

High Country News

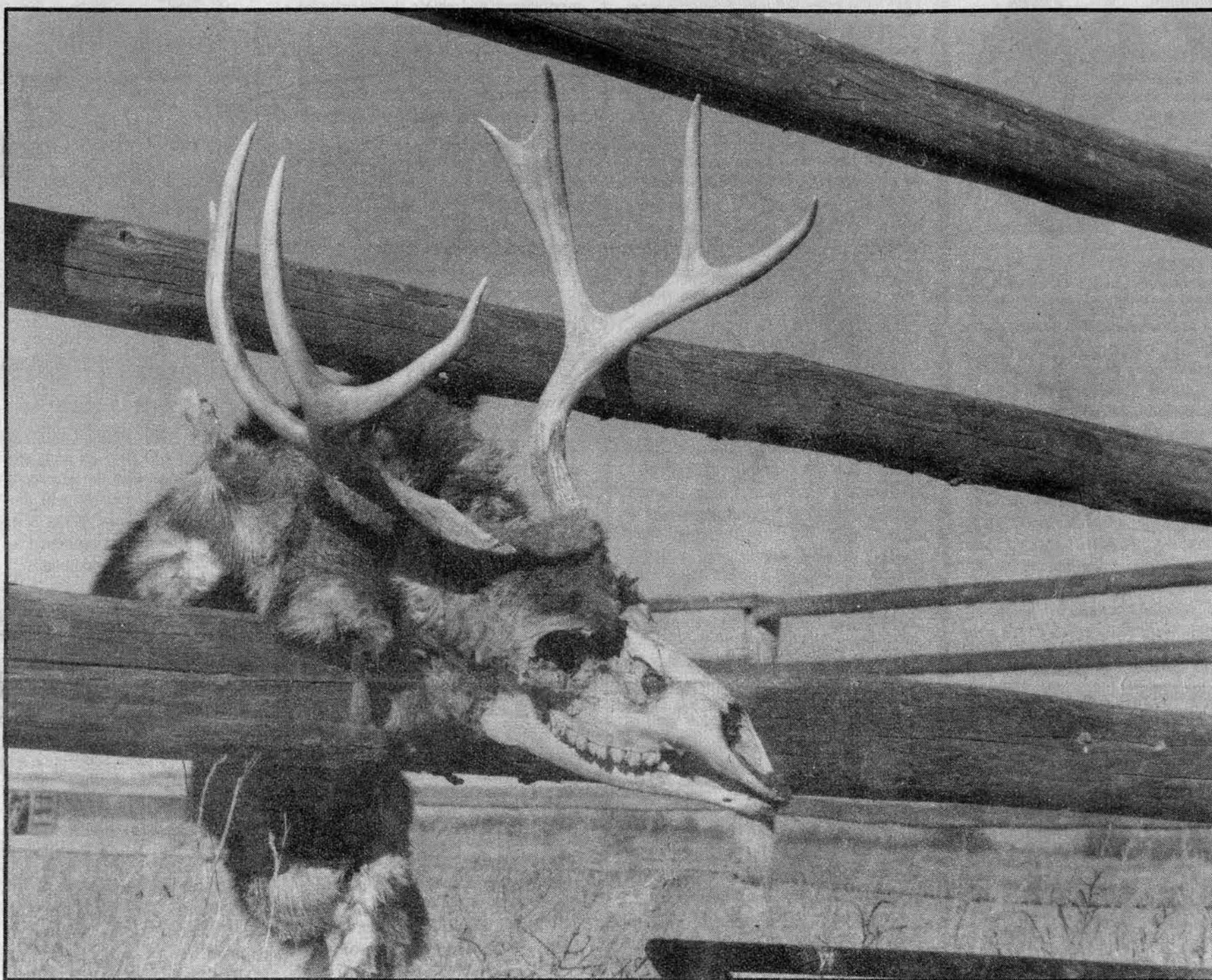
December 18, 1989

Vol. 21 No. 24

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar

POACHERS:



© J.D. Marston

For every wild animal killed legally, federal wildlife agents estimate that another is poached for meat or profit

Driving wild things to extinction

by Todd Wilkinson

As habitat for game animals and endangered species continues to dwindle around the world, the Rocky Mountain West has become a stronghold for commercial poachers and illegal hunters seeking the last concentrations of trophy animals.

Joel Scrafford does not want to sound pessimistic, but the special agent with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Billings, Mont., paints the picture of illegal wildlife killing this way:

Less than 150 years ago, the frontier supported 60 million bison, 100,000 grizzly bears, 50,000 bald eagles, prolific herds of big game trophy animals and vast numbers of fur bearers and waterfowl. Today, the ranges for most of those species have decreased by more than 50 percent.

One hundred fifty years from now,

Scrafford says, few of those species will exist on public lands if present trends continue. Poaching, combined with increased pollution, loss of winter ranges, blockage of migration routes and despoiled riparian areas, will result in less and less wildlife.

Those animals still available for sportsmen will likely be raised and sold only on expensive, private game preserves. The public hunt for the non-rich will be over.

"At some point in the future, the general public will look back upon this moment in history and realize it was a pivotal juncture for saving the wild animals and plants that made this country great," special agent Scrafford said.

"Without exaggeration, our children three generations down the road could easily lose it all. Most people don't realize there is a serious battle being fought between illegal hunters and conservation officers which is no different than the

drug war. Unfortunately, we're only winning the small battles but losing the war on poaching."

In 1989, Scrafford said federal agents witnessed one of the most active years for illegal wildlife killing in the Rocky Mountain West. From California to Colorado, and Canada to the Mexican border, the fever for exotic animal parts and record-book trophies reached an all-time high.

"The Rocky Mountain region is a veritable treasure house for wildlife resources in the United States," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agent Terry Grosz, who coordinates law enforcement for eight states from his office in Denver.

"The wildlife executioner recognizes no boundary," Grosz added. "You have to keep in mind there's a market for just about everything that's running wild or growing out there."

For criminals dealing in wildlife parts and rare plants, Grosz said a map

of the West's public lands reads like a directory to grocery store aisles: grizzly bears from Montana, moose from Idaho, bighorn sheep from Wyoming, elk from Colorado, mountain lions from Utah, eagles from New Mexico, cacti and snakes from Arizona.

The economic incentive for a poacher far outweighs the risk of serving time in jail or paying fines. And the rarer a species becomes, the higher the market value.

By broad definition, "poaching" means simply to hunt or fish illegally. But Scrafford and Grosz place poachers in two categories. One is the commercial smuggler who stands to turn a large profit by selling live animals and exotic animal parts across state lines and international borders.

The second is the illegal hunter who kills wildlife for personal benefit — a record-book trophy or rug for the den.

(Continued on page 10)

Dear friends,



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Visitors

An entrepreneurial couple from Evergreen, Colo. — Mary Kay and Bill Stoehr — came through Paonia bearing gifts. They were in town to consult with the Forest Service on the condition of backcountry trails, and their gifts were several trail maps printed on water- and tear-proof plastic.

Their firm, Trails Illustrated, publishes maps of Western national parks and monuments, as well as maps of some public lands in Colorado and Utah. The maps — which are made up of eight or more 7½-minute quads — are intended for hikers and cross-country skiers.

Our favorite is the Rampart Range map, which shows, in addition to trails and other features, the land the proposed Two Forks Reservoir would inundate. An editorial against Two Forks is part of the map. The Stoehrs, being good business people, are not about to surrender without a fight good, mapable hiking land.

Trails Illustrated sells by catalogue and through dealers. It can be reached at 303/670-3457, or by writing: P.O. Box 3610, Evergreen, CO 80439-3425.

Marta L. Witt, chief of public affairs for Colorado for the Bureau of Land Management, came by recently with Alan Kesterke of the Montrose BLM office. They had just toured BLM land surrounding the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument, which is administered by the National Park Service. There is talk of expanding the monument onto BLM land, and designating it a national park. The two BLM visitors seemed unenthusiastic about the proposal.

Corrections

The Nov. 22 issue had a gender error on page 22, in an article titled "Subterranean toxics threaten city." It identified geologist Kelly Summers as a she. We apologize to Mr. Summers.

Moving from gender to money, the cost of a single issue of the *University of Colorado Law Review* is \$12, noted incorrectly in a Nov. 6 Bulletin Board on a law review article on the Greater Yellowstone Region.

Visit to Utah

HCN publisher Ed Marston learned first hand about the Utah work ethic during an early November two-day visit to Utah State University in Logan. Host Andy Giarelli, a young faculty member in the Department of Communication, scheduled Marston to give an evening lecture to the university community, teach three media classes, and be interviewed by KUSU, the university-affiliated NPR station.

The visit was a revelation. Utah State is a land grant college, which means it is, like all Western land grants, tightly tied to commodity producers and an intimate part of the system that has turned agriculture into a branch of the nation's chemical and petroleum industries.

But there are other perspectives on campus. Prominent among those alternative voices is James J. Kennedy, whose business card reads, "Student of Trees and People — not necessarily in that order."

Kennedy, a professor of forestry in the College of Natural Resources, specializes in the U.S. Forest Service. He is a former Forest Service staffer who believes the agency is on the cusp of change, caught between its traditional

forestry values and new preservationist values. The agency, he says, is deeply disturbed by the fact that it no longer leads the nation in setting the values for use of the forests, as it did in the days of Gifford Pinchot.

Kennedy was among the few outsiders invited to attend the Forest Service's "Vatican II" meeting — the gathering this November, in Tucson, of the supervisors of all the nation's national forests with the chief and deputy chiefs of the Forest Service. This is only the second time in the agency's history that such a meeting has been held. Kennedy presented to the supervisors and chiefs the results of a survey he had done on attitudes within the agency toward resource and social issues.

Kennedy is as far from the traditional timber beast as a forester can be. The Forest Service, he says, is in the midst of a struggle between its male persona — characterized by an emphasis on logging and on top-down bureaucratic behavior, and a female persona, characterized by non-commodity values and a different kind of organizational structure.

In between visits to his office from a stream of students seeking his advice and help, Kennedy spoke of "dog" and "cat" loyalty. Dog loyalty, he said, is upwardly directed, toward higher levels in the hierarchy, with the chief of the agency at the apex. Cat loyalty is non-hierarchical, directed at values rather than at those who occupy the particular offices in a hierarchy. A cat-like Forest Service will be loyal to watersheds, old growth forests and other resources.

The Department of Communication was as provocative as Kennedy. Elizabeth LaMont, a student writer for *The Cache Citizen*, which is owned by the university, had just written an article that had Logan and the university buzzing. Logan's town dads are attempting to raise funds to build a golf course as a boost to economic development. Ms. LaMont's story revealed that Logan and the university, between them, already own 85 percent of the land the present Logan Country Club golf course occupies. So Logan and the university already have a public golf course.

But the fact has been kept secret by the city, by the university and, of course, by the country club. The two public institutions have been getting little or no benefit from their ownership of the golf course land. In fact, Ms. LaMont's article revealed, the university's golf



Mardy Murie

team does not even practice at the country club.

The heat from the embarrassed university, which had allowed a university official with close ties to the country club to negotiate an agreement, was palpable in the Communication Department in the wake of Ms. LaMont's article. But the paper's faculty editors, Nancy Williams and Nelson Wadsworth, were fierce in their defense of the story.

Congratulations, Mardy Murie

Congratulations to Mardy Murie on her receipt of the Carl Rungius Medal. It was presented to the Moose, Wyoming, resident on December 4 by the Wildlife of the American West Museum in Jackson for her contribution to wildlife awareness and preservation.

Although she lives in a lovely and spacious log cabin, she may still have some trouble finding space for the medal. It must squeeze itself in among the Wilderness Society's Robert Marshall Award, the Sierra Club's John Muir Award, copies of the two books she wrote with her late husband, Olaus, *Two in the Far North* and *Wapiti Wilderness*, as well as other memorabilia accumulated in a lifetime of work for conservation.

Among other achievements, the "godmother of conservation" was the first woman graduate of the University of Alaska, Class of '24, helped found the Wilderness Society, and worked hard to convince Congress to pass the Wilderness Act in 1964 and the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act in 1980.

—Ed Marston for the staff

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TRICKY FARMS

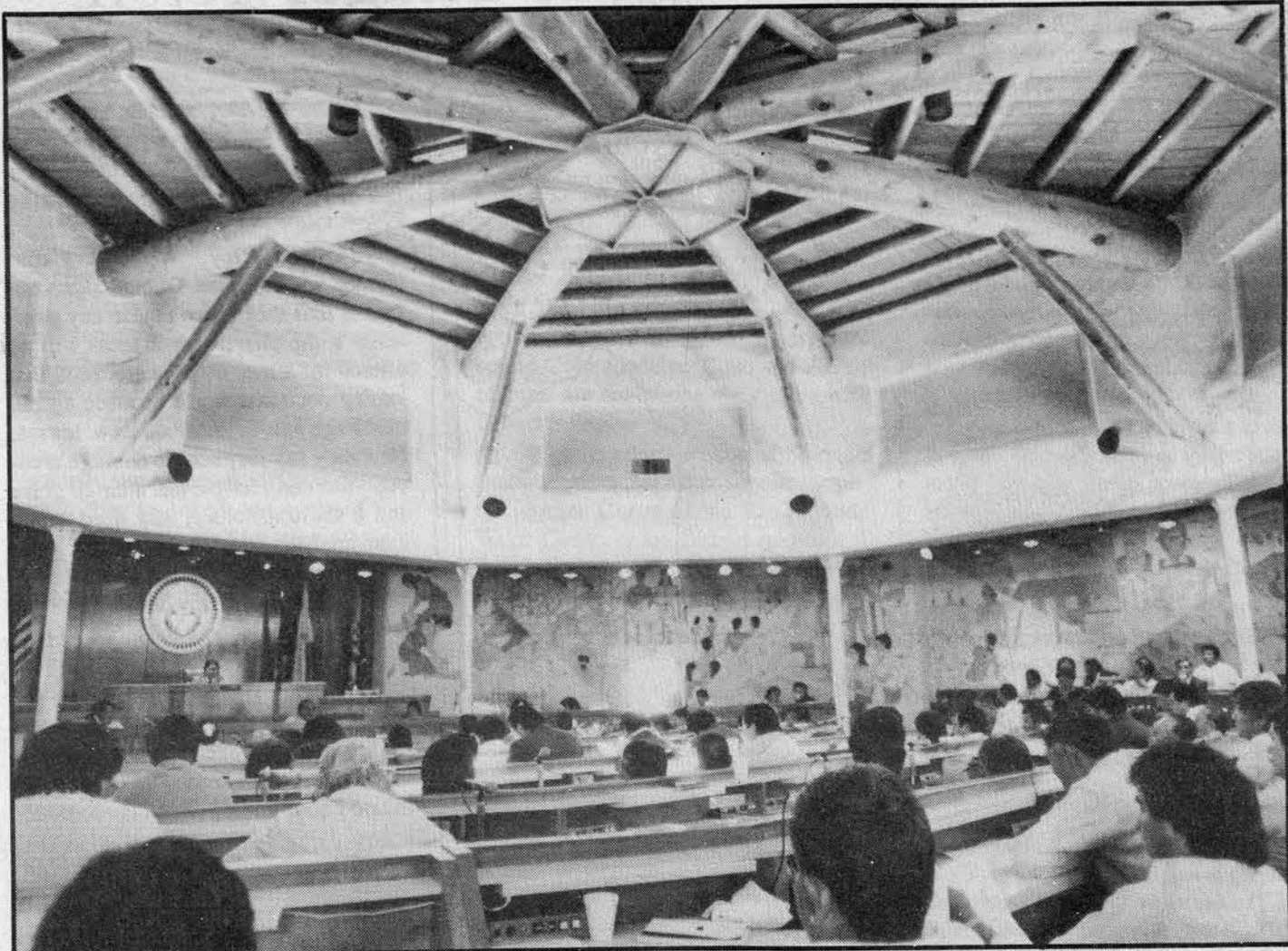
Congress' 1982 attempt to limit the use of cheap federal water on farms larger than 960 acres has failed, according to a congressional watchdog agency. The General Accounting Office found that because of a loophole in the law, six of the eight large farms studied continue to receive subsidized water. While the revised law limited the size of "landholdings" that can use the water, it did not prohibit many different landholdings from operating as one farm. The GAO found one 12,000-acre cotton farm in California that was managed as a single farm and eligible for subsidized water. It had been reorganized into 15 separate landholdings through 18 partnerships, 24 corporations and 11 trusts. Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., who wrote the revised law and requested the report, blames the Department of the Interior for ignoring the problem and costing the government millions of dollars in lost revenue. "Wealthy farmers in California's Central Valley have subverted the intent of federal water laws," he says, "and top Interior Department officials, aware of the abuse, declined to take corrective action."

For a copy of the report, *Water Subsidies: Basic Changes Needed to Avoid Abuse of the 960-Acre Limit*, RCED-90-6, write U.S. General Accounting Office, P.O. Box 6015, Gaithersburg, MD 20877 (202/275-6241).

AGENCIES UNITE IN UTAH

The Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and the Forest Service recently announced that they will work together in southeast Utah to develop recreation facilities and minimize impacts to the canyon country. The three agencies said establishment of a visitors center is a priority, and preliminary planning has already begun for a multi-use trail system to connect Moab, Green River, Natural Bridges National Monument, Canyonlands National Park and other scenic areas. Other projects under consideration include trail systems in the Canyon Rims Recreation Area and the San Rafael Swell and interpretive exhibits along the area's highways. For more information about potential projects or to get involved with long-term planning, contact the BLM Moab District Office, P.O. Box 970, Moab, UT 84532.

WESTERN ROUNDUP



Paul Natunabab

Navajo tribal council meeting

The Navajo Nation faces a critical test

The alleged crimes of former tribal chairman Peter MacDonald have brought the Navajo nation itself to trial. The federal government, the private sector and the media are watching closely to see how the tribe handles the prosecution of its most renowned leader, due to be tried in tribal court Jan. 29.

MacDonald, elected to an unprecedented fourth term in 1986, is charged with 107 counts of fraud, conspiracy and abuse of funds. At his arraignment Nov. 29, MacDonald pleaded not guilty to all counts. He also faces possible indictment by a federal grand jury and numerous civil suits filed in Arizona.

Most of the alleged crimes relate to the tribe's 1987 purchase of the Big Boquillas ranch in Arizona from two non-Indian middlemen, who made \$7.2 million in profits. Last February, a special Senate committee determined that MacDonald received some of those profits through his son, Peter (Rocky) MacDonald, Jr., who testified with limited immunity against his father (HCN, 2/27/89).

The Senate committee also reported that MacDonald took over \$500,000 in gifts and cash from companies that wanted contracts with the tribe and in illegal election contributions from non-Navajo firms. While in office, MacDonald received a BMW car, a luxury residence, numerous plane tickets and a vacation in Hawaii.

For the Navajo tribe, the investigation has been both erosive and embarrassing. A week after the Senate hearings, the 88-member tribal council split into two factions, with a majority voting to place MacDonald on administrative leave. MacDonald's supporters, both on the council and throughout the reservation, waged a persistent campaign to reinstate him that culminated in the deaths of two Navajos during a July demonstration.

After this event, a number of businesses pulled off the reservation. Now, five months later, the 200,000-member tribe under interim chairman Leonard

Haskie still faces resistance attracting companies, according to Navajo spokeswoman Lenora Begay.

Begay also says that in the wake of the July demonstration, support for MacDonald has dwindled. "The violence that occurred in July changes people's minds because Navajo people don't resort to violence," says Begay. "They are convinced that he instigated it, and that he no longer cares about the people."

The MacDonald investigation has been painful for the entire tribe, says Richard Hughes, one of the special prosecutors hired by the tribal council. For many Navajos, he says, the effort to prove MacDonald guilty in a public forum runs counter to traditional ways of dealing with wrongdoing.

Says Hughes: "In the Navajo tradition, people do not like to see open conflict. They want to see their problems resolved so that there isn't a winner and a loser."

MacDonald, however, has rejected efforts to change his plea, settle out of court or otherwise expedite the lengthy court procedures, Hughes says.

The Navajo nation, the largest tribe in the country, has been struggling to achieve self-determinacy since its treaty with the United States government in 1868. Now, with a probing federal inves-

tigation under way, the tribe must regain the people's trust. To do that, says Hughes, the tribe needs to prosecute MacDonald fully in its own courts, and prove that it can keep its house in order.

Navajo tribal government evolved from an unwritten code that has no formal system of checks and balances. Even before the investigations of MacDonald, younger Navajos were calling for a new system in which all people can participate, according to Leo Watchman, director of the Navajo Office of Government Development.

"People are saying they want changes, and not a recurrence of the abuse of power that we've witnessed in recent years," says Watchman. His office is conducting public hearings throughout the reservation that he says may lead to a written constitution.

Out of the pain and embarrassment of the allegations has come a new push for effective leadership. Spokeswoman Begay says that for the first time in years, many Navajos have become interested in tribal representation and are more demanding of accountability.

"Now the Navajo people realize their government is important," says Begay. "We need to hold on to the values we still have."

— Florence Williams

HOTLINE

Rocky Flats closes

The Department of Energy has closed the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant near Denver indefinitely. The shut-down began Nov. 13, but wasn't announced for two weeks. Rocky Flats office manager David P. Simonson told the *Albuquerque Journal* that the halt was routine, allowing plant operators to inventory "special nuclear material on the site, namely plutonium." Energy Secretary James Watkins says he is concerned about safety conditions at the plant and told the *New York Times* that it "won't start up until it's safe." In the past year, several investigations have disclosed extensive safety and environmental hazards at Rocky Flats (HCN, 9/23/89), and environmental groups and some politicians have repeatedly demanded that the plant shut down.

Church sells some land

Montana's first dude ranch, established 91 years ago, will now be dedicated to critical winter range for elk migrating north from Yellowstone National Park. The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation recently purchased the 3,265-acre OTO Ranch near Yellowstone National Park from the Church Universal and Triumphant. CUT bought the ranch in 1986 for \$3.7 million to facilitate a land exchange with the Forest Service. But Ed Francis, CUT vice president, says the church sold it to the elk foundation because the Forest Service was too slow in working out an agreement. K.L. Cool, director of Montana's Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, hailed the sale as a "notable addition" to lands already secured for elk habitat. The Missoula-based Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, a nonprofit group which raises funds from private sources to support elk and elk habitat, purchased another 3,275 acres of ranch land near the OTO Ranch earlier this year.



Men fined for killing a grizzly

Three men found guilty of illegally killing a grizzly bear last fall in Wyoming's Teton Wilderness were each fined \$2,000 and sentenced to two years probation by a federal judge. Dennis Smith, a Forest Service law enforcement agent, said Brad Baxendale, Keith Grant and Nick Sponsel, all of Wyoming, attracted the bear to their camp when they failed to store their food according to regulations. The Forest Service requires all food and game meat to be hung at least 10 feet vertically from the ground, four feet horizontally from the nearest trees and 100 yards from camp. "These men hung their game meat three or four feet from the ground and next to their tent, as far as we can tell," Smith said. The men shot the grizzly when it wandered into their camp, then buried it before leaving. Smith said the dead animal was discovered a few days later by a hunter who saw another grizzly digging near the exposed leg of the animal. Fred Kingwill, public affairs specialist for the Bridger-Teton National Forest, said an estimated five to six bears are killed each year, although few cases are ever prosecuted.

HOTLINE

Fur-ocious opposition

Protesters gathered in cities across the country the day after Thanksgiving to urge shoppers to cross furs off their Christmas lists. In Reno, Nev., 50 protesters stood in front of a downtown mall with placards reading "fake people wear real furs," while in New York City, 2,500 protesters followed game show host Bob Barker on a march down Fifth Avenue. Donna Steadman, president of the Alliance for Animals in Nevada,

says animal rights activists want to "inform consumers there's no such thing as a humanely obtained fur." And she says a 20 percent drop in U.S. fur sales in the last two years shows that they've been successful so far. The Fur Information Council of America, however, says U.S. sales have tripled in the last decade, and Reno furrier Lester Conklin told the *Reno Gazette-Journal* that this year's protests haven't affected his business "one iota." The fur industry has increased its public relations efforts to counteract the negative images of fur items portrayed by protesters.

Oil exploration foes hope to lock up the Bridger-Teton

A product of 10 years of discussion and compromise, the final management plan for the Bridger-Teton National Forest has won praise from environmentalists for its stance on wildlife, recreation and timber harvest (*HCN*, 10/9/89). But critics charge that planners also created a giant hole in the protection of the forest: Almost all its non-wilderness lands will be open to potential oil and gas development.

The Bridger-Teton is one of seven national forests surrounding Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks. With 3.4 million acres, it makes up one-fourth of the greater Yellowstone area. Its sweeping views and abundant wildlife, including grizzly bear and elk, make it one of the most visited national forests in the country. The forest is also an integral part of the multi-million dollar tourist economy centered in the town of Jackson Hole, Wyo.

Unlike the national parks which it borders, the Bridger-Teton is managed by the Forest Service; as the entrance signs proclaim, it is a "land of many uses." That means that on the 65 percent of the forest not protected as wilderness — some two million acres — planners must try to balance the demands of recreation and land preservation with those of mining, timber and energy development.

In the case of energy on the Bridger-Teton, those demands can be strong. The southern half of the forest contains the Wyoming overthrust belt, a geologically complex region potentially rich in trapped gas. In the north lie areas such as the Spread Creek anticline where oil companies want to explore.

While environmentalists note that the overwhelming majority of the 20,000 public comments sent to the Forest Service favored preservation and recreation, the plan sets aside just 114,000 acres as off-limits to oil and gas leasing. These include the peak and ridges of the Mt. Leidy area and Snow King and Teton Village ski areas.

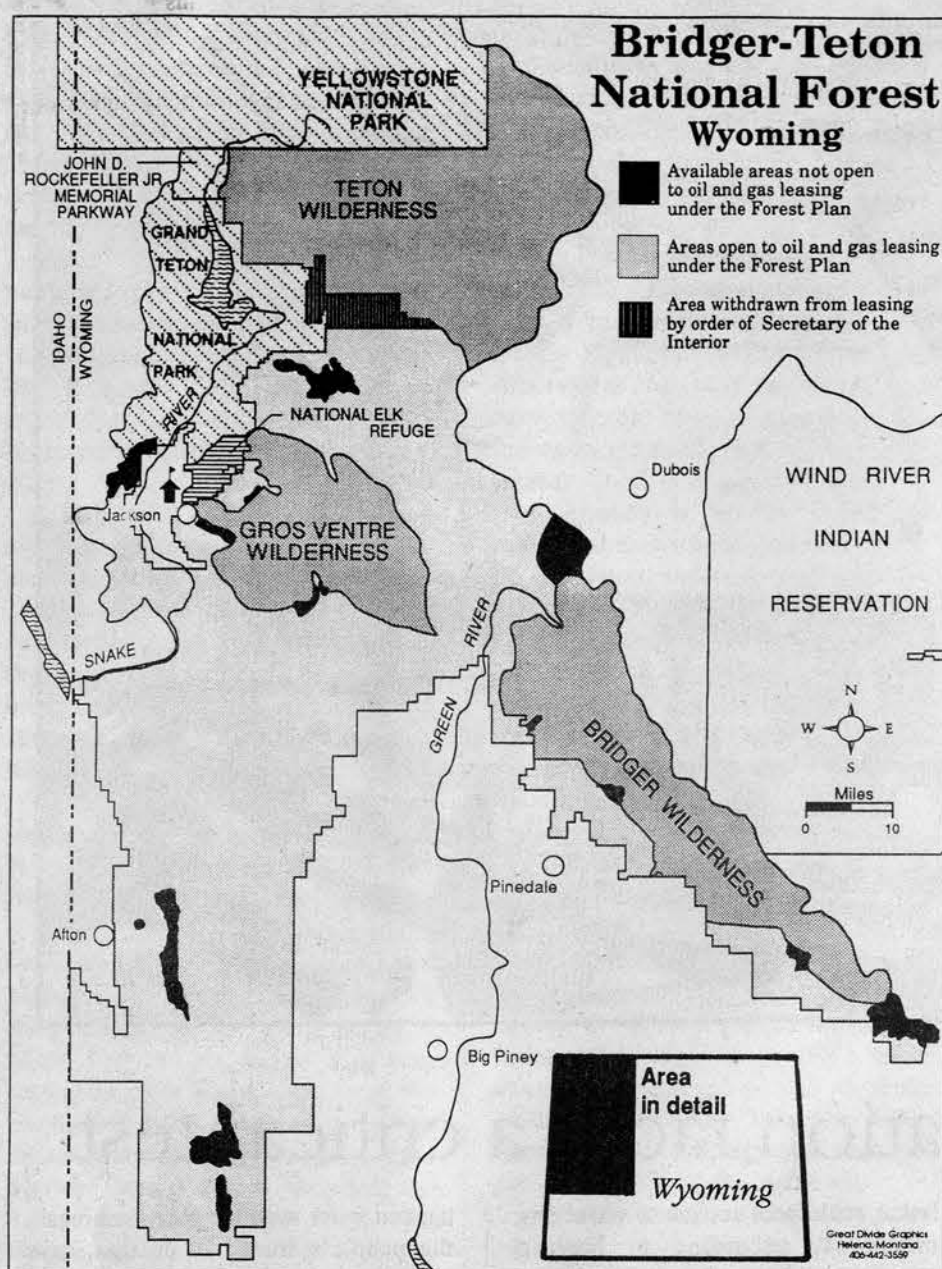
Scott Garland, public lands director for the Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning, says that the Forest Service avoided the "tough choices." While he admits that it would have caused enormous controversy for the agency, Garland says the Forest Service should have withdrawn more land from the possibility of leasing. As examples, he cites areas adjacent to Grand Teton National Park and the National Elk Refuge just east of Jackson Hole.

But Bridger-Teton forest planner Jim Caplan counters that the Forest Service may not, because of its multiple use mission, withdraw lands the environmentalists want protected from oil and gas leasing. That, he says, is a job for Congress. He says forest resources will be protected by special leasing conditions, called stipulations.

All federal oil and gas leases, even those on national forests, are handled by the Bureau of Land Management. But as the agency responsible for managing "surface resources" such as timber, wildlife, recreation, grazing and wilderness, the Forest Service may limit or deny leases to protect those resources.

The agency does this through stipulations — agreements in the leasing contract that restrict an energy company's operations. The plan says almost 80 percent of the forest will be subject to some sort of stipulations.

As an example, Caplan uses the "no surface occupancy" stipulation. A lease with such a stipulation gives a company



the right to underground deposits, but it prohibits the company from using the surface for its operations, forcing it to drill at a slant from outside the area. This stipulation, says Caplan, would cover about half the forest, including areas with steep slopes and unstable soils. It would also apply seasonally to critical winter range for bear and elk.

If any threatened or endangered species are found in the drilling area, adds Caplan, a standard stipulation in all leases could force the company to modify or abandon the operation. Other stipulations would be applied as needed to control the construction of roads, the placement of wells, the timing of operations and the scope of development in the case of a successful oil or gas field discovery.

To the Jackson Hole Alliance, the Greater Yellowstone Coalition and other groups concerned about the forest plan, the stipulations are a sham.

Says Jackson Hole Alliance's Garland: "They are all subject to modification or elimination. And they are so poorly worded that they're only going to lead to litigation." He says that the effectiveness of stipulations depends too heavily on how they are interpreted and applied. As an example, he cites the Sohore oil well (*HCN*, 12/5/88).

While the well was never drilled, Garland says it showed the ineffectiveness of the kind of restrictions on which the Forest Service plan relies so heavily. After a process that included an environmental impact statement and a good deal of public participation, the agency waived stipulations in May 1988 that protected steep slopes, unstable soils, a pristine stream in a roadless area and critical grizzly bear habitat.

"The Sohore well is a perfect example of lease stipulations not protecting the very resources they purport to protect," says Garland.

While Caplan agrees that stipula-

tions have not provided enough protection in the past, he says the Sohore well is an example of the system working as it should. Stipulations were waived, he said, only after Amoco had shown to the Forest Service and to the public that, at great cost, they could satisfy the objectives of the stipulations and still drill.

Caplan predicts the public participation and extensive analysis that surrounded the Sohore decision will be the pattern of the future. All modifications of stipulations will be subject to an analysis in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act and provisions to be included in the agency's record of decision.

"We're serious about it, and I think the agency's serious about it," says Caplan. "We want the public to be confident of our ability to manage and we want to continue to work with folks."

As long as stipulations can be waived, they won't satisfy Garland and other environmentalists. The protection they offer, he says, depends too much on the presence of exceptional managers like Caplan and Forest Supervisor Brian Stout. Says Garland: "If (Jim Caplan) could guarantee me that he was going to spend the rest of his life on this forest, I'd be much more confident about these stipulations. All it takes is one guy who's cozy with developers and all these stipulations will go out the window."

Philip Hocker, a former Jackson resident who has taken his fight against energy development to Washington, D.C., as founder of the Mineral Policy Center, agrees. "It's always the same: What these guys always forget is that they won't be here in nine years when the companies come in to drill."

The concerns over the long-term effectiveness of stipulations, Caplan responds, bring up an important point. "The real issue," he says, echoing the environmentalists, "is whether lands in an area of great recreational use should

even be available to oil and gas development."

Claire Moseley, a public lands consultant for the Denver-based Rocky Mountain Oil and Gas Association, says the answer should be a resounding "yes."

Says Moseley: "We're very displeased with the plan. Of particular concern is that they haven't made any decisions in the plan on which areas will be offered for lease. We were promised that leasing decisions would be made and in exchange we held off on new leases. Now they say they need to do more analysis. You can't tell me that after 10 years and a million dollars, they need to do more analysis."

Moseley says that the plan "bends over backwards for environmental groups," making any exploration highly constrained and expensive. "People are interested in exploring in that forest, but the stipulations are very confining, very hard to modify." She blames indecisiveness in the Forest Service for costing the industry five to six years in unnecessary delays.

Under the final management plan, such delays are all that opponents of energy exploration on the forest can hope for, according to Garland. "We participated for five years," he says, "and this is what we got. Now we're gearing up for a political solution."

Garland's group, the Jackson Hole Alliance, is seeking a legislative ban on leasing national forest land in Teton County, which covers 1.1 million acres in the northern part of the forest.

While about 850,000 acres in the county are already designated wilderness, the ban would protect the Mt. Leidy highlands, the borders of Grand Teton National Park and the National Elk Refuge and backcountry popular with hikers and outfitters. Garland says that he hopes a petition drive to kick off the push for legislation will have 2,000 signatures by mid-December.

But Garland also acknowledges that the ban would be a "miracle." "From a practical standpoint, it's incredibly difficult to do something like this," he says. The group hopes one ally will be Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., whose family homesteaded what is now the town of Jackson Hole. But Simpson, in a recent radio interview with station KOWB in Laramie, said that he wasn't "about to intrude on the decision" after a public process had taken place in which everyone had a chance to participate. "The plan is tilted towards recreation, and I don't have a problem with that," he said.

Rep. Craig Thomas, R, Wyoming's sole representative, said the "highest and best use of the land around Jackson Hole is recreation and scenic values." He added that the plan "had been an awfully long time in coming and changes should be considered carefully."

Sen. Malcom Wallop, R-Wyo., also stands by the plan, according to legislative assistant Steve Emery. "It's probably the best compromise that can be reached on the oil and gas issue," he said, adding that Congress had already addressed the issue of the multiple-use lands with the 1984 Wyoming wilderness bill.

The Jackson Hole Alliance has some powerful allies locally. The Teton County Commissioners are unanimous in supporting a ban on oil and gas drilling in Teton County.

Hocker of the Mineral Policy Center in Washington says, however, that the Wyoming delegation's historical support

(Continued on page 5)

Colorado water venture loses its founder

The financial wizards behind a plan to slake urban thirst with water from Colorado's San Luis Valley have lost the founding member of their troupe.

Canadian financier and United Nations diplomat Maurice Strong, who founded the company that plans to pump up to 200,000 acre-feet of water from the valley, said he is severing all ties with the firm (HCN, 11/6/89).

Strong said he has irreconcilable differences with the investors he recruited when he launched American Water Development, Inc.

"I've lost control of (the company) ... I wanted to develop the water in a socially and environmentally responsible way. They are bottom-line oriented."

Strong said the investors who now control the company — a Pennsylvania banking group led by Alex Crutchfield

and Vancouver, Canada, developer and financier Sam Belzberg — have no knowledge of or interest in the valley. He said he had hoped that part of the water could be used for development projects in the valley. But the Crutchfield and Belzberg interests appear to be focusing only on export of the water to Denver suburbs.

Strong's departure comes at an awkward time for the company. AWDI's application for the water is currently before Colorado Water Court and AWDI officials are negotiating water sales with Denver suburbs.

Valley residents welcomed Strong's announcement but many remain skeptical. Ralph Curtis of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District said that if Strong is sincere, "you have to commend the man for backing out. But it's unfortu-

nate that he got this thing going in the first place."

Greg Gosar, an organic beef and wheat farmer, says, "Strong's got a lot of bridges to mend in the valley. We will just have to wait and see what this means."

Chris Canaly, a Crestone resident who has been organizing a citizens' group to oppose the project, says she hopes Strong "will come and speak to us. Maybe he can give us some ideas on how to fight this. It would be great if he would help us."

And Strong says he intends to work to ensure that AWDI lives up to commitments he made to the people of the San Luis Valley.

—Rick Boychuk

HOTLINE

A plundered province

Timber companies are to blame for the loss of logging jobs — not environmentalists who want more wilderness, says John Osborne, coordinator of the Inland Empire Public Lands Council. Osborne recently spoke to 300 people at the annual meeting of the Montana Wilderness Association in Great Falls. Osborne said the Plum Creek Timber Company, the timber arm of Burlington Northern, was one of the companies logging the Northwest at a devastating rate and then sending the raw logs to Japan. This deprives local economies of much-needed jobs, he said. Plum Creek is unique in that its 40 million acres of land in the West was given to it by Congress in 1864, and the timber company pays no federal income tax, according to Osborne. He called on Congress to rein in this "unintended corporate empire" it created. The meeting included speaker David Brower, who advocated putting boundaries around civilization, not wilderness. Wallace Stegner, an early resident of Montana, wrote in a letter to the association that the state was part of a "plundered province," which has been left poorer with every boom and bust cycle, and that "nothing that the loggers and miners have planned for it promises to change that situation."

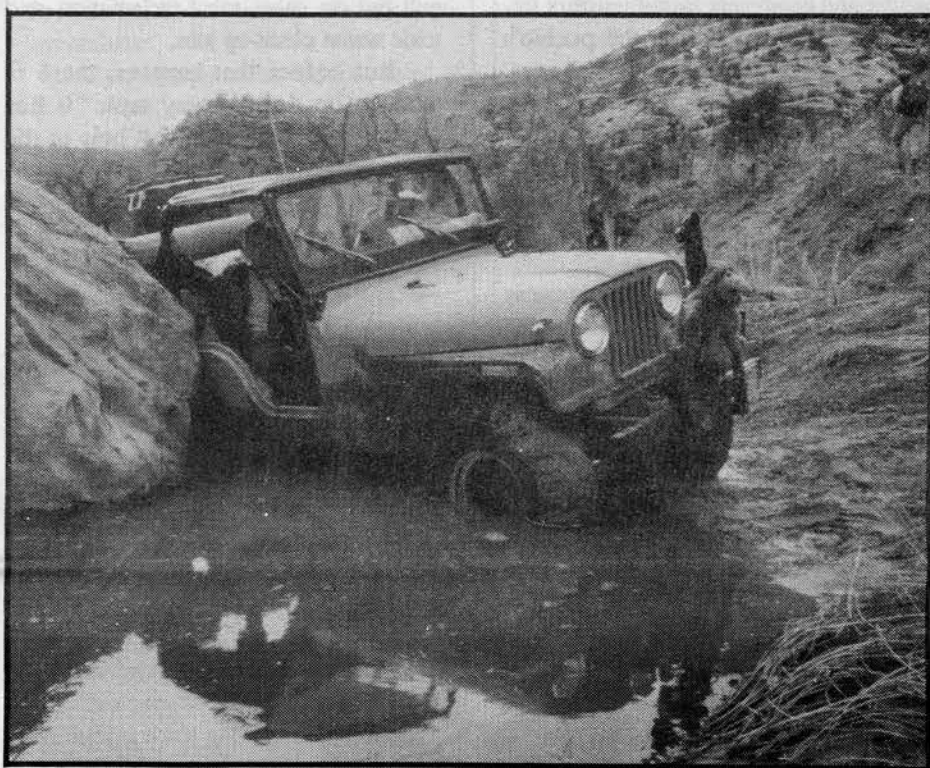


Protesters at Christmas tree cutting in Montana

Christmas tree falls hard

A 65-foot Engelmann spruce, chosen from all of the trees in the nation to adorn the lawn in front of the nation's capitol, decided not to cooperate with federal authorities. As the Christmas tree was cut inside Montana's Kootenai National Forest, it toppled across the road, smashed into a logging crane and narrowly missed crushing a scattering crowd of spectators. When it landed, the tree broke off its top. A group of Boy Scouts, chain-saw industry representatives, Forest Service employees and environmental activists watched the tree's demise. Bill Crismore, head of the Montana Logging Association, and the man who cut the tree, was visibly chagrined. Kootenai National Forest Supervisor James Rathbun was more philosophical. He said, "We have another tree lined up. It's a nicer tree." Protester Kris Maenz, concerned about clearcutting in the area, put it this way: "It's nice to see the trees finally fight back."

HOTLINE



Jeep stuck in the mud in Arch Canyon

Jeeps barred from Utah canyon

Arch Canyon in southern Utah is now for hikers only. The Bureau of Land Management had been allowing off-highway vehicles into the narrow, steep-walled canyon for the past several years. But following a March 31 "Jeep Jamboree," in which 30 Jeeps drove eight miles up the canyon's streambed, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance and Sierra Club successfully appealed to the Interior Department's Board of Land Appeals. The board ruled that under federal law and the BLM's 1973 management plan, BLM could not permit motor vehicles on agency lands unless it determined there was a "significant right of way." In this case, BLM officials made no such determination and, in fact, no right of way existed, the board said. The case was not decided until after the jam-

boree because the BLM failed to file its environmental assessment and FONSI — Finding of No Significant Impact — until March 28, three days before the jamboree. Scott Groene, SUWA staff attorney, says the issue was "basically a question of whether the BLM was upholding its responsibility to protect public lands." SUWA has asked BLM officials to post signs at the canyon entrance announcing that motor vehicles are prohibited.

BARBS

The FBI should stop pussyfooting around and go after the real enemies: all those who can read.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation has said that it did background checks on certain libraries as part of its Library Awareness Program.

B-T Plan . . .

(Continued from page 4)

of oil and gas make a congressional solution impossible.

"I don't think we'll succeed in correcting this mistake," Hocker said. "It's a real tragedy for the nation, for the state of Wyoming and for the greater Yellowstone area. I think the best we can do is a holding action, trying to get people to see that a mistake's been made."

Because of the interest in the final

management plan, the Forest Service has made the plan available for public review until Dec. 31. To request a summary or a complete copy of the plan, or to comment, write to Bridger-Teton National Forest, P.O. Box 1888, Jackson, WY 83001 (307/733-2752). The Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning, which has reviewed the plan in its newsletter, can be reached at 260 E. Broadway, P.O. Box 2728, Jackson, WY 83001 (307/733-9417).

—Devin Odell

Nevada ranches vandalized

A Las Vegas, Nev.-based agent for the Federal Bureau of Investigation is blaming "militant vegetarians" and radical environmentalists for incidents of vandalism on Western ranches. FBI agent Richard Whittaker recently told the Nevada Cattlemen's Association that the vandals are the same people suspected of torching meat plants in California, and that any livestock operation is a potential target. Incidents in Nevada include draining oil from tractor engines, castrating bulls and cutting water pipelines. Two groups, both commonly associated with radical environmental activities, have acknowledged increased "actions" in Nevada, reports the *Los Angeles Times*. Earth First! activists told the newspaper that they hope to end grazing on public land, while Animal Liberation Front member Margo Tannenbaum says her group wants to make the poultry and livestock industries "quit and follow other pursuits."

Biological diversity debated

A New York congressman says an assessment of biological diversity should be a required part of federal environmental studies. But timber companies and other natural resource developers opposed the proposal as a ploy to block them from public lands. The bill, sponsored by Rep. James Scheuer, D-N.Y., would require environmental assessments and environmental impact statement to include tests for measuring the diversity of the living organisms. Scheuer says the requirement is necessary to prevent the extinction of species, which he says is a largely man-made catastrophe. Timber companies, however, see the diversity proposal, which calls for a "full range of variety and variability within and among living organisms and the ecological complex in which they occur," as too vague. "Our problem is we really don't know what it means," says John Heissenbuttel of the American Forest Council, an industry trade group. The practical impact, he says, would be to give environmentalists another reason to block cutting on federal lands. Opponents have asked that Scheuer delay the bill until the Keystone Center, a think tank in Colorado studying the proposal, makes recommendations on what a diversity definition should include.

HOTLINE



Price of cattle on the rise

Cattle prices started to rise in 1987 and are currently at their highest level in a decade. Gordon Kearl, professor of agricultural economics at the University of Wyoming, says ranchers are now getting up to \$1.10 per pound because demand exceeds supply. But there haven't been so few cattle since the early 1960s. Today's estimated 99-million head reflect a significant reduction from the all-time national high of 132 million head in 1975, Kearl says. Bob Carver, extension marketing economist for the University of Wyoming, says fluctuating grain prices are at the root of the problem. As grain prices increase, ranchers are forced to liquidate their feeder calf herds. "Ranchers just haven't had the returns to keep the sizes of their herds up. When they don't make a profit, they tend to take the land used for cattle and put it into crops," he says. Although the cattle industry is beginning to rebuild its herds, numbers won't increase significantly for several years, says Carver. "When you are rebuilding herds, more cattle are being used for breeding. That means there are less cattle for the feed lots."

Senator makes report public

Nuclear-waste storage tanks at the Hanford nuclear plant in Washington may have the explosive potential of 36 tons of TNT, according to an engineering report released by Sen. John Glenn, D-Ohio. The report says that when cyanide was added to the tanks in the 1950s to create more storage space, a potentially explosive reaction was created. The report was written five years ago by Batelle Pacific Northwest Laboratory but was kept secret by the U.S. Department of Energy until this year. Sen. Glenn said he wants to put pressure on the Energy Department to expand public access to information that may threaten the safety of workers and people living nearby. A limited number of the reports are available from Sen. Glenn's office, U.S. Senate, 340 Dirksen Building, Washington, D.C. 20510 (202/224-4751).

BARBS

What do we get if we increase timber harvests?

Idaho Sen. James McClure warned that the state could become "a new Appalachia" if greater timber harvests are not allowed, reports *Newsweek*.

And in the spring, the stork will bring his lady friend a nice new calf.

A dramatic photo of a bull elk bugling in Yellowstone National Park was captioned by the *Casper Star-Tribune*: "Late fall restlessness."

Tribe undertakes huge reclamation job

When the Laguna Pueblo broke ground this fall for a mammoth mine reclamation project, over 350 New Mexican tribal and federal dignitaries and others watched Pueblo Gov. Delfino Begay turn the first shovelful of earth. Over the next seven years, many more eyes will be watching to see if the pueblo's construction company can successfully complete the precedent-setting work here in the New Mexican desert, west of Albuquerque.

In 1986, Anaconda Minerals, a division of Atlantic Richfield Co., signed over to the pueblo \$43.6 million and the responsibility for reclaiming the Jackpile-Paguate uranium mines, once the largest open pit uranium mines in the world. The Bureau of Indian Affairs has only an oversight role, assuring that the work meets federal requirements. During its 30 years of mining, starting in 1952, Anaconda extracted an estimated \$600 million worth of ore there and employed hundreds of Pueblo workers.

Now many of the 500 workers laid off by Anaconda in 1982 work for Laguna Construction Co., Inc., reclaiming 2,700 acres of mined lands. They are gentling the steep slopes, rechanneling the Rio Paguate, planting native grasses and putting a shale cover over the radioactive mine wastes. They will move 35 million cubic yards of material — an amount that would have qualified this as a respectably sized project even back in the energy boom days.

Pueblo Gov. Begay, head of the 3,500-person pueblo, says that one day pueblo cattle will graze on the mine site although residential and commercial uses would probably be ruled out for some time into the future.

Paul Robinson of the Southwest Research and Information Center in Albuquerque, N.M., says the center will monitor the work to assure that the Lagunas and the federal government live up to their commitments. He shares Begay's concern about the people who may be affected and also worries about the precedent set for uranium mine and metal mine reclamation throughout the West. No federal standards exist for either, according to Robinson.

The present approach did not come easily. Anaconda, with the support of some other uranium companies, balked at paying to clean up the Jackpile-Paguate mines. The federal government insisted that the language of the leases under which Anaconda had mined provided sufficient authority to demand full reclamation, but the lack of uranium reclamation standards undermined that argument.

A successful legal challenge by Anaconda could have called into question some federal regulations used for mine reclamation on both Indian and federal lands.

But whatever the legal complications, the physical situation called for action. Without proper protection of groundwater, the Interior Department said, the Laguna mine pit area would be covered by toxic, saline wastelands.

Interior also predicted that without reclamation, 95 to 243 additional radiation-induced cancer deaths could be expected within 50 miles of the mine. Anaconda said that overestimated the risk by 100 times or more.

Negotiations between the company, the federal government, the pueblo and pueblo consultants helped bring the company around. The pueblo was assisted by the Council of Energy Resource Tribes, Jacobs Engineering, Inc., and, for

a short while, by the Southwest Research and Information Center. Thus, Robinson's scrutiny can be expected to be more supportive than skeptical. The Southwest Center often works closely with Indians on natural resource issues.

Some in industry and government will be watching with a more jaundiced eye. They expect the project to fail, according to Neal Kasper, and that makes him angry.

Kasper is president and general manager of Laguna Construction Co., Inc. When the pueblo officials offered the job to Kasper, a non-Indian, they also got a one-man chamber of commerce.

"They (pueblo officials) invested their uranium royalty money. They knew mining would end, and they didn't give it away," he says. In addition to making monetary investments, pueblo officials used the mining royalties to buy land and provide government services for their people.

Investment firms, bonding companies and equipment manufacturers frequently quiz Kasper about the pueblo's form of government and its powers. Pueblo members are shareholders in the Laguna Construction Co., a state-chartered corporation. Yet the company has its own board of directors so it can operate as a somewhat independent entity. Most of the present board are not members of the pueblo and have a business background.

According to Kasper, the board has not been selected for political affiliations and bloodlines, as occurs in many tribal companies.

Nevertheless, skeptics are suspicious because tribally owned companies

often suffer from poor financial management and political interference. However, since 1984, the pueblo has established a good track record with another tribally owned company, Laguna Industries. Created with the help of a \$175,000 grant from Anaconda, Laguna Industries assembles communication and electronic equipment on Army communication shelters.

The state of New Mexico will monitor the reclamation project, too, but for now state officials see it as a success story.

Alan Richardson, director of the New Mexico Economic Development Office, says the Laguna construction work ranks as a medium-to-large project by today's post-boom standards. "It should have a fairly substantial, positive economic impact on the area," he says. The pueblo intends to continue helping both pueblo people and the broader local economy. After completing the Anaconda project, Laguna Construction will bid on other mind reclamation and toxic waste clean-up jobs.

But before that happens, there is work to be done. Begay says, "It has taken us 30 years to dig that hole in the ground, and it will take us many more to fill it back in."

— Marjane Ambler

The writer is a former editor of *High Country News*. Her book on Indian energy development will be published in January by the University Press of Kansas.

Lagunas are a "modern" tribe

Pueblo Indians descend from the Anasazi, who were believed to have inhabited the southwestern area of what is now the United States since 10,000 B.C.

They developed elaborate irrigation systems to farm high-desert lands that now produce mostly saltbrush, sage, cholla, snakeweed and desert willow.

Unlike most Western Indians, the Pueblo Indians never signed a treaty with any of the governments — Spain, Mexico, the United States — that once ruled them, according to Pueblo historian Joe S. Sando. Their land claims rest upon aboriginal occupancy and treaties between the United States and Mexico.

Today, Pueblo tribes have retained more of their traditional religious and governing practices than most other tribes. Of the 19 Pueblo tribes in New Mexico, the Lagunas are considered the most modern, although many continue traditional religious societies and ceremonies, speak the native language of Keresan and live in adobe houses.

The Lagunas' history forced them to adapt to European and Mexican culture, but they always melded the new foods, languages and religious symbols with the old. In 1880, the Atlantic and Pacific Railroad (later the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe) laid its rails through the middle of the village of Old Laguna. The outside world arrived with a bellow on the first train.

Many Lagunas went to work on the railroad, and wage-work began to replace farming and ranching, according to historian Marjorie Baer. The construction of a state highway through the pueblo brought more exposure to other

customs and lifestyles and more jobs.

Just as World War II veterans from Pueblo began returning home from their travels around the globe, uranium was discovered near the Laguna village of Paguate. The area was right in the Grants Mineral Belt and destined to produce almost half of the country's uranium at the height of the boom.

By the early 1970s, more than 700 people worked in the uranium mines on Laguna lands, the vast majority of them Laguna Indians. But with the wages came problems, which Lagunas described at public hearings in 1985.

During blasting, yellow dust fell on their dinner plates in Paguate 1,000 feet away from the big mine. The adobe houses developed cracks big enough to stick a hand through. Many worried about radiation exposure. A religious leader said important sites were lost.

When the mines closed in 1982, the economic base had shifted almost entirely away from agriculture, and the unemployment rate jumped to 51 percent. Many Laguna Indian families moved away to find jobs elsewhere.

Today, Laguna Industries, the tribal electronics and communications company, employs over 170 people, 81 percent of them tribal members. Laguna Construction Company will employ as many as 70 on the reclamation project. Others work primarily for the tribe, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, or the Indian Health Service.

Although the Pueblo lands cover over 400,000 acres, most of the 3,500 people live in the three principal villages of Laguna, Paguate or Mesita.

— Marjane Ambler



CAPITOL HILL

James Cason pulled himself down by his bootstraps

by Andrew Melnykovych

WASHINGTON, D.C. — At the start of the eight-month-long struggle, conservationists despaired of blocking James Cason's ascension to control of the national forests. Soon after President George Bush's nomination of Cason this spring, strategists for the national groups said privately that the most they hoped for was to muster 35 to 40 mostly liberal, overwhelmingly Democratic votes against Cason.

But in November, it was Cason who had only about 35 or 40 mostly conservative and overwhelmingly Republican senators on his side. Faced with certain rejection, Cason spared himself and the Bush administration further embarrassment by asking that his name be withdrawn. His failure to win confirmation was a stinging defeat for Bush, who has proclaimed himself an environmentalist, in his first confrontation with environmentalists.

Cason would today be in charge of the Forest Service had he been able to accomplish three relatively simple tasks: entice right-of-center Democrats, mostly Southerners, to support him; persuade moderate, pro-environment Republicans not to oppose him; and, most important, convince key GOP senators to work actively on his behalf. He was unable to achieve any of those goals.

The story began in late March, when Bush nominated Cason, 35, to be assistant agriculture secretary for natural resources and environment. The post carries management and policy-making responsibility for the Soil Conservation Service as well as the Forest Service. The Forest Service is headed by its own chief, who always comes up through the ranks, but the assistant secretary, a political appointee, still wields a great deal of influence over the agency.

Conservationists, who knew Cason well from his four years as a deputy assistant interior secretary for lands and minerals management in the Reagan administration, responded almost immediately. They produced a lengthy bill of particulars aimed at proving that Cason holds a bias in favor of commercial exploitation of public resources at the expense of the public interest and the environment.

Cason was accused of trying to block efforts to protect the spotted owl, whose survival is believed threatened by logging of the Northwest's old-growth forests. He was also said to have defied Congress by encouraging further sale of federal oil shale lands for \$2.50 an acre while lawmakers were trying to end the practice.

Also cited were his clashes with the National Park Service over how to handle old coal mining claims in the parks, and with the Forest Service over that agency's plans to regulate petroleum development on its lands.

The most damaging revelation

The most damaging revelation was that Cason had made a behind-the-scenes deal with 12 major oil companies to close off or limit audits of the royalties they pay on oil and gas produced from federal and Indian lands. The Dec. 28, 1988, agreement was a unilateral revision of an audit plan agreed to earlier by federal, state, and tribal auditors.

States receive half the federal royalties collected within their borders, while

Indian tribes receive all of the money from their lands. Yet state and tribal officials were not told of the agreement until months after it was concluded. State and tribal auditors said the audit restrictions could lead to tens of millions of dollars in lost revenue. Cason insisted he was only trying to make the royalty collection process more efficient.

He hunkered down

The welter of charges led to a protracted investigation by the Senate Agriculture Committee, which would make the initial judgment on his nomination. Despite the steady barrage, Cason did not launch a counterattack. Instead, he hunkered down, refused to grant interviews, and, presumably, prepared to testify before the senators who would consider his fitness to oversee 191 million acres of Forest Service lands.

That testimony, when it came on Sept. 27 and Oct. 4, was not a disaster for Cason. But neither was it the victory he needed. Cason's responses to questions from Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., who was leading the Senate opposition, did not turn the tide in his favor.

For the most part, Cason did not argue the particulars of the allegations made against him. Nor did he take issue with the impression that some of his actions had created. But Cason disagreed strenuously with any attempt to label him as anti-environmental. And when all else failed, he said he was simply carrying out policies and decisions made by his superiors.

Despite the dismantling of Cason's record, the committee voted 12-7 to give the full Senate a chance to consider whether to confirm him. But there were signs that the nomination might be in trouble. For example, when challenged by Democrat Kent Conrad of North Dakota to defend Cason's record, the only Republican response came from Rudy Boschwitz.

The Minnesotan said he had been assured by Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter that Yeutter would play an active role in setting Forest Service and SCS policy. In effect, Boschwitz was saying that Cason should be confirmed because, unlike his predecessors in the post, he would be kept on a short leash.

The lukewarm support for Cason on the committee apparently extended to the two Republican senators from his home state of Oregon. Neither Robert Packwood nor Mark Hatfield made much of an effort on Cason's behalf, either before or after the committee vote.

Hatfield introduced Cason to the committee and movingly told how Cason had pulled himself up from his origins as the son of migrant farm workers. But Hatfield never explicitly endorsed Cason; he only asked the committee to give him a fair hearing.

In retrospect, the favorable vote by the Senate Agriculture Committee was the apogee of Cason's trajectory through the confirmation process.

Once the battle moved to the full Senate in early October, environmentalists went into high gear, lobbying individual senators and orchestrating a letter-writing campaign directed at key or wavering senators.

Cason's chances began to fall apart the first day of November, when two Southern Democrats, Bennett Johnston of Louisiana and Ernest Hollings of

South Carolina, announced their opposition. Johnston's decision was all the more significant because he chairs the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, which shares jurisdiction over the Forest Service with Leahy's panel.

The opposition had added impact because neither Johnston nor Hollings is closely allied with environmentalists. Their opposition signalled that Cason would win very few votes from Senate Democrats, Southern or otherwise.

With most of his potential Democratic support gone, Cason's chances rested on holding the Senate's 45 Republicans. That hope evaporated when Robert Kasten of Wisconsin joined the opposition. Ultimately, as many as 10 or 12 Republicans were prepared to join at least 50 Democrats in voting against Cason, Leahy said.

Cason's failure to win the Senate's ideological swing groups was in large part due to his lack of support among Republicans who should have been his strongest proponents. A campaign on Cason's behalf by Richard Lugar of Indiana, who is the senior Republican on the agriculture committee, or by Hatfield and Packwood, might have made a difference.

Active supporters were Westerners

As it was, his only active support came from a quartet of Western conservatives, Al Simpson and Malcolm Wallop of Wyoming and Jim McClure and Steve Symms of Idaho.

Although Simpson, by virtue of his position as assistant GOP leader, and McClure, the ranking Republican on Johnston's committee, have considerable influence, they also represent one extreme in the debate over the best use of natural resources. The predictability of their backing of Cason lessened its impact.

In letters to Senate colleagues, the four painted Cason as the victim of a campaign of rumor, innuendo, and misinformation spread by environmentalists, aided and abetted by the media. But the letters did not address the questions raised about Cason's record. And the charges of a smear rang untrue.

Unlike other confirmation battles, the debate had been free of any allegations of personal peccadillos or misconduct. It was about his record, as former Forest Service Chief Max Peterson had pointed out at the agricultural committee meetings. And that record, Peterson told the attentive senators, "was uniformly bad when measured by any reasonable standard of public interest."

What support Cason received from the Bush administration also was ineffective. Yeutter, while apparently having some initial misgivings about Cason, ended up working hard to get him confirmed.

But when the White House did speak up on Cason's behalf in mid-November, it backfired. The White House put Cason's name at the head of a list of stalled nominations it sent to the Senate with a request for speedy action.

But by the time the list arrived, Leahy and Democratic leader George Mitchell of Maine knew that they had the votes to defeat Cason. Their willingness to proceed forced GOP leader Robert Dole into the awkward position of trying to delay a vote the White House had requested. After buying time

for two days, Dole conceded defeat. The nomination was sent back to the White House, forcing Cason's withdrawal.

Before surrendering the nomination, Dole charged that the fight had been politicized and that Cason's opponents were "just blowing smoke."

While some of the conservationist rhetoric might fairly be described as smoke, the fire was produced by Cason himself. Ultimately, it was his record, and his inability to defend it, that cost him the assistant secretary job.

Cason couldn't defend himself

The nomination battle was noteworthy because there was no single "smoking gun" that beat Cason. Rather, it was the weight of the evidence of Cason's record, as well as his lack of qualifications to run the agency. Republican Kasten of Wisconsin said that Cason, when asked why he wanted the job, "could not identify any unique mission or skills he could bring to this position."

Cason's opponents tried to associate him in the public mind with former Interior Secretary James Watt, going so far as to describe him as a Watt "clone." In one sense, that comparison seemed facile and a bit unfair, since Cason had never worked directly for Watt and did not even know him.

In the end, Cason's support came mostly from the same senators and interest groups who had been the staunchest defenders of Watt and his policies. If a nominee can be judged by those who embrace him, linking Cason to Watt was completely justifiable.

The Bush administration is now faced with the task of coming up with a new person to oversee the Forest Service and the SCS. The Senate has made it clear that clones of James Watt, or James Cason, need not apply.

There may also be other, longer term, implications to be drawn from this fight. That Cason was rejected because of his approach to natural resources, rather than for dishonesty or other personal failings, may indicate that the Senate will be looking at the West with a more attentive and knowing eye in the future.

The writer is Washington correspondent for the *Casper Star-Tribune* in Wyoming.

HOTLINE

Idarado proposes a golf course

Greens may be coming to the vast mounds of mine tailings in Telluride, Colo. Eighteen of them, to be exact. As part of its cleanup of the area ordered by a federal judge last February, Idarado Mining Co. might build an 18-hole golf course on the mine wastes east of town (HCN, 8/14/89). The course, designed by Denver-based Dye Designs, would be built to recycle water sprayed on the greens so that none contaminates groundwater or the San Miguel River. Idarado's plans also include re-routing streams above the tailings and building a system of settling ponds to clean water flowing from the tailings. The company announced the proposal as an alternative to a state plan — opposed by some residents — which would require moving large amounts of dirt and relocating 33 trailers.

THERE IS A SEASON

Wheat under the wind, frantic, cloud-darkened.
Morning's western horizon, having swallowed distance and heat,
arrives green-bellied, violent, ready to crush ripe grain.
Such afternoons clench a farmer's heart—our combines move
so slowly, paddlewheelers lazily devouring their golden Mississippi.

Daydreamer at the controls seeing buffalo, tall grass, riders lost
in landscape and storm. These days aren't yours for living
were you even equal to them. Tend machinery, watch the sky
for sign of imminent collapse. It comes. Tarp loads splash into town,
everyone thinking beer and eight-ball. We'll gather round the jukebox,
comfortably blinded by ceiling and walls. Sedate gypsies at their leisure,
drifters on the ghost of a prairie.

John Wahl
Flagstaff, Arizona

WHAT'S LEFT TO REMEMBER

You show me the street
where the Post Office and Mercantile stood,
then catty corner across town
to our old neighborhood: vacant now,
rotted and looted, burned and bulldozed down.

Like a child playing in the dirt
you drag big squares with the deft toe
of your left boot: here's the Morgans',
here's the Millers'. And on the empty lot between
you scratch out our old house.

You turn the knob and give the wind a shove.
Like ghosts on tour, we fade in
and out of the walls, rearrange the furniture,
drift through rooms and halls,
leave by the back door,

forgetting to shut the screen
as the landscape snaps
into place all around us.

William Studebaker
Twin Falls, Idaho

SON

PLANTING POTATOES

She asks when you plant potatoes and I say the
will tell. If the eyes stay green you shouldn't
eat close to the unripe skin. All the old folklore
coming back. It does make a difference, chemi
leeching in, groundwater tables falling fast, not
of us paying attention, only the almanac faithful
to legend, the moon coming up with dependab

Up from the dark earth wet like a blanket around
the potatoes we dig this year were tagged with
of their seed, but we don't know the condition
they sleep in. Red russets, Idaho bakers, long v
the paper-skinned boilers we depend on to fee
to find out where to plant them if we're changin
and the rain, the ground. If taking more than w
is only the waste of forgetting who we are.

When do you plant potatoes? When there's hope
and the pure rain, the seasons? When you know
that sprouts go into. If you're hungry and have
When there's no alternative. In that Irish famin
poor eyes from the same crop were set out ove
the bad seed couldn't be stopped, failures repea
the dying. The moon's blind-eyed, a simpleton
no answer. So I say planting depends. It all de

Jeanne Lohmann
San Francisco, CA

TRAVEL

When the
Materialize
In tandem
And all he
The roadw
a carpet ro
Thirty min
I stayed al

LONGS

POTATOES

you plant potatoes and I say the moon
eyes stay green you shouldn't
unripe skin. All the old folklore
does make a difference, chemicals
underwater tables falling fast, not enough
attention, only the almanac faithful
moon coming up with dependable changes.

Earth wet like a blanket around them
dig this year were tagged with the time
we don't know the condition of dirt
red russets, Idaho bakers, long whites,
red boilers we depend on to feed us, we need
to plant them if we're changing the air
ground. If taking more than we need
of forgetting who we are.

Want potatoes? When there's hope for sun
in the seasons. When you know the soil
into. If you're hungry and have to.
alternative. In that Irish famine
the same crop were set out over and over;
couldn't be stopped, failures repeated,
moon's blind-eyed, a simpleton who gives
say planting depends. It all depends.

Jeanne Lohmann
San Francisco, California

POSTS AND RAILS

Very endearing,
these new posts and rails.
They keep in the houses,
give them measured distance,
square them to their setting.
They protect the trees.
One rail might fit in
a long run of old fence.
Then a new section of rail and post
may replace a wearing away
of time, soil and weather
or a sudden road accident.
I've never noticed before,
like a father with first child
seeing the raw birth, not knowing
how it naturally will weather,
fit in and support in time the line.

Ray Greenblatt
Paoli, Pennsylvania



of HOME

IN THE OPEN

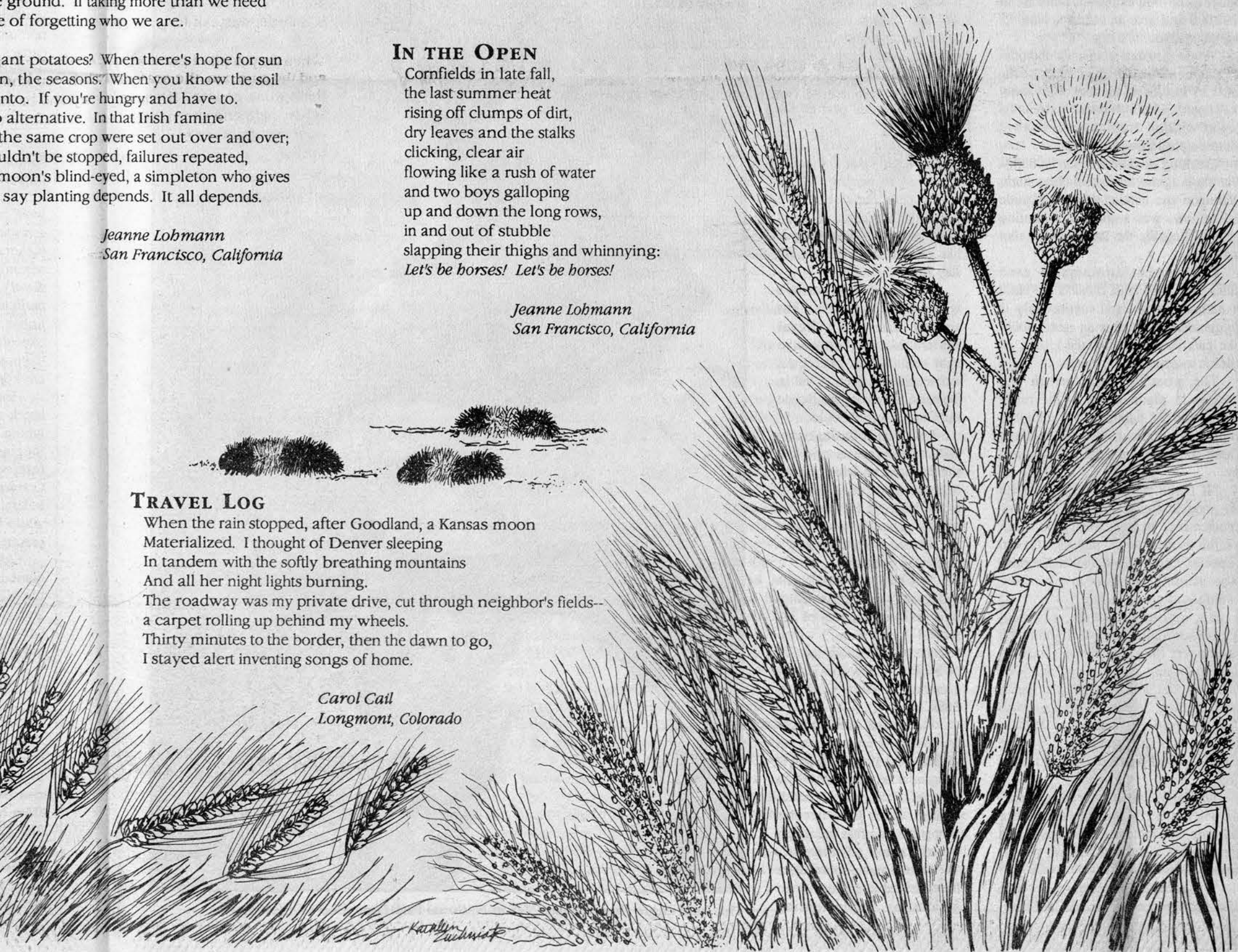
Cornfields in late fall,
the last summer heat
rising off clumps of dirt,
dry leaves and the stalks
clicking, clear air
flowing like a rush of water
and two boys galloping
up and down the long rows,
in and out of stubble
slapping their thighs and whinnying:
Let's be horses! Let's be horses!

Jeanne Lohmann
San Francisco, California

TRAVEL LOG

When the rain stopped, after Goodland, a Kansas moon
Materialized. I thought of Denver sleeping
In tandem with the softly breathing mountains
And all her night lights burning.
The roadway was my private drive, cut through neighbor's fields--
a carpet rolling up behind my wheels.
Thirty minutes to the border, then the dawn to go,
I stayed alert inventing songs of home.

Carol Cail
Longmont, Colorado



10-High Country News — December 18, 1989

Poaching . . .

(Continued from page 1)

"Our financial resources are limited," Grosz said. "There's no way we can even begin to stop all the small-time poachers or the nickel and dime killing, though it all adds up. I am forced to look for the worst wildlife crooks in the bunch."

Only 200 wildlife agents

Law enforcement officials are outnumbered, outfinanced and unequipped compared to commercial poachers, said Dave Hall, a federal agent based in Louisiana who is an expert on poaching in North America.

According to Hall, there are more police officers in New York City than conservation officers in all of the United States. The 200 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service field officers nationwide are spread thin across isolated terrain where organized crime can only be penetrated through expensive — and sometimes controversial — undercover operations.

Nearly three decades ago, biologist James Vilkitis went undercover in Idaho to gather intelligence on commercial poaching. His findings still are considered the most accurate tool for measuring the magnitude of poaching in the West.

Vilkitis said that for every animal harvested legally, another is taken illegally.

For an undercover operation to succeed, Scrafford says the federal government must invest a minimum of \$200,000 and give an officer at least 12 months to infiltrate a ring.

Yet no guarantees exist for the officer's safety. According to federal officials, an increasing number of commercial poachers are well armed, have a history of dealing drugs or weapons, and possess a past criminal record.

Cracking an operation can be tricky. When two agents in western Idaho stumbled upon the hunting camp of Claude Dallas, who was suspected of hunting wildlife illegally, the lawmen were shot and killed.

Government attorneys in each undercover case must consider the issue of entrapment. Raised continuously is the question of whether an agent should take part in the selling and killing of wildlife to apprehend criminals.

The poaching problem in the Rockies is made worse by the rapid destruction of habitat. That squeezes wildlife populations into smaller areas where they are vulnerable, biologists say.

"If these trends continue, despite any good intentions on the part of law enforcement, you just won't have much wildlife in the future," said John Gavitt, a special agent based in Washington. "The ultimate solution to protecting wildlife is to protect habitat."

But Gavitt believes the movement by animal rights activists to eliminate hunting will only spawn more poaching. "It (eliminating legal hunting) is a simplistic answer to a very complex problem," he said. "A ban on hunting would eliminate monies that come in from licenses to help preserve habitat and combat poaching with law enforcement."

Similarly, Gavitt says that privatizing wildlife herds and eliminating state authority will remove the average citizen from having a stake in wildland preservation.

"Privatization promotes species-specific management of the land, not man-

agement that considers the environmental needs of all species," he said. "It makes wildlife management similar to raising cattle."

Poaching in the parks

The American West — in particular the national parks — has become a repository for trophy animals and rare species that are genetically pure. That accelerates their value in the world market, Gavitt said.

In the early 1980s, Gavitt was picked to infiltrate a poaching network around Yellowstone Park; that made him part of one of the largest wildlife busts in the Northern Rockies.

The three-year undercover investigation known as Operation Trophy Kill led to the arrests of three dozen people, jail-time totaling 51 years and more than \$128,000 in fines.

One man implicated in Operation Trophy Kill was Livingston, Mont., taxidermist Dan Quillen, who admitted trying to peddle two bighorn sheep heads.

"He (Gavitt) was brave," Quillen said of the undercover officer. "He got in the middle of it, and his life was constantly in danger. Had Ellison ever known, he would have had (Gavitt's) throat cut."

Loren Jay Ellison, considered the ringleader, was convicted in Billings, Mont., and slapped with the stiffest sentence ever rendered in an American poaching case: 15 years in a federal penitentiary.

"Prior to Trophy Kill, poaching was a laughing matter," said Quillen, whose sentence was suspended. "They (poachers) had the park divided into areas. You can't believe the shock waves that went through this part of the country."

Scrafford fears that Trophy Kill's value for deterrence may be waning. "Some of the guys convicted five years ago are back in business," he said. "Poaching is like an addiction. They can't stay away."

The lure of Yellowstone's world-class wildlife has already attracted illegal hunters this year who have shot and killed protected moose, elk and deer — all in the name of making the Boone and Crockett record books.

Philadelphia businessman William Heyer was arrested and convicted on felony Lacey Act charges for killing a record-book elk in the center of the park. He was fined \$13,300 and given three years' suspended probation.

Scrafford said that "sport and greed" drove Heyer to also seek completion of his second "grand slam," which consists of killing four species of bighorn sheep, the Rocky Mountain, Desert, Dall and Stone.

"More and more people are competing for trophies out of fear that they better get them now or there won't be any left," Scrafford said. "Animal heads have become almost like priceless paintings, like a Picasso or a Renoir."

State crime laboratories have assisted in some investigations by implementing

DNA fingerprinting to determine the genetic makeup of some species. Occasionally, the method has been used to match decapitated wildlife heads with the bodies of animals left behind.

Laws aren't all tough

While some states have enacted tough laws to punish poachers in court, others such as Wyoming, Colorado and Idaho still allow the liberal sale of animal parts and legally tagged heads that were allegedly found in the wild.

"The states with weak laws make it tough for all the rest," Scrafford said. "It causes more illegal activity to move across state lines. Fortunately we have fairly tough federal laws which I call the bread and butter of enforcement."

The "bread and butter" of federal poaching laws are the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, the Marine Mammal Act, the Endangered Species Act, the federal Airborne Hunting Act, the Bald Eagle Act and the Lacey Act, Scrafford said.

The Lacey Act is one of the oldest wildlife laws on the books. Enacted in 1900, it was drafted originally to protect domestic fish and game and also prohibit introduction of unwanted species.

It took eight decades of amendments and revision before the Act mandated

prison terms and fines. In 1981, when poachers were killing Yellowstone elk for their blood antlers, the Lacey Act gave judges the authority to levy harsh sentences. Like the Racketeering Influenced Corrupt Organizations (RICO) Act used to prosecute organized crime, the Lacey Act allows seizure of property and income related to the illegal sale of wildlife.

Most of the federal wildlife laws today allow maximum sentences of up to five years in prison and a \$25,000 fine. A recent modification to the Endangered Species Act allows for fines of up to \$100,000. Sentencing, however, is left to the discretion of federal and state judges. Some view poaching as a serious offense while others send a message of toleration to repeat offenders.

These days, however, poaching seems remarkably closer to organized crime. Working under the security of darkness, poachers launch boats into lakes and reservoirs, using gill nets to harvest thousands of walleyes which are shipped to markets in St. Louis, New York City and San Francisco.

Black bears are killed by the hundreds, their gall bladders used as herbal medicines in the Orient. Bear meat sells for \$12 a pound in cities like Chicago.

Elk, deer and antelope are under siege on winter ranges in Colorado, Wyoming, Utah and Nevada. "They're

Ted Wood



This bald eagle shot in Grand Teton National Park later died of its wound

really taking a beating," Scrafford said. "It's a hard operation to infiltrate because you're dealing with individuals and not groups."

Around Yellowstone, more than 50 grizzly bears, a federally threatened species, have been killed illegally since 1975. The number is considered significant since only 200 bears are thought to survive in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem.

Charges of racism

In New Mexico, the fourth largest state in the lower 48, there are 52 state conservation officers covering 121,336 square miles.

"Poaching is a very serious problem here," said John Cross, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service special agent in charge of operations for New Mexico, Arizona, Texas and Oklahoma.

According to Cross, a parochial view of wildlife has been promoted over centuries of settlement in the region, dat-

ing back to the time of the Spanish conquistadors. Some landowners feel that wildlife on their property is theirs to kill for personal use, Cross said. "With that kind of attitude, there are no limits to how much poaching actually goes on."

Such observations have fueled charges of racism from members of the Hispanic community. Cross denies any bias.

But a recent bust in southern Colorado provoked those charges again. On March 6, 1989, Colorado's San Luis Valley swarmed with dozens of law

enforcement officials who culminated the three-year investigation by arresting 47 people for felony wildlife violations. Ultimately, 108 people would be named in indictments.

Region chief Grosz said 850 serious wildlife violations were chronicled "and a tremendous movement of illegally taken wildlife."

Even though only a portion of the market was penetrated, agents documented the killing of at least 96 big game animals and 25 eagles. Grosz said

(Continued on page 12)

There is a brisk, destructive trade in wildlife

America's hunger for tusks, furs and other wildlife parts is causing the decline of species around the world. In 1986, almost 33 million wildlife items comprising over 64,000 shipments were legally imported into the United States from foreign markets, according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service special agent John Gavitt.

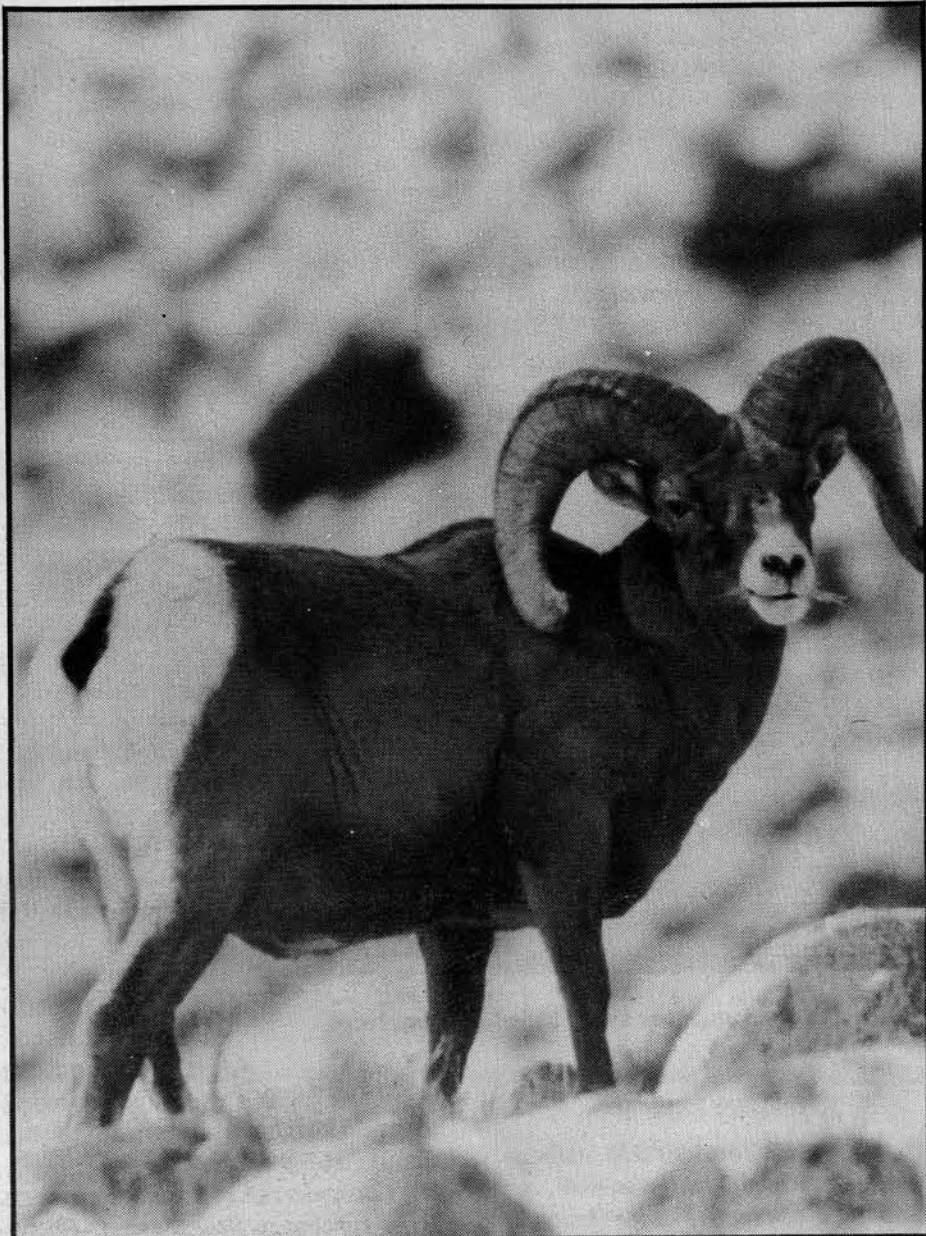
Although there is no way to calculate the number of illegal wildlife items entering this country, the magnitude of known legal imports is considered significant in its own right.

Three years ago, five to 10 million raw fur skins, six to eight million pieces of elephant ivory, and 15 to 20 million finished reptile products were shipped into the United States. But federal agents say smugglers also shipped thousands, perhaps millions, of other animal parts into the country: tiger skins, leopard coats, whale blubber, lion's manes, rhinoceros horn, elephant tusks, live macaws. The list could go on.

The result is that time is quickly running out for many species, said Kurt Johnson, a research biologist with the World Wildlife Fund. The fund estimates, for example, that only 3,500 black rhinos survive in Africa and numbers are plummeting quickly. Although the United States has banned products made from black rhinos and elephants, officials say there still is demand on the black market.

The African elephant, which numbers 600,000 to 750,000 animals in the wild, dropped from a population of 1.5 million 10 years ago. Roughly 10 percent of the population is killed each year to satisfy demands for ivory worldwide, including customers in the United States.

"This country's purchasing power may be a significant factor contributing to the decimation of foreign wildlife



Bighorn sheep

populations, particularly in Third World countries," Gavitt told the North American Wildlife Conference meeting in Washington this year.

Conversely, the United States — chiefly the Western half of the country — is a major supplier of animal parts for markets in Asia, Africa and South America, Gavitt said.

For example, a recent U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service investigation uncovered an illegal smuggling operation that channeled live falcons and other birds of prey to buyers in Saudi Arabia and the Middle East.

As part of intelligence gathered in Operation Falcon, it was learned that oil sheiks reportedly were willing to pay as much as \$50,000 for an American gyrfalcon and \$10,000 for a native peregrine falcon.

But the herbal medicine market may pose the most serious threat to species in the West. Federal officials estimate that one-third of the world's 5.5 billion people practice traditional forms of medicine that consider animal parts to hold healing powers.

"The Asian attitude towards plant and animal substances for medicine is compared to aspirin in the United States," Gavitt said. "Contrary to popular belief, the use of animal parts as

aphrodisiacs in the Far East is negligible."

Efforts to supply the Asian market with such highly coveted parts as ungulate horns and bear gall bladders have put formidable pressure on American wildlife populations, federal agents say.

"The demand for galls is almost insatiable in some areas of the world," Gavitt said. "With approximately 200,000 black bears in the lower 48 states, the impact of an unregulated commercial market can cause significant declines in populations."

Dried bear galls fetch \$3,000 per pound in foreign markets they usually reach illegally through Pacific port cities such as Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle.

In 1987, a federal field agent reported that of 12,000 to 15,000 black bears surviving in the wild in California, the estimated illegal kill approached 700 to 900 bears, or almost 10 percent of the population.

Gavitt said Arizona wildlife officers seized over 20,000 pills containing bear gall with an estimated value of \$26,000.

Johnson said the World Wildlife Fund is concerned about declining black bear populations in the United States and around the globe. "There's been no concerted push to have a complete ban on

wildlife commercialization in the United States," Johnson said. "Many states have their own bans but there are a few states that still allow the sale of wildlife products. Those states are causing major problems, especially in regard to bears being shipped to the Orient." The fund plans to launch a lobbying effort in states which do not ban commercialization.

American elk are also being purchased by commercial horn dealers overseas. Elk calves are worth an estimated \$5,000 per animal and velvet blood antlers have sold for as much as \$100 per pound.

In Jackson, Wyo., the annual Boy Scout Antler Auction draws many Korean buyers. In 1989, they legally purchased most of the 5,000 pounds of antlers put on sale for an average price of \$8.92 per pound. After the antlers are shipped to Korea, they are sliced into thin sections and mixed into tea and medicines, fetching exponential profits for local dealers.

"The most effective way to curtail illegal markets is to totally ban commercialization," Gavitt said. "With the notable exception of fur and other skins, I believe the elimination of commercial markets for parts from native wildlife, particularly those destined for the Oriental medicinal market, would not place a significant economic burden on citizens of our country."

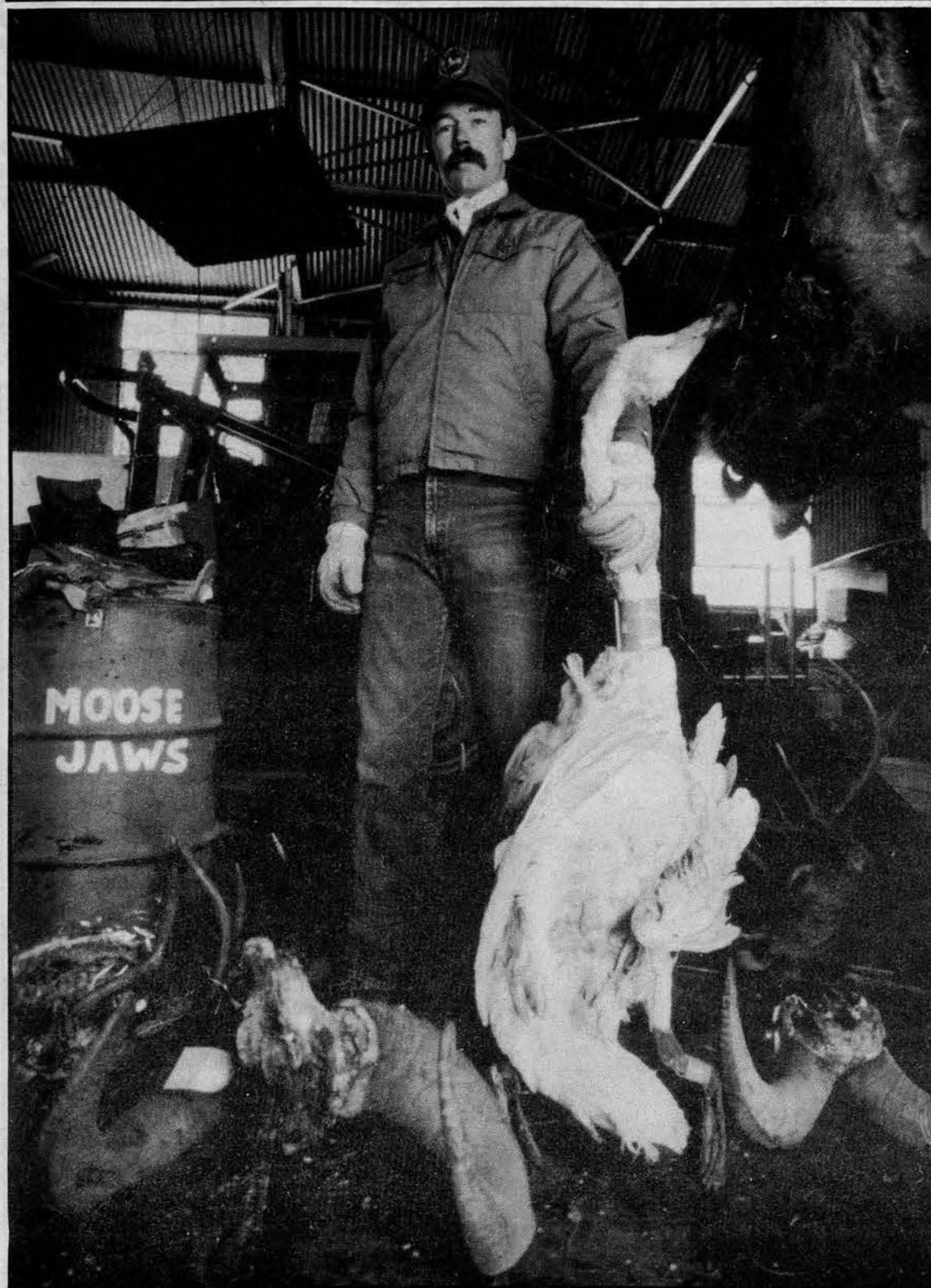
—Todd Wilkinson



Pronghorn antelope



Mountain goat



Wyoming game warden Kent Schmidlin holds a rare trumpeter swan killed by poachers near Jackson, Wyoming

Poaching . . .

(Continued from page 11)

one officer was aware of the illegal killing and commercial transport of 547 elk, 2,006 deer and 92 eagles.

Still, some defendants claimed they were motivated to kill because they needed the meat to survive. The state of Colorado conducted an inquiry into charges of racism and those allegations were subsequently dismissed.

"Rather than being used for food on the table, a lot of the animals were used to barter for liquor or drugs," Grosz said. "Under federal welfare programs, nobody has to go hungry. Nobody had to kill an eagle or an elk. In this country, you do not have to destroy the environment to survive."

Agent Cross has his own gauge for measuring the impact of poaching. "When you drive into Colorado in the dead of winter, it is not uncommon to see herds of wildlife along the highway," he said. "But when you come back into New Mexico you see nothing. Under normal circumstances, wildlife should be there, too, because the habitat is the same."

Early in November, state conservation officers used the second weekend of the deer season to conduct a sweep of nighttime poachers. The effort netted more than 30 people for shining spotlights to see and then kill deer and elk.

Southwest species are targeted

While considerable attention centers on protecting game animals, rare birds and exotic species in the Southwest are highly susceptible.

Illegal guides and outfitters are taking their toll upon Javalina wild pigs; wild billy goats known as ibex; Barbary sheep; and African antelope called oryx, which are the size of elk but have spherical-shaped horns 35-40 inches long.

A two-year investigation in New Mexico and Arizona resulted in the arrests of 37 people for killing such birds as eagles, hawks and owls for their body parts. But the destruction does not stop with large fauna.

Astronomical growth in the Phoenix metropolitan area has resulted in a blight of native cacti for miles around the city. "A good indicator is to go to Phoenix and travel outside the suburbs for 30 miles," Cross said. "You see no more saguaro where there used to be hundreds of thousands. They're all being taken by landscapers and put in front of desert homes."

On the black market, a large saguaro can bring as much as \$15,000. Cross said hundreds of the famed barrel cactus and other rare desert plants are being removed daily to supplement private botanical collections on the West Coast.

A "private" stock of wildlife

Private hoarding of plants and wildlife is quickly becoming a major

"Some judges make fun of wildlife crimes and say they're no worse than a traffic ticket."

issue in many states.

The federal government convened a grand jury investigation Oct. 3 in Espanola, N.M., over allegations that a large game ranch had illegally removed dozens, if not hundreds, of wild elk from public lands and made them available for private hunts. Indictments likely will be handed down Dec. 20 in a case which is expected to set a national precedent, Cross said. It marks the first time that federal agents have vigorously pursued claims of illegal hunting on private lands.

Cross said the grand jury is investigating allegations that the Chama Land and Cattle Company supplemented its game park with publicly owned animals. Agents seized 109 elk and are holding them as evidence.

There is speculation that the elk, some valued at \$5,000-\$7,000 apiece, were being shipped to game farms in Alberta, Canada, as breeding stock.

Chama is one of the largest private game ranches in New Mexico. Clients pay a fee to hunt specific animals. For example, authorities say it costs \$6,400 to shoot a bull elk, \$2,000 for a cow elk, \$2,500 for a deer and \$200 a day to fish for trout.

"We estimate it takes in over \$1 million a year on wildlife alone," Cross said. "There have been 1,000 animals hunted there over a 25-year period." Among those under investigation is Chama ranch owner Grady Vaughan, a wealthy Texas oilman from Dallas.

"The hunting ethic seems to be slipping away," Grosz said. "The fair chase of the animal used to be what it was all about. If you got a critter, that was a bonus, but just being outside in nature was the reason to hunt."

"Now you see large numbers of people paying large sums of money for guaranteed hunts. The whole trip is considered a major disappointment unless you kill something. This puts a lot of pressure on legal and illegal outfitters to produce for their clients. Often it means breaking the law."

Rambos and slob

Forests are being inundated by so-called "slob hunters" who know nothing about legal limits or conservation, Grosz said. Hunters clad in "Rambo" fatigues, carrying long knives and

assault rifles, search for animals to shoot from the sanctity of their new four-wheel-drive pickups, Scrafford added.

A New York man was arrested by Montana authorities this autumn for allegedly stopping his vehicle on Interstate 94 west of Livingston and killing two trophy elk that were grazing inside a fenced game preserve.

When a local citizen stopped to tell him that what he had done was illegal, the man replied, "That's the way we hunt back in New York," and drove away. He was arrested a short time later.

Roadblocks in 10 Western states this autumn uncovered hundreds of hunters who did not properly gut and dress the animals they shot. "I have a feeling a lot of those animals will end up in the trash cans," Grosz said.

Southwest of Glacier National Park, five teenagers were arrested Nov. 28, 1989, by Montana game wardens for allegedly killing 30 deer, leaving many animals behind to rot. One young suspect said the group "wounded and lost five animals for every deer they retrieved." Another member of the group confessed to shooting at animals every night for more than a month.

"Don't get me wrong, there are still a lot of responsible hunters out there, but many are not passing along the ethic to their children. As a result we're seeing more problems with illegal killing of wildlife," he added.

"For many people, hunting in the forest used to represent an experience that was clean and quiet and rejuvenated the soul as well as the mind. Many people don't see it that way anymore."

Throw the book at them

The 40,000-member Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation supports judges who take a hard line on poachers and illegal hunters, said Gary Wolfe, the foundation's director of field operations.

"In local situations, poachers can be very damaging to elk herds," Wolfe said. "From an ethical standpoint, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation is concerned and disturbed about the amount of poaching going on in the woods."

"Poaching is giving hunters and sportsmen a bad name," he added. "We are extremely supportive of state and federal wildlife laws that exact strong penalties on the violators."

Poaching expert Hall said the remedies for illegal commercial poaching are based more on public attitude than market demand.

"We need to create a situation in North America where the people who illegally take wildlife are viewed as villains rather than heroes," he said. "And the education process has got to go farther than trying to reform poachers. It has to reach judges and prosecutors."

Hall said a new study on poaching will soon be released by Robert Johnson of the University of Wisconsin at La Crosse. Johnson, an expert on hunter behavior, says data show that suspending hunting privileges has a greater impact upon poachers than fines or prison time.

(Continued on page 13)

Poaching . . .

(Continued from page 12)

"We now have the penalties in place that can be devastating to commercial rings," Hall said. "But it doesn't mean you will win the support of the courts. Some judges make fun of wildlife crimes and say they're no worse than a traffic ticket."

Elected officials on the state and federal level must take wildlife crimes as seriously as they do the illegal drug trade, said one conservation officer who wished to remain anonymous. In order to

stop poaching, several federal wildlife agents suggested the following:

- Ban nationwide the commercial sale of all animal parts and put tighter controls on the distribution of game meat;
- Levy larger fines and longer prison sentences for big-time wildlife offenders;
- Make loss of hunting privileges mandatory for hunters who exceed legal limits or hunt out of season;
- Appropriate more money on the federal level to fund more undercover operations to fight wildlife smuggling rings;

• Make conservation ethics classes mandatory for American school children, beginning in the first grade.

"The American people have got to get off their dead butts," Grosz said. "The wildlife resources we're using today are those that belong to our grandchildren. Nobody has a right to use them up."

Todd Wilkinson lives in Bozeman, Montana, and writes about natural resources in the Northern Rockies.

PRICES FOR NORTH AMERICAN WILDLIFE AND PLANTS

Bald eagle	\$ 2,500
Golden eagle	200
Elk penis	5 (each)
Gila monster	200
Peregrine falcon	10,000
Gyrfalcon	120,000
Goshawk	1,500
Grizzly bear	5,000
Grizzly bear	
claw necklace	2,500
Pronghorn	
antelope	1,500
Polar bear	6,000
Black bear paw pad	150
Reindeer antlers	35 (/pound)
Peyote fans	600
Wild ginseng	250 (/pound)
Grand slam sheep	
(Bighorn, Desert	
Dall, Stone)	45,000
Mountain lion	500
Mountain goat	3,500
Saguaro cactus	15,000

PRICES FOR WORLD SPECIES

Olive python	\$ 1,500
Rhinoceros horn	12,500 (/pound)
Tiger skin	
(Siberian)	3,500
Tiger meat	130 (/pound)
Red Blunt Nose	
Viper	720
Cockatoos	2,000
Leopard	8,500
Snow leopard	14,000
Elephant tusk	250 (/pound)
Walrus tusk	50 (/pound)
Mountain gorilla	150,000
Panda	3,700
Ocelot	40,000 (/coat)
Imperial Amazon	
Macaw	30,000

*Figures supplied by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, whose agents recorded prices in the field.



Ted Wood/Jackson Hole News

Annual elk antler auction in Jackson, Wyoming

LETTERS

SHORTSIGHTED

Dear HCN,

Bryan Welch's article on the MolyCorp, Inc., Guadalupe Mountain Tailing Project was excellent (HCN, 10/20/89). He fairly stated opposing views and managed to do so in an impartial manner.

Opponents to this project, however, have once again demonstrated their shortsightedness by pointing out that there are still 10 years of storage remaining in the existing tailings pond. In a vacuum, this is true. The consequence, however, of not commencing work on the site now is that the facility would not be ready for use when needed, i.e., when most portions of the existing facility would be filled to capacity.

Final design drawings, access roads, facility construction and utilities, must all precede dam construction. This will take approximately four to five years. Actual dam construction will take at least two more years.

The charge that the air will be filled with toxic tailings dust is totally without scientific or technical merit. The fact is that the tailings are nothing more than inert crushed rock.

The final concern is that tourism will be hurt by construction and operation of the new dam site. The west dam of the facility will be visible from the rim of the Rio Grande gorge, part of the Wild and Scenic River area two miles to the west. With the planned and required

plantings and seeding of the dam face, the impact will be minimized. Feasible alternative sites for dam construction would have far greater impacts on the environment than the Guadalupe site, and would be visible, not only to visitors to the Wild and Scenic Rivers area, but to thousands of local and out-of-state travelers on NM State Road 522, an interstate highway into southern Colorado.

The mine is located in a mining district. Mining has been carried out in the area since before the turn of the century without environmental damage. Many hundreds of employees have earned livings for themselves and their families at this mine and have also been able to enjoy living in this wonderful, scenic area. MolyCorp is committed to providing a necessary commodity for use worldwide in an environmentally safe and sound manner.

LeRoy E. Apodaca
Questa, New Mexico

The writer is a manager for MolyCorp, Inc. in Questa, New Mexico.

LET'S SAVE BLACKHAWK

Dear HCN,

In the article about the private wilderness property on Blackhawk Mountain ("The deck is stacked against privately owned wild lands," Oct. 9th issue), I was saddened to read of the Sampsons' decision to sell the land. I

was shocked to read that several charitable organizations had failed to come to the aid of the Sampsons and of their property. Take heart! Help is on the way.

Rocky Mountain Land Stewards, Unlimited, is a land trust founded on the belief that land, especially undeveloped land, was not meant to be bought and sold by individuals, like corn futures or junk bonds, to maximize short-term profits. Rather, we believe that the earth has been entrusted to humans to care for and use in ways that benefit all peoples, all generations. As a nonprofit private foundation, our trust can hold land perpetually free from speculation and see that it is used in ways that preserve its beauty and ecological richness.

Surely the Sampsons' land on Blackhawk Mountain deserves such protection. We have begun negotiations to purchase the property and to hold it forever free from development and degradation. But we need help. Tax deductible contributions can be sent to: Rocky Mountain Land Steward, Unlimited, P.O. Box 1090-RMLS, Paonia, CO 81428. Please earmark your check, "Blackhawk Mountain."

Conrad Lindes, Chairman
Middleburg, Ohio

VULGAR TRASH

Dear HCN,

I am writing in regard to the book review by Bert Lindler, which appeared Nov. 6, 1989. I am dumbfounded and extremely annoyed that you would stoop

to print such an insult to the sensibilities of your readers.

Both the author of the book, Kathleen Meyer, and the reviewer deserve to pass to their meager reward at an early date, and you deserve not much less if the review was printed with your knowledge and/or approval.

We have enjoyed reading most of the past contents of your paper; however, we cannot condone recognition or printing of such vulgar trash. It is an insult to the finer sensibilities of your readers — I hope! On the other hand, if your readers are the type of people to whom such trash appeals, then we no longer wish to be associated with you or with them.

We were even considering giving some gift subscriptions or memberships in *High Country News*. How embarrassed we would have been if any of our friends had received such trash from us. Unless you print immediately a sincere apology and a promise never again to defile the pages of *High Country News* with such trash, I request that you cancel our subscription and refund the remaining balance.

Harvey W. Lance
Tucson, Arizona

Dear Mr. Lance,

The review was meant to be both humorous and informative. I'm sorry it didn't strike you that way. Your refund check is on its way.

Betsy Marston
Editor

BULLETIN BOARD



SAVE THE JEMEZ

Where does the "stone" for "stone-washed" jeans come from? According to Tom Ribe, a New Mexico environmentalist, the only domestic source for the pumice used as an abrasive powder in the "stone-washing" process, are strip mines in the Jemez Mountains west of Santa Fe, N.M. But Ribe says the mines threaten the area, much of it on national forest land, which also contains abundant wildlife, recreational opportunities, archaeological sites, hot springs and the Jemez River, now under consideration by Congress for wild and scenic status. A coalition of environmental groups, including the Sierra Club and the National Parks and Conservation Association, has formed to fight a proposed 1,700-acre pumice mine in the area. They are working to have Congress nullify the mining claims by designating some land in the Santa Fe National Forest a national scenic area. For more information, write to Save the Jemez, Box 4067, Albuquerque, NM 87196 (505/268-7822).

TIE-INTO NATURE

If, as Henry David Thoreau wrote, wilderness is the source of "tonics that brace mankind," a Kentucky-based distilleries firm is on the right track. Glenmore Distilleries Co., the manufacturer of Yellowstone Straight Kentucky Bourbon Whiskey, has launched a campaign to protect the whiskey's namesake — Yellowstone National Park. The company's new promotion allows residents of the Western states to choose between getting a \$2 rebate sent to them or to the National Parks and Conservation Association's Yellowstone Fund. According to Glenmore representative Donna-Ann Hayden, the new campaign is intended to help renew the nation's first national park after last year's forest fires.

INQUIRING MINDS WANT TO KNOW

Do you have questions about energy use? The National Appropriate Technology Assistance Service may have some answers at no charge. A project of the Department of Energy, the service is designed to help consumers reduce their utility bills through energy conservation. Since its establishment in 1984, NATAS consultants have responded to more than 40,000 requests from individuals, businesses and government organizations. For more information, write to NATAS, P.O. Box 2525, Butte, MT 59207 or call 800/428-2525. In Montana, call 800/428-1718.

ONE AQUIFER IS RECHARGING

Water from the Ogallala Aquifer, which underlies 156,000 square miles of the High Plains from the Texas panhandle to southern South Dakota, irrigates 20 percent of the nation's irrigated land. Because water did not enter the aquifer as fast as farmers pumped it out, Ogallala's water levels have declined for decades. But between 1980 and 1987, the worsening of the farm economy, a series of unusually wet years and better conservation practices allowed the aquifer as a whole to rise an average of more than an inch per year, according to a report from the U.S. Geological Survey. Large drops of 10 to 25 feet continued, however, in the highly developed areas of Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. "We're not looking at the dire situations we were in 1980," said William M. Kastner, the author of the report, "but they could easily reoccur." Kastner also noted that the effects of the 1988 drought have not yet been measured. Another recent USGS report warns that if the rapidly growing area near Colorado Springs continues to rely on groundwater, local aquifers will run dry by the year 2085. Both reports, *Water-level changes in the High Plains aquifer — predevelopment through nonirrigation season 1987-1988*, Water-Resources Investigations report number 89-4073, \$41.50 in paper, and *Hydrologic effects of pumpage from the Denver basin bedrock aquifers of northern El Paso County, Colo.*, number 88-4033, \$34.50 paper, \$7.75 microfiche, may be ordered by sending the exact amount to U.S. Geological Survey, Books and Open-File Reports Section, Federal Center, Box 25425, Denver, CO 80225. Call 303/236-7476 for more information or to find out where the reports may be examined.

AGRICULTURE IN TRANSITION

Agricultural chemicals, and how to use less of them, will be the focus of a Jan. 19-20 conference in Fort Collins, Colo., called "Agriculture in Transition." The two-day conference will address agricultural concerns of the central Rockies and western Great Plains, providing practical information about how to decrease reliance on chemicals. Speakers include Rep. Hank Brown, R-Colo., and conference sponsors include the Colorado Department of Agriculture, Colorado State University and the Colorado Organic Producers Association. For more information, contact the CSU Cooperative Extension's Logan County Office, Box 950, Sterling, CO 80751, or call 303/522-3200.

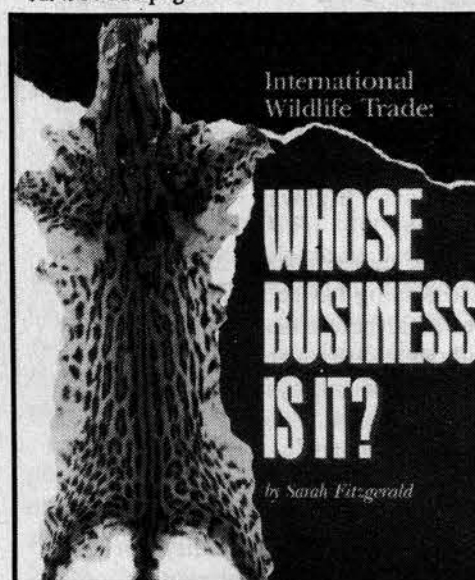
COMMENT ON ENDANGERED TORTOISES

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is seeking public comment on its Oct. 13 proposal to list the Mojave population of the desert tortoise as an endangered species. Fish and Wildlife officials gave the population an eight-month emergency listing on Aug. 4 after researchers found that a contagious respiratory disease was threatening an increasing number of tortoises. Continuing the listing could provide funding for research on the disease as well as additional protection from habitat loss and disturbance. The proposal would also change the status of the Beaver Dam Slope tortoise population in Utah from threatened to endangered, and protect members of the Sonoran population even if outside their natural range. Written comments, and any new biological information, should be sent by Jan. 11, 1990 to Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Enhancement, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services, 1002 NE Holladay St., Portland, OR 97232.

TIMESCAPES

Barrie Rokeach takes photographs — he calls them "timescapes" — that record the forces of creation and disintegration at play on the land. His new book, *Timescapes — California from the Air*, features 111 color images he created while wandering in his plane above the mountains, coastlines, deserts and fields of California. Ignoring cities and suburbs, the photos document the state's 11 geomorphic provinces, those regions of distinctive geologic history, by revealing large-scale patterns seen best from the air. A foreword by Alan Cranston and quotations from Robinson Jeffers, Mary Austin, Barry Lopez and John Muir accompany the photographs.

Westcliffe Publishers, Inc., 2650 S. Zuni St., Englewood, CO 80110. Hardcover: \$29.95. 128 pages.



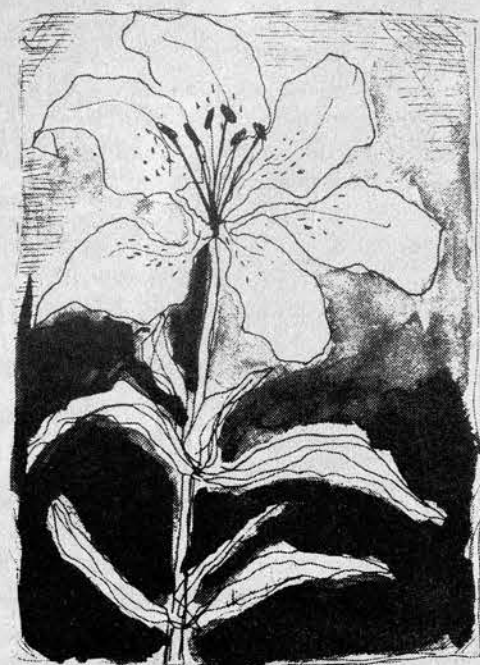
WILDLIFE ON THE BLOCK

In one year, exotic wildlife worth at least \$5 billion is traded in the international market. Often sold as luxury goods, the plants and animals that cross international borders each year include some 40,000 primates, one million orchids and four million live birds. More than 25,000 species are affected by consumers around the world, says the World Wildlife Fund, in its recent book, *International Wildlife Trade: Whose Business Is It?* This study by Sarah Fitzgerald of the wildlife market, its impacts on various species and existing laws and trade controls also includes information for anyone considering the purchase of wildlife or wildlife products.

World Wildlife Fund, 1250 Twenty-Fourth St. NW, Washington, DC 20037. Paper: \$25. 459 pages. Illustrated with black and white and color photos, maps and charts.

GIANT FOOTPRINT SIGNS

When Masau, the Puebloan god of life and death, greeted the Indian people as they came up from the underworld, he told them not to wander the earth haphazardly. Instead, they followed a trail of his enormous footprints to the American Southwest. Now the National Park Service is planning to use giant footprint signs to guide tourists through a series of 30 Puebloan cultural sites in western New Mexico and eastern Arizona. The Masau Trail, authorized by Congress in 1987, would include 1,500 miles of existing public roads and nine shorter loops for trips of one to three days. According to the plan, the Park Service would provide brochures, guidebooks and roadside exhibits to help tourists understand the sites and their relationships to one another. The plan also emphasizes the role the trail will play in promoting tourism in the area. For a copy of the 58-page *Masau Trail Draft Comprehensive Management Plan*, write the National Park Service, Branch of Trail Programs Chief, P.O. Box 728, Santa Fe, NM 87504. Comments on the plan will be accepted until Dec. 22.



COLORADO'S RARE PLANTS

Ninety-two rare and endangered species are profiled in a new publication of the Colorado Native Plant Society called *Rare Plants of Colorado*. Designed by Ann E. Green, the 75-page book reveals that Colorado is losing plant diversity and its heritage of natural places. While many of the plants listed in this colorful publication are candidates for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act, only a few are already protected, and many are not being considered for that designation at all. "Plant rarity," says Colorado Native Plant Society president Eleanor Von Bagen, "is in no way synonymous with 'failure' but instead indicates a limited habitat. It is up to us to determine whether the limitation is a natural one, or whether the limitation results from the activities of man."

Rocky Mountain Nature Association, Rocky Mountain National Park, Estes Park, CO 80517. Softcover: \$7.95. 75 pages. Illustrated with color photos, line drawings and maps.

PRACTICE YOUR WILDERNESS

How can we enjoy wilderness without damaging it? David N. Cole, considered by many to be an expert on the ecological consequences of recreational wilderness use, offers well-researched answers in his 131-page report, *Low-Impact Recreational Practices for Wilderness and Backcountry*. Cole, a research biologist at the Forestry Sciences Laboratory in Missoula, Mont., directs the report to wilderness managers. They should teach users the "art and science" of visiting wilderness and not simply an inflexible set of "do's" and "don'ts," he says. Cole cites common problems caused by recreationists, such as trail erosion and campfire scars, and explores low-impact camping techniques. "Low-impact wilderness education must be an ethic and a way of thinking if it is to realize its full potential," he points out. The report, published by the Ogden, Utah-based Intermountain Research Center, has extensive references and appendices including regional guidelines from the National Outdoor Leadership School. The report is free from the Intermountain Research Station, INT-265, 324 25th St., Ogden, UT 84401 (801/625-5437).

LETTERS

NOT COMPATIBLE

Dear HCN,

I read with predictable dismay Kent Patterson's write-up of the invasion of New Mexico wildlife management areas by Ganados del Valle and their churro sheep. Nowhere in the article was it stated that wildlife management areas are not public property. They are owned by a special interest group and financed out of dedicated funds donated by that group. They are private property open to public trespass. The hunting license buyers to whom that property belongs have no obligation to livestockmen, Hispanic or other. They bought the land for elk population maintenance, just as a New Mexico rancher buys land to maintain populations of cattle, sheep and goats. Moving any sheep, churro or whatever, onto Game and Fish lands is comparable to moving them onto single-ownership private land, in town or out. Wildlife management areas are not national forest or BLM lands.

Ganados leader Maria Varela is quoted as stating that there are benefits to deer and elk resulting from controlled grazing in Idaho. I was a habitat and big game biologist in Idaho for 20 years, in the sheep-infested end of Idaho at that; I am here to say that the controls required on grazing of livestock to furnish those benefits to wildlife are more severe than any Ganados del Valle or any other New Mexico livestock concern is willing to accept. The class of livestock used for such controlled grazing is cattle.

Varela is banking on environmentalists not being able to define desertification. I don't know any faster way to desertify a given tract than to beat the hell out of it with sheep. If sheep grazing would benefit elk range New Mexico sportsmen wouldn't need to buy wildlife management areas.

Churro sheep are private property. Ganados del Valle had better buy private land to maintain them on. Sheep and elk are not compatible, and the tiny bits of land devoted to elk in New Mexico had better stay that way. Sheep have more of the state than they are entitled to already.

Bob K. Sherwood
Battle Mountain, Nevada

A HILLERMAN FAN

Dear HCN,

As a mystery aficionado and a fan of Tony Hillerman's, I was pleased to see Ray Ring's article about his books (HCN, 8/28/89). After I read it, I was confused and annoyed. Was Ring's main point that Hillerman is a good novelist and a bad sociologist? Is fiction required to imitate journalism?

I agree with Ring that Hillerman is a masterful landscape writer, but I fail to see that littering the landscape with drunken Indians would in any way improve his books. Nor do I find the language of Hillerman's characters jarring, as Ring does. If, as Ring states, Hillerman's cop heroes are college-educated, why would they talk like Sam Spade? Does anyone, for that matter, talk like Sam Spade?

I also disagree with Ring's characterization of Hillerman's works as "classical British locked-room mysteries." (Note: Edgar Allen Poe published "Murders in the Rue Morgue" in 1841, so the locked-room mystery has an American paternity.) To me, a "typical" British mystery is witty, civil, class-conscious or even snobbish, with a hero who is often highly eccentric as well as intelligent. I don't find those elements in Hillerman's books.

I think that Hillerman's popular books do give readers a glimpse into the Navajo world. If they're not the whole story, neither are the "poverty, unemployment and widespread political corruption" that are reported by journalists. Hillerman treats the culture as he treats the landscape — with respect and regard for its unique beauty. If Anglos came off badly in Hillerman's books, is that so far off the mark? Our history of dealing with Native Americans certainly suggests at least incompetence.

In a sense, both of Hillerman's heroes suffer from cultural isolation. Chee wants to be a traditional Navajo singer while simultaneously pursuing his police career. It is significant that he has a hard time finding clients for his services as a singer. Leaphorn doesn't seem to believe in much of anything, particularly since the death of his wife. In *Talking God* Chee and Leaphorn follow a mystery to Washington, D.C., where both feel out of place. That neither resorts to drinking as a response to his

isolation may seem odd to Ring, if he subscribes to the theory of "essential and nearly universal corruption." If Hillerman's heroes are guilty of having hope in a hopeless world, they surely have plenty of company.

For most of the country, Western fiction has meant the romance of the cowboy. Hillerman's books give his readers a different view of the West. If they tend to be romances of the Native American, as Ring says, there's nothing wrong with that.

Gretchen Nicholoff
Hotchkiss, Colorado

ACCESS

ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNER — Idaho consulting firm seeks environmental planner with strong analytical thinking abilities and excellent communication skills, including cartography and graphics. Must be familiar with local government planning, land use law, citizen participation techniques. Bachelor's in geography, landscape architecture or planning required; Master's preferred. Projects include natural resource inventories, comprehensive plans, land use controls, recreation planning. Send letter explaining your interest, resume, writing and graphics samples to: Lee Nellis, Consulting Planner, PO Box 50953, Idaho Falls, ID 83405. Salary: \$1,750-2,000 per month DOQ. (1x23 p)

STUDENT INTERNSHIPS: Would you like to live on the edge of Glacier National Park, Montana, for a season and help run an outdoor education program? The Glacier Institute offers outdoor classes for all ages and interests, including 1-5 day residential environmental programs for 1st-9th grade students. 2 interns spring, 3 summer, 2 fall. Write: Glacier Institute, PO Box 1457, Kalispell, MT 59903. (4x24 p)

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SHARON D. CLARK, ATTORNEY AT LAW. ENVIRONMENTAL LAW, LAND USE, and WATER LAW. 20 Boulder Crescent, Colorado Springs, CO 80903. (719/473-9966). (10x14p)

Executive Director



The Alaska Conservation Foundation announces the opening of the new position of Executive Director. The Executive Director will be responsible for the management and fund acquisition activities of the Foundation. The Alaska Conservation Foundation is a ten-year-old (c) (3) public foundation that is actively engaged in raising funds for activist environmental projects in Alaska.

Fund acquisition activities include: maintaining and improving the Foundation's existing fundraising program; consulting with the Foundation President concerning contact with existing fundraising matters; communicating with major donors and foundations for both unrestricted and special project monies.

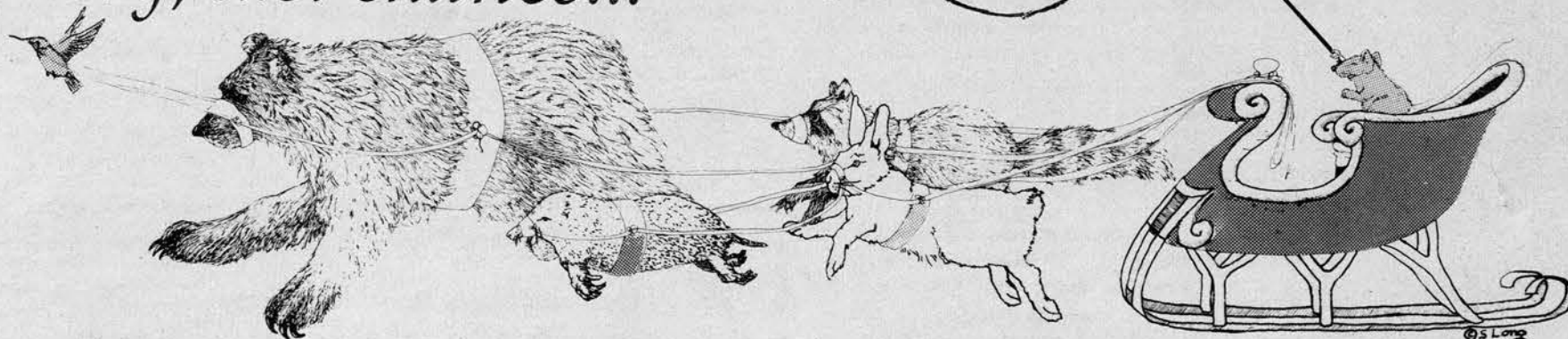
The Executive Director will be the Foundation officer with chief management responsibilities for daily operations. Applicant must have solid fundraising and management skills, successful fundraising experience, excellent communication skills, and a high level of initiative. She or he must have an understanding of environmental issues and a strong commitment to the responsible management and preservation of Alaska's magnificent, diverse natural environment. Experience in managing a public foundation is preferred, though not necessary. Travel both within Alaska and the United States will be required.

The Board of Trustees has not adopted a rigid deadline for applications. However, it intends to complete its evaluation of applicants and hire an Executive Director in January, 1990. Salary: \$40,000 (DOE)

Qualified persons interested should write:

Mr. Stephen H. Williams
Chairperson, Board of Trustees
Alaska Conservation Foundation
430 West 7th Ave., Suite 215
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

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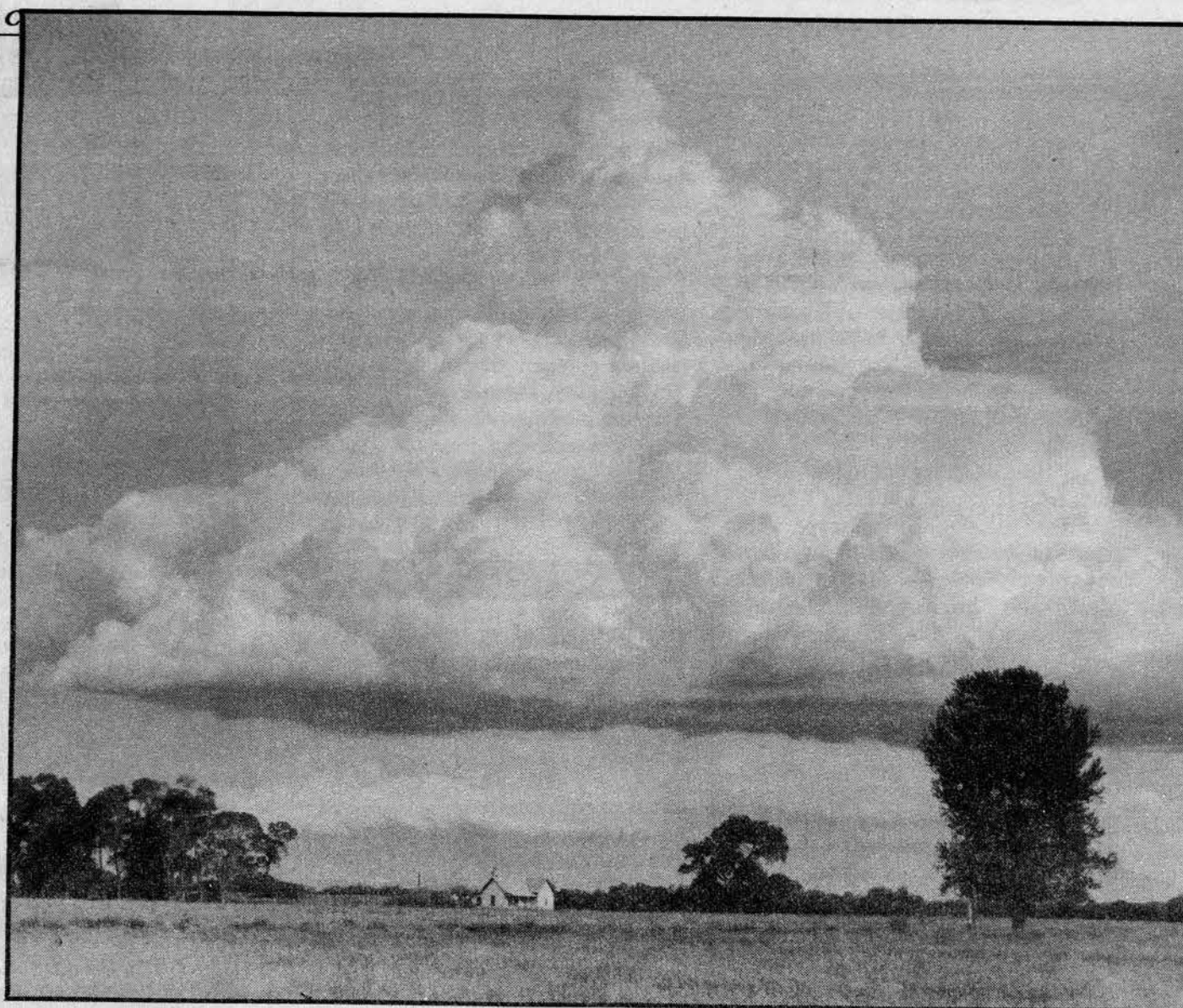
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