

High Country News

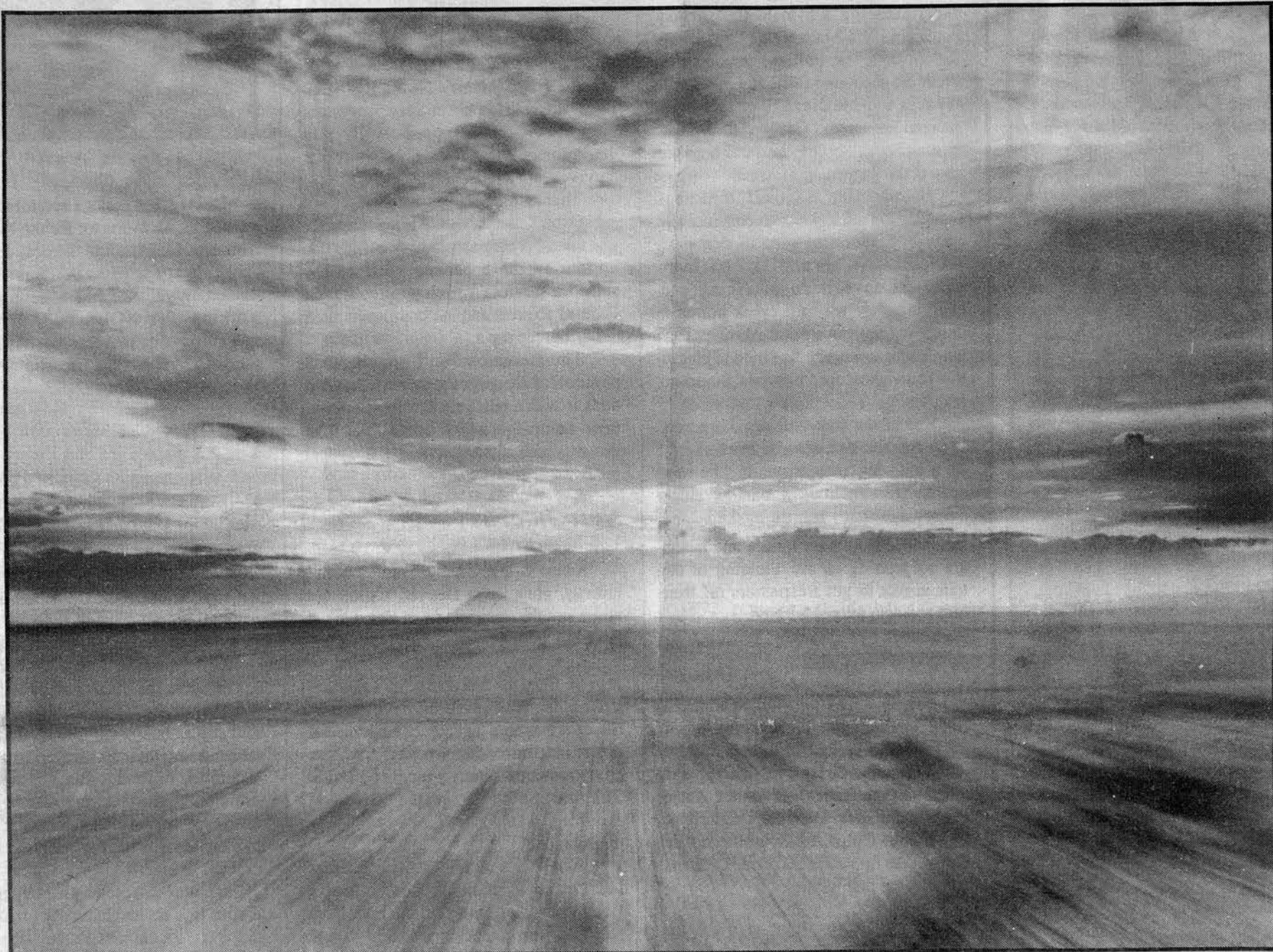
Vol. 21 No. 19

October 9, 1989

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar

It's time to celebrate the wild West ✓ See page 8



Colorado sunset

Stephen Wenger

WIPP is dazed, but not dead

by Tony Davis

If the fight over the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant were a game of chess, says a spokesman for the U.S. Department of Energy in Albuquerque, it would be a stalemate. In the messy world of environmental politics, call it gridlock.

Today, 10 years after Congress authorized WIPP as a solution to the national defense nuclear-waste problem, the opening of the pioneering nuclear dump seems as elusive as ever. Energy Secretary James Watkins' announcement in June of an indefinite delay in WIPP's scheduled September opening was DOE's fourth postponement in less than a year.

In New Mexico, opposition to or concern about the project has recently mushroomed far beyond the band of activists and dissident scientists who battled it for a decade. Opponents now include city council members, county commissioners, candidates for governor, legislators and hundreds of average citizens.

Yet WIPP is far from dead. Even critics have been unable to persuade

members of their own New Mexico congressional delegation that WIPP's problems are serious enough to warrant abandoning the project after spending \$700 million to build it.

Pressure to open WIPP also remains strong in Carlsbad, where 600 jobs connected with the project are on the line. Idaho and Colorado officials also remain firm in their desire to see WIPP open, to relieve the buildup of plutonium-contaminated wastes at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory and the Rocky Flats plutonium-trigger factory near Denver.

DOE Secretary Watkins shows no sign of backing away from WIPP, either. In late June, a day after he told a Washington, D.C., news conference he wouldn't allow WIPP to open until he was sure it is safe, he told a Chamber of Commerce dinner in Albuquerque, "I love WIPP."

DOE has made some progress on a few of its numerous legal and technical hurdles to opening its dump. But many crucial old issues remain unsettled and new ones arise by the month:

- Uncertainties or disputes linger over exactly what toxic chemicals will

be in the waste drums and what their environmental effects may be; about the combined effect of salt water seeping into the site and lying 800 feet beneath it; and over the effect of invisible, pressurized gases expected to form inside the waste drums.

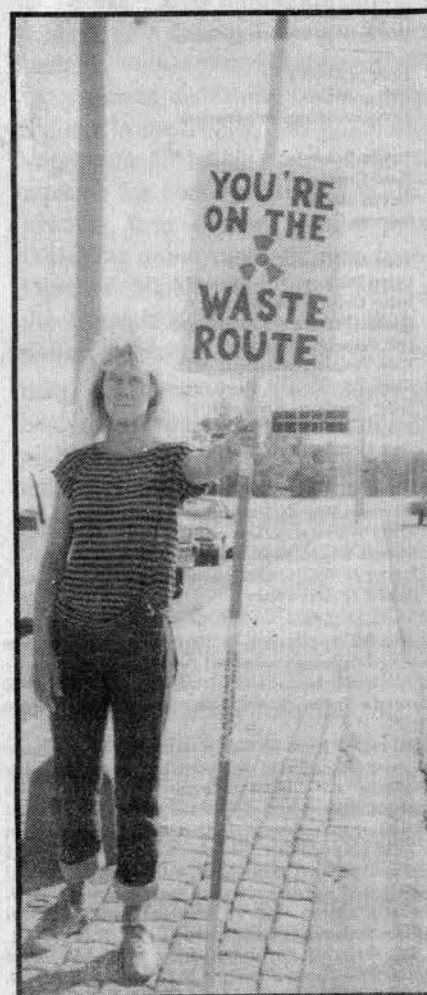
- Also unsettled is the adequacy of the training of WIPP's work force and how serious would be the result of a major accident involving WIPP's stainless steel, TRUPACT II waste shipping containers. It's not even clear whether state and federal officials have properly picked the routes over which the wastes will travel.

- A WIPP land-withdrawal bill in Congress, which is needed to open the repository, is dead for this year. No one predicts if supporters will be able to get the bill passed next year.

- The Environmental Protection Agency says it can't issue a permit to the Defense Department to bury mixed, hazardous-radioactive wastes in WIPP until next March, if then.

- DOE still has no approved Final Safety Analysis Report for the project, although over the years it has turned in a

(Continued on page 10)



WIPP protester, Santa Fe, New Mexico

Dear friends,



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Tom Bell
Editor Emeritus

Ed Marston
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Research/Reporting

Linda Bacigalupi
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Forest Hackers

The *High Country News* staff put its muscles where its word processors are, and spent Sept. 25 hacking a trail through meadows and woods toward a now largely inaccessible mountain range.

The seven staffers and Caleb Gates, a friend, were recruited by new Paonia resident Dick Guadagno, who has undertaken the 2.5-mile trail across Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service land. The trail, when completed (*HCN* did about one-third of a mile), will connect the McClure Pass highway between Paonia and Carbondale with an existing Forest Service trail that hugs the base of the Ragged Mountains.

In addition to trail building, Guadagno is attempting to convince the agencies to close the area to motorized vehicles. "Recreationists" on four-wheelers have been smashing and churning their way up creek bottoms, destroying riparian habitat wherever they go. Guadagno says he has tried talking to the four-wheelers, but has made no progress.

The hiking trail will provide access to an area that can now be reached only by a long, circuitous route. The new access trail follows a narrow stock driveway that is unmarked and surrounded by private land. Landowners are cooperating in the building of the trail in part to get trespassers off their land and onto the public land.

An avalanche

Several weeks ago, *HCN* printed a Bulletin Board describing the taped books Audio Press publishes: Edward Abbey, Louise Gretel, Ivan Doig and others reading from their works. Audio Press publisher DeWitt Daggett of Louisville, Colo., tells us the notice brought the firm over 50 phone calls and letters in the first week.

A new forest supervisor

Dropping by recently were "Griff" Greffenius, Larry Hill and Paul Senteney, all staffers on the Gunnison-Uncompahgre-Grand Mesa National Forest. Greffenius is the new Forest Supervisor. He takes over at a time when the local forests are at the center of a regional controversy — whether to raise the aspen cut from 800 acres a year to 2,900 acres a year to supply a Louisiana-Pacific mill with wood.

Whether Griff can come up with an acceptable variation on the agency's Alternative E, which has inspired opposition from, among others, the Gunnison County Stockgrower's Association, remains to be seen. But he

is making a promising start. The previous Forest Supervisor, Ray Evans, who served for five or so years, was largely invisible so far as the outside world was concerned. By comparison, Greffenius, whose last job was as a deputy regional forester for the national forests in California, clearly intends to see as much of his new domain and its residents as is possible.

The annual appeal

If all goes well in the over-worked mailroom, all subscribers should have received or should soon receive the annual *High Country News* Research Fund appeal. It's not a very important appeal — the response will only determine whether *High Country News* survives into its 21st year.

Thanks to the generosity of *HCN*'s subscribers, the Research Fund pays for all stories, photographs and drawings that appear in the paper, as well as the support services — telephone, travel, Federal Express and the computers used to lay out the paper.

The Research Fund provides 35 percent of the paper's income. And it does it with a relatively low-key, once-a-year campaign which costs less than three percent of the money the appeal raises.

New Interns

Susan Bridges, one of our new fall interns, grew up in Denver, Colo., but never got the chance to learn about small town life until moving to Paonia, Colo.

Last May, she earned a journalism degree from the University of Colorado in Boulder. While there she devoted most her energies to a campus environmental organization and worked as an environmental intern with Rep. David Skaggs. She also edited the *CU Environmental Review*, a bi-semesterly publication.

Susan's interests in women's issues led her to a volunteer position at a Boulder eating-disorders clinic and, more recently, to pro-choice work in Grand Junction, Colo. After her internship in Paonia she hopes to work with an organization that focuses on the roles of women in developing countries.

New intern Kate Gunness hails from Boston, Mass., a far cry from rural Colorado. But family roots in North Dakota and a longstanding love for mountainous places and cultures have slowly been pulling her west.

Kate graduated from Princeton University in June 1989 with a degree in history. Her focus was in Native American studies, and her senior thesis examined the emergence and implications of Native American literature in the 1960s and 1970s. Kate also led hiking and rock-climbing trips for the university, and organized an Hispanic youth group in Trenton, N.J.



Kate Gunness

During her college summers, Kate worked as an instructor for the National Outdoor Leadership School, leading backcountry trips in the Wind River Range, Wyo. She hopes to continue working for NOLS in the future, spreading out to some of its branch schools in Alaska or the Pacific Northwest.

Visitors

What had been a flow of a dozen or so visitors a week slowed to a trickle after Labor Day. Jeff Jackson of Seattle, WA., came by first. His job is to dispatch 1,000 transit authority buses in that city. Not surprisingly, he felt in need of a two month leave of absence, which he will spend on Sierra Club and Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance trips in southern Utah.

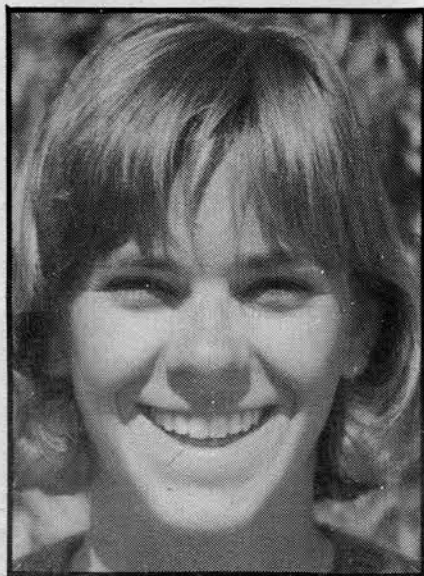
The second visitor was Kristi Thorp, who came bearing a gift — a box of back issues that the Center for Rural Affairs in Walthill, Neb., was about to throw out. Kristi, a staff member with the group, volunteered to deliver it to our door on her way back to Nebraska after a vacation in Utah.

She was followed by Joe Feller, who teaches law at the University of Arizona and who specializes in the subject of grazing.

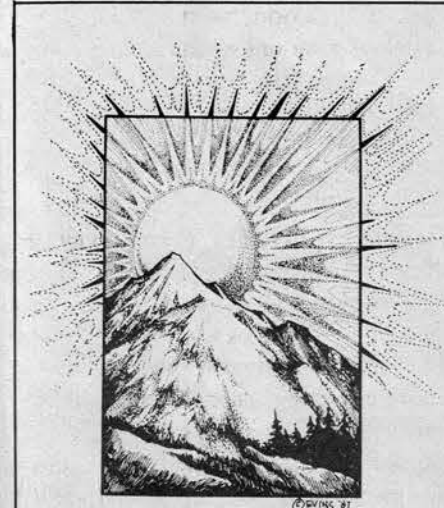
In lieu of a visit, writer and historian Alvin Josephy, Jr., telephoned to say that the recent story on Canyonland's 25th anniversary filled him with nostalgia. Josephy was one of a group Secretary of Interior Stewart Udall assembled in 1964 to tour Canyonlands to create momentum for the proposed park.

Josephy says helicopters shuttled the group from place to place, brought in and took out dignitaries, and made the logistics of impressing locals and visitors with the beauty of the place relatively easy. Within months Udall had his park bill and Josephy had a wonderful spread for his American Heritage book, *Natural Wonders*.

—Ed Marston for the staff



Susan Bridges



Toni Evins

Toni Evins, a gifted artist whose drawings have embellished several *HCN* centerspreads over the years, died in a glider accident Sept. 15.

Evins, 46, was a teacher at Buena Vista High School in Colorado. Last year she was selected as Colorado Art Teacher of the Year.

Tom Rampton, a science teacher and close friend, was piloting the glider when it crashed. He suffered severe injuries but is recovering.

To honor Toni Evins, a scholarship fund has been established at Buena Vista High School. Contributions can be sent there to Box O, Buena Vista CO 81211.

WESTERN ROUNDUP

New Mexico mine leads to a bitter fight

A familiar drama of environmental politics is playing out in the isolated mountains of northern New Mexico.

It involves a tiny mountain village with abundant resources and a unique cultural milieu 300 years old. Some of the hardy mountain people believe their way of life is threatened, however, by interlopers who covet the area's resources. The old-timers and the newcomers are facing off in a debate charged with mutual allegations of ignorance, greed and racism.

In this case, the old-timers are Hispanic miners and the alleged carpetbaggers are Anglo environmentalists. At the center of the controversy is a molybdenum mine owned by Unocal.

Last year Molycorp Inc., a wholly owned subsidiary of Unocal, the Los Angeles-based oil and mineral company, applied for a Bureau of Land Management permit to build a tailings disposal pit in the saddle of Guadalupe Mountain, about 1.5 miles west of Questa, N.M.

Dams would be built across the mountain's saddle to contain 250 million tons of tailings on 568 acres of former pinyon-juniper forest. The dams would be visible from Questa, from a New Mexico state road that carries tourists from Colorado to Taos and Santa Fe, and from the Wild Rivers Recreation Area, a dramatic complex of canyons to the east.

Proponents of the plan say it's an economic imperative. Environmentalists say it will destroy critical wildlife habitat, charge the air with toxic tailings dust and leach toxic metals into the groundwater and surrounding rivers.

Since the turn of the century miners have brought metal out of the mountains east of Questa. The sterile, rust-colored tailings are visible along the ridge above the village. Every family in town includes miners.

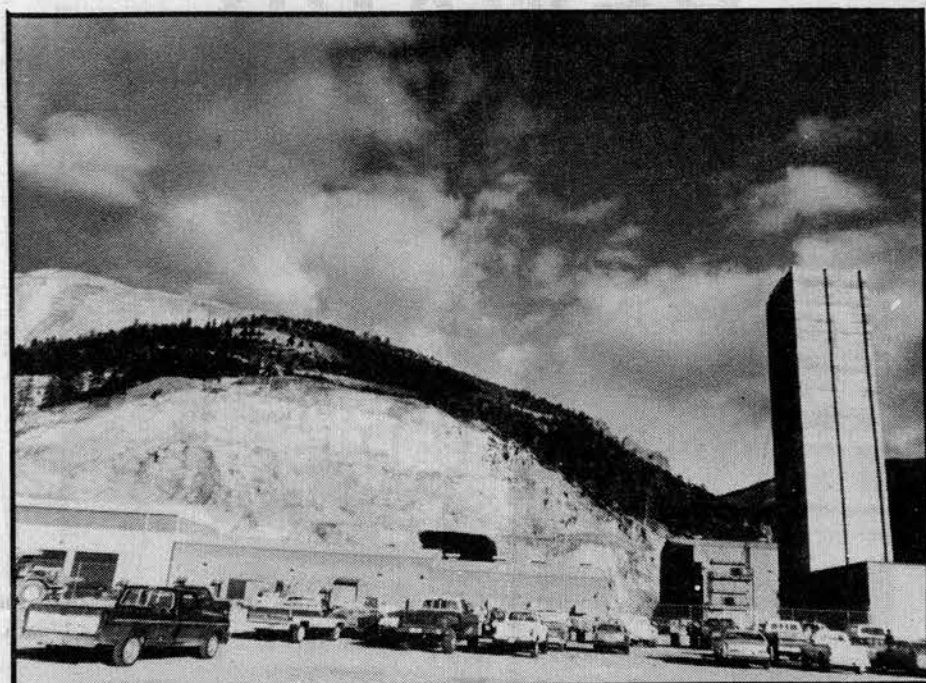
But Molycorp ran out of storage space in the narrow canyons around its mine decades ago, so it bought land on the other side of the village for a tailings pond, piping slurry through town and spreading the gravel across two dozen acres of sagebrush prairie. Now, mine managers say, they have no more than 10 years' worth of storage space left at that site, and that the safest new tailings disposal site is on Guadalupe Mountain.

Molycorp has been the largest private employer in Taos County for most of this century. Until 1986, the mine employed over 1,000 people at an average wage of more than \$20,000 per year. In a county with a current unemployment rate between 15 and 20 percent and an average income of \$8,500 annually, the mine's economic clout has been substantial.

But in 1986, the mine closed, citing molybdenum prices that had plummeted from \$30 per pound in 1980 to \$2.60 just six years later. Unemployment soared from 15 percent to 25 percent and the entire county went into an economic recession.

Economic issues remain the crux of arguments surrounding the tailings site issue.

"The needs of the many outweigh the wants of the few who possibly don't have to work for a living any longer," said former miner Augustin Montoya of Taos at a BLM hearing to discuss the tailings site proposal. The charge echoed



Molycorp mine in Questa, New Mexico

other accusations that opponents are either professional artists, a relatively common commodity in Taos County, or live off trust funds.

"People I know — they can't paint pictures that sell for a few thousand bucks and they don't have a trust fund. They have to work for a living," said social worker Leroy Philippi.

Opponents to the plan point to the shortage of wildlife habitat on the sagebrush plains, where volcanic cones like Guadalupe Mountain provide critical shelter and food for wildlife. The mountain's watershed includes both the Rio Grande and the Red River, prime trout habitats, and golden eagles and other rare raptors hunt the mountain's slopes.

Tourism, the county's largest industry, would be hurt by unsightly dams in such a prominent location, argues wilderness guide Brian Shields.

"Do you think people want to drive down here from Denver just to see something ugly like that?" Shields asked at a May hearing.

Also in evidence are hundreds of environmental violations in the mine's history, including slurry spills from its tailings pipeline and blowing clouds of dust from its existing tailings disposal sites. In recent years, the slurry has been safely confined in rubberized pipes and new surfactants have controlled the dust problem.

The controversy doesn't boil down to strictly a newcomer-versus-native conflict. Joe Vigil, a native of the tiny village of Cerro just north of the mountain, has organized rallies and petition drives opposing the mine. He says Cerro's environment and its spiritual connection to the mountain are in danger.

"That mountain is like a mother to us," he says, pointing out that it has provided wood, meat and shelter to many generations of his family. Even the tiny chapel in Cerro, Our Lady of Guadalupe, was named in honor of the mountain.

And the mine's top managers are professionals from elsewhere. Their foremost spokesman, Gene Dewey, is a former mine manager promoted to a vice presidency at Unocal's corporate headquarters in Los Angeles.

When Molycorp applied for its permit to dump tailings on federal land, molybdenum prices had inched back up to about \$3.50 per pound. Dewey said if the tailings site was approved, he would

reopen the mine. But last April he announced the mine would reopen in August, tailings site or no tailings site. These days some 200 people are working at the Questa mine as small-scale production gears up.

Jack Anderson, chief of New Mexico's BLM land and minerals staff, told a hearing audience that as long as Molycorp's proposal represents a practical plan for tailings disposal, it will be approved. He said the Mining Law of 1872 requires only that the mine operation cause no "undue and unnecessary" harm to the surrounding area.

"If you meet the requirements of the law, then the BLM has no authority to say no. If we say no, Molycorp could take us to court," Anderson said.

Taos contractor and environmentalist David Bates promised that the BLM will end up in court for sure if it approves Molycorp's plan.

"What is due and necessary?" he asked Anderson, pointing out that at least 10 years of storage remains in existing tailings ponds. "This proposal is not due or necessary."

In July, Bates had gained the support of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund to help fight the tailings dump. He outlined his timetable: "We suspect that the BLM will issue its final environmental impact statement on the Molycorp permit application (in November) and that it will show no negative impact or impacts they regard as insignificant," Bates said.

At that point, he says, opponents of the disposal plan will file an administrative appeal of the EIS with the Department of Interior's Board of Land Appeals, and file suit in federal court if necessary.

—Bryan Welch

The writer is managing editor of the Taos News.

BARBS

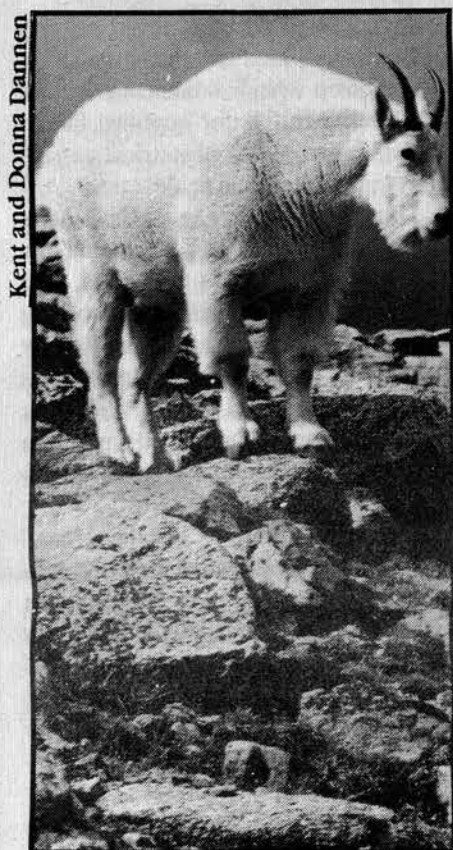
And pound of pork by pound of pork.

Democratic Rep. Pat Schroeder of Colorado described to the *Denver Post* how she is using her clout as chairwoman of the House Armed Services subcommittee on military construction to gain congressional support for the new Denver airport. "I think this airport's going to be built ... inch by inch, brick by brick, dollar by dollar," she said.

HOTLINE

Is Dubois endangered?

The Mayor of Dubois, Wyo., sharply criticized the Denver, Colo.-based Mountain States Legal Foundation for calling his town "endangered." Mayor Vance Ponton called the categorization "inaccurate, negative and counter-productive." The conservative foundation said its research showed Dubois was still reeling from the Bridger-Teton National Forest's refusal to allow a larger timber cut requested by Louisiana-Pacific. L-P closed its timber mill in Dubois almost two years ago. The foundation also said a "let it burn" fire policy in Yellowstone National Park delivered a second blow to the town by reducing tourism. In his letter to the foundation, Ponton said that tourism was "excellent," a new economic diversification plan was in place, and the town was bouncing back from the mill's closing. The foundation has refused his request to retract Dubois from its report, Ponton said.



Mountain goat

Park goes after its goats

Some 1,000 mountain goats are kicking up a fuss at Olympic National Park in Washington. Introduced to the mountains of the Olympic Peninsula by hunters in the 1920s, the goats scrape vegetation off hillsides to make huge wallows for cooling dust baths. In the process, they destroy native plants, including some rare species such as Piper's bellflower, the Flett's violet and the Olympic Mountain milkvetch. To protect the plants, the Park Service began using helicopters and tranquilizer guns last year to capture and transfer the goats to other mountain ranges. But that technique cost the agency \$800 a goat, and the animals often died during capture or soon after being transferred, reports the *New York Times News*. Beginning 1991, the Park Service says it plans to shoot most of the animals, at a cost of only \$40 a goat. While the Washington Native Plant Society says that the Park Service should have begun aerial shooting earlier, animal welfare groups are protesting the plan. "In general, we're not opposed to protecting the plants," said Cathy Sue Anunsen of the Fund for Animals. "But not at any expense to the animals." Jerry Gorsline of the Washington Native Plant Society said, "We believe that complete and timely elimination of mountain goats on the entire peninsula should be the goal."

Insurance rates and Medicaid drive MDs from towns

Last year, the Ipswich Community Hospital in South Dakota, which serves a town of 1,187, posted a \$10,000 bounty for a doctor.

The ploy worked. In October, Dr. Basil Phobos, a 68-year-old retired Chicago doctor with 37 years of experience, moved to Ipswich and didn't even accept his \$10,000.

Tiny Choteau, Mont., population 1,800, short one doctor, is now offering \$10,000 for a doctor. Delta, Utah, population 1,930, about 125 miles southwest of Salt Lake City, promises a \$5,000 reward to anyone who knows where a family physician might be found. And while Richfield, Utah, population 5,482, and Rawlins, Wyo., population 11,547, are not offering money, these towns need doctors, too.

Nationwide, but especially in the West, rural health care is hemorrhaging as doctors choose cities rather than small towns, leaving communities scrambling to attract MDs.

Long plagued by distance, poverty and isolation, rural hospitals are struggling to keep what few doctors they have left. Their need is for qualified family doctors, some with obstetrical experience, to provide basic health care.

But the trend toward specialization in medical school has decimated the number of family physicians, the workhorses of rural medicine. According to the American Academy of Family Physicians, the number of doctors has increased between 1975 and 1985, but the number entering family practice medicine in the last two years has plummeted.

"Despite a surplus in other areas," says Gary Stay, administrator of the Millard County Hospital in Delta, "there is a real manpower shortage with family practitioners." Specialists can command higher salaries; family doctors cannot. Medical students, many saddled with huge loans, inevitably choose money over service after graduation.

Even if a rural town succeeds in luring a doctor, it can't always make them stay.

"Rural doctors work longer hours, are on call constantly, including weekends, and have few or no specialists to consult with," says Roz Bushman, administrator of the Teton Medical Center in Choteau, 51 miles northwest of Great Falls, Mont. Difficult working conditions, lack of professional "perks," and profound physical and cultural isolation drive many aspiring country doctors back to the city, Bushman says.

Money, however, is the biggest deterrent. Skyrocketing malpractice insurance rates already make medicine expensive, but in rural areas, fewer patients bring in less money to pay mounting insurance premiums.

Tony Wellever, senior vice president of the Montana Hospital Association, says, "Rural populations don't have the critical mass of people to keep a doctor solvent."

Distances in the West magnify the problem. Some residents have to travel up to 100 miles to find medical help. In Wyoming, each of the state's 27 acute-care facilities serves an area the size of Delaware.

"The West is not really rural like the Midwest. It is still a frontier society," says Mary Lynne Shickich of the Wyoming Hospital Association.

Eight years of budget cuts by the Reagan administration have only worsened the problem. The National Health Service Corps offers financial aid to doctors and nurses who serve in understaffed areas for their residency. But

REWARD

\$10,000

TO

ANYONE WHO FINDS A
FAMILY PRACTITIONER
WITH OBSTETRICAL
QUALIFICATIONS.

PERSON MAY BE A DOCTOR OF MEDICINE OR
DOCTOR OF OSTEOPATH

ANYONE WHO HAS INFORMATION
LEADING TO THIS PERSON,

CONTACT

TETON MEDICAL CENTER

466-5763

under Reagan, its budget was slashed from \$100 million in 1978, to just \$2.3 million in 1987. Wellever says an already small number of Corps doctors in Montana "has dwindled to a trickle."

The most severe blow has been the restructuring of Medicare and Medicaid payments to doctors. In 1983, Congress changed the payment plan from reimbursing actual costs to covering estimated costs of treatment. Congress assumed that rural communities had lower costs; therefore, rural physicians and hospitals would need less federal assistance.

As a result, an operation in Choteau, Mont., may be reimbursed under Medicare at a rate 30 percent less than a similar operation in Great Falls, Mont., despite similar insurance rates and operating costs, Wellever says. Since many rural residents cannot afford to pay in full, the doctor subsidizes their visit.

Richard Johnson, executive director of the Wyoming Medical Society, says, "The problem of costs because of insurance and Medicare rates compounds geometrically in rural areas into a horrible mess."

Sen. Lloyd Bentsen, D-Texas, has introduced a bill in Congress that would equalize urban and rural Medicare payments. In the meantime, the attrition rate for doctors at rural hospitals is staggering.

According to a study released last January by the University of Wyoming Family Practice Residency Center in Casper, of the 127 family doctors offering pre- and post-natal care in rural Wyoming, more than 60 have stopped their obstetrical services since 1987. "I expect the number to escalate even further," says Johnson.

The crisis prompted some state officials in the West to act. In June, the Wyoming Legislature authorized Gov. Mike Sullivan to spend up to \$100,000 of his annual contingency fund to help finance obstetrical insurance for rural hospitals. Up to \$25,000 will go to physicians in Fremont, Niobrara and Converse counties to defray a portion of their insurance premiums; the difference must be paid by the local communities.

In Utah, the state keeps doctors afloat by paying up to 95 percent of Medicaid in-patient charges for rural hospitals. According to Rodney Burton,

vice president of the Utah Hospital Association, 15 of Utah's 18 rural hospitals are losing money.

Last month, the Utah Hospital Association released a five-point plan calling for joint government and private action. The proposal includes giving tax credits for businesses that contribute to rural

health care, forgiving health student loans in exchange for a rural practice upon graduation, and offering grants or loans to rural hospitals. A legislative task force has recently formed to study the problem.

But bounties remain the most visible tactic for attracting physicians, and hospital administrators are optimistic of their success. In Choteau, Bushman has received 25 inquiries so far; in Delta, Stay says he has interviewed several prospective candidates.

Craig Broman, senior vice president for Lutheran Health Systems of Fargo, N.D., which manages the Choteau hospital, says bounties are cheaper than hiring a professional search firm, and they also help create broad community support.

"The community has to sell itself to a prospective doctor," says Broman, "and bounties have worked in the past." Burton is more blunt: "Bounties give you leads. If you don't have a physician, you don't have a hospital."

Still, some hospital administrators are skeptical about anything working until there is an overhaul of insurance rates, Medicare and soaring malpractice awards by the courts.

"Some hospitals," warns Johnson, "are going to have to make some tough decisions in the future."

One South Dakota hospital just made a tough choice: Dr. Phobos still practices in Ipswich, but he no longer has a hospital to work in. Ipswich Community Hospital, bled financially dry, closed its doors this May.

—Matt Klinge

REWARD!



\$5,000 REWARD

FOR A FAMILY PRACTICE PHYSICIAN
WITH OBSTETRICAL AND SURGICAL SKILLS

A reward of \$5,000 is offered to any individual who is first to identify and arrange an interview for a family practice physician who meets the criteria and commits to a three-year contract.

The physician can assume an existing practice on a solo basis or on a salaried basis with Intermountain Health Care. The salaried arrangement includes clinic personnel, rent, utilities, equipment and supplies, computer accounting system, malpractice insurance, etc., in a new clinic building.

This is a great opportunity for an enterprising physician who wants to live in a moderate-sized, central Utah, value-centered community. Contact:

Gary Stay, Administrator,
Delta-Fillmore Community Medi-
cal Centers, Intermountain Health
Care Facilities, 126 White Sage
Avenue, Delta, Utah 84624, (801)
864-5591

NOTE: Delta, Utah has been
designated as a Federal Loan
Repayment Area. Physicians with
education loans, who are
approved, are eligible for up to
\$20,000 per year loan forgiveness.

Public takes charge of the public's land

Last summer, as New Mexicans celebrated 20 years of a free-flowing Rio Grande River, a small group of Taos-area residents decided to become environmental watchdogs.

The group, calling itself the Amigos Bravos, vowed to assist the Bureau of Land Management in protecting a 48-mile stretch of the river that Congress designated wild and scenic in 1968.

Amigos Bravos also decided to monitor the Rio Chama because the BLM is charged with managing that river, which last year received a wild and scenic designation for 27.6 miles.

Brian Shields, vice president of the group, said the first year has been a good one. Membership grew from an initial 14 members to about 100. Members also raised \$12,000.

While Amigos Bravos is the only statewide organization concerned with protecting two stretches of wild rivers, the group is only one of many volunteer associations that recognize the limits of federal agencies.

Volunteers have always been welcomed by the BLM and the Forest Service to help maintain public lands. In 1972, enactment of a federal act provided agencies with a formalized network for handling volunteers, said Carmen Mazer, manager of human resources for the Forest Service's Southwest Region.

But officials in those agencies acknowledge that increased budget cuts during the Reagan Administration forced a greater reliance upon volunteer assistance.

Coinciding with this decade's federal cuts was the formation in 1982 of New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors, which has become the state's largest such organization.

Although the group only has about 180 paying members, it draws upon an additional 200 people statewide who participate in select projects.

Past undertakings have included restoring and maintaining a trail at the Wild Rivers Recreation Area. Volunteers also have fenced Piedras Marcadas Arroyo, an area rich in petroglyphs, to inhibit dumping and four-wheel-drive access.

The group has rebuilt and maintained trails in the Pecos Wilderness every summer since 1983, and for the past few years has sponsored a wilderness host project there. Volunteers live in the back country for weeks at a time, educating backpackers about low-impact camping and general outdoor etiquette.

Earlier this summer the group worked on a trail up to Guadalupe Peak. Later, 20 volunteers assisted the BLM and Forest Service in installing a log foot bridge across the Red River just upriver from its confluence with the Rio Grande. Duke City Lumber donated \$5,000 in materials and the U.S. Army offered a helicopter to lower a 42-inch diameter log into place.

Volunteers for the Outdoors also participated in a riparian enhancement project at Bluewater Lake State Park near Grants. The massive undertaking was sponsored by a number of federal and state agencies, along with numerous environmental groups such as the Izaak Walton League, Sierra Club, New Mexico Trout and the Society for Range Management.

On all projects involving agencies, volunteer groups provide the manpower and the agency supplies the materials.

New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors is part of a nationwide network

Nancy Harbert



Volunteer trail-builders in New Mexico

of groups dedicated to preserving and improving outdoor recreational facilities, said chairman Kirk Minnick. Last year, the group raised \$8,600 in donations and contributions.

Minnick, who operates his own business, said there is no typical outdoor volunteer. Members include Sandia Laboratories scientists, retirees, secretaries and lawyers. Although the majority of members live in Albuquerque, the entire state is represented.

There also is no typical volunteer organization.

In Albuquerque, about 12 people who call themselves Quail Unlimited work with the BLM to inspect water facilities in the Cabezón Peak area to enhance wildlife habitat. Also in that region, a group called Cabezón Coyotes has spent the past two years patrolling the wilderness and reporting illegal woodcutters and off-road vehicle use.

In Las Cruces, volunteers help the BLM perform archaeological surveys. In Carlsbad, they count bats and remove trees near Carlsbad Caverns. Near Grants, they provide labor and conduct tours of the El Malpais.

Federal employees who depend upon donated labor quickly admit many projects wouldn't get done without their volunteers. Danny Randall, volunteer coordinator for the BLM state office in

Santa Fe, said that in 1988, volunteers nationwide outnumbered employees: 14,000 volunteers to 9,000 employees. The same percentage applied in New Mexico.

"We don't know what we'd do without volunteers," he said.

At the Forest Service, Mazer said much of the state's national forests would not be accessible to the public without volunteers who play a major role in maintaining campgrounds and trails.

In addition, Randall said volunteers also provide ideas and skills often utilized by the federal agency. For example, a retired computer specialist developed a program that enabled the BLM to track its money.

"You can't put a price on something like that," he said.

At the Forest Service, Public Affairs Officer Gary Schiff said more than 900 people volunteered their time in 1988 in the Carson National Forest alone. He figures the value of their work to be in excess of \$200,000.

New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors is at Box 36246, Albuquerque, NM 87176.

— Nancy Harbert

Nancy Harbert writes for the *Albuquerque Journal*.

HOTLINE

An outpouring of opposition

A plan to nearly double aspen logging in scenic areas of western Colorado continued to draw fire as the public comment period drew to a close. By Sept. 29, the Forest Service had received 2,490 letters — most opposing the proposed timber cuts — and seven of the nine counties nearby were on record as opposing the plan. Sen. Tim Wirth, D-Colo., and Rep. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, D-Colo., both asked the Forest Service to completely rewrite its timber proposal, and the Natural Resources Defense Council, a national environmental group, demanded either justification or elimination of money-losing timber sales. The aspen trees proposed for cutting are in the Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison National Forest. They would be bought by Louisiana-Pacific, which runs a waferboard factory in Olathe, Colo.

Now the studies begin

The North Rim of the Grand Canyon won't be the site of a new hotel — at least until an environmental impact statement is completed on the project. That decision comes in response to a July ruling by U.S. District Judge Paul G. Rosenblatt against construction of the 100-room Ponderosa Lodge. In that suit, filed by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, Rosenblatt said the Park Service had neglected to study environmental impacts when it signed a contract with TW Recreational Services to build the hotel. Among the options that will now be studied by the Park Service are: construction of the hotel just 50 yards from the North Rim at Bright Angel Point; building it about a half-mile west of the rim at Upper Transept Canyon; and not building the hotel at all. The draft environmental impact statement is scheduled for release by the end of this year, although a deadline for comments has not yet been set. Letters can be sent to the Superintendent of Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

Observatory project moves ahead

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will not review the University of Arizona's plans to build an observatory on the top of Mount Graham. After a long battle between environmentalists and the university, Congress authorized the multi-telescope project near Safford, Ariz., last year. But four environmental groups, the Sierra Club, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation and Defenders of Wildlife, challenged the proposal in court and pressured the agency to reconsider its assessment of the project's biological impact. The four groups charged that the project could cause extinction of the rapidly declining population of some 116 to 167 Mount Graham red squirrels (*HCN*, 3/27/89). Fish and Wildlife counters that poor cone crops in the spruce-fir forest on the mountain are causing the decline in the squirrel population and that the observatory project would not be an important factor. The federal agency discontinued a biological monitoring program after two squirrels died while being tagged, reports the *Arizona Republic*. In an earlier setback for the environmental groups, a federal judge refused to grant an injunction stopping the construction of a road to the top of the mountain. The university will begin work on the road, a necessary step in the project, in early October.

BARBS

How Denver's leaders planned to grow bigger than L.A.: by wasting the most water.

Glenn Saunders, the dean of Colorado water attorneys, told the *Denver Post* he is puzzled by water conservation. "We built our house 36 years ago when people in Colorado were trying to take all the water we could before Los Angeles got it for free. Now we're supposed to be saving. It's crazy."

He's a century too late.

The Australian rancher who served as the "inspiration" for Crocodile Dundee was disappointed by his trip to Wyoming: "I thought the country would have a lot more fodder and trees."

A professor drowns in the quicksand of deductive reasoning.

Range sciences professor Quentin Skinner of the University of Wyoming says dams and reservoirs help the environment. "We (water developers) store water, water creates riparian areas."

A flagship forest in Wyoming shifts away from timber

When the Bridger-Teton National Forest in northwest Wyoming, near Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, went through the delicate resource balancing act that is a final management plan, cutbacks in some uses were inevitable.

The loser was timber. The winners may be wildlife and recreation.

The plan, which should become final later this year after a public review period, heralds a fundamental shift in management philosophy.

"It really represents a broad-scale change in forest direction," said B-T timber staff officer Larry Warren. "It's a real change in land management objectives."

"We've been operating under a 1979 timber management plan," he said. "The objective was to cut trees."

"We're no longer trying to maximize wood production, we're trying to meet recreation and wildlife objectives."

Under the final forest plan, the allowable timber cut on the Bridger-Teton would be 12 million board feet (MMBF) a year, a 29 percent reduction in allowable cut from current levels.

The plan identifies 279,400 acres of land "suited for timber management" — a reduction in timber lands from 348,200 acres under existing management.

Of the 3.4 million acres in the Bridger-Teton, 2.1 million acres either have no trees on them or are lands withdrawn from timber production, including about 1.5 million acres of congressionally designated wilderness.

Annual harvest volumes on the forest — the amount of timber actually cut on the Bridger-Teton — has varied widely over the last 10 years, from a high of 37.3 MMBF in 1983 to a low of 5.5 MMBF in 1985. The average annual actual cut from 1978 to 1987 was about 16 MMBF.

The Bridger-Teton covers parts of five northwest Wyoming counties — Fremont, Park, Lincoln, Teton and Sublette. In three of those counties — Lincoln, Teton and Sublette — the forest covers so much land that the forest plan virtually provides a blueprint for economic development.

Of the roughly 1.8 million acres of land in Teton County, 1.1 million acres — nearly 60 percent — is under the jurisdiction of the Bridger-Teton forest supervisor. An additional 536,000 acres in the county is in federal ownership, mostly in Grand Teton National Park.

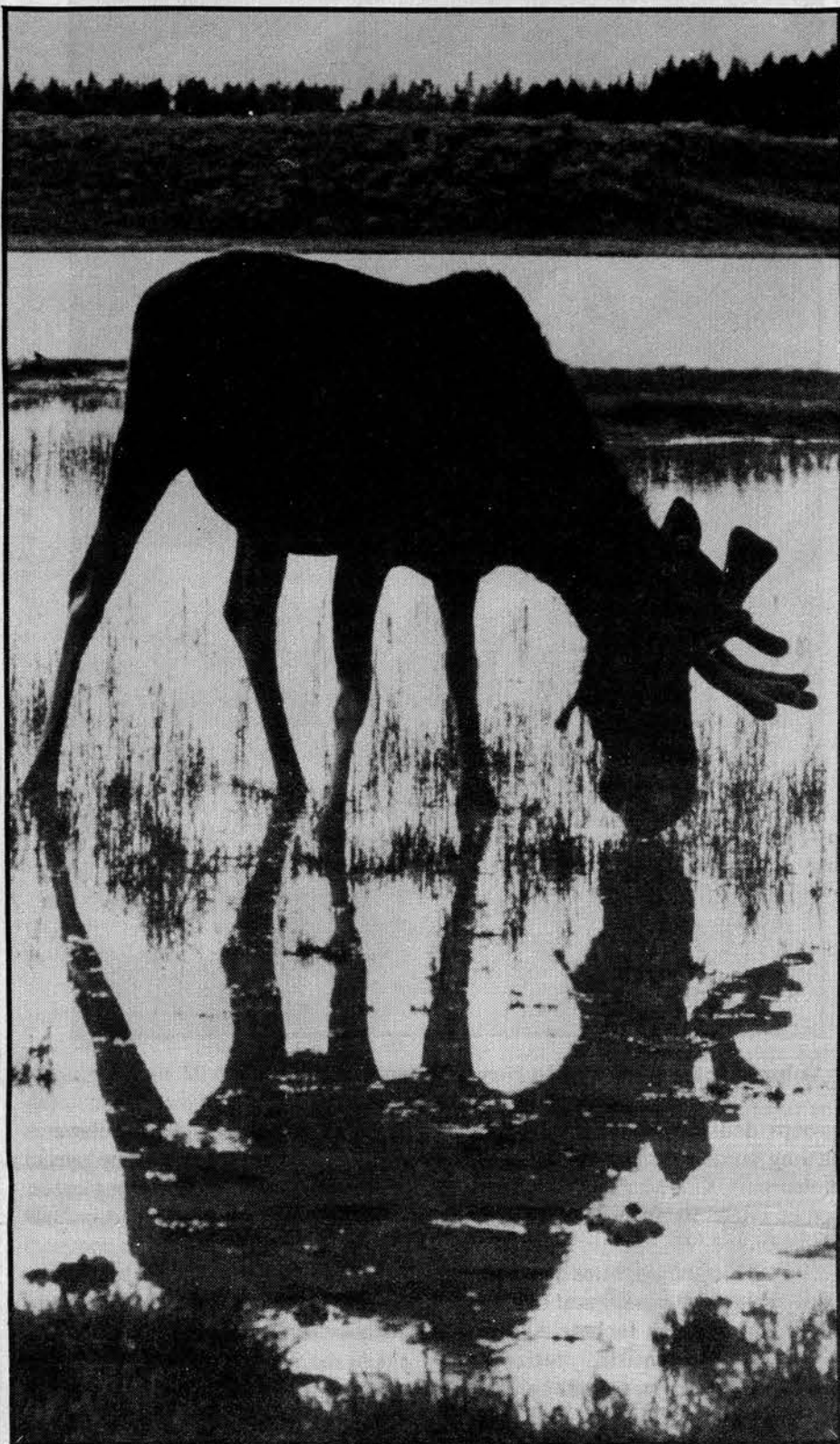
In Sublette County, 37 percent of the county's 3.1 million acres are within the Bridger-Teton. And in Lincoln County, 32 percent of the land is within the forest. Towns that depend on the Bridger-Teton's resources include Pinedale, Dubois, Kemmerer, Jackson, Big Piney and Afton.

Some of those towns, notably Dubois and Afton, have had economies dominated by the timber industry.

The "broad-scale change" in the Bridger-Teton Forest's approach to timber includes not only a reduction in timber acreage and cut, but also in the way timber will be harvested. Timber officer Warren said that the plan calls for a reduction in clearcutting in favor of more selective logging practices.

"We're looking at partial cutting or selective-type harvesting so we don't get into the bind again where the clearcut is adversely affecting wildlife," Warren said. "When we get into a partial cutting system, we can maintain the cover for wildlife."

The changes will produce a more



Moose in Wyoming

diverse forest habitat, he said. There will be less land dominated by lodgepole pine, the tree favored for timber production. Instead, the forest will have more Engelmann spruce and subalpine fir, which are not as valuable for timber, Warren said.

Clearcutting removes "all merchantable vegetation at one time and requires either natural or artificial regeneration of stands," according to the forest plan.

Shelterwood harvesting, which will increase, "removes 60 to 80 percent of the vegetation at the first harvest, but leaves mature trees for shelter."

Most of the reduction in the cut will come from the northern end of the forest. The cut on the northern portion will be about 3 MMBF for the next 10 years, which is about half of the historic cut, Warren said. That means that 75 percent of the 4 MMBF annual reduction in timber from the forest will come off the northern portion.

The plan attempts to estimate the employment and income impacts of the new policy on communities during the first decade of its implementation. The plan warns that these estimates are "highly speculative."

Although the bulk of the reduction in logging will be on the north end of the Bridger-Teton, the plan estimates that the economic impact of the overall reduction will be mostly in Afton, where 41 jobs and \$558,000 in total income will be lost over the next decade. The

economic impact results largely from constraints on logging increases in the future — timber the industry hoped to get will not be offered for sale.

Afton is the home of Tricon Lumber, the mill with the largest capacity — about 30 MMBF annually — which regularly buys timber from the Bridger-Teton. Tricon Lumber spokesman Willie Peck said that he had not seen the final plan and could not comment on its specifics. "We need more timber than that to run at full potential. But if we could get 12 million to 15 million board feet it would be a step in the right direction," he said. "In the last four years, it's varied so much, there's no number that anybody can sit down and tie down."

"We'd like to see this thing get taken care of on the Bridger-Teton and get the plan on the ground so we've got something to deal with," Peck said.

He also said that the market for Tricon's lumber has been good. "We can sell way more than we can get ... the market's good and has been good for a year and a half."

The reduced cut on the northern portion has its greatest potential effect on logging operations in Dubois. Warren said that the reduction could have been a severe problem to the community if the large Louisiana-Pacific mill was still in operation there.

However, regardless of the assumptions made in the current forest

plan, "there is no way we could have sustained the demand of the Louisiana-Pacific mill," he said. The L-P mill closed about a year ago.

The only remaining timber operation in the town is Wilson Lumber, owned by Darwin Wilson. Wilson said in an interview that he does not expect to be adversely affected by the forest plan.

"A few years ago it might have," he said, "but right now — if I can get it — there should be enough timber available for me on the Shoshone (National Forest)." Wilson said the B-T has offered "very little except firewood over there for the last couple or three years."

Wilson said that he was not even certain that he would bid on B-T timber once it is offered. It would depend, he said, on the location of the sale, the timber species offered and the price. His recent timber purchases from the Bridger-Teton have been limited to "one little ... sale last year and prior to that it's been several years" since he bought any timber from the forest.

Wilson said that he could run 3 MMBF through his mill annually, but is currently running at about two-thirds capacity.

In Dubois, total income from sawtimber production is expected to decline by \$137,000. Total employment is estimated to decline by the equivalent of nine full-time positions. Some of this income and employment loss is expected to be offset by increases in the recreation/hunting economy and other, less important forms of logging such as post-and-pole production and fuelwood gathering.

Of all the communities affected by the timber cut reduction, only Kemmerer shows a slight increase in total income (\$46,000) and total employment (three jobs). Despite the assertions of the Forest Service that the plan represents a major change in forest direction, environmentalists are not convinced.

Todd Wilkinson of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition said, "We're looking at the trends of what they say. You go back in to some areas around Union Pass, and these clearcuts have responded with poor regeneration and these vast open spaces look like a complete mess."

"Meanwhile now they're focusing their attention on the southern end of the forest and if we are to judge by what's happened on the northern end, wildlife habitat is going to be severely affected by the timber program."

"Look at the concentrations in some of those areas down there that have been targeted for massive cutting. There are not many, if any, examples where widespread clearcutting has actually enhanced wildlife habitat."

"The fact that they're calling for a reduction doesn't necessarily mean that the current timber program is appropriate," Wilkinson said.

Copies of the plan will be available in mid-October. Though the Forest Service says that it does not expect to make any major revisions, there will be one more 45-day public review period beginning when the plan is released. To request a copy or to comment on the plan, write to Bridger-Teton National Forest, F.S. Building, 340 N. Cache, Box 1888, Jackson, WY 83001 (307/733-2752).

— Dan Whipple

Dan Whipple is a reporter for the *Casper Star-Tribune*, where this article originally appeared.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Some Montanans say peaceniks lurk in wilderness

by Richard D. Manning

MISSOULA, Mont. — In its last public appearance, the bill to decide the fate of six million acres of wild lands in Montana played the role of political football.

A decade of contentious battle finally pushed the Montana wilderness bill through Congress late last year only to see it draw the election-eve veto of President Reagan. Many observers agreed the veto was a blatant attempt to defeat Democratic Sen. John Melcher, one of the bill's sponsors.

The state's politicians still debate the veto's role in Melcher's defeat at the hands of Republican Conrad Burns, but at least it was assumed that once the politicking was over, the state could get on with the business of a wilderness bill.

Now that Burns has weighed in with the outlines of what he would like included in a bill, it appears as if politicking perseveres. There are also indications that Burns is having his public-lands agenda written by a coalition of conservative groups still carrying the torch lit by former Interior Secretary James Watt.

You don't have to wade far into Burns' draft wilderness bill to get an idea that people working to protect Montana's last, best places will not have an easy go of it. Forebodings came a few weeks before the draft leaked out when Burns, in a speech in Kalispell, Mont., said wilderness advocates were unconcerned about national security and are some of the same people who fled to Canada to avoid the draft during the Vietnam War.

The senator's remarks drew unanimous fire from the state's editorialists. The remarks seemed provocative, even for a fellow who has, in eight months in office, earned a national reputation for colorful comments. But Burns has been raising the specter of "national security" ever since a coalition of anti-wilderness groups, called the "wise-use" movement, sounded that theme last October.

The wise-use movement is a collection of pro-development groups with ties to the defunct Sagebrush Rebellion, the Mountain States Legal Foundation (Watt's old outfit) and even Rev. Sun Myung Moon's Unification Church. Claiming the support of Burns and a number of other conservative lawmak-

ers, the coalition works to promote development of public lands in the West.

Burns' draft wilderness bill, then, should not surprise anyone. It has not yet been made public, but the copy obtained by this newspaper reveals quickly where the senator is headed. It opens by stating a purpose: "To designate, undesignate and modify certain lands ... as wilderness."

Among other steps, Burns' draft bill would open to mineral exploration and development all — not just new — wilderness lands in the state for another 20 years. The 1964 Wilderness Act already gave industry 20 years to prospect in roadless areas.

The draft also includes such steps as allowing the secretary of agriculture to permit "the establishment and maintenance of reservoirs, water-construction works, power projects, transmission lines, radio repeater sites, translator sites, aircraft landing sites and other facilities ... including road construction" in wilderness areas.

"I think his bill is so far off the wall there is nothing to discuss here," said John Gatchell, director of the Montana Wilderness Association. "The message for conservationists is we are clearly in a long-term battle."

While Burns' bill may cling tightly to the wise-use plan, it doesn't match the nation's agenda as set by Congress, said Ron Cooper, a staffer for the Wilderness Society and formerly an aide to Montana's other senator, Democrat Max Baucus.

Cooper said Burns' draft is such a severe departure from existing law that it has virtually no chance of passing or even winning a serious hearing, especially in the House.

But the bill may not be intended for Congress. Instead, observers say, its raising of long-settled or non-existent issues may be more aimed at inflaming passions that have already pushed the wilderness debate to the boiling point in the state.

Sen. Baucus stands for election next year, and there is some speculation that the Republicans, buoyed by Melcher's defeat, may be counting on Burns' wilderness proposal to stretch a single contest into a long series of electoral games. Once again it is fall, and political football is in the air.

□

Richard Manning is a freelance writer in Missoula, Montana.

HOTLINE

Del Rio trounces Pentagon

Determined residents of Del Rio, Texas, have thwarted the Pentagon. The agency had almost settled on the south Texas area for tests involving underground explosions when a combination of politics and geologic factors blocked the plan. Opposition came from 12,000 Del Rio residents who signed a petition demanding that the Pentagon abandon the site. The agency planned the explosions to simulate the impact of a nuclear warhead on missile silos and underground command centers. Originally scheduled to run from April 1990 through November 1992, the tests have been set back indefinitely. A Pentagon spokesman says the site-selection process will start again from scratch.

Bibles leaves Arizona

The Arizona director for the Bureau of Land Management, D. Dean Bibles, will move on to become BLM director for Oregon and Washington. Bibles will be responsible for twice as many districts, many of them with timber programs, according to BLM spokesman Gordon Warren. Environmentalists praised Bibles' seven-year term in Arizona. Russ Butcher of the Arizona National Parks and Conservation Association called him "the most qualified public lands man that I've encountered in my years in conservation." Rob Smith of the Arizona Sierra Club said, "He is the most effective and environmentally inclined state director the BLM has." More than 2.5 million acres of public and private lands have changed hands under Bibles' leadership. But, critics said Bibles did not always get full value for BLM land or allow for public involvement (HCN, 6/19/89). Smith acknowledged that Bibles was a "behind-the-scenes operator," but added, "history will treat Dean well."

Gray Ranch purchase delayed

Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan says the creation of a wildlife refuge on southwestern New Mexico's Gray Ranch is not one of his priorities (HCN, 6/5/89). In early September, Lujan asked the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to bow out of negotiations to purchase the 560-square-mile ranch, leaving the Nature Conservancy without a partner in creating the Animas National Wildlife Refuge. Lujan told the *Albuquerque Journal* that the Bush administration ranks acquisition of wetlands and urban parks as priorities above the grasslands, deserts and forests of the ranch. However, Tom Wolf, director of development for the Nature Conservancy's New Mexico office, says the Gray Ranch is so important to his organization that it may seek a new federal partner. "This is too high a priority not to proceed," Wolf said. "The Gray Ranch remains the biggest helping on the Conservancy's plate." The Interior Secretary's action also had little effect on the plans of Sen. Jeff Bingaman, D-N.M. He says he will continue to seek funding for the \$22.5 million purchase.

Deaths stop grizzly hunt

Hunting season for grizzlies in one area of northwestern Montana ended before it began. To protect the grizzly population, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks allowed the loss of only two female bears to humans in the Flathead Bear Management Area this year. After five bears, including two females, were killed in the area, the department cancelled the season. A poacher killed one grizzly, a hunter killed one he mistook for a black bear, a 16-year-old hunter killed one while being attacked, and trains ran over two grizzlies feeding on grain spills. Two other grizzly hunting areas in northwestern Montana will be open from Oct. 1 through Nov. 26.

Calf kills unsolved

Wildlife officials still aren't sure whether wolves or coyotes killed seven calves on a ranch west of Kalispell, Mont. The presence of a pack of wolves in the area initially led ranchers to believe that wolves were to blame. But studies of the dead calves and of coyotes and wolves captured in the area made the situation more uncertain, says Kemper McMaster of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Although an investigation continues, McMaster isn't optimistic about solving the case. It will probably stand as an "unanswered livestock loss," he says. In any case, four captured wolves were transplanted to Glacier National Park, which wolves have moved into from Canada. Federal officials originally planned to release the wolves in Montana's Great Bear Wilderness, but Gov. Stan Stephens said Montana wasn't ready to accept wolves in areas they do not already inhabit.

Lion kills boy in Montana

A five-year-old boy was killed by at least one mountain lion in a remote area of western Montana Sept. 10. The body of Jake Gardipee was found in a wooded area behind his family's ranch near the small town of Evaro. Local officials shot a female mountain lion seen nearby, and an autopsy established "convincing evidence that the lion had at least fed upon the boy," said Keith Aune of the Wildlife Research Center in Bozeman, Mont. Investigators are trying to capture another lion whose tracks were found in the area, but it is not certain whether this lion was involved in the killing. Kerry Murphy, a wildlife biologist who has studied mountain lions in western Montana, said encounters between people and lions are uncommon in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. In Gardipee's case, he said, the small boy playing in the brush was not perceived as a threat by the lion, so he "essentially became the lion's prey."

Utah backs down

Utah has decided not to market state-owned land within national parks and on Indian reservations (HCN, 7/31/89). The state hoped to sell or lease parcels in Arches and Capitol Reef national parks, Dinosaur National Monument and the Navajo and Goshute reservations to private parties. But protests from environmental groups and the public came swiftly. According to a recent *Deseret News* poll, 77 percent of Utah's population opposed the marketing plan. In an earlier attempt to make money from the school-trust land, which is mandated to generate funds for public schools, Gov. Norm Bangerter proposed trading it for five large parcels in the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. That trade would have allowed the state to develop its own recreational facilities on Lake Powell. Terri Martin, staffer for the National Parks and Conservation Association, said the Lake Powell trade will never happen: "Congress will never give the state land in a national park for purposes of private development."

Timber sales appealed

Saying that the Ponderosa pine ecosystem may be even more endangered than old-growth Douglas fir, the Oregon Natural Resources Council appealed timber sales on five national forests in eastern Oregon. Sales amounting to 150 million board-feet — enough to build some 20,000 houses — were appealed in the Winema, Deschutes, Ochoco, Malheur and Fremont national forests in late August. Most large stands of Ponderosa pine in the region were logged 60 to 70 years ago.

BARBS

Somebody's cleaning up.

The Superfund program has cleaned only 34 of America's 1,175 worst toxic waste dumps and polluters paid less than 10 percent of the cost, according to a study by the Rand Corp.

The glory of America is its wild

by Michael Frome

Let us gather round a campfire, better yet around many campfires within wild places across America, to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. It is time to rejoice at what we share in common, a National Wilderness Preservation System of 90 million acres, all fragments of the original America.

Let us reflect on the Wilderness Act of 1964 as an expression of ethics and idealism to contrast with the corruption in high places, technological "fixes" and violence characteristic of our age. It is time, too, to remember the struggles and sacrifices of those who worked for the protection of wilderness and honor them as heroes and patriots.

Yet the Wilderness Act was only a beginning, rather than an end. Since 1964, Congress has passed more than 100 pieces of wilderness legislation, including the Eastern Wilderness Act of 1975, designating key tracts in the East; the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, extending the wilderness system to include areas administered by the Bureau of Land Management; and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980, adding more than 60 million acres to the system. Nevertheless, this anniversary should be a time to identify the unfinished agenda, recognizing chronic weak spots and new opportunities, challenges and needs.

Sen. Clinton P. Anderson spoke memorably at the dedication in 1954 of the Aldo Leopold Memorial at the portal to the Gila National Wilderness in New Mexico. The Gila 30 years before had become the first designated wilderness, resulting entirely from Leopold's initiative as a Forest Service official in the Southwest.

"Heavy clouds and strong winds blew out of the west during the ceremonies," reported the *Silver City Daily Press*, but a good-sized crowd insisted on hearing the addresses. New Mexico Sen. Anderson spoke of the creative commitment of his old friend Leopold (who had died in 1948) and then declared:

"We now become trustees of his inheritance. Those of us who may visit within the wilderness have an obligation to see that the work of one generation shall not be sacrificed by those that come after. We have an obligation to make sure that this area may remain untouched for generations and perhaps centuries to come."

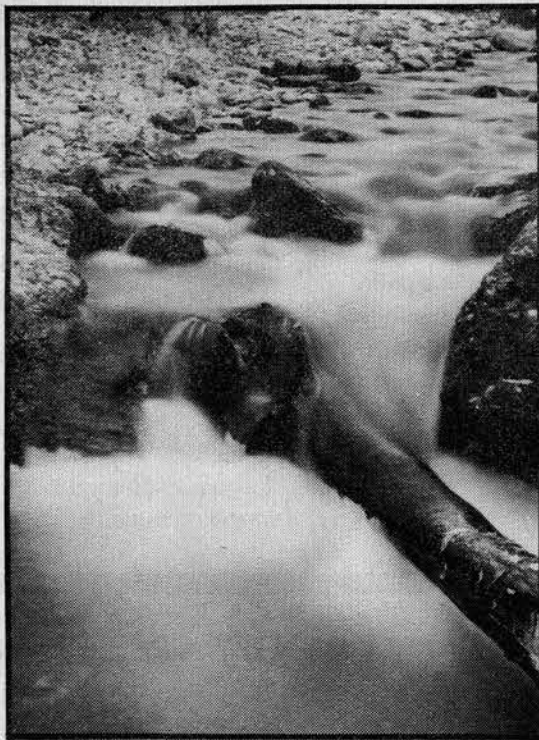
Though I was not present at the scene, Sen. Anderson later told me of his conversations with Leopold about wilderness, enlisting the senator in the cause of preservation. I treasure such connections with wilderness advocates, and feel fortunate to have been an observer and recorder of momentous events, and in a small way a participant in them.

Readings in history convince me that preservation of wild places is at the heart of American traditions. Wilderness tells one generation what is right and lasting about all generations and about the land itself.

"Now we face the question whether a still 'higher standard of living' is worth its cost in things natural, wild and free," wrote Leopold, but he was by no means first with this idea. William Penn, even in the colonial period, wanted one acre of forest left wild for every five acres that were cleared.

"A town is saved," wrote Henry David Thoreau in the 19th century, "not more by the righteous men in it than by the woods that surround it."

New York State moved to save the best of its wild heritage in 1892 by establishing the Adirondack Park, then following up two years later with a constitutional amendment declaring that: "The lands of the state, now owned or hereafter acquired, constituting the forest preserve as now fixed by law, shall be forever kept as wild forest lands. They shall not be leased, sold, or



Dale Schickelanz

In the Gila Wilderness, New Mexico

exchanged, or be taken by any corporation, public or private, nor shall the timber thereon be sold, removed, or destroyed."

Those citations are well recorded, but I continually discover new evidence of public care and concern. During the four years I spent in Idaho, for example, I came across documents showing that in the late 1920s, the governor of the state appointed a committee to consider the wisdom of establishing something to be called a "primitive area" in the national forests of central Idaho.

After three years of consultation and study, the regional forester proposed to close approximately one million acres to public roads, buildings and other permanent improvements. The idea received support from all quarters. The chairman of the governor's committee, representing the timber industry, was its strongest booster.



Idaho Sawtooths

Del Owens

The president of a dairyman's cooperative declared, "We of the agricultural industry and interests think of a primitive area on the headwaters of streams as a natural resource for a water supply, as the protection of sources of streams means their life blood."

Consequently early in 1931, chief forester Robert Y. Stuart approved establishment of the Idaho Primitive Area (in due course to become the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness), stating: "The potential value of the Idaho Primitive Area for recreational and inspirational purposes evidently is greater, more susceptible of early realization and more desirable than is the utilization of its material resources."

There was no input, so far as I can determine, from Aldo Leopold, or from the other two Forest Service wilderness pioneers, Arthur Carhart and Robert Marshall. It was essentially a local show, the outcome of a movement on the part of people who care, in collaboration with the resource professionals, who were largely a different breed in those days.

I knew Carhart in his later years, before his death in 1978, and wish he were more widely appreciated today. In 1919, as the first landscape architect hired by the Forest Service, he convinced his superiors that the Trappers Lake area of Colorado's White River National Forest should remain roadless rather than be made accessible for summer homes.

That, as far as I can tell, was the first definitive application of the wilderness idea. Later he did much the same for the Superior National Forest in Minnesota, identifying a large area that could be "as priceless as Yellowstone, Yosemite, or the Grand Canyon — if it remained a water-trail wilderness." It was the beginning of the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, renowned because it remains roadless.

Robert Marshall, as chief of recreation in the Forest Service, enlarged national forest wilderness and strengthened regulations to protect it, although his interests cut across bureaucratic boundaries of federal lands. He encouraged citizen involvement in public lands and was the prime mover in organizing the Wilderness Society. His brother George once shared with me a copy of *The People's Forests*, a wonderful little book written by Robert Marshall in 1933, well deserving of reissue today. In it he proposed a national network of numerous reservations located in all sections of the country, both to make them accessible and to avoid overuse. He defined wilderness in words that ultimately would be strongly reflected in the Wilderness Act, though it came into law 25 years after his death in 1939.

But everywhere in the country, during the first half of this century, wilderness was under attack, pressured by road-building, dam-building, logging, mining, recreation and tourism. Even the Gila Wilderness was threatened by the proposed Hooker Dam. Nor were the national parks any longer safe — it actually took a nationwide campaign to convince Congress to keep dams out of the Grand Canyon.

"How Much Wilderness Can We Afford to Lose?" Such was the challenge raised by Howard Zahniser in 1951 at the Second Biennial Wilderness Conference of the Sierra Club. Zahniser saw test cases everywhere — so widespread that citizen conservationists were continually on the defensive. He called for a bold strategy, an *offensive* to establish a national wilderness preservation system composed of lands administered by federal agencies.

I knew and observed Zahniser in Washington, D.C. He had begun his career as a teacher, then worked as a government editor until 1945, when he became executive director of the Wilderness Society. I can't remember anyone calling him by his first name. He was always "Zahnie," studious, gentle, soft-spoken and patient, always willing to listen yet persuasive and persistent, never losing heart, and always resisting compromise. In 1961 he told the Sierra Club Wilderness Conference:

"We are not fighting a rear-guard action, we are facing a frontier ... We are not fighting progress. We are making it. We are not dealing with a vanishing wilderness. We are working for a wilderness forever."

In those days the Wilderness Society was a small organization with a small staff operating in humble quarters, but with a bold sense of mission. Everyone revered Zahnie.

I think also of people like Michael Nadel, who at one period in his life had initiated and conducted conservation programs for urban children and who had worked for years on wilderness preservation in the

lderness

Adirondacks, and Stewart Brandborg, ultimately Zahnie's successor, who grew up with the great Idaho-Montana wilderness as his backyard.

Besides the Wilderness Society staff, Zahnie derived support from David Brower, the executive director of the Sierra Club. They made a powerful team, focused on the issue above and beyond the institutional interests of their respective organizations.

Then there were the unpaid crusaders of the Wilderness Society Council, bright minds and elevated spirits — individuals such as Olaus Murie, who knew the wilderness intimately from his scientific expeditions; Sigurd Olson, wilderness guide and educator, who at the age of 50 began his creative writing career; and Harvey Broome, my own teacher and hero, who set aside his law career for his love of wilderness.

The first wilderness bill was introduced in Congress in 1956 by Democratic Sen. Hubert Humphrey of Minnesota and eight co-sponsors. Republican Rep. John P. Saylor of Pennsylvania introduced the bill in the House. Between June 1957 and May 1964, 18 hearings were held on the wilderness proposal in both Washington and the West.

The extractive industries that felt public lands were their private domain fought it tooth-and-toenail. The Forest Service and National Park Service fought it, too, in the true spirit of bureaucracy entrenched.

Nevertheless, the bill was passed by the Senate April 10, 1963, by a vote of 73-12, with Clinton Anderson of New Mexico, and Frank Church of Idaho, the floor leader, playing key roles.

It was a different story on the House side, where the bill was bottled up year after year by Wayne Aspinall of Colorado, the powerful, crusty chairman of the Interior Committee.

Saylor, a towering figure of indomitable will, never gave up. "I cannot believe," he said, "that the American people have become so crass, so dollar-minded, so exploitation-conscious that they must develop every little bit of wilderness that still exists."

Finally Aspinall gave in. The bill was passed by the House July 30, 1964 with only one negative vote, and was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson in the White House rose garden on Sept. 3, 1964.

That historic act established a definition of wilderness in law and a National Wilderness Preservation System in fact. It was imperfect on passage, allowing mineral exploration through December 31, 1983, and it remains imperfect today. But the wilderness system has grown and endured, outlasting Reagan-Watt attempts to undermine it, and the principle of wilderness preservation is firmly established the world over.

Passage of the Wilderness Act opened an age of environmental awareness and activism, inspiring many people to continue the crusade. I recall being in California and hiking in the San Rafael Wilderness, the first area reviewed under the 1964 act. I went in company with Dick Smith, an energetic Santa Barbara newsman who made the Los Padres National Forest his special beat.

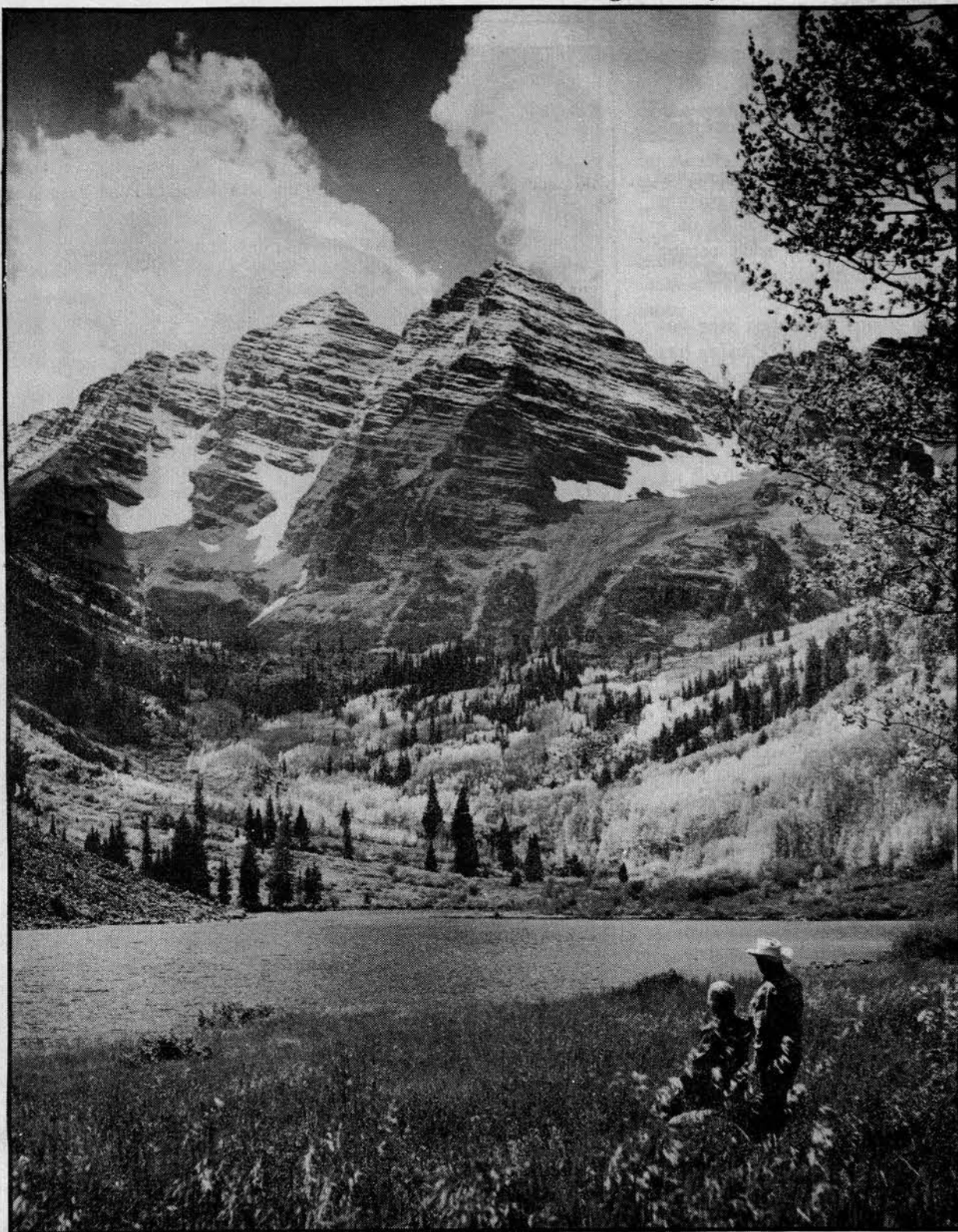
When he died suddenly in 1977, the mayor proclaimed Dick Smith Week and the whole community mourned. Dick had helped to get a large roadless area adjacent to the San Rafael placed on the wilderness study list — a mosaic of chaparral slopes, Indian cave paintings, sandstone cliffs and 6,541-foot Madulce Peak — and in 1981 it was named the Dick Smith Wilderness. Rather like Carhart in northern Minnesota and Aldo Leopold in the brushy Southwest, Smith persevered to save something special.

"In wildness is the preservation of the world." So declared Thoreau in a charge to his time and to all time. I would add that in the preservation of wild nature lies our salvation, that the very effort to preserve and perpetuate, as manifest by Dick Smith and all the others cited above, counts most.

The public, unfortunately, has been led to believe by Congress, the federal agencies and some major conservation organizations that once an area is designated as wilderness everything will be fine. Things don't work that way.

Many wilderness areas are abused and degraded, often by uncontrolled and inappropriate recreation uses. They are staffed by inadequate personnel insufficiently trained.

The agencies simply do not take their responsibility seriously. Decision makers, mostly trained in voca-



Maroon Bells near Aspen, Colorado

tional forestry schools, view the earth as a composite of commodities intended for consumption; they have little appreciation of wilderness, if any at all. The Forest Service is oriented to timber, the Bureau of Land Management to grazing and mining, the Fish and Wildlife Service to ducks and deer for hunters and the National Park Service to crowds and tourism.

Yes, there are able people at work in these agencies. But they often do their best against heavy odds. They deserve a better break, and so does wilderness.

The time has come to establish a new agency, to be called the United States Wilderness Service, as a watchdog over the others. It would inventory wilderness, review and report on threats, opportunities for expansion, values, appropriate uses and capacities.

The Wilderness Service would be staffed by people who care about wilderness and relate to it as an educational and inspirational resource. Since we pay people to serve mining, grazing, timber, oil and gas, electric power, and highway interests, we can readily afford a cadre of men and women to fulfill the public's wilderness cause.

We can never allocate enough wilderness, but we can continually improve the administration of areas in

the wilderness system. The 25th anniversary of the Wilderness Act marks a fitting point at which to reconsider the propriety and proportions of such activities as grazing; hunting, fishing and trapping; fire control; insect and disease control; luxury outfitting with permanent and semi-permanent structures and aircraft flights over wilderness.

Let us advance the ethical cause of wilderness by redefining the purpose of all public lands, of reassessing what they do to enrich life in America, in long-range terms of economics, science, and recreation, and beyond them of culture, art and spirituality. Emerson wrote that literature, poetry and science are all homage of humans to the unfathomed secrets of nature.

I cherish wilderness as living art, poetry and music, rather than for its utility. The best way to commemorate the wilderness anniversary is to reorder priorities and to value the earth for its own sake.

□

Michael Frome is a writer and environmental studies professor at Huxley College in Bellingham, Washington.

*Let us advance the ethical
cause of wilderness by
redefining the purpose of all
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WIPP...

(Continued from page 1)

dozen drafts to state environmental regulators.

- Environmentalists have threatened to sue DOE if it carries through plans to bury a few thousand drums in the site's salt beds for experiments before meeting federal standards for waste disposal.

Perhaps the biggest issue surrounding WIPP today has become the performance and credibility of DOE itself: its record of creating environmental messes at weapons plants at Rocky Flats, Savannah River, Fernald and Hanford; its repeated efforts to get exemptions or delays from having to meet key environmental rules before opening WIPP; and its repeated practice of establishing deadlines for opening the project that later turn out to be unrealistic.

While DOE and its supporters have always said the project is safe, Energy Secretary Watkins, in his delay announcement, acknowledged that DOE's plans for WIPP were "flawed." He said he lacked adequate scientific data about the project. He also conceded that his department could not guarantee to the public that it knows exactly what is in the tens of thousands of barrels of radioactive wastes that are produced at Rocky Flats.

Shortly before Watkins' announcement, DOE's internal safety auditors had — for the second time in nine months — written memos outlining a lack of safety documentation at the WIPP site. They found DOE needed to spend up to \$1 million and nine months to improve its quality control programs there.

Shortly afterward, an advisory committee to DOE visited WIPP. Members returned with serious reservations about training standards for the project's 600-person workforce and its ability to handle an abnormal or damaged shipping container.

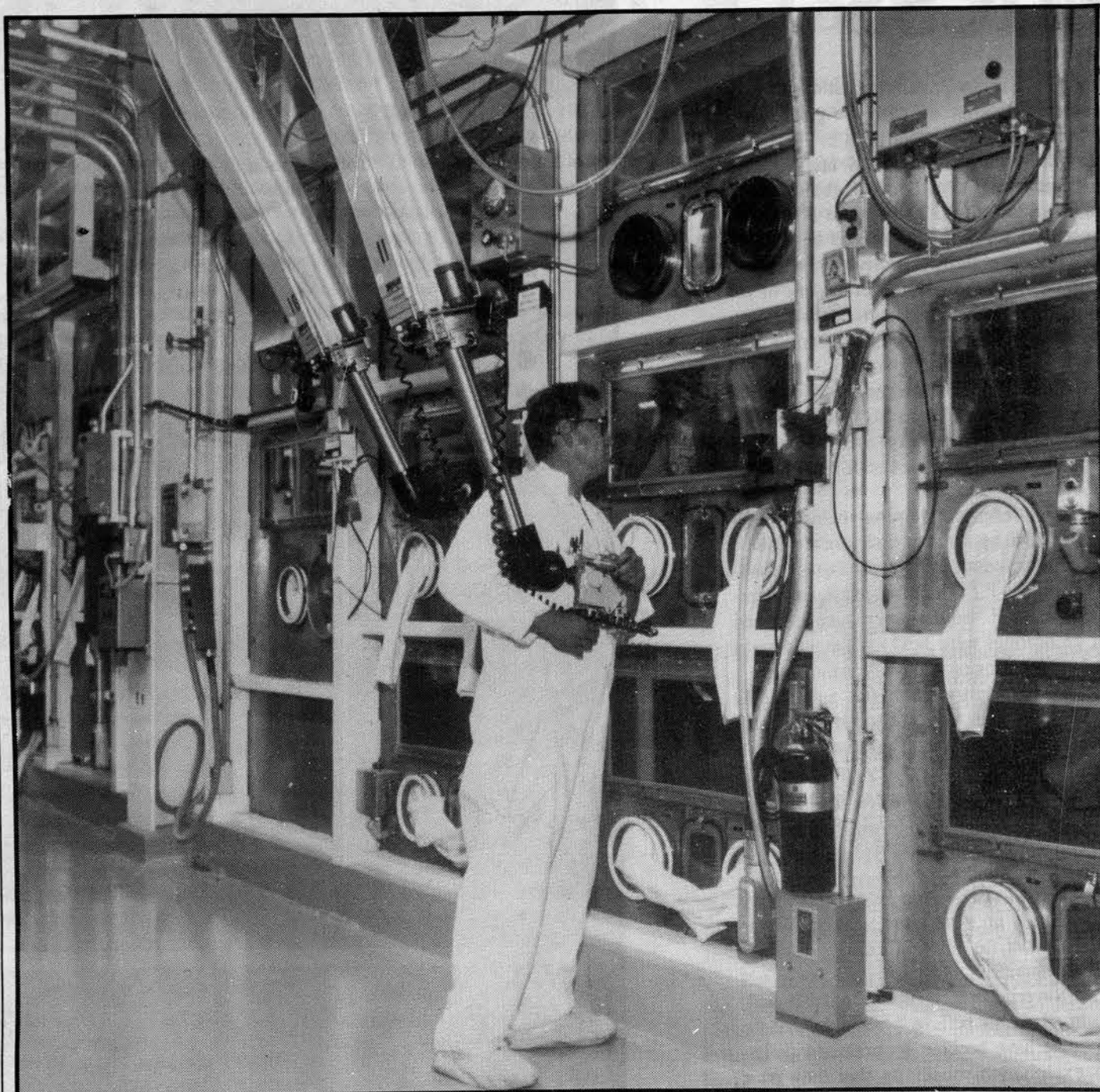
"Procedures are set up with the expectation that all waste shipments will be within specifications. This assumption could lead to contamination of the building," said a letter to Watkins from panel chairman John Ahearn, a former chairman of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Finally, in late August, New Mexico state energy officials said they were ordering the state attorney general's office to begin an investigation. It would look at whether authorities had improperly selected routes seven years ago for shipping the wastes through New Mexico to the nuclear dump outside Carlsbad.

In 1988, state and DOE officials had pooh-poohed warnings about the route selection process from environmental groups.

But policy analysts for the state Department of Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources now say they probably have to hold more public hearings to re-designate the routes. Otherwise the state could be vulnerable to lawsuits from worried residents living close to designated roads.

Public concern remains high in New Mexico. Six hundred persons testified against WIPP in recent public hearings in WIPP-crazy Santa Fe, the center of anti-WIPP sentiment. Except for two busloads of Carlsbad residents, most of the 150 speakers testified against the project at hearings in Albuquerque, until now never a hotbed of opposition sentiment. In southeast New Mexico where WIPP was once a sacred cow, nearly half the 71 speakers testified against the project.



Rockwell International

Rockwell International uranium worker At Rocky Flats bomb plant

DOE changes Rocky Flats management

After a summer of controversy, the federal government and its contractor at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant near Denver, Colo., announced they would part ways.

The DOE said it will replace Rockwell International with EG&G Inc., a Massachusetts-based engineering firm that also manages the federal government's Idaho National Engineering Laboratory. EG&G said it plans to take over operations at Rocky Flats by Jan. 1.

W. Henson Moore, the second highest ranking official at the Energy Department, told the *Denver Post* Sept. 26 that the agency ended Rockwell's contract because it was "fed up" with the company's recent actions. "This Rockwell incident shows we're not going to be bullied or buffaloed or scared," he said.

The "incident" was Rockwell's announcement the day before that it had filed suit in U.S. District Court in Washington, D.C., against the DOE. The company wanted assurances that the federal government would not prosecute Rockwell for future violations of environmen-

tal law. Rockwell said that illegalities were certain to occur, and that it could not continue to run the plant without violating Environmental Protection Agency regulations for the storage and disposal of hazardous waste.

Federal regulations prohibit the storage of hazardous waste for more than 90 days. But with WIPP's opening postponed and a temporary facility in Idaho closed to more waste, no federally approved disposal site or treatment process exists for waste produced at Rocky Flats.

Rockwell had run Rocky Flats, which makes plutonium triggers for nuclear bombs, since 1975. Just eight months ago, the Energy Department renewed the company's contract for five more years. But by spring, the relationship between Rockwell and the federal government grew stormy:

- On June 6, agents from the FBI and Environmental Protection Agency raided Rocky Flats to investigate alleged violations of environmental law (HCN, 6/19/89);

- In response to the ongoing investigation, DOE froze over \$4 million in 1989 performance bonuses for Rockwell employees. Nonetheless, in July, Rockwell gave Sam F. Iacobellis, the executive responsible for operations at Rocky Flats, a promotion and a large bonus;

- On Aug. 1, a federal grand jury was empaneled to hear evidence that top officials at Rockwell and the DOE covered up illegal handling and disposal of nuclear waste. Rockwell repeatedly denied any criminal wrongdoing;

- On Sept. 14, Rockwell officials threatened to stop production at Rocky Flats unless the federal government guaranteed it would not prosecute managers for environmental violations; and

- On Sept. 21, Rockwell sued the federal government, seeking an injunction that would bar the government from seeking civil or criminal penalties. The next day, the DOE announced the cancellation of Rockwell's five-year contract to run the plant.

— Devin Odell

The climactic moment came when former Democratic Gov. Bruce King, who is running again in 1990, told a cheering crowd in Albuquerque that DOE had failed to settle issues he'd raised about transportation when he was governor 10 years ago. In an interview later, he said he would stop nuclear wastes at the state's borders if he were governor and DOE tried to open WIPP before bypass roads to carry the wastes are built around Santa Fe, Roswell and other cities.

"If they let Cecil Andrus get by with

it, why shouldn't we do it?" asked King, referring to the Idaho governor's decision to close his state to more radioactive waste from Colorado's bomb factory at Rocky Flats.

To DOE spokesman Richard Marquez in Albuquerque, some of the new problems and uncertainties surrounding WIPP are actually reassuring signs. It means the energy department's internal watchdog systems are operating properly, he said.

"As a New Mexico resident, I know that with all these people reviewing the

project, I'd feel kind of comforted," said Marquez.

But critics such as Santa Fe environmental consultant Merle Lefkoff, who once did consulting work for DOE's commercial nuclear-waste disposal program, said the spreading criticism of DOE was a sign of the department's lack of credibility.

"The critics have targeted DOE, and DOE has hung this target up and given them the darts," said Lefkoff.

(Continued on page 11)

WIPP...

(Continued from page 10)

Carlsbad officials and businessmen were angry at Watkins for announcing the latest delay in WIPP's opening only one day before he flew to New Mexico and visited the WIPP salt beds. They said DOE had not shown any reason to delay the opening, and that the timing of Watkins' announcement was poor.

But Carlsbad State Sen. Louis Whitlock, a strong WIPP supporter and a close friend of Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus, also acknowledged DOE's actions in the past have done more than any single other factor to hurt WIPP.

For now, Energy Secretary Watkins says he plans no further push to set a new opening date for WIPP until he learns when a new, blue-ribbon panel issues its report. The five-member panel only started visiting WIPP, Rocky Flats and the Idaho National Engineering Laboratories in September.

For the second time in a year, Idaho Gov. Andrus has closed his state's borders to additional nuclear waste shipments from Rocky Flats. Also for the second time in a year, Andrus' action has raised the specter of a shutdown of Rocky Flats, because it will run out of storage space next March.

DOE says it's studying whether to put waste from Rocky Flats in an interim storage facility until WIPP opens. The agency has given few other clues about its plans except to say an interim facility won't be in New Mexico, Colorado or Idaho.

DOE has gotten some good news from the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. It recently certified WIPP's cylindrical, double-lined TRUPACT II containers for road use. The National Academy of Sciences also endorsed DOE's plans to bury a few thousand drums underground at WIPP to test the wastes' potential for creating explosive gases.

The project has also gotten an equal dose of bad news. Its own studies show that a gas problem could occur within 65

years and be worse than most scientists had estimated.

Studies from DOE contractor Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque indicate that the radioactive waste is likely to produce more than enough gas to fracture the salt beds, thus providing escape paths for the waste.

Sandia and DOE officials say they're hopeful that long-term, underground tests of wastes at WIPP will show the problem isn't as serious as previous studies above ground have shown. Independent scientists at a watchdog agency, the New Mexico Environmental Evaluation Group, are more skeptical.

The state scientists say DOE needs to start studying solutions to the gas problem now. They warn that any solutions are known to carry big bills or pose major technical and environmental problems. Solutions include burning the wastes in an incinerator, allowing the gases to escape harmlessly to the surface via pipes, or treating the wastes with chemicals to lessen chances of producing gas.

Critics such as Lokesh Chaturvedi

of the evaluation group and Don Hancock of the Southwest Research and Information Center in Albuquerque say DOE's choices may well be to treat the wastes at high cost, to seek an exemption from federal radioactive waste disposal standards, or to try to persuade EPA to weaken standards to make them easier to meet.

WIPP supporters in Carlsbad, meanwhile, grow more frustrated by the day as they watch problems mount for a project they still believe is safe. While environmental groups denounce DOE's experimental plans as worthless, Carlsbad officials say the tests are pivotal to demonstrate WIPP's potential as a disposal site for the wastes.

"I can visualize us 10 years from now, spending money and holding hearings without accomplishing anything," said Louis Whitlock, a strongly pro-WIPP state senator from Carlsbad.

□

Tony Davis is a reporter for the *Albuquerque Tribune*.

LETTERS

THERE'S MORE TO COMPENSATION

Dear HCN,

Hank Fisher's proposal (HCN, 9/11/89) to compensate ranchers for predation losses due to wolves is a basically sound concept and one that should be a part of any wolf recovery plan. However, if conservationists and others interested in wolf recovery are to be held responsible for compensation, it's proper to ask ranchers to assume a certain level of responsibility for prevention.

It is not unreasonable to demand that ranchers tend their herds. It is only because ranchers have created an artificial predator-free environment that they have been able to abandon their stock for months at a time on isolated ranges. In effect, the ranching community has transferred one of their operational costs — tending livestock — to the public at large.

We must not forget that livestock interests have taken something away from the public in order to operate in the manner to which they have grown accustomed. While the rancher gained a predator-free environment, the public lost ecosystem integrity as well as the opportunity to see, hear and know there are large predators still roaming the land. Many people who love predators — myself included — have suffered a loss without any compensation from ranchers for these losses.

We must also keep in mind that the use of public rangelands for private livestock production may contribute to those losses. The only way wolves and other predators will avoid preying on livestock is if there is large and healthy wild prey base that makes livestock predation an unlikely occurrence. Since a large proportion of the forage on public lands is presently allotted to livestock, not wild ungulates, the potential prey base for wolves outside of national parks is severely reduced, making it more likely that any wandering wolves may have no choice but to eat beef and lamb rather than venison and elk steaks. Until there is total reform of public lands grazing, one could argue that ranchers are in effect contributing to potential predation problems.

But with or without livestock reductions on public rangelands, I would

argue that the federal government or any other taxpayer-funded agency should flatly refuse to pay compensation for any predation losses which occur on public rangelands. The presence of predators and risk of predation should be one of the costs any livestock operators accept if they wish to utilize publicly owned forage.

In spite of these qualifications, there are still likely to be occasions when wolves will kill stock on private lands. In these instances, if the rancher has acted in good faith to reduce predation opportunities through tending, corralling, close supervision of stock and proper disposal of dead carcasses, then compensation for all losses is certainly justified.

George Wuerthner
Livingston, Montana

TOO OPTIMISTIC

Dear HCN,

I hate to be the bearer of bad news, but the short note on Anasazi National Monument (Bulletin Board, 8/28/89) is a bit too optimistic. Your lead sentence reads: "The Anasazi National Monument in southwest Colorado is one of the West's most important archaeological sites, and the National Park Service wants to improve the way it's managed." Fact is, there ain't no such animals. What does exist is a collection of very large and very significant Anasazi towns that are either privately owned, are under jurisdiction of the Forest Service and BLM, or in the case of Goodman Point Pueblo, is an isolated unit of the Park Service's Hovenweep National Monument.

What has been proposed are five management alternatives for these sites. Although the title of the Park Service study is "Anasazi National Monument Resource Assessment," the fact is that national monument designation has not been included as one of the five alternatives.

However, one of the alternatives does call for establishment of a Northern Anasazi National Park. And fortunately, the final report will be forwarded to Congress, which will then select the preferred alternative. This is slightly better than leaving the decision to BLM, whose attitude towards the study is best described as lukewarm, and who most certainly prefers the conservation area alternative administered by BLM and the

Forest Service without a role for the National Park Service. This might better be called the "no action" alternative.

The BLM administering and protecting vulnerable archaeological sites is akin to asking the Park Service to issue the West's oil and gas leases or grazing permits. Quite simply, neither agency is up to the task the other has historically performed. The only viable alternative resulting in long-term protection of the ancient towns is a congressionally-designated Northern Anasazi National Park.

W.R. Haase
Gales Ferry, Connecticut

DARK SIDE

Dear HCN,

Thank you for printing Ray Ring's review/revelation of the dark side of Tony Hillerman's treatment of the Navajo. Whether Navajo culture is being murdered by alcohol or committing suicide with it, I don't know, but I do know that violent death is in the air there, and that the landscape Hillerman portrays so lyrically is one of the murder victims.

The worst kind of stench rises from these deaths, both human and non-human. Sometimes I wonder if so-called "Western art," like alcohol, isn't just another drug, an "opiate of the people," as Marx called religion. Maybe some of our sentimental Western artists are actually the cause of the problems we face rather than just symptoms. After all, both alcohol and art have served too long to stupefy their willing victims. Unlike alcohol, however, we can make demands of art and of artists. Mine is this: art should point us back to life. Art should help us face the reality of evil in the West and especially in our myths about the West.

Tom Wolf
Santa Fe, New Mexico

CAN'T TAKE CREDIT

Dear HCN,

Mr. Leal of the Political Economy Research Center (PERC), in his letter (HCN, 7/31/89) endeavoring to refute Professor Power of the University of Montana, confuses coincidence with cause when he takes partial credit for recent instream flow legislation.

As a founding director of the Alliance for Montana Waters (AMW), the coalition of individuals and conservation groups to which Mr. Leal refers, I am not aware that he or PERC sparked the formation of our group or guided its activities.

While it is true that AMW successfully lobbied for a water leasing bill that would allow the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to lease water for instream flow to benefit fish and wildlife, AMW is not an ideological exponent of market-oriented solutions to environmental problems. Contrary to Leal's implication, AMW is not an expression of PERC policy. AMW is an expression of Montana's grass-roots conservation movement, which is not so ready to conceive of the market as the salvation from our environmental tragedies. In fact, most Montana conservationists would probably agree that Leal's proposed solution to the whale problem as the private ownership of those critters would be yet another tragedy and testament to PERC's hubris.

Leal's anti-government, anti-public property rights, free-market ideology leads him to draw the inaccurate conclusion that The Nature Conservancy has done more for the grizzly bear than the Park Service and other government agencies. A more honest appraisal would recognize that the contribution of the Conservancy, while praiseworthy, is less significant than the protection efforts of federal and state agencies. Leal is too quick to scapegoat government and too quick to praise private business. He is unwilling to condemn business for despoiling the environment. He seems to argue that corporations are not engaged in bad behavior, they are only responding to bad prices.

Leal is undoubtedly eager to prove the validity of PERC's market approach when he takes partial credit for the accomplishment of the Alliance for Montana Waters. How often does his ideology result in confusing coincidence with cause, appearance with reality or economics with ethics? Is there no higher purpose to human life than getting a good price? The marketplace may be a good place to fix the hole in the sole of the shoe, but is it the place to go to repair a damaged soul?

And it is a damaged soul that wants to own a whale.

Jan Konigsberg
Helena, Montana

ESSAY

Must the West's air become an opaque shroud?

by Robert Yuhnke

President George Bush has broken the congressional log jam that has stymied efforts to amend the Clean Air Act since 1981. In September, the environment subcommittee in the House started work on proposals that will become the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990. It is Bush's own proposals and willingness to see legislation that has led to this activity.

The West has much at stake in this legislation. But most of the region's needs, including protection of its scenic grandeur from regional haze, acid pollution damage to high country lakes and streams, and urban carbon monoxide and particulate pollution, drew little attention in Washington. The action focused on the ozone pollution that plagues the Northeast and southern California, and acid rain in the East, where environmental damage is more severe than in the Rockies.

Unless Western leaders in statehouses and Congress become more assertive in demanding protection, our problems are likely to remain ignored for another decade, when clean air will again rise to the top of the national agenda.

Most at risk are the West's world-class vistas: the spectacular scenic grandeur of the Grand Canyon, the complex canyon country of southern Utah and the majesty of snowclad peaks in Colorado and Wyoming. The West's sparkling blue skies are a fragile and endangered resource; the ability to see to the limits of the horizon will be the first casualty of air pollution.

The Grand Canyon and other wild lands in the West are already shrouded in pollution a few days each summer, depriving visitors of an awe-inspiring experience. Within the next two decades the pall of pollution over the canyon and all of the West is expected to become worse, unless Congress tightens the limits on the pollutants that cause regional haze.

National Park Service studies show that most visible pollution in the West (outside of the urban airsheds) can be traced to the sulfur emitted from coal-fired power plants like the Navajo power plant near the Grand Canyon, and from copper smelters and oil production.

Moreover, the Park Service predicts that expected increases in coal-fired power generation will nearly eliminate the clear skies for which the West is famous.

Sulfur pollution, along with nitrogen oxides also emitted mostly from coal-fired power plants, causes acid rain as well. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency says sulfur and nitrogen oxides from coal-fired power plants are expected to double in the West between 1985 and 2010. This can happen under current law because earlier this year the EPA successfully defeated a lawsuit brought by environmental groups. The suit would have required the agency to implement the regional haze program enacted as part of the 1977 Clean Air Act amendments. The EPA's legal victory repealed the 1977 congressional decision to protect national parks and wilderness from visibility degradation.

The projected increases in these pollutants also threaten the survival of life in some high country lakes and streams. EPA's 1985 western lakes survey found that about 20 percent of the 10,000 lakes in the Rockies, Cascades and Sierras above 9,000 feet are extremely vulnerable to increases in acid pollution.

Researchers in Colorado reported earlier this year that acid pollution peaks measured during the spring snowmelt killed almost all of the young salamanders exposed to the acid. They have linked the acid pollution to the collapse of the salamander population observed since 1980. These results suggest that the widespread declines in other amphibian populations, including species of frogs and toads which have completely disappeared from their historical range throughout much of the West, may also be caused by acid pollution. These are only the early warning signals of coming damage, as power plant emissions in the West double over the next 20 years.

President Bush's proposed acid rain legislation would include Western power plants under a national emissions cap. It is a major step forward. Until now, acid rain bills introduced in Congress only dealt with

(Continued on page 13)

National Park Service

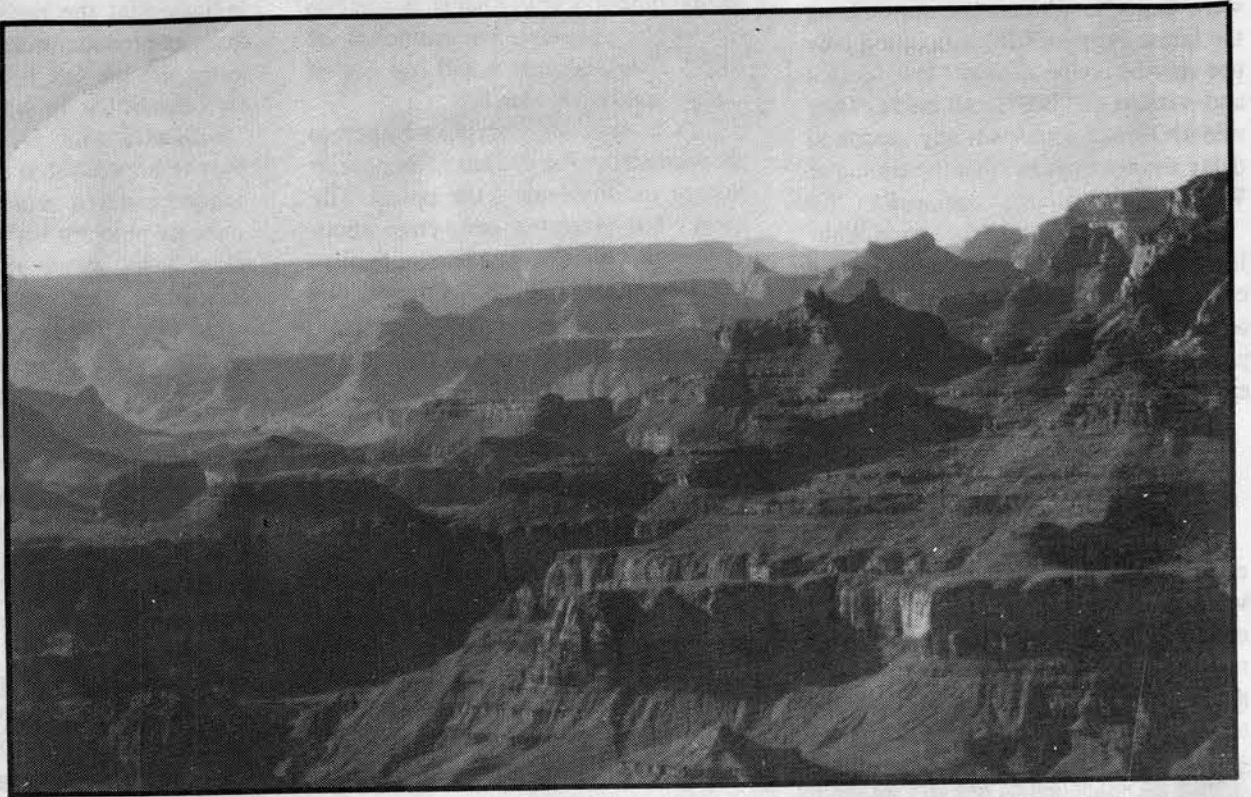


PHOTO NUMBER 1: Clear conditions like these occur about 10 percent of the time. The air is this clean or cleaner during only nine of the 90 summer days. If pollution levels increase, the number of these clean-air days would be cut in half to only four or five throughout the entire summer.

National Park Service

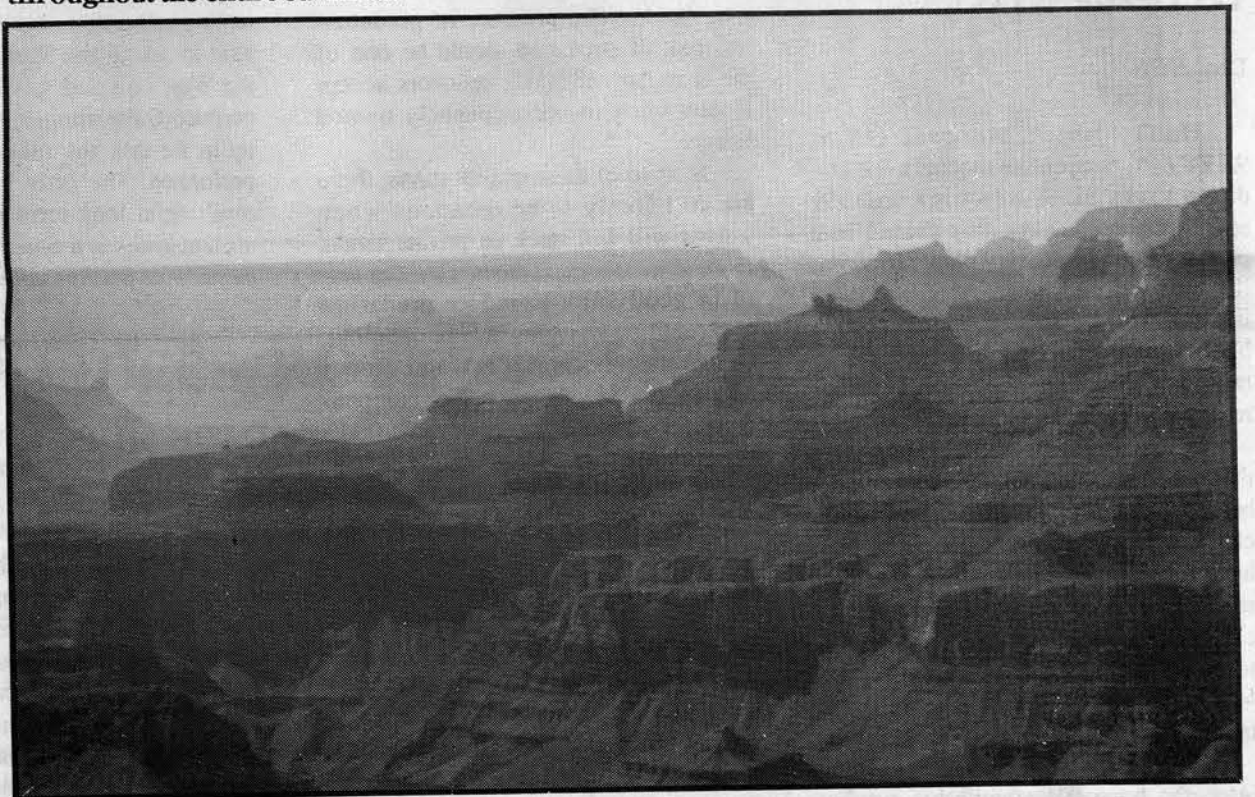


PHOTO NUMBER 2: During the summer at the Grand Canyon, half of the days — 45 out of 90 — are more polluted than this. If sulfur dioxide emissions double by the year 2010, as predicted, the visibility will be as bad or worse than this 70 percent of the time. Only 23 summer days will be cleaner.

National Park Service

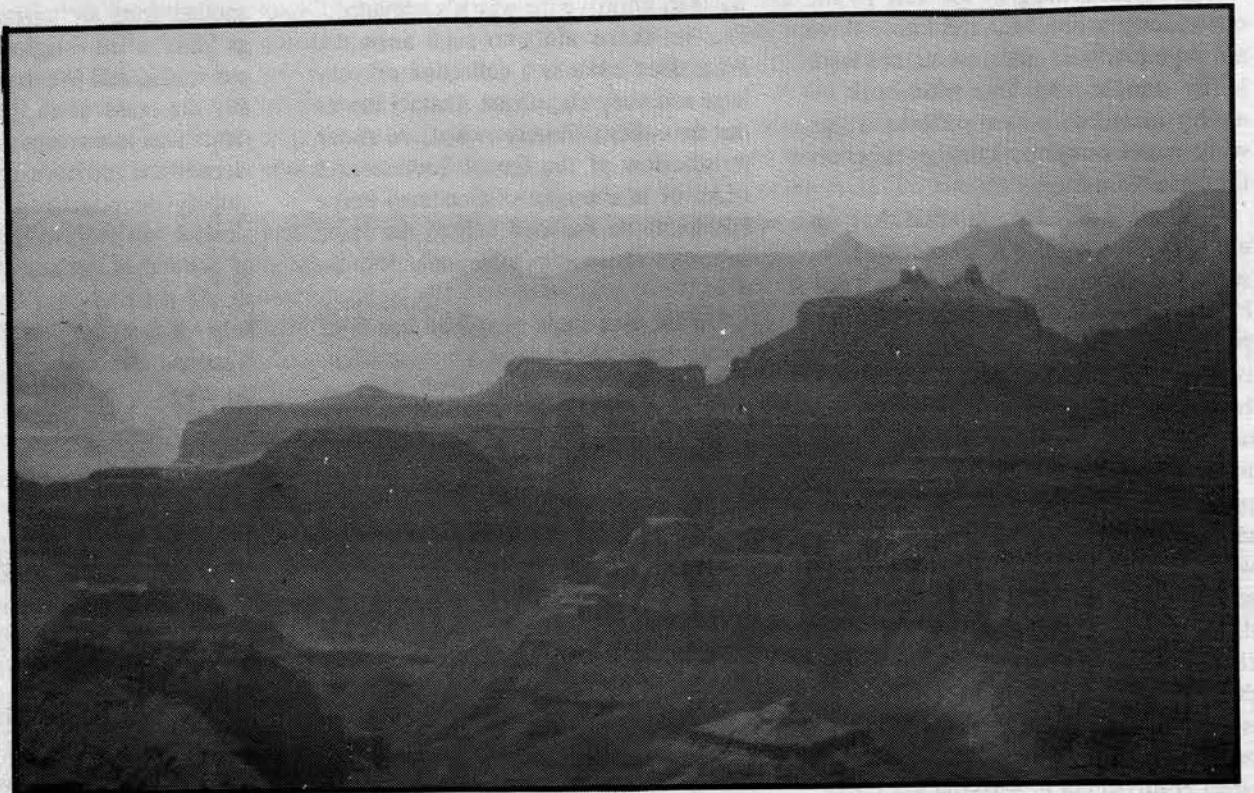


PHOTO NUMBER 3: Conditions such as these are observed 10 percent of the time. About nine days each summer the air is at least this polluted.

Opaque shroud...

(Continued from page 12)

areas where severe environmental destruction has already occurred.

Westerners should welcome the initiative, since it offers the first politically viable proposal to protect the West. But we should also demand that Congress reject delays in the Bush proposal that would allow coal plant sulfur emissions to nearly double in the West before the cap takes effect.

Four major improvements in the Bush bill are needed. First, the emission cap should hold utility emissions at 1985 levels. Bush's plans require power companies to cut emissions from existing plants to offset emissions from new plants. But more than half of the projected increases during the next 20 years will come from higher power-generation at existing plants, the EPA says.

Western utilities overbuilt and have much more capacity today than is needed. The increased use of existing plants will increase pollution emissions from these plants by nearly 50 percent. This need not occur. The emission cap should be set at 1985 levels, which would bring existing plants into the regulatory process.

Second, the Bush bill allows utilities to obtain offsetting reductions from any sulfur source. The West should insist that emission increases in the West are offset by reductions in the West — not in Florida or Pennsylvania.

Third, the administration proposal allows any emission reduction that occurs after 1985 to qualify as an "offset" to pollution produced at a new power plant.

As a result, the nearly 500,000 tons of sulfur dioxide emissions eliminated by the shutdown of Arizona's Douglas and San Manuel smelters would qualify as offsets. This would allow about 10 new power plants the size of the Intermountain Power Project to be built before any further emission reductions are required. This should not be allowed. Emission reductions should qualify as offsets only if they go beyond the reductions required to comply with current law. The smelters were in violation of the law when they closed.

Finally, the Bush bill repeals the requirements of the existing law to prevent the significant deterioration ("PSD") of air quality by allowing the use of tall stacks, and by withdrawing the new PSD limits on nitrogen oxides. These provisions help protect national parks and wilderness near new plants and should not be repealed.

National Park Service

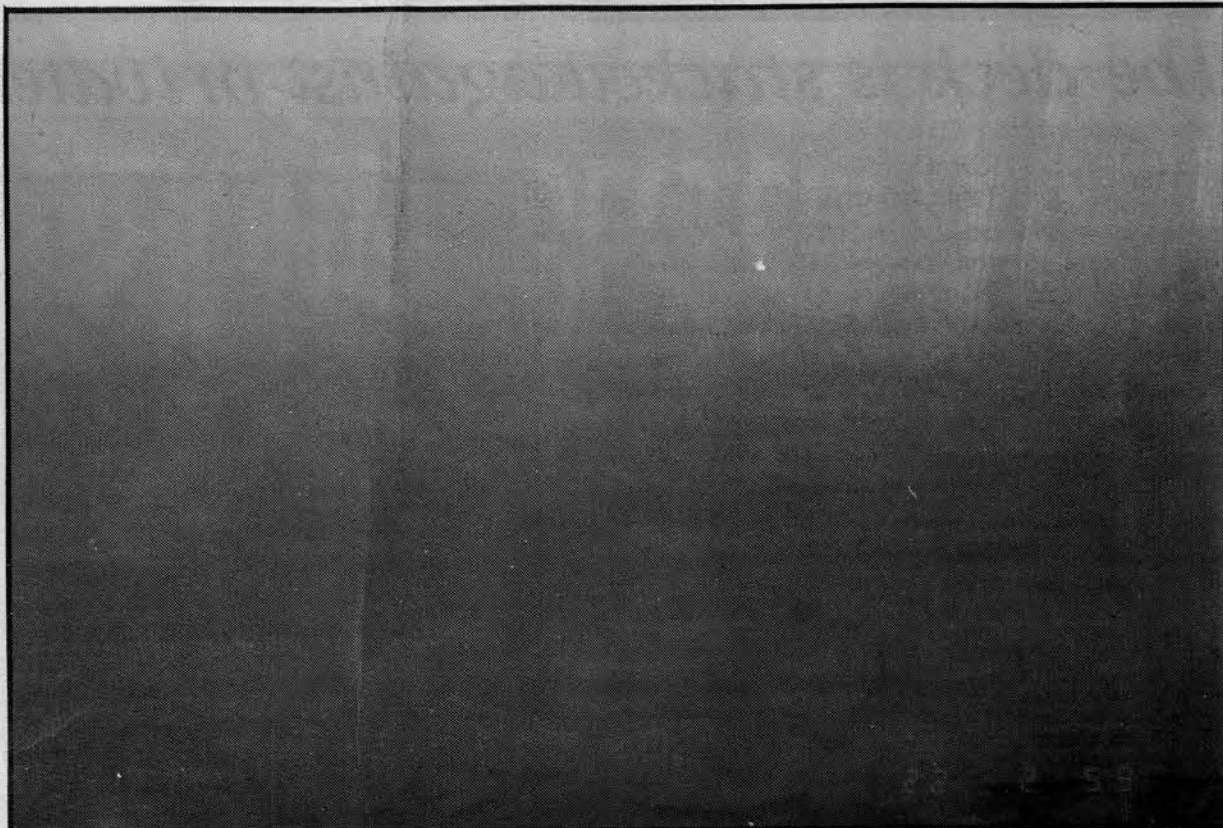


PHOTO NUMBER 4: When pollution is at its worst, canyon visitors are greeted by a complete white-out.

All photos were taken at approximately 3 p.m. on relatively cloudless days. The pollution's main ingredient was sulfate, a compound formed when sulfur dioxide is oxidized in the atmosphere. The sulfur dioxide responsible for the pollution originates with coal-fired power plants and copper smelters. Since 1979, the Park Service has monitored national parks for pollution.

To date, the loudest response to the Bush proposal has come from utility spokesmen, who have branded the bill "anti-growth." Nothing could be further from the truth. Putting a cap on emissions at 1985 levels will not limit the ability of the industry to add new capacity for at least 50 years. Numerous options are available to offset increased emissions.

California utilities, for example, have adopted conservation strategies that help the homeowner and industrial power user reduce energy use. This makes room for new consumers without adding coal plants and pollution.

Utilities can also add emission controls to old plants. For example, the Navajo plant in Arizona, the Mojave plant in Nevada and the Centralia plant in

Washington are large coal-fired units that have no sulfur or nitrogen oxide emission controls. Retrofitting these three plants alone with the low-cost sorbent injection controls would offset the emission increases from 20 to 30 new coal-fired power plants.

Until 2045, we have the potential to supply energy and accommodate growth before other options have to be considered. And by then we may have made the transition away from coal as the primary source of power.

□

Robert Yuhnke is an attorney with the Environmental Defense Fund in Boulder, Colorado.

BOOKS

New Mexico acequia absorbs a newcomer

Mayordomo: Chronicle of an Acequia in Northern New Mexico.

Stanley Crawford. University of New Mexico Press, 1988. 231 pages. \$16.95.

Review by George Sibley

Like most of the Rocky Mountain region, northern New Mexico is a place of wet uplands and dry lowlands, connected by rambunctious little streams and rivers that, for all their charm, are plainly revealed as the "cutting edge" of the erosive forces of water and wind that give the West its desolate beauty.

Humans have survived in these places by confounding those streams and rivers, trying to slow them down, making them stay and nourish rather than cut and run.

In our own historic period, humans in New Mexico have been doing this irrigation work longer than anywhere else in the West. Many of New Mexico's *acequias* — a Spanish word referring both to an irrigation ditch and to the society of *parciantes* that maintain and use it — go back 200 or 300 years under the Hispanic culture that spread north

and east from Mexico, and perhaps even centuries earlier, in the Indian culture that the Hispanic culture first inundated and then more or less assimilated.

The Hispanic culture in New Mexico in turn has been inundated in the 19th and 20th centuries by the anglo-American culture rolling in from the East. Its impact on the *acequia* culture of rural New Mexico was dramatically described in John Nichols' bestseller, *The Milagro Beanfield War*. Nichols himself was an Anglo immigrant to the area — a member of that curious part of a cultural vanguard which always seems more like refugees than conquerors.

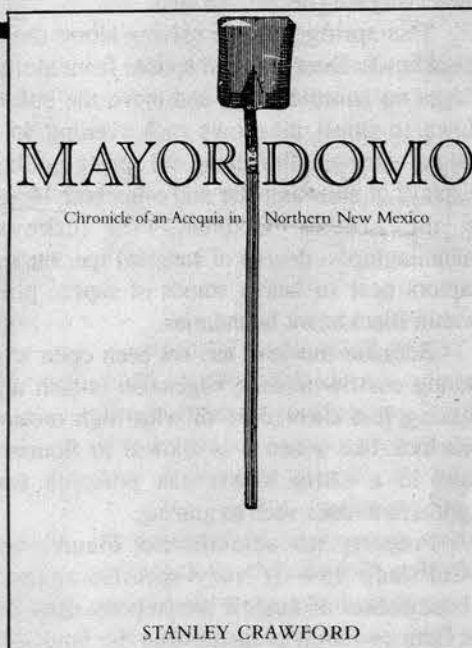
Now Stanley Crawford, another Anglo vanguard-refugee, has followed up the volatile drama of Nichols' story with a quiet and beautiful book about a year in the life of an *acequia*. At the time of the book — 1985-86 — Crawford had been living in the "La Junta Valley, nestled like a slightly folded leaf within the foothills of the Sangre de Cristo Range," for some 15 years — an old "flower child" still struggling to grow up rather than reverting to the adolescent mainstream. He and his wife, Rose Mary, have a modest truck farm on the *Acequia de la Jara*, one of eight *acequias* carrying

water back onto the land from the Rio de la Junta, a tributary of the Rio Grande.

During his 15 years as a *parciantes* on the *Acequia de la Jara*, Crawford took on growing responsibilities in the running of the ditch community, culminating in the position of *mayordomo*, or ditch manager. He readily admits this elevation was more a measure of his willingness to take on the responsibility than a mark of respect or acceptance from his primarily Hispanic neighbors.

Anyone who has ever lived in a rural area knows that there are chronically more positions of local responsibility than there are responsible people to fill them, and the rural mistrust of strangers is usually balanced in part by the need for new hands to take up old burdens.

Since the *mayordomo* is the person who deals firsthand with all of the problems associated with distributing a scarce resource, the position is heavier in duty than in power and honor; it is not avidly sought by anyone but eventually accepted for a year or two by most of the *parciantes*. As described by Crawford, the job seems to require the authority of a master-sergeant, the tact of a diplomat, the endurance of a hero and the patience of a saint.



Crawford begins and ends his book with the almost ceremonial spring cleaning of the ditch by the *parciantes* or their hired representatives — cutting down the willows, shoveling out the dirt and detritus and making it ready for the water. He fills in the events of the rest of the year's cycle — letting in the water, patching up breaks in the banks, dealing with squabbles among users, meeting to elect the next year's commissioners and *mayordomo*. In the process he paints a picture of his neighbors and their valley, and of an old way of life inexorably changing in

(Continued on page 14)

GUEST ESSAY

The deck is stacked against privately-owned wild lands

by Joanna Sampson

Blackhawk Mountain, private property within an hour's drive of downtown Denver, Colo., will soon be another ravaged piece of ground torn up for development. Roads will cut through aspen groves where elk calve in springtime and where wild turkeys began making a comeback five years ago.

It is not something I want to see happen.

Blackhawk Mountain is 199 acres of wilderness. The mountain, rising up from the foothills of the Rockies, has remained undeveloped for many years because we, the owners, have had a growing concern for the rapidly disappearing "native" Colorado.

My husband, John, and I bought the land in 1963 and have kept it a wilderness ever since. The property contains several diverse ecosystems ranging from grassy meadows and aspen groves to old stands of evergreens and the summit of Blackhawk Mountain. No roads cut into the land, just a few hiking trails.

Why must this end? Colorado property tax laws. We have kept the land pristine for over 25 years, but we can no longer afford the luxury of maintaining a natural parcel of Colorado.

The first year we owned the land we paid \$99.09 in property taxes; last April I wrote a check to the Gilpin County treasurer for \$4,299.02 to pay the property taxes for 1988.

That means wild land in private hands, such as Blackhawk Mountain, will soon be as unique as any priceless work of art owned by the famous collections of the world.

When the land was recently evaluated, Blackhawk Mountain property taxes were tripled, even though the state of Colorado is in an economic slump and property values are down statewide. In order to set up a property tax evaluation, the Colorado Division of Property Taxation says the "responsibility belongs solely to the assessor." The burden of all research to contest an evaluation falls on the taxpayer.

Mary Anne Maurer, Colorado property tax administrator, writes: "I know that the process of filing a protest, appealing decisions, conducting your own sales analysis, and attending budget hearings sounds terribly tedious; however, the only way to get your tax bill reduced is to get involved with the property tax system and the budgeting process."

Without special assessments for fragile environments like ours, however, the battle is lost before it is begun. Colorado has no provision for preserving fragile, private land.

This spring, elk are calving along the slopes of Blackhawk. Deer will bed spotted fawn along the high ridges on summer days and move the babies slowly down to small meadows each evening to sip from natural springs. Bordering the spring pools, colorful displays of shooting star and columbine blossoms nod in the breeze. Grouse, wild turkeys, owls, hummingbirds, dozens of songbird species, ravens and raptors nest in heavy stands of aspen, pine and fir within Blackhawk boundaries.

Because the land has not been open to livestock during our ownership, vegetation is lush and exotic, making it a showplace of what high mountain land can look like when it is allowed to flourish. This is rare in a state where tax policies encourage agricultural uses such as grazing.

Property tax administrator Maurer writes that "Colorado law is very specific regarding the classification of land. If the property does not qualify as farm or ranch property, then the land is classified and valued as 'vacant land.' Colorado has no classification for vacant mountain property."

Our Blackhawk Mountain land, now downgraded with a trashy classification of "vacant land," is taxed at 29 percent. Had we chosen to put livestock on

Dan Heidel



this land and over-graze it until it looks like the southwest corner of hell (as adjacent property owners are presently doing) we would have realized property tax benefits from the state.

Colorado Division of Property Taxation decrees that "agricultural property is valued based on the productivity of the land and uses landlord incomes and expenses applicable to agricultural activities." That is why so much land is being abused by over-grazing. Tax policies encourage overusing land for monetary rewards.

If we were developers and had these acres platted for projected housing developments, solar sites, highways and industrial complexes — all potential pollution generators — no problem, Colorado's tax laws would look out for our business interests.

But "there are no preferential assessments for fragile environmental areas or for land owners with good environmental practices," says the office of the Colorado Department of Local Affairs, Division of Property Taxation. Those words spell out the destruction of many acres of privately held land. For we feel we have no choice. We cannot afford the annual burden of Colorado's property taxes.

And we are not alone. Other small property

owners like ourselves are being forced to sell undeveloped properties. We have looked hard, but find no alternative to selling it on the open market. We have contacted Gilpin County, The Nature Conservancy, the Audubon Society, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, the Boulder County Land Trust, and others. Not one of these groups has seriously considered purchasing the lands, so far as we can tell.

Colorado is encouraging mountain tops filled with elite housing. "Big-Buck Ventures" are moving in with an accompanying eradication of wild animals and plants, with septic tanks leaching sewage into high aquifers above the cities, and with new roads adding more filth to the air.

Blackhawk Mountain wilderness is up for sale to the highest bidder. I admit that I will never return to see the devastation that will surely occur after the property is sold. When it is torn up, this small wilderness will be like Humpty Dumpty: No one will ever be able to put it back together again.

□

Joanna Sampson lives in Boulder, Colorado.

Mayordomo...

(Continued from page 13)

its focus from the land and farm to the jobs and stores of Los Alamos and the city.

Whether he is talking of a muskrat undermining the ditchbank or the complex process of "dividing the river"

among the ditches in a dry year, Crawford's tone is even and honest, dispassionate but empathetic and warm. It is the voice of a true *parciante* as well as an observer in the story he relates.

Crawford has too much respect for his ditch and the community it engenders to romanticize or imbue it with Currier-and-Ives rural values. Throughout the book, the *acequia* — ditch, community, way of life — is fragile against the over-

whelming storm of a larger America threatening to break over it: the janitorial jobs in Los Alamos that take the young men (if the murderous combination of alcohol and automobile don't take them first), the tractors and trucks that tie them into networks alien to the *acequia*, the pressures to turn water and land into the cash that levels all.

But today, this month, this year, that threat notwithstanding, people turn up

again to elect commissioners, chop willows, clean the ditch; the water runs again; and this older, other America continues to happen. As Crawford puts it, a thing of "words, water, mud and sky."

□

George Sibley lives and writes in Gunnison, Colorado, where he also teaches at Western State College.

ACCESS

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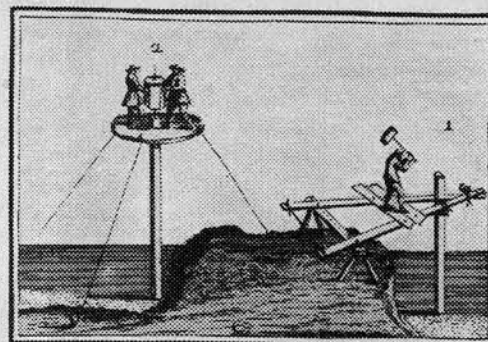
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— Christopher Shaw
The Washington Post
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High Country News

Edited by Ed Marston

REOPENING THE WESTERN FRONTIER



The West, seemingly impervious to change since the 19th century when the Western way of life was established, is being rapidly refashioned with the decline of its natural resource economies; oil, gas, uranium, mining, and ranching.

With the economy and culture of the West at a crossroads, communities and leaders are asking what will replace the old industries and way of life, and what issues will shape the future?

REOPENING THE WESTERN FRONTIER documents these dramatic changes, and the exciting opportunities and challenges that lie ahead.

The West's most astute and informed observers contributed to this book, which originally appeared as a special series in *High Country News*, the award-winning newspaper based in Colorado.

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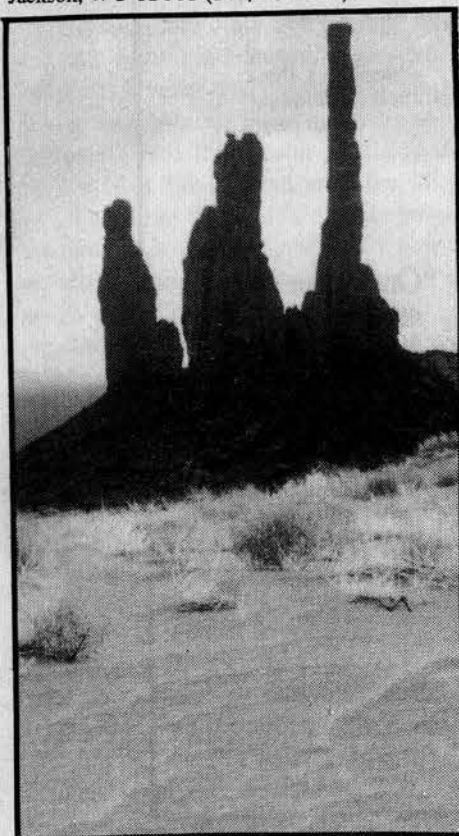
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16-High Country News — October 9, 1989

BULLETIN BOARD

WATER IN THE ROCKIES

Trout Unlimited is sponsoring a Western Regional Instream Flow Conference at the Snow King Resort in Jackson, Wyo., Oct. 20-21, to explore issues of water law and management in the West. Prompted by the devastation of Rocky Mountain aquatic habitats in the 1987-88 drought, the conference will focus on the preservation of riparian areas. Speakers include U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director John Turner, National Public Lands Council Vice President Jim Magagna and National Wildlife Federation Counsel Christopher Meyer. For more information, contact Suzanne P. Van Gyteneek, Western Regional Instream Flow Conference, c/o Wyoming Trout Unlimited, PO Box 4069, Jackson, WY 83001 (307/733-7991).



Monument Valley, Arizona

THE WEST IS NOT LUSH

Much of the water Denver imports goes into hoses to keep lawns green. An alternative comes from Denver's fast-growing suburban neighbor, Aurora, which has published a guide called *Landscaping for water conservation: Xeriscape!* The Denver Water Department coined the term xeriscape in 1980; it means a water-conserving landscape. Edited by Kimberly Cox, the book identifies which plants survive and look fine with minimal water, how to choose appropriate planting areas, and how to conserve water while irrigating. The book is especially targeted to Front Range climatic conditions, but it contains information useful to any Western gardener who wishes to plant a less-thirsty garden.

The book, co-published by Denver Water Department, is available from the City of Aurora Utilities Administration, attn. Water Conservation Office, 1470 S. Havana, Suite 400, Aurora, CO 80012 (303/695-7381). Paper: \$5.79. 84 pages. Illustrated with drawings; contains glossary and bibliography.

NEW PAPER FOCUSES ON OLD GROWTH

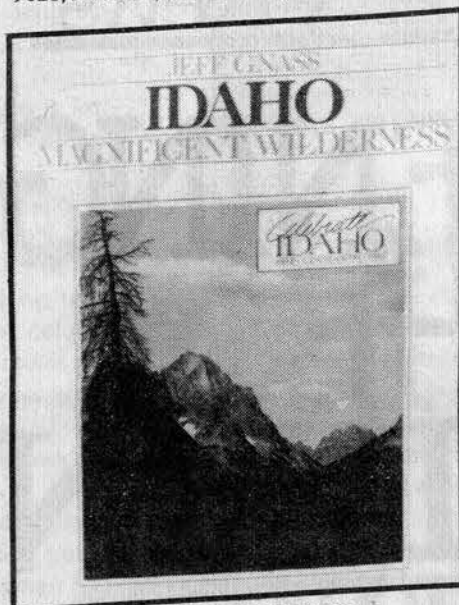
Timothy Hermach believes that if people could see the damage done by the logging of America's forests, they would demand action. So he filled his new monthly newspaper, *Forest Voice*, with "dirty pictures" of clearcuts plus cartoons, charts and pithy quotations, leaving out what he calls the "scientific mumbo-jumbo." The 12-page tabloid is published by the Native Forest Council, a new organization Hermach started after becoming frustrated by the Sierra Club's moderate approach. No compromise with the Forest Service is possible, he says. "We believe that not one more stick of old growth should be cut." To get the message out, he plans a mailing of 100,000 to every member of Congress and as many newspapers, magazines and broadcast media as possible, he says. An individual subscription is \$25 for one year. For a sample copy or for more information, write to Native Forest Council, P.O. Box 2171, Eugene, OR 97402 (503/688-2600).

NEPA TURNS 20

A conference to mark the 20th anniversary of the National Environmental Policy Act is set for Oct. 27-28 in Portland, Ore. Called "NEPA at 20: The Past, Present and Future of the Environmental Policy Act," the gathering includes law professors, lawyers, political scientists and government officials. Speakers include chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality Michael Deland, Pace University School of Law professor Nicholas Robinson and U.S. Department of Justice - Land and Natural Resources Division official David Shilton. William Rodgers, professor at the University of Washington School of Law and author of the *Handbook on Environmental Law*, is the keynote speaker. Sponsors are the Northwestern School of Law and Lewis and Clark College, with the Henry M. Jackson Foundation. For more information, contact Laurie Mapes, Continuing Legal Education Director, Northwestern School of Law, 10015 SW Terwilliger Blvd., Portland, OR 97219 (503/244-1181).

WILD ROCKIES CONFERENCE

The Wild Rockies, a mountainous swath of land stretching from northwest Wyoming to southern portions of British Columbia, holds a large percentage of designated U.S. wilderness area, and is also lucrative ground for timber and oil ventures. From Oct. 12-14, the Alliance for the Wild Rockies will hold its 4th Annual Rendezvous to explore the issues raised by this duality. "The Conservation of Natural Resources in the Wild Rockies" will convene at the University of Montana's Missoula campus to examine such topics as oil and gas development in the Wild Rockies, wolf restoration and newspaper reporting in the region. The tentative slate of speakers is a diverse mix of conservation and Native American leaders, state and federal officials, and several biologists with local specialization. With a Project Lighthouse flight over U.S. Forest Service clearcuts and an activist strategy session woven in to the program, Rendezvous organizers hope to foster energetic involvement in the issues discussed, not just intellectual interest. For more information, contact Conference Committee, 4th Annual Wild Rockies Rendezvous, Box 9021, Missoula, MT 59807 (406/243-5361).



MAGNIFICENT IDAHO

If natural beauty is your yardstick, then Idaho measures up. It contains more than 80 mountain ranges, rugged deserts, white water and alluvial plains. Nature photographer Jeff Gnass spent three years hiking and photographing Idaho's wildlands, and the result, *Idaho: Magnificent Wilderness*, is a book of 96 stunning color photos of the lands he encountered. Photos are arranged in chapters according to subtleties of color, form, place, motion, soft light, and the "intimate and vast worlds of microcosm and macrocosm." Paired with the photos are 19th and 20th century quotes from the Idaho Writers Project guidebook, a 1930s publication of the Works Progress Administration. Pat Ford, a contributor to *High Country News* and Idaho resident, wrote the book's foreword: "Chance placed me in Idaho while growing up, and uncertainly brought me back ... The places you see in this book, and others like them, are the reason why."

Westcliffe Publishers, P.O. Box 1261, Englewood, CO 80150 (1/800/523-3692). Paper: \$14.95. Cloth: \$25. 112 pages. Illustrated.

GARBAGE FUTURE

Does the future of America lie in its garbage? In *Salvaging the Future: Waste-Based Production*, a Washington, D.C.-based group called Institute for Local Self-Reliance says yes. Using a hypothetical city of one million people as a model, authors Caroline Rennie and Alair Maclean outline the connections between recycling and economic and environmental stability. They focus on the paper, glass, plastics and aluminum industries, investigating the supply and demand trends for each material, the technological demands of its recycling and the costs of establishing recycling plants. They conclude with a discussion of several production strategies that would encourage recycling. The goal of the Institute for Local Self-Reliance, a private nonprofit research and educational organization founded in 1974, is to help communities become more self-sufficient.

Institute for Local Self-Reliance, 2425 18th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009. Paper: \$100.00; \$35.00 for community groups. 162 pages. Includes tables, diagrams, appendices and index.

PSST! DUMP YOUR GARBAGE FOR YOU, SIR?



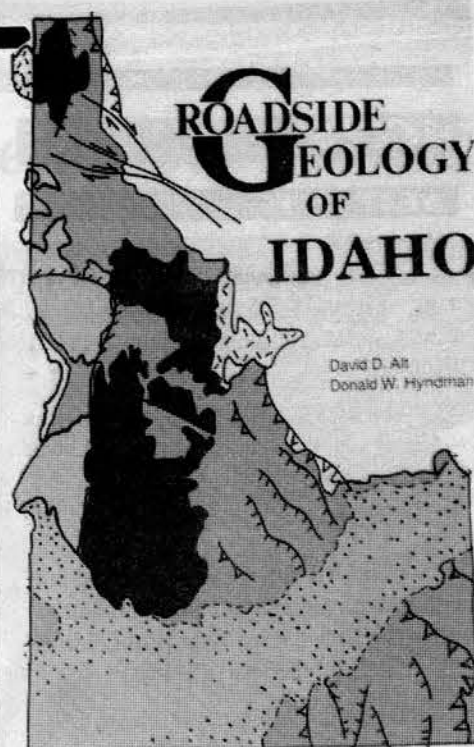
NEBRASKA GROUP FIGHTS DUMP

A group of residents in south-central Nebraska wants to stop the siting of a low-level nuclear waste dump in their area. The group, Concerned Citizens of Nebraska, says Nebraska will bear the environmental, health and economic risks associated with the dump while having no say in its operation. A five-state compact, including Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, Kansas and Nebraska, chose Nebraska as host state and U.S. Ecology as the private contractor to run the dump. Under the compact, member states may not pass regulations that conflict with the compact and must take legal responsibility for waste received from the other states. Concerned Citizens says it plans a court challenge because these provisions "violate state sovereignty," and are unconstitutional. For more information, contact Edd Epley, Concerned Citizens of Nebraska, Nuckolls County Chapter, Rt. 1, Nora, NE 68961 (402/225-4275).

RURAL ECONOMICS CAN BOUNCE BACK

How can small towns jump-start lagging economies? The Midwest Research Institute may have some answers in its study, *Profiles in Rural Economic Development*. The Kansas City-based think tank combed the nation and came up with 65 programs that successfully combine public and private resources to fuel economic growth. Efforts include a modest weaving cooperative with 12 mostly part-time employees in Los Ojos, N.M.; a \$6.5 million Coca-Cola plant in Fruitland, Idaho, that employs 65 and serves a seven-state region; and a 15-acre museum and tourist attraction with 57 full- and part-time employees in Burlington, Colo. A California state prison in Del Norte County with 600 employees is also considered an economic boost, although the study fails to discuss the long-term consequences it may have on attracting other investment. Two-page profiles describe each program, its costs and benefits, total revenues and the region affected. Local officials and residents are also interviewed about the path to success and possible pitfalls.

Midwest Research Institute, 425 Volker Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64110. Paper: \$15.00. 142 pages.



ROADSIDE ROCKIN' IN IDAHO

Roadside Geology of Idaho is the newest in a 15-part series of books that take advantage of road cuts. Written by David Alt and Donald Hyndman, geologists at the University of Montana, *Roadside* offers non-geologists a chance to learn about the rock formations as they drive the roads of the Panhandle state. A highlight is a description of how volcanoes in southern Idaho resulted from the collision of a meteor with the earth 17 million years ago. The authors don't shy away from difficult concepts, but they do avoid technical terms wherever possible.

Mountain Press Publishing Company, PO Box 2399, Missoula, MT 59806. Paper: \$14.95. 403 pages. Illustrated with maps, diagrams and line drawings.

MAKING IT HOT FOR POACHERS

The National Park Service catches only a small number of poachers and looters each year. Equipped with specialized vehicles and airplanes, high-tech equipment and assault rifles, most escape with thousands of dollars worth of protected plants, animals and cultural artifacts. To help an understaffed Park Service fight the thieves, the National Parks and Conservation Association will open a toll-free, confidential hotline Oct. 1. The nonprofit group says it will investigate each report of poaching or looting to the hotline number, 1/800/448-NPCA, and notify the appropriate law enforcement authority. The group's campaign, Save Park Wildlife Now!, also includes lobbying to increase funding for better enforcement of poaching laws.

WINTER USE IN THE YELLOWSTONE AREA

For the second time this year, the National Park Service is asking for public comment on winter expansion plans for Yellowstone and Grand Tetons national parks and the John D. Rockefeller Jr. Memorial Parkway. Comments received by Nov. 3 will be considered in the preparation of a Draft Winter Use Plan/Environmental Assessment, scheduled for public review next summer. Of the 250 people who responded to the agency's first newsletter, which was published last spring, 34 percent said they wanted more snowmobile trails. For a copy of the September newsletter for the Joint Winter Use Plan, contact Richard Alesch, Winter Use Plan Project Director, National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Box 25287, Denver, CO 80225.

SALAD DAYS

Mixing bok choy and basil, cats and chickens, Jerome's Organics in Basalt, Colo., is thriving. Jerome Osentowski, in his eighth year of organic farming, says he nurtures an interdependent relationship among his plants, animals and carefully introduced insects in a "permaculture" garden that provides all of its own resources and controls. A year-round venture, with a solar greenhouse in use from October to June, Osentowski sells his mixed salad greens and "yuppie vegetables" such as patypan squash to the Aspen area. He also conducts a nonprofit educational program, hiring interns and giving workshops to help others establish their own permaculture gardens. For more information about the next workshop, Oct. 14-23, contact Jerome Osentowski, Box 631, Basalt, CO 81621 (303/927-4158).