Karle said access through the park is necessary since the alternative route to potential mills in Livingston almost doubles the mileage, traveling over treacherous 10,947-foot Beartooth Pass.

The park's hauling proposal would limit operations to daylight hours, especially during winter months, and prohibits travel during the spring when bison, antelope and elk are grazing along the roadside. Trucks would be cleaned before entering the park to prevent the introduction of noxious weeds to the fragile, post-fire ecosystem. Steps would

also be taken to insure visitor safety along the narrow, winding roads.

Tom Mitchell, a Shoshone National Forest spokesman, says that since the timber is still salvageable, the agency should harvest it. He says logging activity will also help break up soil fused by the fire, reducing erosion.

On this issue as well, Willcox disagrees. She says the Forest Service has failed to weigh the value of the remaining vegetation for wildlife when proposing timber salvage sales. She also says already heavy traffic in the park would put visitors at risk. "Finally," Willcox adds, "are logging trucks what tourists want to see when they visit Yellowstone?"

Public comments on the trucking proposal will be accepted until Aug. 8, and a final plan will be issued by early September. For a copy of the assessment, write to Bob Barbee, Park Superintendent, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82910 (307/344-7381).

— Don Mitchell and Matt Klinge

BARBS

Proof positive that Communists are part of the anti-nuclear movement.

The Soviet Union reduced its nuclear weapons testing program in response to concerns and protests from Soviet citizens.

Air conditioning isn't the only cure for the greenhouse effect.

An article in the *Times'* Sunday magazine section for July 9, 1989, begins: "In an era of global warming trends and equatorial summers, men's clothing is following suit."

HOTLINE

Aspen gets a palace

In exchange for \$500,000 for subsidized employee housing, Pitkin County commissioners in Aspen, Colo., narrowly approved a controversial "home" that will be somewhat larger than the White House. The mansion for Saudi Arabian prince Bandar bin Sultan bin Abdel Aziz is going up in Starwood, an exclusive subdivision known for its mammoth houses. The prince's plans include 26 bedrooms, 15 bathrooms, four living rooms, a steam room, massage room, bars, a pub, dumbwaiters and outdoor decks. At 55,000 square feet, the complex will be twice the size of the largest house in the county. The prince's proposal has generated often bitter debate, reports the *Denver Post*. "I can't vote for this level of consumption," said Pitkin County Commissioner Colette Penne, "I find it incompatible with the values of this community." Commissioner Herschel Ross, however, supported the prince and lauded his \$500,000 contribution. "I don't think that's buying your way in. I think that's trying to address the impact you're going to have," he said. The prince's donation will also help fund a program to make local government buildings more energy efficient.

Aspen harvest to triple

Plans to nearly triple aspen cutting on three western Colorado national forests will damage the recreational, scenic and economic value of those forests, opponents charge. But Forest Service officials say their plan will benefit the forest while meeting increased timber demand from a Louisiana-Pacific waferboard plant in Olathe, Colo. The proposal is offered as an amendment to the 1983 forest plan for the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison national forests. It would increase aspen cutting from about 1,000 acres to 3,000 acres each year for the next 10 years. Areas planned for cuts include the north side of Mt. Sneffels; a corridor following the Kebler Pass road bordering the Raggeds and West Elk wildernesses; and the Roubideau and Tabeguache roadless areas on the Uncompahgre Plateau. Opponents say the Forest Service has exaggerated economic benefits to the forest from logging, and undervalued economic benefits from recreation, tourism and grazing. "It's a radical plan," said Mark Pearson, a Sierra Club volunteer in Grand Junction, Colo. It "sacrifices all other uses of the forest to Louisiana-Pacific Corporation." Forest officials say the cuts will improve wildlife habitat, help protect the forest from disease, increase water runoff with no effect on water quality, and provide hundreds of jobs. Public comments will be accepted through Aug. 25. To obtain a copy of the draft amended forest plan and draft supplemental environmental impact statement, contact R.E. Greffinius, Forest Supervisor, GMUG National Forests, 2250 Highway 50, Delta, CO 81416 (303/874-7691).

Fast-food junkies recycle

Almost 400 pounds of plastic a week are being recycled through a pilot program at McDonald's restaurants in Portland, Ore. Seven of the fast-food emporiums are participating in the program, which offers customers separate waste bins for their used straws, utensils and containers. The company says up to 70 percent of the customers comply with the program, which is now being expanded to other cities in Oregon.

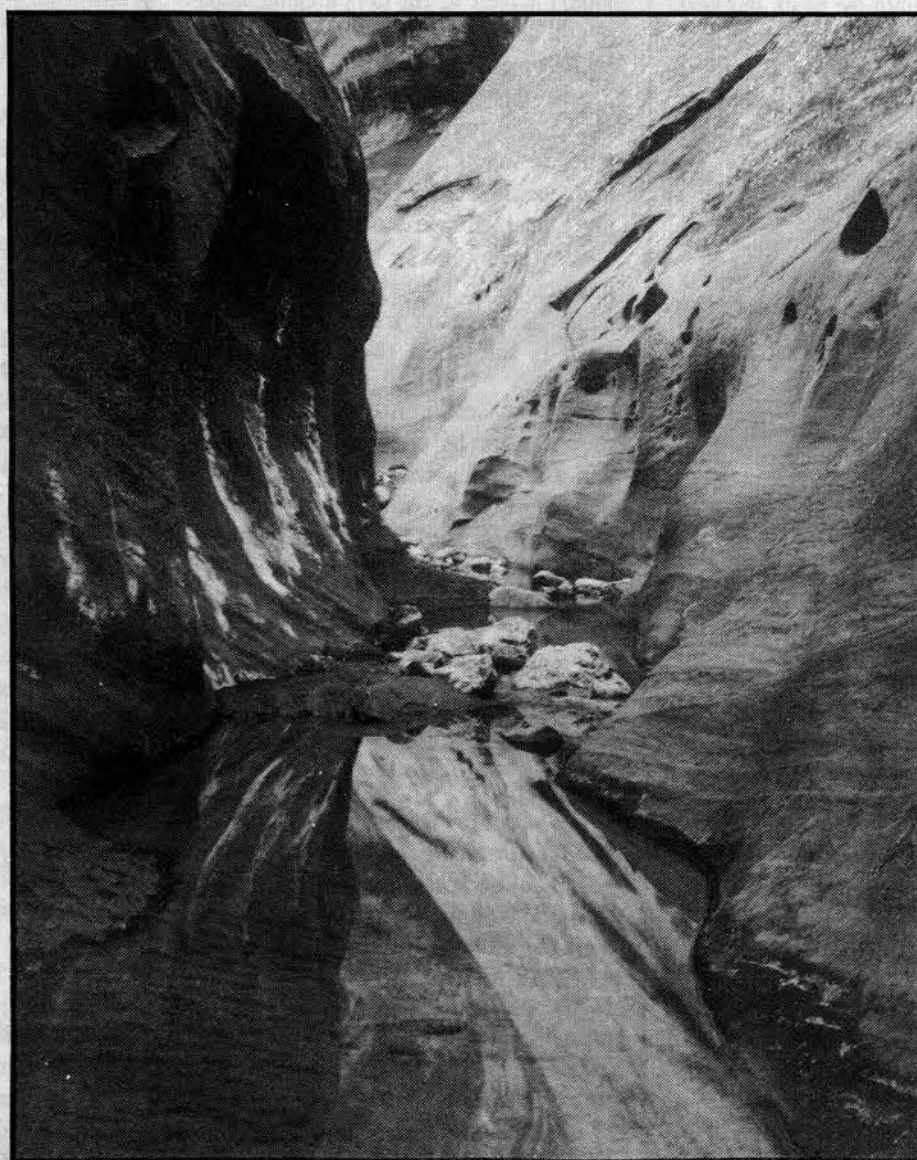
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Coyote's Canyon

Coyote's Canyon, photographs by John Telford, stories by Terry Tempest Williams; published by Gibbs Smith Publisher/Peregrine Smith Books. Reprinted by permission.



Inspiration Point, Bryce Canyon National Park, Utah



Choprock Canyon, Escalante, Utah

"There is a man in Boulder, Utah, who buries poems in the desert. He is an archaeologist who knows through his profession that eventually his words will be excavated, that although they may not be understood now by his community, at a later date his poetry will be held as an artifact, mulled over by minds that will follow his

The man knows the ways of these people. They ranch and they farm. They know the contours of the land, and if a white triangle of paper is sprouting where corn should be, they'll pull it up. Or if the cows are out grazing and happen to kick a sheet of paper into the air, it'll get read by the wranglers. And when women are planting borders of zinnias around their homes and uncover a poem with their trowel, they'll call their neighbors and pass the word along.

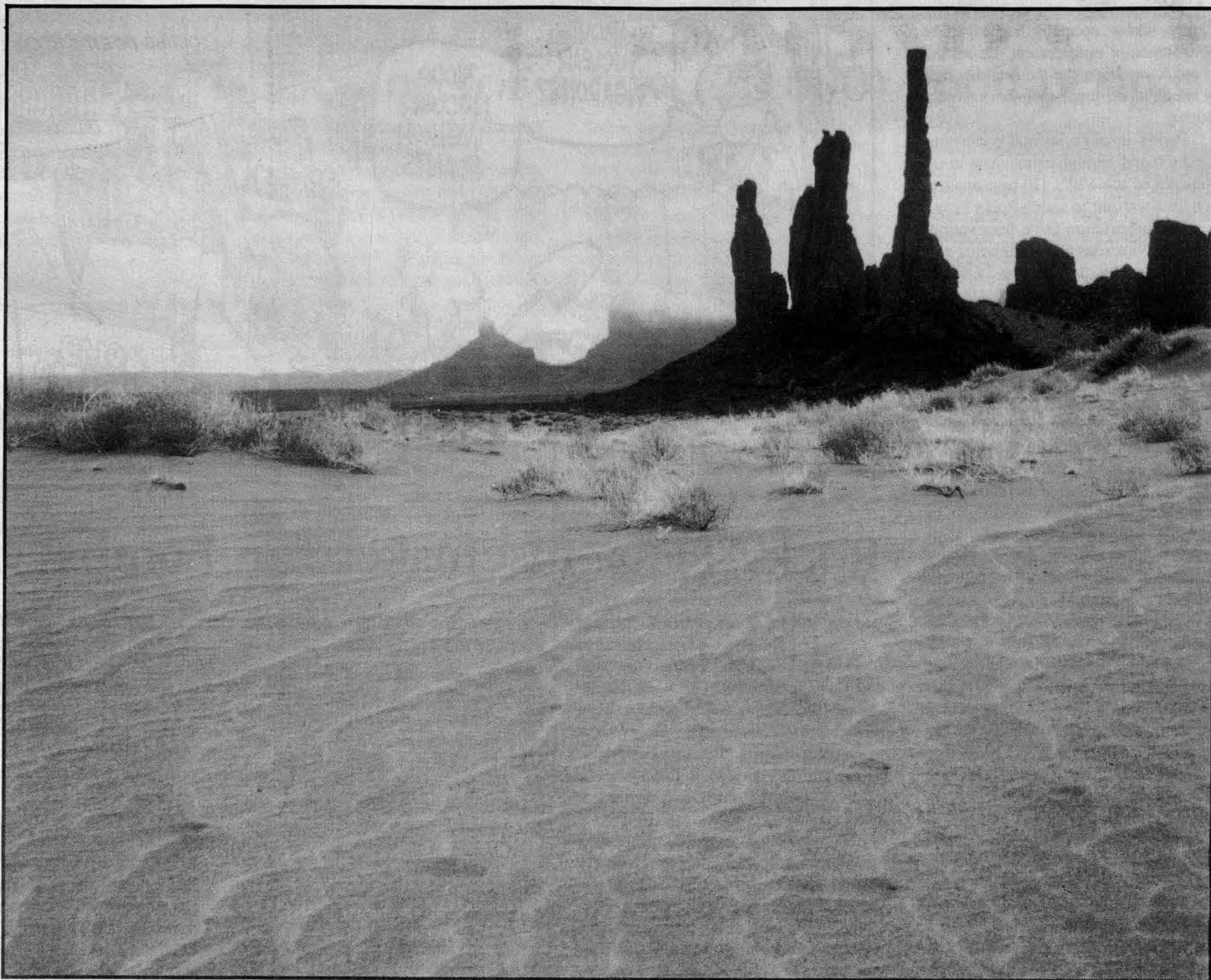
Which is exactly what happened

Some think they are love poems written by an Indian. Others guess they are clues to a buried treasure left by John Wesley Powell or Father Escalante. And still others believe they are personal messages left especially for them by a deceased family member, which is how they became known as 'the ghost poems' ... "



Slot canyon, near Page, Arizona

"There was a woman who left the city, left her husband, and her children, left everything behind to retrieve her soul. She came to the desert after seeing her gaunt face in the mirror, the pallor that comes when everything is going out and nothing is coming in



Monument Valley, Utah

"We had been down by the river for the afternoon. A thin veneer of ice had coalesced along its edge, and the children, bending down, would break off pieces and hold them between their thumbs and forefingers. Before the ice would melt, some brought the thin sheet to their eyes as a lens, while others placed it in their mouths and sucked on the river. Still others winged the ice sheets across the cobbles, watching, listening to them shatter like glass"

The woman returned to the place of her childhood, where she last remembered her true nature. She returned to the intimacy of a small canyon that for years had loomed large in her imagination, and there she set up camp"



Ice pattern, Echo Canyon, Zion National Park, Utah

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Nuclear...

(Continued from page 1)

The memo piqued the interest of Lipsky, whose specialty happens to be environmental enforcement. He set out to collect and analyze the available data in search of criminal environmental violations.

Poring through internal documents, Lipsky found enough ammunition to fill 86 pages of the FBI's 110-page application for a warrant to search Rocky Flats.

His information came from various permit applications to governmental regulatory agencies and internal DOE and Rockwell memos. To put it baldly, the numbers did not add up. For example, at Rocky Flats there were statistical discrepancies in the amounts of waste produced and waste disposed. Paper trails showed the waste streams were disposed of by both evaporation and incineration, which seemed unlikely.

With this evidence in hand, the FBI began an active undercover investigation of the plant that included overflights by airplanes equipped with cameras using infrared film to pinpoint thermal activity. The agency also set up a surface-water monitoring program at points where various creeks crossing Rocky Flats reentered private land.

In both cases, the FBI was aided by investigators and researchers from the Environmental Protection Agency. Agents learned from the overflights that an incinerator in building 771, which had been ordered closed by the DOE, was active during the nights of Dec. 9, 10 and 15, 1988.

They learned from the stream monitoring that various chemicals were dumped untreated in the creeks in violation of the Clean Water Act. The types and combinations of chemicals make it likely that various medical experiments were taking place at Rocky Flats.

One chemical, oxindole, is said to be in common use at weapons plants and other DOE facilities. An injected chelating agent, it bonds with ingested plutonium particles and makes it easier to pass them from the body. An inquiry revealed that the chemical was never approved for use as a drug and was likely in violation of federal drug regulations. Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio, began a Senate investigation of the situation within days of the revelation.

With most of the allegations in the affidavit contained in public records, and with the continual criticism by environmental and peace groups of Rocky Flats, it was inevitable that action would be coming.

The *Denver Post*, in an article July 3, quoted a source "close to the investigation," who was responding to a question on the timing of the raid, as saying, "There was no single reason. The time was ripe ... There was an increasingly sympathetic environment for it."

But the major goad may have been the Sierra Club. It had filed a lawsuit Feb. 1 calling for a shutdown of Rocky Flats' plutonium "recovery" incinerators.

As part of the lawsuit, the environmental group sent a list of questions to the DOE. At issue was whether the mixed waste burned in the plutonium recovery incinerators fell under the scope of RCRA, which requires permits for all disposal of mixed wastes.

Plant operators maintained that the incinerators were used only to recycle plutonium. But the Sierra Club was curi-



Rocky Flats: fusemaker for bombs

The Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant is a U.S. Department of Energy facility. It is operated by Rockwell International Inc., which makes small nuclear bombs that detonate the larger thermonuclear bombs in multiple-warhead weapons. The only such facility in the United States, it is critical to the nuclear weapons production process.

With the cessation of plutonium production at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation and the cutback in power levels at the Savannah River Plant, recycling of warheads at the plant provides a major source of plutonium for new weapons.

The plant is near the entrance to Cold Creek Canyon, halfway between the city of Golden on the south and Boulder on the north. It is approximately 16 miles northwest of downtown Den-

ver. More than two million people live within 30 miles of the plant.

The water supplies of Broomfield and Westminster lie downstream from Rocky Flats, and most of the population of metropolitan Denver lives downwind of it.

The plant's 134 structures sit within a 385-acre security area, and the entire site encompasses 6,550 acres. Operations began at the plant in 1952 with Dow Chemical as the contractor. Rockwell International took over operation of the facility in 1975.

Rockwell International is a conglomerate whose operations focus on defense and high-tech industries. According to published reports, the El Segundo, Calif.-based corporation has annual revenues averaging \$12 billion. The budget for the Rocky Flats plant in

1987 was an estimated \$480 million. The plant employs 5,600 workers.

Run-ins with regulatory agencies are nothing new for Rockwell. The conglomerate was replaced as operator of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in 1987, after years of safety and regulatory violations. In March of this year, the company was fined \$5.5 million for overcharging on a government defense contract.

One of the most serious accidents ever reported in the United States took place at the Rockwell-operated Santa Susana Field Laboratory in California. In 1959, some uranium fuel rods achieved a partial meltdown. The Santa Susana plant was the first nuclear reactor in the United States to produce power.

—R.B.

*The F.B.I began an active
undercover investigation of the plant
that included overflights
by airplanes equipped with cameras*

ous about what happened to wastes that were separated from the plutonium.

The Justice Department interceded on behalf of DOE in the name of national security and gained a delay until June 12. On June 2, the Sierra Club filed another lawsuit against the DOE and Rockwell, seeking deactivation of the fluidized bed incinerators, whose purpose was to burn plutonium-contaminated hazardous wastes. The Sierra Club maintained that these also needed permits and didn't have them.

Then, on June 6, the same day as the raid at Rocky Flats, the FBI, the DOE and the EPA went to court asking that the Sierra Club suit be set aside. A hearing was scheduled for June 30.

At that hearing, U.S. District Judge Lewis Babcock rejected the government's argument and gave the Sierra Club suit a green light to proceed. In his ruling, Judge Babcock explained that the

environmental group was actively pursuing enforcement of regulations aimed at protecting the public health.

He also said that evidence gained by the Sierra Club could help the grand jury investigating criminal conduct at Rocky Flats.

Denver attorney Adam Babich, who is representing the Sierra Club in the suit, said on July 17 that the DOE has been granted another delay. But the Sierra Club has received some information from Rockwell, and he said he expects the information from the DOE to be forthcoming.

In a related move, Colorado Gov. Roy Romer on July 7 created a panel of independent experts to monitor developments at Rocky Flats. The panel of 13 scientists, headed by John Bagby, former director of the Colorado State University Institute for Environmental Health, will advise Romer whether the plant is oper-

ating safely. The panel's recommendation could lead to the closing of the plant, Romer said.

With lawsuits, citizen monitoring councils and a grand jury all probing the secrets of Rocky Flats, the public may finally learn what environmental damage has been done under cover of national security.

□

Information for this article was drawn from the FBI search-warrant affidavit; "A Citizen's Guide," by the Radioactive Waste Campaign; the *Colorado Daily*, the *Rocky Mountain News*, the *Denver Post*, the *Boulder Daily Camera*. Dale Bailey and Maggie Arden of the *Colorado Daily* contributed to this article. Ron Baird is a writer for the *Colorado Daily* in Boulder, Colo.



Attempted encirclement of Rocky Flats in 1983

Peace group is looking for a few (20,000) good people

For the second time, a Boulder-based peace group is organizing an encirclement of the Rocky Flats bomb plant.

Colorado Freeze Voter, which is coordinating the Aug. 6 event, expects to attract the 20,000 people needed to achieve linked arms around the huge plant.

A previous attempt in 1983 drew an estimated 18,000 people.

Steve Perry, organizer of the event, explained that car pooling and child care will be provided in Golden and Boulder. People who drive to the site should circle the plant counter-clockwise on Highways 93, 72 and 128 and park off the roadway.

Perry recommends that people bring

water, protection from the sun, sturdy shoes and a portable FM radio. KGNU, 88.5 will coordinate logistics of the event and broadcast traffic conditions and instructions to participants. Perry advises that participants arrive well in advance of the 2 p.m. encirclement time.

However, Paula Elofson-Gardine, member of a group called Concerned Health Technicians for a Cleaner Col-

orado, has criticized the encirclement as unsafe because of the presence of plutonium in the area. Perry suggests that participants wear plastic bags over their shoes and bring painter's masks or wet bandanas to protect themselves against plutonium inhalation.

For more information, call Colorado Freeze Voter at 303/443-3680 or 303/447-9635.

—R.B.



Hotline for hot information

The Federal Bureau of Investigation wants to hear from people who have information about possible environmental law violations at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant.

To centralize information, the agency has established a 24-hour hotline number: 303/893-5729. In other developments:

- The FBI told the press July 15 that the investigation of Rocky Flats was taking far longer than an anticipated 10 days, and that 15 agents had been added to analyze documents taken from the plant;

- The Colorado Department of Health began its own investigation of Rocky Flats;

- The state and EPA reported that an uncontrolled chain reaction may have taken place at Rocky Flats in 1987;

- A coalition of 15 peace and environmental groups, the Rocky Flats Alliance, called on Colorado Gov. Roy Romer to close the plant to protect public health. Romer refused; and

- LeRoy Moore of Boulder, Colo., began a fast July 5, pledging to continue until Aug. 9 if Rocky Flats is not closed.

—Betsy Marston

LETTERS

MORE ON MARKETS

Dear HCN,

I thoroughly enjoyed reading the collection of Arizona-related articles in the June 19 issue, particularly the one about the BLM land trades. The article exposed wheeling and dealing that even I as an Arizona resident for the last three-and-a-half years had not known about. In that short time, I have seen vast areas of the beautiful Sonoran Desert gobbled up by a juggernaut of growth driven by greedy land speculators, developers and land-annexing cities. Besides the infamous Sun Valley "parkway" which I have criticized in the local Sierra Club newsletter, developers have pushed for other taxpayer-funded roads in newly accessible areas; fortunately, these have failed. Ironically, the recent economic bust has frozen in their tracks bulldozers fanning out of the city.

The BLM land trades resulted in potential desert greenbelts being flushed down the tubes from public ownership into the grim underworld of speculation, subdivision and quick profit-making in which the original residents of the desert, its flora and fauna, have no say. Yet these trades have liberated other ecologically sensitive lands from the grip of development companies.

I was disappointed to read about the audit of the BLM land trades. The trade that spurred this investigation involved trading away an isolated 4,880-acre tract of flat land near Casa Grande in exchange for 5,278 highly scenic acres in the mountains north of Phoenix that are rich in fauna and flora. (The latter was not mentioned in the HCN article.) Unfortunately, the investigation will likely ignore the non-monetary values that the Bureau of Land Management and the public have gained. Perhaps the only thing the BLM may be blamed for is not asking for even more land during

the exchange or keeping part of the Casa Grande land for future trades. I hope this investigation does not result in the BLM becoming another state land department that holds onto (speculates on) land near the city, which land it might otherwise trade for succumbs to rural subdivisions and other degradation.

No matter how the BLM acts, developers seem to control too much raw land and seem to be bent on making another sprawling, car-oriented Los Angeles out of central Arizona. Chaotic land development in my country of origin, Lebanon, which is almost entirely privately owned, has resulted in the environmental devastation of the once-forested mountains and valleys of the tiny country despite the war. Sad to say, the same seems to be going on everywhere outside (as well as on some) publicly owned land which some people have the gall to say we have too much of.

Keep up the good work. Although I enjoy articles about areas outside Arizona, I hope to see more articles exposing the holocaust destroying our underappreciated Sonoran Desert.

Fareed Abouhaidar
Mesa, Arizona

SUPERFICIAL

Dear HCN,

Your story on Char-Fuels (HCN, 5/22/89) makes good reading; however, at best it is incomplete and superficial. As a layman, I am impressed that Char-Fuels represents a genuine attempt to solve major environmental and distributional problems. To write that state of Wyoming loans to Char-Fuels somehow were the result of an informal agreement by the state's power structure is naive.

Author Lazarus has identified Char-Fuels' founder as a former VP for research at the University of Wyoming who also "had co-owned the Holiday Inn in Laramie, which wound up in bankruptcy." (The reader is invited to

make the connection.) The author did not report the pertinent fact that Char-Fuels' founder is regarded as having been the most energetic dean of the university's college of arts and sciences. In that position, he had attracted outstanding faculty members, built several academic departments into regional and national prominence and, necessarily, made enemies.

It has been noted that there exists in Wyoming an attitude, both infectious and destructive, which opposes anything which is imaginative, extraordinary, or visionary. Such opposition is always obscured by tangential issues. My guess is that Char-Fuels is now moribund and that eventually the Chinese or Japanese will get hold of the Char-Fuels process and make it work for them.

John F. Freeman
Laramie, Wyoming

PREMATURE

Dear HCN,

Just writing to let you know (as I'm sure many others will) that I believe your call for the end of ecotage is a bit premature. I think that Earth First! would agree with me that if ecotage were to cease immediately, the extractive establishment would be very quick to respond by strip-logging/mining/smeltering, etc. every last resource within their grasp. By the time the social solution came into effectiveness there would be nothing left to save. This is, of course, the classic defense of ecotage and it is still relevant today.

Your view represents the only possible long-term solution, though. Ecotage alone cannot accomplish anything more than short-term harassment of the extractive establishment. That establishment will live on gloriously until the will of the people becomes law. And even then, we know that law doesn't necessarily mean that enforcement will follow.

I applaud both Earth First! and the Nature Conservancy for their sincere

efforts to help solve the problems our society has wreaked upon the land. What a shame that such noble organizations are unable to utilize the weapons of their opponents: political coercion, massive bribes, misinformation, heavily subsidized propaganda and political assassination.

Evan Cantor
Boulder, Colorado

NO TIME

Dear HCN,

In a recent letter, Rodney Greeno makes a well-argued plea for a long-term, four-to-five-year process for a Utah BLM wilderness bill. While this might, indeed, be the best strategy in a rational world, it unfortunately ignores the grim realities of life in Utah.

There seems to be an assumption by Mr. Greeno that it will be easier to negotiate with the Utah congressional delegation in four-to-five years than it is now. The chances, however, of Democrat Wayne Owens being replaced by an anti-wilderness Republican in 1990 or 1992 are considerably greater than the chances of replacing any of the anti-wilderness Republican members by a pro-wilderness Democrat. A coalition of anti-wilderness organizations, led by the Farm Bureau, is currently mounting a strong attack on Owens and his wilderness bill. If Owens is not re-elected, what are the prospects for his bill?

Each year the amount of BLM wilderness in Utah decreases significantly. Much of this is a result of destruction by ORVs; this is particularly evident in the San Rafael, Canyonlands and Cedar Mesa areas, but it is widespread throughout Utah. BLM is doing precious little to protect the 1.9 million acres in its WSAs from this damage, and nothing at all for the remainder of the 5.1 million acres.

Jack T. Spence
Teasdale, Utah

12-High Country News — July 31, 1989

LETTERS

GLOBAL CITY

Dear HCN,

In March, the Environmental Protection Agency began the process of vetoing the proposed Two Forks Dam in Colorado. Shortly after environmentalists congratulated themselves over this victory, a carefully orchestrated booster campaign persuaded voters in suburban Adams County to pass a referendum creating a gigantic new airport northeast of Denver. It is regrettable that the environmental movement has ignored the new airport issue.

Both Two Forks and the new airport are part of a thrust designed to transform Denver from a regional trade center into a "global city" capable of competing in the international market of the 21st century. The comprehensive vision, long-term strategy and coordination of this thrust will have to be overcome by the environmental movement if the mega-development of northern Colorado is to be successfully challenged.

Jay D. Jurie
Orlando, Florida

QUESTIONS?

Dear HCN,

There are a great many positions taken in HCN with which I agree. I do have a few questions about the headline front-page article of June 19. Dave Foreman awoke on May 31, 1989, in his own bed in his Tucson, Ariz., home (where the temperature was to reach a high of 96 degrees that Wednesday) to gaze down the barrel of an FBI gun. Could that home per chance be connected to the same power source as serves the Central Arizona Project?

Uh ... was Foreman's air-conditioner running at the time? Or, assuming he would disdain air-conditioning, maybe a swamp cooler? If he eschewed a swamp cooler, perhaps a window fan. No window fan? How about a simple oscillator setting on a bureau? No? Maybe he forsook electricity altogether on that 61-degree night at his Tucson home in favor of a generator. What would a generator run on — petroleum products or a lead acid battery? Oh, his house had no cooling system whatsoever. In Arizona at 96 degrees? Where was he planning to summer — a glacier in Alaska?

And how would he get to Alaska — drive a gasoline-powered auto? Perhaps on a diesel train? Surely not in a jet-propelled passenger vehicle ...

Alas, poor Dave Foreman, the former bean farmer ...

B. L. Carroll
Arvada, Colorado

ANASAZI

Dear HCN,

In your July 3 issue, Todd Guenther expresses a great deal of deserved righteous indignation over pot-hunting and looting in Anasazi sites of the Southwest. However, in two cases, his zeal borders on the antagonistic and inaccurate. He refers to the "notorious Weatherill (sic) brothers, who plundered Mesa Verde." I believe that if he were to read *Anasazi* by Frank McNitt, he might adopt a more conciliatory tone to the Wetherills. Who amongst us wouldn't have done as Richard Wetherill did under the same circumstances? And how can Guenther judge the 19th century Wetherill by 20th century standards?

Guenther also claims that the Anasazi "enjoyed a denser, more successful population in the Southwest than our modern society ..." Does he mean to compare the ancient populations of the Mesa Verde, Chaco and Kayenta Anasazi to that of modern Albuquerque, Tucson, Phoenix, Santa Fe, Salt Lake City and Denver? What does he mean by "successful population"? Didn't the Anasazi disappear for many of the same reasons that we might someday disappear ourselves? So just how successful is arroyo-cutting, lowering of water tables and uncontrolled deforestation anyway? That is what eventually drove out the Anasazi.

Evan Cantor
Boulder, Colorado

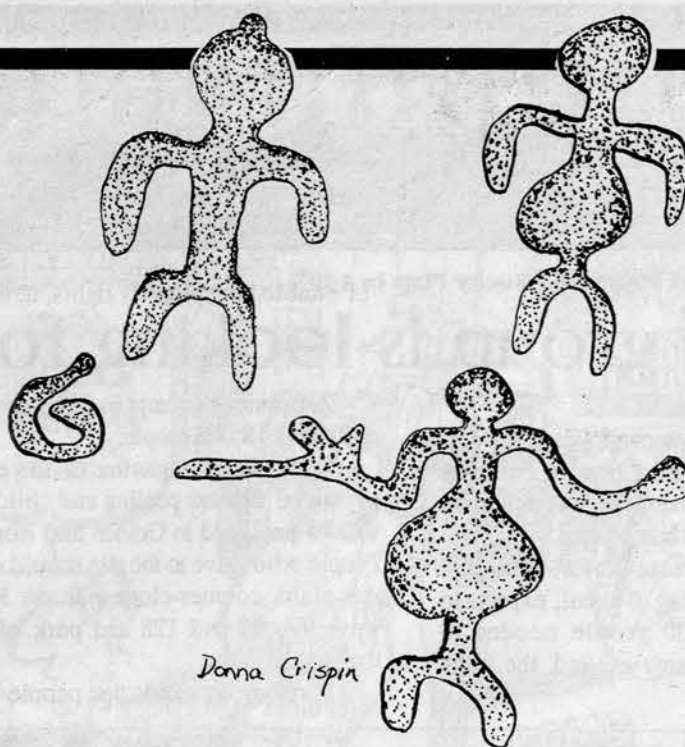
NOT HIS CHAMPION

Dear HCN,

Thank you for revealing the true identity and purpose of the "Communities for a Great Northwest" and its director, Bruce Vincent (June 12, 1989). In looking at the photos of the logging trucks, I could only chuckle when I read the name "Champion" as being one of the corporations sponsoring the "Log Haul" demonstration. As an east Tennessean I have observed this corporation's incredible unethical acts in attempting to justify its poisoning of the Pigeon River from the firm's Canton, N.C., paper mill. Champion has transformed a clean, clear mountain river into a foaming, stinking sewer that looks like burned coffee, smells like rotten eggs and carries a dose of cancer-causing dioxin. This has been the case for over 80 years, and despite record profits, the firm has done practically nothing to clean up the poisonous waste water they dump daily into Tennessee's waterways.

So when Champion speaks in Montana, I would simply laugh. They are proven liars in Tennessee. Ask Tennessee Gov. Ned McWherter. The firm's name should be changed to "Champion Polluters"!

Orville E. Bach, Jr.
Morristown, Tennessee



Donna Crispin

THE PUBLIC'S LAND

Dear HCN,

In response to the July 3 letter by Mr. Russel D. Butcher about the HCN news story (6/19/89) on Bureau of Land Management land trades in Arizona, we, the writers, would like to make a few comments.

First, there is no doubt that the Arizona real estate market is collapsing. In fact, the BLM trades may have greatly contributed to the overextended market by placing more than 100,000 acres of public land west of Phoenix on the private market in just three years.

However, Mr. Butcher fails to recognize, when he states falling land prices have justified low BLM appraisals, that the proponent of several of the land trades, a Canadian real estate speculator named Huddie Bell, got his millions of dollars long ago. The people getting stung for losses now are far down the daisy-chain of real estate transactions.

Second, Mr. Butcher is incorrect in his description of the Bureau of Reclamation land at Lake Pleasant as "situated on the lakefront." The property, in which Arizona Sen. Dennis DeConcini at one time had a small share, is south of the New Waddell dam site and is crossed by the dam's flood spillway. There is no lakefront property and no view of the lake from any point on the property, according to DeConcini and others.

Third, Mr. Butcher correctly points out that the land trades with the Forest Service are often delayed for years and sometimes cancelled because of "more public appraisal review." Mr. Butcher, however, takes the stance that the public's opportunity to review BLM exchanges in the same detail would not "be helpful in bringing about BLM's land exchange objectives."

This is where we differ. If public review of a proposed land exchange involving public lands brings about the delay or cancellation of a swap, then so be it. After all, it's the public's land, not BLM's.

John Dougherty
Yellow Springs, Ohio

Jill Morrison
Los Angeles, California

FIRE WASTE

Dear HCN,

Your hotline, "An expensive fire" (June 19), brought back many memories. With the equipment and personnel involved, I can believe it cost millions to extinguish. I also believe that Vernon Smith isn't the only party responsible for the costs.

I worked as a medic on the Hellroaring fire and saw, heard and was person-

ally affected by the mismanagement and waste that occurred. Understanding that managing an operation of that size must have been a nightmare, one must also understand that well-paid "professionals" were in charge.

The biggest waste that I remember was with the air operations. Bear management had their hands in it by requiring that garbage had priority over everything but life and death situations. Crews were left at abandoned fire camps and meals and supplies were delayed because garbage hauling was more important. V.I.P. flights by government officials and the press were so common it was treated as an ongoing joke.

"Overhead" was overstaffed to the point that those doing the actual fighting sometimes went without sleeping bags when their gear was delivered to the wrong camp.

No question that if it is proved that the outfitter was responsible he should be accountable for some of the costs; but I feel that a large portion of the amount is the government's responsibility.

Alan Green
Gardiner, Montana

THANKS

Dear HCN,

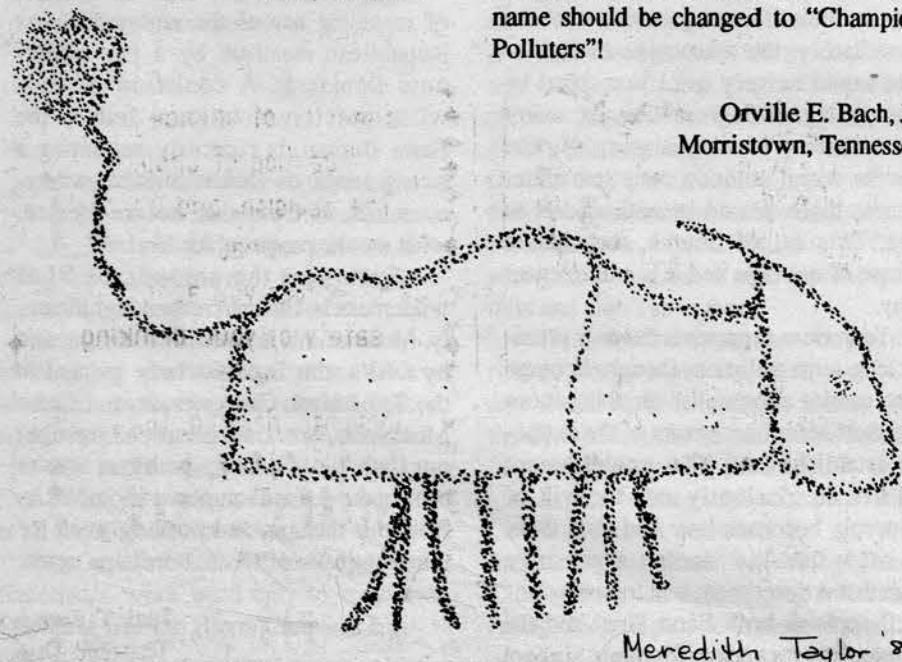
A heartfelt thanks to Jeff DeBonis and his letter to Chief Dale Robertson of the U.S. Forest Service (HCN, 6/5/89). Every time he says "timber industry" we in Colorado could say "ski industry."

An extremely biased draft environmental impact study was just issued by our Routt National Forest on Lake Catamount, a proposed new ski area on 6,600 acres of public land. Not only does our Forest Supervisor, Jerry Schmidt, think we need a new ski area despite all evidence, but he is giving away 2,000 acres of a proposed wilderness area to make it better. This conflicts with the 50-year plan for the Routt National Forest, but Mr. Schmidt says he can change that.

Plastered all over the front pages of our newspapers is the news that Steamboat Ski Corp. was just sold to the Japanese company, Kanko Kamori. But Mr. Schmidt says public land will not be leased to foreigners because the Forest Service made the Japanese set up a dummy corporation!

Audubon magazine recently identified a new political science: manipulating or suppressing the results of scientific research by politicians or bureaucrats. Two Forks is a good example, Lake Catamount is another. Thanks, Jeff DeBonis, for making that clear.

Joan Hoffmann
Steamboat Springs, Colorado



Meredith Taylor '88

LETTERS

MORE ON MARKETS

Dear HCN,

I found Thomas Power's reasons in your May 8 issue for opposing free-market environmentalism unconvincing. His distaste for markets apparently leads him to tolerate, for the time being at least, a political system that fosters environmental destruction and economic wastes — for example, below-cost timber sales, subsidized wetland destruction from farm programs, and so on.

His hope is that someday federal agencies will have shifted political alliance from commercial to environmental interests, and the environment will be saved. Perhaps he has a point since environmentalists have managed to secure significant acreage of wilderness protection on former multiple-use lands. But the political will against giving up more land to wilderness is strengthening. Indeed, on remaining unprotected lands the Forest Service is pushing to increase timber sales on Western national forests, claiming a timber shortfall and local unemployment. Mill closings and unemployment no doubt catch the attention of politicians wishing to prevent such dire circumstances. If Mr. Power wants a more realistic approach, then perhaps he should reconsider markets.

Mr. Power states that markets cannot protect environmental values because people will not pay to preserve wildlife or habitat. "This puts the provision of public goods such as protected wildlands at a distinct disadvantage..."

But Mr. Power is wrong. Many environmental goods are privately produced even though individuals exist who can enjoy the benefits without paying for them. In Power's words, "Take the grizzly bear," as an example. There may be non-paying beneficiaries of grizzly bear protection, but this has not prevented the private sector from protecting grizzlies and their habitat (probably more effectively than the National Park Service). The Nature Conservancy has managed to overcome this problem using private contributions and fees from recreation to support its 18,000-acre Pine Butte Preserve in northwestern Montana — the last lowland grizzly habitat in the lower 48 states. The revenue from the operation of its nearby guest ranch is used to offset the operational expenses of the preserve.

Mr. Power recognizes that if property rights to environmental benefits could be assigned to specific people, then the environment would be protected, but he considers this impossible. Granted, for

some environmental goods this may be difficult, and for goods such as clean air or water too costly for now. But the assignment of property rights is not static. As demand for environmental goods rises and as technology lowers the costs of establishing property rights, new institutions for protection become feasible.

The discovery of barbed wire in the latter part of the 19th century increased the pace of establishing private property rights to the Western range because it overcame the problem that timber was scarce on the range, making fencing too costly. Similarly, the development of science and technology for monitoring wildlife may someday allow more efficient institutions to protect and produce wildlife. It is now possible to identify and monitor individual whales and their offspring using "genetic fingerprints." This affords greater protection through more precise monitoring and may allow environmental entrepreneurs to protect endangered mammals by assuming ownership of individuals.

The point is that we should not rule out the possibility of property-rights solutions, and therefore, we must guard against governmental obstacles which prevent their evolution. For example, subsidized recreation on our national forests is one such obstacle. The "massive clearcuts" in the Gallatin range by Burlington Northern referred to by Power illustrates price distortion generated by government-subsidized recreation. These private lands about national forest land in a checkerboard pattern, with each tract one-square mile in size. The Forest Service is conducting clearcuts on adjacent national forest land. Timber is sold at less than cost and recreation such as fishing and hunting is provided free of charge. Such policy reduces the value of wildlife and recreation for private landowners so they may as well clearcut, too. They cannot capture the value of recreation and wildlife. If they could, landowners would respond by producing more of it.

Such is the case on International Paper's vast timber holdings in the South. IP collects fees for hunting, fishing and other recreation on its land, and responds by harvesting less timber and providing more wildlife habitat than it did prior to its recreation program. The fees from recreation now constitute 25 percent of total profits, so it's not hard to see why management is receptive to the idea of producing other goods from their timberlands.

State water laws that prevent rights to instream flows are another obstacle to property-rights solutions. Mr. Power finds himself in an uncomfortable position of alliance with free-market environmentalists such as Terry L. Anderson

and myself. Our proposal urging changes which would allow organizations to lease instream water rights from consumptive users appeared in *Fly Fisherman* in June 1988. It helped spur action on the part of Trout Unlimited and other conservationists to lobby for new instream flow legislation. While I am neither Republican nor Democrat, I am an advocate of market-oriented approaches to environmental problems. New water laws which foster water markets in instream flow protection are an excellent example of a market-oriented approach to capturing the rising value of fish and wildlife. The groundwork for such an approach was based on research by Terry L. Anderson in his book, *Water Crisis: Ending the Policy Drought* (Cato Institute, 1983).

Don Leal
Bozeman, Montana

The writer is a research associate at the Political Economy Research Center in Bozeman, Montana.

JAPAN HO!

Dear HCN,

In reference to the story on spotted owls (HCN, 5/8/89), the timber shortage in western Washington is caused by the export of over 4 billion board-feet of lumber a year to Japan. This figure is for Washington state only. If the lumber were milled here and finished products were shipped to Japan there would be no layoffs at the mills. But the Japanese will only accept unmilled logs, not finished lumber products.

We need to stop the export of logs in Washington and Oregon to keep the jobs at home.

The real problem here is the diminishing amount of old growth forests. This means the mills of the future must be adjusted to take smaller diameter logs. It looks as if old growth is a one-time thing, so when it is gone, it is gone — otherwise we would have old growth again in Minnesota, Wisconsin and upper Michigan.

If anyone doubts the amount of timber shipped from Washington state, all they have to do is look at the loading facilities at Port Angeles and Aberdeen. These places operate day and night filling ships bound for Japan.

Clint Watkins
Spokane, Washington

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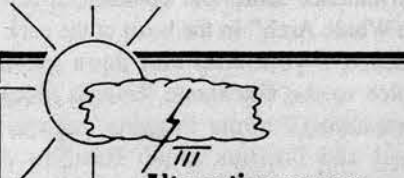
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Laurel Casjens

Arches National Park, Utah

Utah's land board threatens to kill its hostages

by Terri Martin

Don't be surprised if, on your next visit to Arches National Park, you find a new curio shop, convenience store and commercial resort at "Eye of the Whale Arch" in the heart of the park. And don't be shocked if your next hike down spectacular Coyote Gulch to the Escalante River is blocked by a "No Trespassing/Private Property" sign just before you reach the famous Jacob Hamblin Arch in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area.

In fact, citizens of and visitors to Utah may be running into a lot of new "Private Property/No Trespassing" signs, as well as shops, stores and summer homes — and the fresh scars of new roads and mineral development — throughout four of Utah's national park units.

On July 12, the Utah Board of State Lands and Forestry voted unanimously to approve a draft "marketing plan" to sell off 116,000 acres of state-owned lands within Arches National Park, Capitol Reef National Park, Dinosaur National Monument, Glen Canyon National Recreation Area and the Navajo and Goshute Indian reservations. The four national park units contain approximately 82,000 acres of the 116,000 acres of state inholdings in scattered one-mile-square parcels.

The draft plan calls for "active marketing" of all state inholdings with "significant development potential," including solicitation of development proposals "on an international scale." The plan also calls for "simultaneous" offering of all minerals interests in the national park units and Indian reservations.

One parcel identified for active "marketing" contains Jacob Hamblin Arch in Glen Canyon National Recreation Area's Coyote Gulch. And marketing of one Arches parcel "will emphasize the fact that the famous geologic feature known as the Eye of the Whale is located on the property." The Land Board's plan would highlight this scenic feature "as an attraction for potential developers" which "undoubtedly increases property values," and it would emphasize that this Arches parcel has "excellent

potential for development as a campground and associated amenities such as a convenience store, showers, curio shop, etc."

Citizens across the country should be outraged. The State Land Board's proposal turns temples into market places. It sends a bleak message: Utah's leaders do not value and will not protect the natural heritage entrusted to us in our national parks. It tells the nation that Utah is governed by people who lack any sense of the spiritual, aesthetic and historical heritage that is central to our national character.

The Land Board claims that federal officials have failed to help in trading state land parcels out of the national parks. The truth is that the marketing plan is a blatant effort to blackmail Congress to approve legislation that would trade state lands into a unit of the national park system.

Consider these events:

In May 1987, Gov. Norman Bangerter and then-Secretary of Interior Donald Hodel signed a Memorandum of Understanding agreeing to work together to trade state lands out of Utah's national parks. The memo legitimately recognized that state land in national park units creates management problems for both the National Park Service and Utah.

The park inholding problem addressed by the agreement originated with Utah's 1896 Statehood Act, which granted Utah every ninth square mile section of land for the support of the public schools. A checkerboard pattern of state and federal ownership was created across most of Utah. Thus, when Utah's national park units were established, the scattered state "school sections" within the designated park boundaries became inholdings.

Exchanging these state inholdings for lands outside the parks is in the interest of both the state and the National Park system, because the state's interest in generating money for the school system is in conflict with proper protection of the parks' natural settings.

The National Parks and Conservation Association and other conservation organizations supported the 1987 agreement to trade state lands out of national park units.

Five months later, however, in October 1987, the governor turned his back on that Memo of Understanding. Rather than trade state lands out of the parks, Bangerter proposed trading into Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, a unit of the National Park system. Bangerter sought to consolidate the state holdings in five large parcels on the shores of Lake Powell for marinas, hotels and other facilities.

The governor has not won approval of the "Lake Powell exchange" from either the Department of Interior or the U.S. Congress, and for good reason. While the scheme might make money for the state, it flies in the face of the nation's long-standing commitment to protect national parks.

The proposed Lake Powell exchange would result in inappropriate and excessive development in the Glen Canyon Recreation Area. The National Park Service already has plans for additional visitor facilities, including seven marinas. Once those facilities are built, NPS studies show that the national recreation area will have reached its carrying capacity. Additional development would result in overuse and degradation.

The State Land Board is now trying to blackmail the federal Congress into approving the Lake Powell exchange. In initiating its draft marketing plan, the board said it will begin selling state-owned lands in the national parks on Oct. 1 unless congressional action is "imminent." Legislation to authorize the exchange has been sent to Utah's congressional delegation.

This kind of blackmail is offensive, futile and foolish. Congress will not be blackmailed, Utah will be the object of national derision, and Utah's national parks will be unnecessarily jeopardized.

The State Land Board further attempts to justify its proposal to "sell off the parks" by claiming that the 1896 Statehood Act compels it to manage these state lands to "maximize" the generation of revenue for support of the public schools. While the state does have a long-term obligation to benefit education, that duty is much more flexible than the board likes to

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BULLETIN BOARD

A CHALLENGE TO CONVENTIONAL VIEWS

The Rocky Mountain Humanities Network, a consortium of state humanities councils from Arizona, Colorado, Utah, New Mexico and Wyoming, is sponsoring a symposium called "Trails Towards a New Western History" in Santa Fe, N.M., Sept. 27-29. Participants include scholars who have challenged conventional views of western history, including Richard White of the University of Utah, author of *Land Use, Environment and Social Change and Roots of Dependency*; Patricia Limerick, history professor at the University of Colorado and author of *The Legacy of Conquest: The Unbroken Past of the American West*; and Richard Maxwell of the University of Oregon, author of *Strain of Violence*. Donald Worster, author of *Nature's Economy, Dust Bowl, and Rivers of Empire*, will give the keynote address, "No More Lies: Facing the Facts of Western History." The symposium will also initiate a regional tour of "Trails Through Time," a photographic exhibit documenting Western trails which helped settle the region, from old pioneer routes to railroads and Route 66. At no additional charge, registrants may also attend the Santa Fe Trail Association Symposium, Sept. 28-Oct. 2, which features keynote speaker Stewart Udall, former Secretary of the Interior. For more information, contact Diane Facinelli, Arizona Humanities Council, The Ellis-Shackelford House, 1242 North Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85004 (602/257-0335).

ANIMAL ATTORNEYS

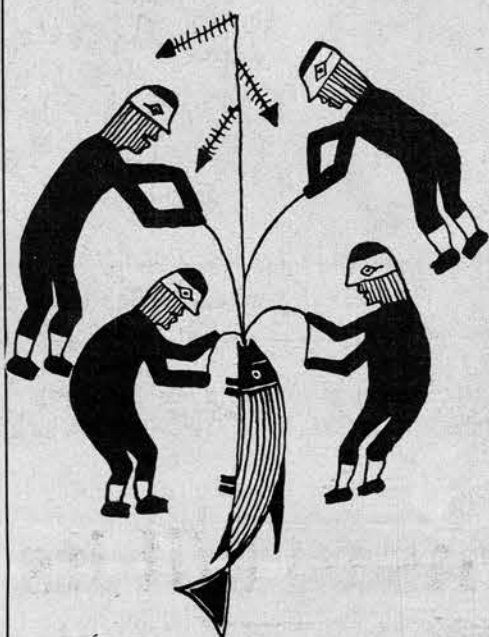
St. Francis of Assisi believed that animals, like humans, have rights and deserve respect. The Animal Legal Defense Fund, a nonprofit organization and nationwide network of over 300 attorneys, has marshaled his philosophy for political action. For 10 years the group has represented mistreated farm and zoo animals, filed lawsuits against trappers and sport hunters, and lobbied for stricter enforcement of anti-cruelty laws. In 1987, it spearheaded a campaign in California against dissection in high school biology classes, culminating in a state law giving students the option to choose. Following the victory, the fund established a national toll-free hotline for concerned students (1/800-922-FROG) and published a brochure detailing how to challenge dissection in the schools. Ultimately, the Animal Legal Defense Fund hopes biology will become a "life science, not a death science." The Animal Legal Defense Fund is at 1363 Lincoln Ave., San Rafael, CA 94901 (415/459-0855).



AN ENDANGERED ACT

Virtually every year since its birth in 1973, the Endangered Species Act has been in the midst of controversy. The recent fracas over continued logging in spotted owl and grizzly bear habitat is typical of the confrontation it has caused. Yet, despite almost constant attack — and near termination in 1976 — it remains one of our most valuable tools for preserving natural diversity, according to Daniel J. Rohlf, an adjunct law professor at Northwestern School of Law. Rohlf spent more than four years researching and writing *The Endangered Species Act: A Guide to its Protections and Implementations*. The result is a comprehensive guide with a detailed discussion of the act's provisions and amendments and an analysis of federal court and agency interpretation. It also includes sections on the act's history, how species are identified for protection, and on the often-attacked Section 7, which provides for enforcement.

Environmental Law Society, Stanford Law School, Stanford, CA 94305 (415/723-4421). Paper: \$12, plus \$1.50 for shipping. 207 pages.



CELEBRATING THE ORGAN MOUNTAINS

The Nature Conservancy, with the help of the Bureau of Land Management, recently acquired land in the pristine Organ Mountains in southern New Mexico. On Aug. 19, the two groups will team up to celebrate their conservation efforts in New Mexico at the Organ Mountains Festival, to be held five miles east of Las Cruces, N.M. The Nature Conservancy also hopes to generate support for the creation of an Organ Mountains National Conservation Area to protect the region's unique geology and rare flora and fauna. Festivities include foot races, mountain bike rallies, nature hikes, climbing demonstrations, Native American dancing, music and food. All proceeds will go to the further development of the Organ Mountains A.B. Cox Visitor Center, and for the hiring of a full-time preserve manager. The festival begins at 10 a.m., and tickets are \$7.50 for adults, \$5 for children, and \$10 at the gate. For further information contact either The Nature Conservancy at 107 Cienega St., Santa Fe, NM 87501 (505/988-3867) or the BLM/Las Cruces District, 1800 Marquess St., Las Cruces, NM 88005 (505/525-8228).

BITTERROOT FRIENDS

The Bitterroot Valley in western Montana is vivid country — high mountain passes, spacious tracts of pine and fertile river valleys. But logging and road construction may threaten the region's ecosystem and quality of life. In response to development, area residents have formed the Friends of the Bitterroot, a group dedicated to preserving the 60-mile valley and environs. Their concern stems from extensive clearcutting, beginning in the 1960s, in the surrounding Bitterroot and Lolo national forests. Currently, logging on the face of St. Mary's peak, a popular hiking area overlooking the valley, has raised the ire of group members. Besides aesthetic damage, clearcutting also affects local ranchers. Without timber cover on the steep slopes of the Sapphire Mountains and Bitterroot Range the snowpack melts rapidly, leaving the ranchers high and dry without adequate water for late summer and early autumn. Friends of the Bitterroot has begun to publish reports detailing environmental damage from logging, is holding meetings, and is sponsoring trips to endangered areas. For further information contact Donnie Laughlin (406/821-3134) or Stewart Brandborg (406/777-3462).

MILLENNIAL ENVIRONMENTALISM

Bioregionalism and global warming are this year's topics at Environment 2000, the first annual conference on international and regional environmental issues in Steamboat Springs, Colo., Sept. 15-17. Speakers include Charles Wilkinson, law professor at the University of Colorado, Sen. Tim Wirth, D-Colo., and William Kellogg, meteorologist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colo. Discussions and lectures will cover pesticide regulation, recycling and community environmental activism. Conference packages, including meals and lodging, run from \$65 to \$80, and college credit is available. For more information call 303/879-1061 or 303/379-5219, or write to Environment 2000, c/o Cindy Wither, P.O. Box 773033, Steamboat Springs, CO 80477.

ELECTRIFYING HEALTH RISKS

High-tension power lines, common throughout the West, may be more than just a scenic blight, according to *Biological Effects of Power Frequency Electric and Magnetic Fields*. This report by the Office of Technological Assessment, which Congress created in 1972 to help lawmakers understand the consequences of technological change, confirms what some scientists have long claimed: Electric and magnetic fields produced by power production and transmission systems can pose significant hazards to public health. The fields are created wherever an oscillating current flows. Drawing from a variety of scientific studies by government and academic researchers, OTA says that electric and magnetic fields may alter the physiology of living creatures down to the individual cell. Effects may be profound, ranging from the disruption of the circadian system — the "inner clock" of living creatures — to an increased risk of cancer. The paper concludes that while more research is needed to establish the exact causes of health effects and ways to reduce their impact, funding is scarce.

U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D.C. 20402 (202/783-3238). \$4.75. 103 pages.



MINING IN A WILDERNESS

The public finally has a chance to voice an opinion in the ongoing debate over a controversial mining proposal in the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness near Aspen, Colo. The White River National Forest has requested written comments about marble quarrying on a portion of 472 acres inside the wilderness where Aspen resident Stephan Albouy owns mining rights. The land was privately owned before the Trust for Public Land and the Forest Service negotiated the purchase of surface rights to prevent second-home development (HCN, 7/7/86). The purchasers failed to buy the mining rights, however, and they remain in force. Last summer, the Forest Service issued Albouy a special use permit to bring motorized vehicles into the wilderness to remove remnant marble left on the land from turn-of-the-century quarrying operations. The dirt road that leads into the heavily used wilderness is a county road, over which the Forest Service has no jurisdiction. The agency can require Albouy to take reasonable environmental precautions and reclaim the surface. Written comments should be sent by Aug. 7 to the Aspen Ranger District, 806 West Hallam, Aspen, CO 81611.

DRIVING WASTE OUT

The West is the nation's nuclear garbage dump, and residents are increasingly concerned that the trucks carrying radioactive waste might spill on their doorstep. The National Nuclear Waste Transportation Task Force, a group of Western anti-nuclear activists, will brainstorm ideas on how to clean up waste transportation during its fifth annual meeting in Carson City, Nev., Aug. 11-13. The group will focus on publicizing road and rail routes — all of which pass through urban areas — to the proposed Yucca Mountain facility in Nevada and the Waste Isolation Pilot Project in New Mexico. A \$20 donation is requested to help cover costs. For more information, contact Bob Fulkerson, Citizen Alert, Box 5391, Reno, NV (702/827-4200).

Utah land board...

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pretend. Certainly, nothing in the act compels a fire sale of park holdings. In fact, no legal decisions have ever compelled short-term sales of the sort the board now proposes. There is no legal duty to dispose of lands in the short-term rather than hold and manage them for what could be more advantageous exchanges in the long-term.

State law also mandates that state lands will be managed under multiple use principles, balancing wildlife, scenic, recreational and other environmental values with commodity values. And federal laws mandating protection of national parks also must be respected in managing the state sections within the parks.

Even if one's sole objective is to maximize

economic return on these lands, the Land Board's proposal makes little sense. The state almost assuredly could make more money if it traded state lands out of the parks into areas more appropriate for development before trying to sell them. Who is going to pay a high price for lands in a park which face restrictions on development?

Finally, the draft marketing plan undercuts the state's ability to generate income from its mineral leases. The plan proposes, for example, to offer mineral leases at a reduced rate to offset any added expense incurred by constructing access through a park. The plan also proposes to assist lessees in defending themselves against legal challenges to the access roads, and allows them to subtract the cost of constructing an access road from royalty payments.

These proposed "incentives" raise the question whether the Land Board is really trying to generate

revenue or simply trying to promote mineral development in our national parks.

The State Land Board will hold seven public hearings in August, and invites written and oral public comment on its plan to "sell off the parks."

If you ever dreamed of hiking a wild, untrammelled Coyote Gulch with your children, or watching the sun rise over the undisturbed wonder of any of our national parks, it's time to speak out.

For more information, write or call the State Land Board, 355 West North Temple, 3 Triad Center, Suite 400, Salt Lake City, UT 84180 (801/538-5508).

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Terri Martin is Rocky Mountain regional representative for the National Parks and Conservation Association in Salt Lake City, Utah.

16-High Country News — July 31, 1989

BOOK NOTES

1988's fires in photos, words

Yellowstone on Fire, by the staff of the *Billings Gazette*. Billings, Montana: Billings Gazette. \$12.95.

Summer of Fire, by Jim Carrier. Layton, Utah: Gibbs Smith, Publisher. \$12.95.

Yellowstone and the Fires of Change, by George Wuerthner. Salt Lake City, Utah: Dream Garden Press. \$8.95

The Fires of '88, by Ross W. Simpson. Helena, Montana: American Geographic Publishing. \$9.95.

by Bert Lindler

Yellowstone's runaway fires ignited a publishing firestorm as writers and photographers rushed fire books into print.

Given the abundance, the question facing park visitors this summer will be: "Which book?"

The most interesting reviews throw bricks. But since this review is about forest fires, I'll follow the lead of the Forest Service. No matter how disastrous the fire, the agency's internal reviews have begun by handing out commendations to firefighters.

Why lead with commendations? Well, for one thing, every Forest Service reviewer might someday be reviewed by those he or she reviews. So, there's nothing wrong with handing out a few carnations on the way to the woodshed.

It's the same with writers. When did you see a book review written by someone other than a writer contemplating a book? Who knows, there may be a book in this for me someday. So here are the carnations:

Best Photography — *Yellowstone on Fire* by the staff of the *Billings Gazette*.

Best Writing — *Summer of Fire* by Jim Carrier.

Best Explanation of Fire Ecology — *Yellowstone and the Fire of Change* by George Wuerthner.

Only Attempt to Cover Fires Elsewhere in Montana — *The Fires of '88* by Ross W. Simpson.

Now for the bricks. Ross Simpson's book is poorly organized and poorly written. He appears to have regurgitated his notes so the reader wouldn't miss anything he jotted down.

Nor is Simpson willing to let the reader overlook his own importance. He begins his book by saying, "The first time I saw the 1988 Yellowstone fires was on Aug. 26, while flying from Billings, Mont., to Salt Lake City, Utah, with Republican vice presidential nominee Dan Quayle."

But readers who are interested in finding out exactly how disgruntled area residents felt about the runaway fires will find the quotes in Simpson's book. Other books gloss over those concerns.

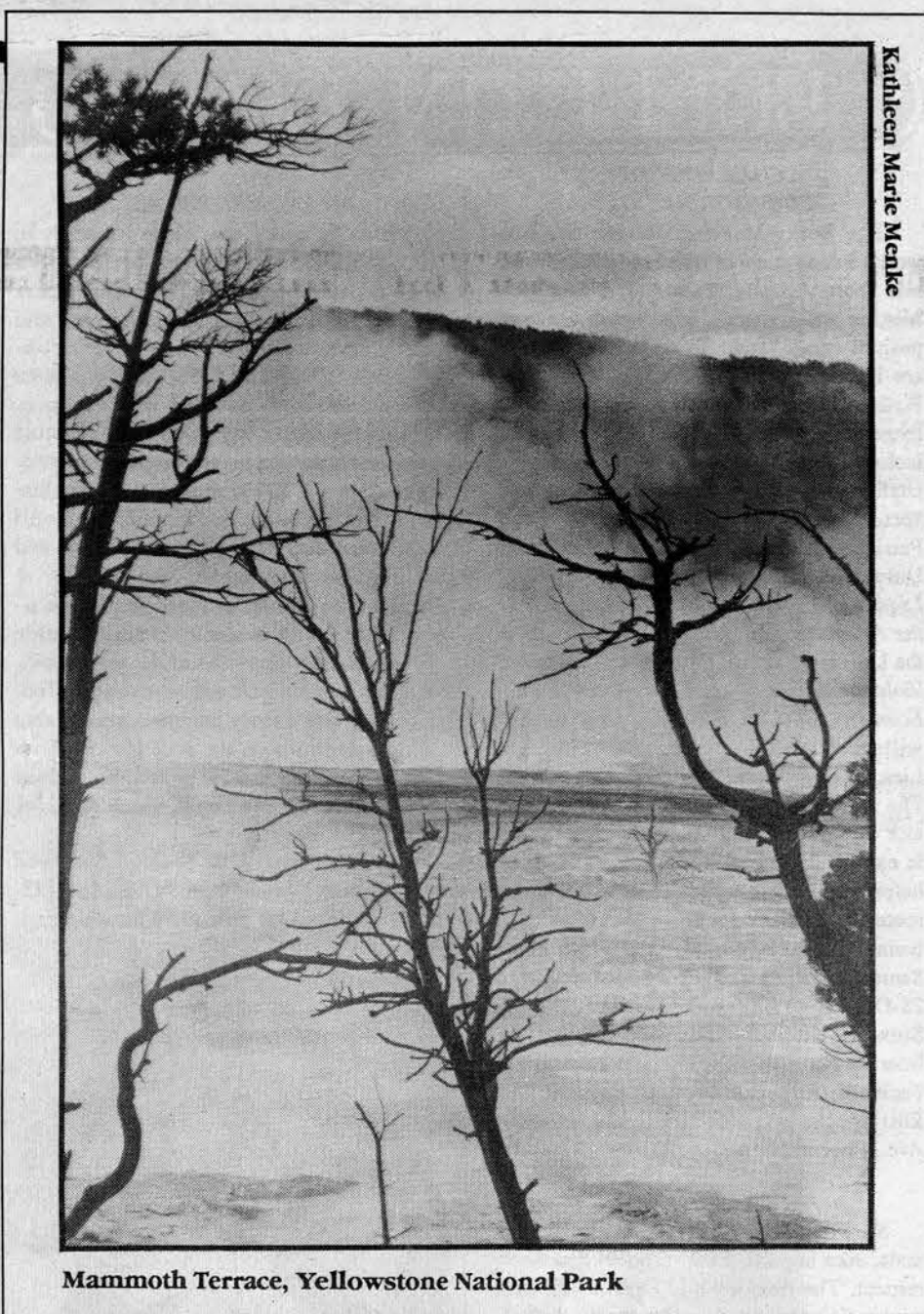
The final chapter, written by Dave Tippetts of the Forest Service's regional office in Missoula, briefly summarizes the fires that burned across much of Montana last summer. They received little notice in the national press but were of great significance to the 805,000 residents of Montana. One of the book's pictures of the other Montana fires is my own, showing the potential for conflict of interest in the reviewing game.

George Wuerthner's book was the first fire book published. He focuses not so much on the fires themselves as on the role of fire in nature.

"From an ecologist's perspective, it is the suppression of fires, not the fires themselves which is truly destructive," he writes. "Wildfires are the dominant driving force behind the Yellowstone ecosystem, just as rain is to the tropical rainforests."

Wuerthner, who lives in Livingston, Mont., has degrees in wildlife biology and botany as well as a master's degree in science communication. So it shouldn't be surprising that he focuses on the forest, not the trees.

Like many other Montanans, I found it easier to take an ecological perspective on last summer's fires when the smoke plumes were in the distance. Once smoke began choking off much of the summer, it was hard not to get a lot more



Mammoth Terrace, Yellowstone National Park

Kathleen Marie Menke

interested in fire suppression than in beneficial fires.

Wuerthner displays little sympathy for smoked-out, or burned-out, residents. "Constructing one's home in a heavily forested mountain valley such as Cooke City at the northeast entrance to the park is rather like placing a house on the flood plain," he writes. "Fires will not sweep the forest every summer, nor will a flood deluge an entire river bottom each year, but those who build their homes in such places are tempting fate."

George B. Robinson, the park's chief naturalist and William Penn Mott Jr., former director of the National Park Service, have written letters praising Wuerthner's book.

"Had we sought the publication of a thoroughly accurate and objective treatment of the history-making summer of 1988, we could not have made a better selection," Robinson wrote.

The *Billings Gazette* was a finalist in the Pulitzer Prize competition for its coverage of the Yellowstone fires. Chief photographer Larry Mayer flew his own airplane while covering the story. Besides taking pictures, he circled the park in his plane, landing to pick up film from other staff photographers.

The photographs are splendid. The best are displayed across two pages. If you buy this book for the photographs, you will not be disappointed by the writing. Bozeman-based reporter Robert Ekey stepped back from his notes to write a book that is informative and pleasant to read.

Jim Carrier's coverage of the Yellowstone fires earned him a finalist's berth in the Edward Meeman awards for environmental writing. Carrier, a roving Western correspondent for the *Denver Post*, used the diary of park fire lookout George Henley to help organize his book.

"It looked at first like a campfire," Carrier begins. "A thin blue gray wisp of smoke above the dark green canopy that stretched away from the lookout windows on Mt. Sheridan. From where George Henley stood in the middle of his

stone and shingled perch, the smoke was northwest, across the Red Mountains and Lewis Lake, across the road to Yellowstone's south entrance, just beyond the channel of water that drained Shoshone Lake."

The photographs in this book are good, but not as spectacular as those of the *Gazette*. Nor are they displayed as well. However, the Nature Book Society apparently liked the writing since it is offering Carrier's book to its members.

The book concludes: "On November 10, snow began falling steadily in Yellowstone, and within four days had covered up the last smoldering logs. The park closed to traffic and George Henley, the lookout, left for Mexico and winter in another warm place."

These books leave room for a second-year fire book, one that uses the Yellowstone fires to describe the natural role of fire, the techniques of fire suppression, the scientific study of fire behavior and the difficulties of managing wildland fire when homes are being built on the edge of the forest. Wuerthner's book was a start. He recognized that his book, like other first-year fire books, would not be the final word.

"Thus, a good book should follow the example set by ecological processes, and rather than being static, should be flexible and gradually evolve over time," he wrote. He plans revisions in later editions.

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Bert Lindler is an environmental writer at the *Great Falls Tribune* in Montana.

BARBS

At those prices, that's all we can afford to do.

Ski lift tickets at Aspen, Vail and Steamboat Springs in Colorado will be \$34 to \$36 next season. Ski industry economist Charles Goeldner says that's a "very, very modest" price rise. "The consumer ought to jump up and down with joy."

Trails: Toward a New Western History

Stuck in the ruts of the western history you were taught twenty years ago? Hungry for stimulating new ideas about your favorite subject? Well, we have a deal for you!

The Rocky Mountain Humanities Network (Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming) is sponsoring a western history symposium September 27th through September 29th in Santa Fe, New Mexico. The lectures will draw upon recent scholarship that challenges conventional stereotypes of western history. The program will be held in conjunction with the Santa Fe Trail Association biennial meeting.



Speakers and respondents include Donald Worster, Richard White, Albert Camarillo, Richard Maxwell Brown, Peggy Pascoe, Marc Simmons, Patricia Limerick, Howard Lamar, Richard Etulain, Camille Guerin-Gonzales, and Alfonso Ortiz.

Topic titles include "No More Lies: Facing Facts in Western History," "Trashing the Trail," "Hispanic Accents," "Stuck in the Ruts--Old Trails, New West," "Western Women at the Cultural Crossroads," and "Pre-Columbian Indian Trails."

For further information and a brochure, contact Diane Facinelli, Trails coordinator (602) 257-0335. Arizona Humanities Council, 1242 N. Central Ave., Phoenix, AZ 85004.