

High Country News

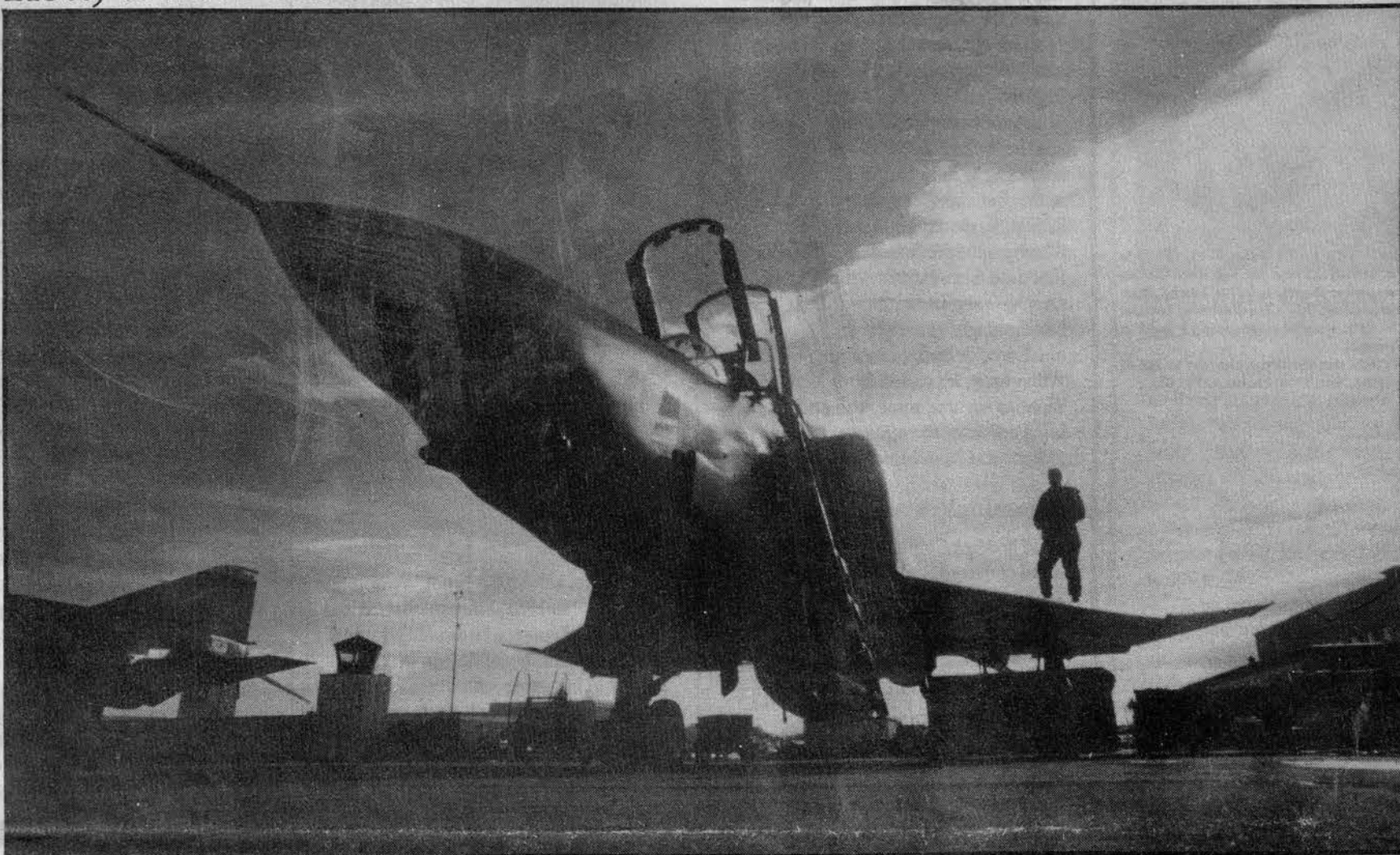
February 12, 1990

Vol. 22 No. 3

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar

Red, white and blue dawn:



Tom Shanahan, Idaho Statesman

An Air Force F-4 is prepared for flight at Gowen Field in Boise, Idaho. Ninety-six F-4s are scheduled to move to Mountain Home Air Force Base east of Boise for use at the Saylor Creek Bombing Range.

U.S. military plots vast land coups

by Steve Stuebner

If the U.S. military has its way, 3.5 million acres in the West — a vast playground for hikers, sportsmen, arrowhead-collectors, river rats and wildlife — would be converted into a make-believe war zone.

Critics are calling it the "Great Basin land grab." The Army, Navy, Air Force and National Guard are proposing to seize an area equal to the size of Connecticut for combat training in seven western states. Nevada, Idaho, Montana and Utah stand to lose the most public land, but Colorado, Washington and California may suffer impacts as well.

"This thing is mushrooming so fast, it's kind of mind-boggling," said Chuck Griffiths, regional director of the National Wildlife Federation in Bozeman, Mont.

At stake are millions of acres of prime wildlife habitat, prized hunting and fishing grounds, potential wild and scenic rivers and leased public land for livestock grazing. The expansions will also require air space for supersonic and acrobatic flight. Civilian pilots, who outnumber military pilots five to one, fear losing their fair share of the skies.

The bombardment of daily supersonic flights, window-shattering sonic booms and live bombs already has ren-

dered some parts of Nevada, Utah, Arizona and California uninhabitable. Critics don't need to be convinced that history will repeat itself.

"It is not unpatriotic to demand that the military protect our way of life instead of destroying it," writes Ed Robbins, an Air Force veteran who lived in Dixie Valley, Nev., before it was burned down and bulldozed by the Navy.

"We weren't on guard — how could we have known — and now we see our beautiful valley turned into a living hell. But don't think Dixie Valley will be the last to be lost. Be on guard, for the very remoteness and isolation that you think insulates you in your valley may be just what the military will invade next."

Herb Meyer, a Mountain Home, Idaho, conservationist and veteran F-4 pilot, would agree. "It's monstrous to propose supersonic flight and live bombing so close to populated areas," he said.

The U.S. Department of Defense says the vast network of aerial bombing courses, tank laser-ranges and electronic battlefields are critical to keep troops, pilots, jets and tanks prepared for modern war.

If approved by Congress, the expansions would be the most extensive since World War II. The military's presence in the West is already large. More than 25 million acres of American soil are dedicated to military training areas, and at least 30 percent of the nation's air space

is reserved for military use. In Nevada, the activist group Citizen Alert believes more than 70 percent of the state's air space has become military domain.

Apparently it's not enough. Nationwide, the military is seeking more than five million acres of public and private land for bombing and training ranges, a 20 percent increase. The proposals come at a time when Cold War tensions are at an all-time low and the Pentagon is pondering deep cuts in defense spending.

Lawrence Kolb, a former high-level Pentagon official now with the Brookings Institution, a Washington, D.C., think tank, said the West's wide open spaces are a natural choice for the expanded and new training areas.

"You've got the empty spaces," Kolb said. "You couldn't put one of these bombing ranges in the middle of Newark (New Jersey), now could you?"

Critics question whether the ranges are needed at all. They want the military to explain why the Montana, Idaho and Nevada national guards, for example, all need their own state-of-the-art electronic tank-ranges.

Grace Bukowski, a spokeswoman for Citizen Alert, which is based in Reno, Nev., said the plethora of range proposals appears to stem, in part, from the age-old interservice rivalry among

the Navy, Army and National Guard. In looking over the proposals, duplication is rampant, she said.

But there could be a deeper purpose. Bukowski and others suspect the flood of proposals is a piecemeal disguise of the Continental Operations Range plan of 1974. That Pentagon plan for a number of bombing and training ranges across the West was gunned down by Congress as being too expensive and unacceptably large.

"If you take a map ... for the Continental Operations Range and put it on the map showing current proposals and expansions, it will slap you right in the face," Bukowski said.

"It's too coincidental to be a coincidence," added Griffiths. In Idaho, where the Air Force proposes a 15-fold expansion of the 100,000-acre Saylor Creek bombing range south of Mountain Home, citizens are demanding that the military justify the need. "It seems to me that the Air Force wants to expand Saylor Creek whether we need it or not," said Duane Williams, a King hill farmer at a recent public meeting. "I don't think it has been proven that we need another training range ... I don't think this whole damn thing is necessary."

Bukowski, who has been filing numerous Freedom of Information requests to reveal which officials, if any, are coordinating the raft of range propos-

(Continued on page 10)

Dear friends,



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Let it snow

Karla Tschoepe, a local rancher, has come by several times to recruit us in the fight against cloud seeding. Local irrigators, panicked by the almost total lack of snow, wish to use water conservancy district tax money to shoot silver iodide crystals into the atmosphere as a way of yoo-hooing moisture out of the clouds. Opponents have a variety of reasons for being opposed: its unproven nature, the alleged carcinogenic effects of silver iodide, and the possibility that cloud seeding will flood out New England.

Another argument against cloud seeding is the *Farmer's Almanac*: according to Karla, it predicts a dry early winter but a wet late winter. Today, Feb. 2, as if the clouds and jet stream read the *Almanac*, the precipitation came. For the first time this winter, it took some muscle to shovel the snow off HCN's 25-foot frontage.

Coincidentally, subscriber Chilton Williamson, Jr., called from Kemmerer, Wyo., to say that snow was also falling in his corner of the state, including Jackson and its ski areas.

Wyomingites are tough

The *High Country News* staff and board converged on Cheyenne, Wyo., Saturday, Jan. 26, for a board meeting and to celebrate the paper's 20th anniversary in its home state. We left the state with two impressions: First, admiration for the toughness of those who live in Wyoming, and, second, gratitude for having escaped a snowstorm out on those high, windswept plains. While we don't care for the sheer drop-offs on some mountain roads, we were surprised at how friendly and sheltering the mountains feel compared with the plains.

The board meeting was held 30 miles west of Wyoming, at the Patriarch Athenagoras National Institute — a facility that, in its sparseness and surrounding beauty, reminded us of almost every other place HCN had met in over the last few years.

The meeting accomplished a great deal: board members approved a budget for 1990; hired two co-editors to take the place of Ed and Betsy Marston during their sabbatical year; added three new board members; approved a set of personnel policies; approved a revised long-range plan; reviewed the overall performance of the paper; set dates and places for future meetings; and then adjourned to a potluck birthday party with readers at the Community House in Lions Park in Cheyenne.

Setting the budget

The budget work went quickly. In 1989, *High Country News* had expenses of \$325,000 and income of \$335,000, allowing the paper to add \$10,000 to its cash reserve. While the \$110,000 reserve with which the paper goes into 1991 is only about three months' expenses (well short of the six months the board is aiming at), it is a fortune by historic standards.

The fact that the 1989 budget came in nearly balanced was a result of several fortuitous circumstances. Staff had projected a \$25,000 deficit for 1989, but expenses were \$18,000 below projections while subscription income was \$29,000 higher than expected and Research Fund income was \$18,000 higher than expected. These savings and additions more than made up for a shortfall in grant income — \$21,000 instead of an expected \$50,000.

The board was very uncomfortable, a year ago in Santa Fe, projecting a \$25,000 deficit. They felt better about this budget, which projects \$420,000 in expenses and \$420,000 in income. The big budget jump is due to the sabbatical and to a \$45,000 grant from Northwest Area Foundation, to be spent in 1990 to create a freelance network and to expand the paper's readership in the Northwest. In pursuit of that, HCN doubled its promotion budget, from 100,000 samples and pieces of direct mail (the level we have mailed at since 1984) to 200,000 samples and letters. Much of that will be directed at people living in the Northwest. The board also met Pat Ford, who will be the paper's regional editor for the Northwest for 1990.

A new team

In another major action, the board voted to hire Mary Jarrett and Larry Mosher as co-editors for the Marstons' sabbatical year, which will start on July 15, 1990. Mary Jarrett has worked as a consulting editor to the National Geographic Society, has written and edited freelance articles for the *New Republic*, the *Wilson Quarterly*, *Washington Journalism Review*, and books for the National Museum of Natural History and Smithsonian Institution Press.

She also has rural, small press experience, although it is not Western. From 1980 to 1982, Mary published and edited *The Evers*, a bi-monthly journal on draft horses, out of Salem, N.Y. Earlier in her career, she wrote articles for *Parent* and *Redbook*, book reviews for *The Washington Post*, was an associate editor at *Redbook*, and worked for *The New Yorker* from 1968 to 1970.

Larry Mosher is presently managing editor of *Middle East Insight* magazine and of *The Water Reporter*, a national newsletter directed at water resource professionals. From 1979 to 1988, he was contributing editor and staff correspondent to *National Journal*, which keeps Washington, D.C., informed about the workings of that city and the nation. From 1966 to 1977, he was a reporter, with a specialty on the Middle East, for the *National Observer*, and from 1962 to 1967 he worked for the Copley News Service, where he spent three years running its Middle East news bureau in Beirut.

The couple plans to arrive in Paonia in mid June and spend a month overlapping with the Marstons, who will then take off for parts still unknown on July 15. Joining them later in the summer will be Mary's two young daughters. They, two cats and a dog will live in the Marstons' house, creating the first major crisis of this transition: What to do with Sam, a large, gentle dog of indeterminate origin whose one failing is an inability to coexist with cats.

Mosher and Jarrett will be in charge of the paper's editorial work, and Linda Bacigalupi, HCN's development director, will be administrative head during the sabbatical. Although Linda came aboard 18 months ago to handle development — the pursuit of new subscribers and foundation grants — she has gradually taken over the multitude of administrative chores that beset any organization. In the last few months, she has seen to the purchase of new computers, the Research Fund drive, the reorganization of HCN's approach to circulation and bookkeeping, the drafting of personnel policies, and a score of other projects.

Stalwarts leave ...

The board lost three board members

and selected three new ones. John Driscoll, a member of the Montana Public Service Commission, had resigned several months ago, due to the press of other duties. In his time on the board, John had kept staff informed about utility and reclamation questions in Montana, and had undertaken to increase HCN's circulation in Helena by distributing the paper to that city's newsstands and by fighting for display space.

This was also the last meeting for Robert Wigington, a water attorney from Colorado who works for the Nature Conservancy. Robert has been on the HCN board since 1982, served as president for several years, and has been one of the board's strongest detail people, not letting things go by until he and his fellow board members understood them. Robert was also an invaluable source on water matters.

As it happened, Helena, Mont., board member Adam McLane, who is also going off the board, could not get to Cheyenne, marking, if staff's memory is correct, his first missed meeting in six years. Adam, a C.P.A., has spent his six years pushing on the staff to produce understandable, consistent financial and circulation statements. He said that he was going off the board because he had (finally) achieved those objectives.

But Adam also had smaller objectives, including the creation of a long-range plan for the paper and the adoption of personnel policies. Although Adam was not at the Cheyenne meeting, his second draft of a long-range plan was, and it was adopted. And staff presented the personnel policies, which the board adopted pending review by an attorney specializing in employment matters.

... New members come on

The three vacancies will be filled by Judy Donald, the executive director of the Beldon Fund in Washington, D.C.; Peggy Berryhill, the executive director of the High Plains News Service, a radio project of the Western Organization of Resource Councils in Billings; and Bert Fingerhut, a businessman and environmentalist who divides his time between Aspen, Colo., New York City, and the canyons and deserts of the Southwest. Their first meeting will be in Paonia on Saturday, June 23. That will also be the first meeting for HCN's new editing team.

Thank you, Wyoming

The meeting would not have been possible without board member Lynn Dickey, who is partner in a Sheridan, Wyoming, bookstore, but who spends a great deal of time in Cheyenne serving as a state legislator. She located the meeting place, and ordered an enormous birthday cake for the 70 or so people who came to help the paper celebrate its two decades of life.

She also brought the paper's birthday to the attention of Gov. Michael Sullivan, who issued a handsome proclamation declaring Wyoming's continued interest in that state's beauty, wildlife and environmental quality, and praising HCN founder Tom Bell for his efforts to alert Wyoming and the West generally to the threats to these qualities. The proclamation ended with Gov. Sullivan declaring "The gratitude and admiration of the people of Wyoming for the efforts of the *High Country News* on this, its 20th anniversary."

Although Cheyenne was well represented, people also drove over from Laramie and up from Fort Collins in

Continued on page 13)

WESTERN ROUNDUP

Forest Service edges toward change

The one-party system of timber that has governed the U.S. Forest Service seems to be crumbling, yielding power to recreation, wildlife, wilderness and watershed.

"I think some of Eastern Europe has worn off on the Forest Service," said Tom France, an attorney for the National Wildlife Federation and longtime opponent of the Forest Service's timber program in the Northern Rockies. But also feeling the breezes of reform is no less a player than F. Dale Robertson, chief of the Forest Service.

"I think the change has been in the winds a long time," Robertson said in a telephone interview with *High Country News*. "We are trying to round out our programs.... We don't want to have things out there on the ground that we're not proud of."

In plain language, what that means is less money (proportionately, at least) for cutting trees and more money for everything else. The Administration's just-released budget contains increases for long-orphaned Forest Service programs, Robertson said.

The numbers look like this: Compared with the previous year, the 1991 budget will increase money for recreation programs by 28 percent and soil, watershed and air protection by 22 percent. Money for fish and wildlife programs would jump by only 5 percent, but Robertson said that's on top of the 25 percent Congress tacked on to the Administration's budget for fish and wildlife last year.

Total timber harvest would drop by 10.5 million board feet during the same period, Robertson said.

Those numbers, however, do not reveal the breadth of developments sweeping the Forest Service. The real barometer of change is what has come to be known as the supervisors' memos, a blunt series of messages to Robertson from the supervisors of all national forests in the country stating unequivocally that the Forest Service simply is not doing its job.

To quote from one of the memos: "The emphasis of National Forest programs does not reflect the land stewardship values embodied in forest plans nor does it reflect the values of many Forest Service employees and the public."

The memos said the Forest Service is "out of control," essentially confirming long-standing charges by environmentalists that the push to cut timber is smothering the Forest Service's vows to protect the environment.

Backing the memo was an internal Forest Service survey that showed 46 percent of the agency's managers believe care of resources and ecosystems is one of the least rewarded values in the bureaucracy's hierarchy. Meanwhile, 72 percent said loyalty to the Forest Service was the most rewarded.

The memos triggered a series of meetings between Robertson and his top managers late in January. He emerged from those to announce that the Forest Service would be shifting course.

In the interview, Robertson acknowledged that the supervisors' memos were a factor in the shift, but denied he is heading an agency in "revolt."

"I don't view it that way. I view it (the dissent) as a strength," he said in the interview. "All of the forest supervisors could come and meet with me and my staff. There was no beating around the bush. There was a lot of straight talk."



But outside observers called the memos "earthshaking."

"Clearly that memo is a seminal event. I have been working with the Forest Service for eight years, and I have never seen this kind of initiative," France said.

"For them (the supervisors) to come out and say there is something seriously awry in the Forest Service has got to be looked at as an extremely significant statement," said Michael Scott, a regional representative for the Wilderness Society in the Northern Rockies.

"These ... letters from the forest supervisors will really mark the beginning of change in the Forest Service. The chief cannot ignore it and the Congress cannot ignore it," Scott said.

In fact, there already is evidence that some in Congress are ready to amplify the message. Speaking to January's gathering of Forest Service managers, Sen. Patrick Leahy, the Vermont Democrat who chairs the committee that runs the Forest Service, echoed the dominant theme.

"The Forest Service mandate means more than just cutting trees or planting

one new tree for every tree cut down. What it means instead is preserving the entire forest ecosystem," Leahy said. "We must move away from current forest practices driven by timber targets."

Both Scott and France argue that even if Robertson and the Bush Administration fail to follow through, forces in Congress, fueled by the supervisors' action, still will push reform. And even failing that, the supervisors' united front bolsters their position, meaning they themselves can use the considerable autonomy the Forest Service system grants them to give environmentalists concessions on individual forests.

Scott said he already is seeing examples of greater cooperation for individual supervisors since the new wave of reform began spreading.

No one, however, is expecting an immediate toppling of the iron curtain

between environmentalists and timber interests in the region. In fact, the new atmosphere already is producing some strained politics among old alliances. For instance, one of the developments in the reform movement was an experiment pushed by the federal Office of Management and Budget but agreed to by the Forest Service. The experiment would curtail below-cost timber sales on a dozen national forests.

Below-cost sales, that is to say, most sales, have long been a hot issue with environmentalists because they are the double insult. They create environmental damage and are subsidized by taxpayers who cover the difference between what it costs to cut the trees and the oftentimes substantially smaller amount loggers are willing to pay for them.

Although the original list of the dozen forests where the experiment would be tried did not include the Beaverhead National Forest in Montana, John Mumma, Regional Forester in the Northern Rockies, pushed to have it added, France said. That made Mumma, often a target of environmentalists' criticism, suddenly a hero.

Perestroika creates such reversals. Here is another: Last week, Montana Congressman Pat Williams, considered the staunchest environmentalist in the state's delegation, vowed to squelch the plan in his state, meaning business as usual on the Beaverhead.

Williams' reason was that banning below-cost sales on the Beaverhead eventually will cause recreationists to be charged fees by setting the precedent that all Forest Service activities must generate income.

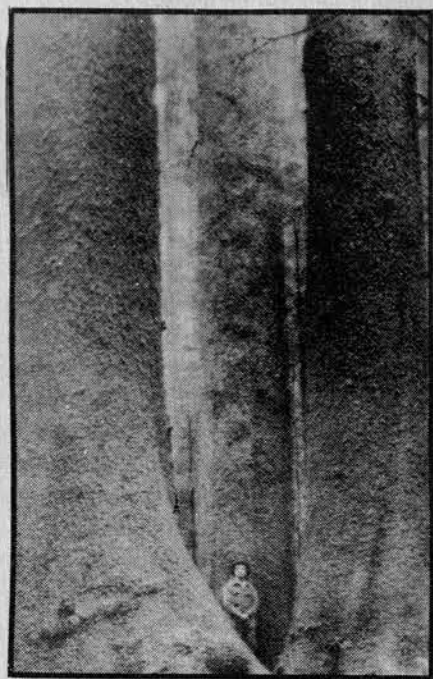
Environmentalists immediately blasted Williams and his colleagues for failing to join the spirit of change.

"Rather than step back and see how the program could work in Montana they (members of the state's congressional delegation) have shown their own lack of creativity," France said.

—Richard Manning

The writer is a freelancer in Missoula, Montana.

HOTLINE



New plan to save old trees

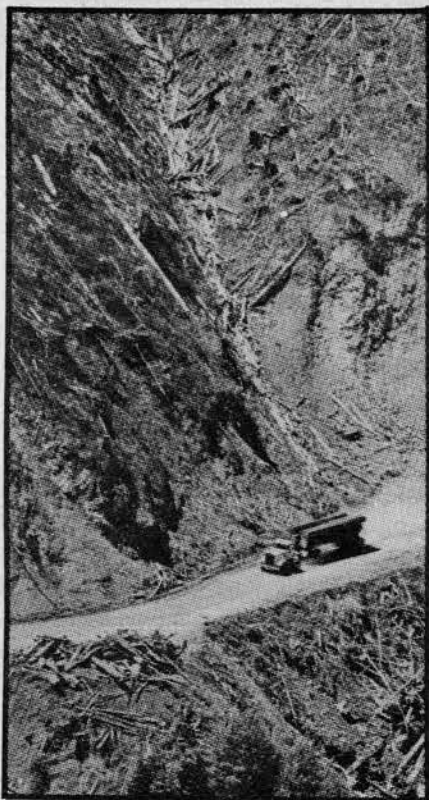
The Wilderness Society has unveiled a sweeping plan to protect the Pacific Northwest's ancient forests, promote stability in the region's timber industry and diversify rural economies. It calls for:

- a congressionally designated Ancient Forest Reserve System by Jan. 1, 1993;
- an interim ban on sales of intact, old-growth forest stands over 200 acres, all low-elevation ancient forest stands, and all suitable northern spotted owl habitat;
- a 40 percent reduction in federal timber sales;
- fewer exports of raw logs;
- increased timber production on private land through preferential tax treatment and increased technical assistance from the Forest Service;
- the establishment of an education and economic development trust fund from assets generated by state export taxes on raw logs; and
- tax credits for capital investments in facilities that produce export-grade lumber or finished wood products.

The proposal comes at the opening of what promises to be a year of heated congressional debate over the fate of the Northwest's ancient forests. "We are trying to broaden the debate over how to save these forests," said George T. Frampton, president of The Wilderness Society. "We are looking for creative solutions." Of the approximately one million acres of unprotected old growth that remain in the Pacific Northwest, over 200,000 acres are slated to be cut in 1989-1990, according to the Washington, D.C.-based environmental group.

Ski Yellowstone fades away

Ski Yellowstone is one developer's dream that won't come true. After more than a decade of opposition from environmentalists, the Forest Service revoked the resort's special-use permit that would have allowed developer John Hall to build a resort, ski trails and lifts on 640 acres of national forest land. Environmentalists had appealed the permit, saying that development would harm grizzly bears and that no demand existed for a new ski area. In 1987, the Forest Service requested that Ski Yellowstone adapt its plans to conform with the Endangered Species Act; Hall never complied. The area is still available for ski development, however, if a company can meet Forest Service and other federal permit regulations.

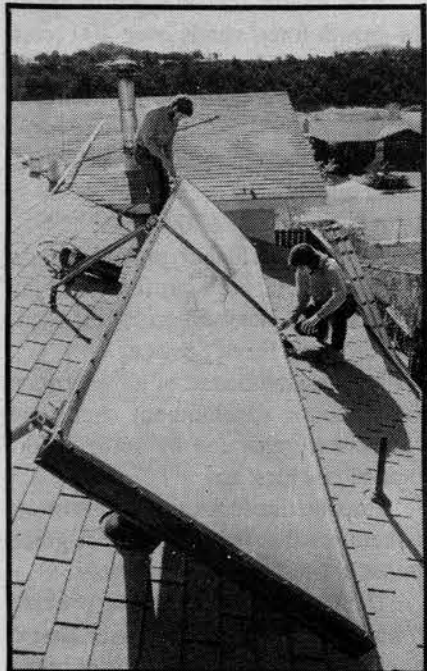


Native Forest Council

HOTLINE

Toilet training
for Amtrak?

Amtrak's inability to responsibly dispose of its sewage still rankles some Western states. Following Florida's example, Nevada's Environmental Protection Division is preparing to sue Amtrak for violating the state's Clean Water Act. As trains exceed speeds of 25 miles per hour, sewage holding tanks automatically release waste, and Nevada officials say that endangers the Humboldt and Truckee rivers. Amtrak maintains that its federally mandated status exempts the railroad from complying with state laws. Nevada state official Dick Reavis agrees that federal laws such as the National Railway Passenger Act allow Amtrak to dump sewage directly on railroad tracks, but he says that does not exempt the railroad from obeying a state's Clean Water Act. Reavis also says that Amtrak "has not been conscientious about locking their waste tanks when they are in station ... it's an archaic, disgusting practice." Last October, when Florida sued Amtrak for releasing wastes into state waters, the case included evidence from fishermen who said they were deluged by a train passing overhead. Florida state court found Amtrak guilty, but Amtrak has appealed the decision.



Turn on the sun

To avoid building new coal-fired or nuclear power plants, the Northwest should develop geothermal and solar-electric generating facilities. That's the conclusion of the Northwest Power Planning Council, which was created by Congress a decade ago to restore Columbia River fisheries and develop a regional energy plan. Meeting in Boise, Idaho, Jan. 9, the council directed its staff to include renewable sources along with wind, home-solar and increased efficiency to meet electricity needs over the next 30 years. The region now generates 16,500 megawatts, but if the council's high-growth scenario of electricity demand materializes, the Northwest will be short some 14,000 megawatts. Council vice chairman Jim Goller said inclusion of alternative energy sources in the plan will "help put off the day" when decisions on coal or nuclear plants are needed, AP reports.

BARBS

Commie peaceniks aided by a lefty press.

The Kremlin reversed an Army mobilization to fight Azerbaijan unrest after protests by Russian parents were publicized by Soviet media.



Sheepmen told: The wolf is at the door

BILLINGS, Mont. — The gray wolf is coming back to Montana and those who raise sheep and other livestock are going to have to learn to live with it.

That was the blunt message from a federal biologist addressing the annual gathering of the Montana Wool Growers. Ed Bangs of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said that under the Endangered Species Act, his agency is working to establish a population of 80 to 120 wolves in wild areas of the state.

The aim is to get the animals thriving and off the endangered list, with the ultimate goal of turning wolf management over to state authority — complete with a hunting season.

Bangs cited a *Great Falls Tribune* poll which, he said, indicated that "in Montana, two out of three people want wolves back."

"The numbers of people are against us," acknowledged wool growers president Joe Helle of Dillon. But, he added, "we can't live with wolves, I'm convinced of that."

Wolf recovery in the Rocky Mountain region is a popular notion among most of the U.S. public, according to Bangs, who worked 13 years on federal wildlife projects in Alaska.

The idea is popular even in some areas of wolf-country, such as the North Fork of the Flathead River. There, a poll showed that 70 percent of the residents surveyed said "yes" to wolf recovery, and 60 percent of the area's hunters want them around.

Bangs took a poll of the meeting room packed with wool growers to see how many favored reintroduction of wolves. Not one hand went up.

One rancher stood up and said, "If

people want to hear the howling of wolves, they should ship those damn things back to Vermont where there are a lot of people, and let them cry."

"My job as a manager is to figure out how wolves can get along on public land," Bangs told the group. He said wolves are being reintroduced into their old Montana habitat naturally, through migration from Canada.

"It's not a case of a federal bureaucrat with a truckload of wolves turning 'em loose. We're trying to present an honest, accurate picture of wolves. Livestock producers don't want wolves, but the public wants them on public land."

Bangs advised ranchers bothered by wolves on their property not to become vigilantes but to report the problem to federal authorities. Killing the endangered animal carries a penalty of a \$50,000 fine and a one-year jail term, he said, and a reward system encourages people to turn in wolf-killers.

He warned that disgruntled hired hands or neighbors could collect some easy cash by turning in a farmer or rancher who chose the method of "Shoot, shovel and shut up."

Officially, Bangs said, wolves coming into the state during the recovery program "are given one chance to make it." If a wolf returns to a livestock area after being driven away once, it is killed.

Livestock losses from marauding wolves are not covered by the government, but a private organization, Defenders of Wildlife, has set up a fund expressly to reimburse ranchers for confirmed wolf kills of livestock.

Montana's wolf recovery area lies in the northwest portion of the state, around the Glacier Park/Bob Marshall/Scape-

goat wilderness areas. Bangs said his agency expects eventually to see 10 packs of wolves flourishing there. He defined a wolf pack as a family group of two or more, anchored by a breeding or alpha pair. He said the wolf recovery plan should be aided by a large prey base since Montana's wild game population is at an all-time high.

Unconvinced, Helle called the wolf recovery project "biologically and ecologically unsound. The land won't sustain wolves. The wolf should be classified as king of the predators. We can't live with 'em and we don't want 'em. Not everybody in Montana wants the wolf back, and Montana people should have a say in their destiny."

But Helle pointed out to his group that their national lobbyist has verified that politically the numbers are against the wolf opponents. "We'll try to be open," he said.

Bangs' presentation to sheep ranchers did contain one bright spot for them that was overlooked in the heated discussion: Research in Alaska shows that wolves kill coyotes.

— Pat Dawson

BARBS

I guess we should be thankful he didn't say the coyotes and bears had "passed away."

A press release from Veto J. LaSalle, supervisor of the Payette National Forest in Idaho, said four coyotes and five black bears are "controlled each year" on his forest.

Land, water, wildlife gain lawyers

For all those environmental cases the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, National Wildlife Federation and Natural Resources Defense Council can't handle, there is a new Boulder-based firm to pick up the slack. The Land and Water Fund of the Rockies, known as the LAW Fund, began operations this month.

The LAW Fund will focus only on cases relevant to the intermountain West, says founder and president Frances M. (Kelley) Green. To manage the legal load, she hopes to recruit lawyers from private firms for free assistance to regional environmental groups.

"There's a lot of (legal) talent out there waiting to be tapped," says Green, a former attorney in the Natural Resource Clinic in Boulder. "It just hasn't been organized yet."

The LAW Fund is needed, says Green, because too few legal resources

exist in the West, given the vast size of the region and the large amount of public lands, minerals and water resources located here. Green expects that the bulk of the fund's work will include disputes over hazardous wastes, groundwater pollution and other water issues.

Green also hopes to establish a comprehensive database for the region so that lawyers and clients will have

easy access to past legal records. That way, says Green, a conservation group in Idaho will know if a group in New Mexico is filing a similar suit, and thus avoid duplicating efforts. Lawyers from the fund will be available to provide legal advice as well as formal representation.

The fund enters its first year with two senior attorneys and a law clerk, thanks to major grants from the General Service Foundation, the New-Land Foundation and the Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation. Eventually, Green says, she would like to see the organization expand to include offices in all seven of the Rocky Mountain states.

Citizens' groups seeking counsel, as well as attorneys interested in pro bono work, should write to the LAW Fund, 1405 Arapahoe, Boulder, CO 80302.

— Florence Williams



Kelley Green

This newsprint may harm your health

Evidence released by the Environmental Protection Agency in December have renewed a controversy over pulp and paper mills in the West. Dioxins have been found in fish downstream from mills in Washington, Oregon and Idaho at levels 10 times higher than previously discovered. The levels, according to EPA, pose "significant threats to human health and the environment."

Dioxins, along with toxins called furans and 3,000 other related compounds, are discharged into the water and air by mills using chlorine. The chlorine bleaches pulp to produce white paper.

According to a Canadian study, 90 percent of these compounds either are toxic or break down into toxins in the environment. One dioxin — 2,3,7,8-TCDD — is among the most deadly substances known; its toxicity has been compared to that of plutonium. It has caused cancer in lab animals at the lowest detectable doses and can cause birth defects, immune system disorders, liver damage, hair loss and a variety of other ailments. Its toxicity lasts for decades.

Dioxins are produced whenever chlorinated compounds are burned. This occurs in mills, in garbage incinerators that burn plastics such as polyvinyl chloride, and in the manufacture of the wood preservative pentachlorophenol (penta, or PCP). An average-size pulp mill discharges 35-50 tons of chlorinated compounds a day.

Dioxins settle into river bottoms, where small organisms absorb them as they feed. They are then passed up the food chain into bottom-feeding fish such as crayfish, carp and sturgeon, where they can accumulate in fatty tissues in levels up to 30,000 times those in the river sediment. Animals at the top of the food chain are even more at risk.

According to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service field supervisor Russell Peterson, "bald eagles, great blue herons and salmon" may accumulate concentrations "that are hazardous to their reproductive capabilities and survival."

EPA has found dioxin levels of up to eight parts per trillion in the edible portions of fish in the Columbia River. EPA says the cancer risks for people eating the fish are 378 times their suggested limit of one cancer case per million people.

The EPA findings released two months ago were a result of a study that was finished in August but not made

public until the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides filed a Freedom of Information suit.

The problem, however, has been known since 1983, when EPA first found high levels of dioxin in fish downstream from mills in Wisconsin, Maine and Minnesota. Rather than implement new regulations, EPA entered into a secret agreement with industry to further study the problem. After EPA found low levels of TCDD in most of its samples, the agency then broadened its study to all 104 pulp and paper mills in the United States.

Meanwhile, the industry took steps to reduce its emissions. "There's been at least a one-third reduction in emissions into waterways," says Red Caveney, president of the New York-based American Paper Institute, which represents 175 companies that produce 90 percent of United States paper.

"There's a move throughout the industry to reduce the use of chlorine," says Caveney, "although it's by far the most efficient way to process the pulp."

Caveney says the industry is also making an effort to increase the content of recycled paper, which is bleached in a "totally different process." But mills can't keep up with the supply of recycled paper since there is a two-to-three year backlog of orders for new de-inking plants, which are essential for using recycled paper.

Last spring, EPA concluded that the 104 mills that use the chlorine bleach process violated the Clean Water Act and set 1992 for compliance. The industry says it's spending up to \$100 million on each mill to make pollution control changes, although this still might not bring them up to EPA standards. EPA's new standard of .013 parts per quadrillion is 1,000 times smaller than what can be detected with existing equipment.

"We believe there's a risk all the way down to zero," said Charles Elkins of EPA's Office of Toxic Substances.

As it tries to retool, the paper industry is experiencing rapid growth. Most major companies reported record pulp and paper earnings during the 1980s as worldwide demand for paper soared. New mills are also planned.

Environmental groups, especially Greenpeace, which is pushing for total elimination of dioxins worldwide, fear that these new mills will commit the industry to several decades of a technol-

ogy that should be abandoned. Alternative pulping and bleaching processes using oxygen or hydrogen peroxide have been developed, they point out, and are widely used in other countries.

The Swedish government is forcing all of its mills to convert to alternative bleaching methods, and Austria's industry is committed to being chlorine-free by 1995. Alternative technology is now used in mills in Canada and Wisconsin.

Environmentalists also point out that many paper products, such as toilet paper, paper towels, sanitary napkins and disposable diapers, don't need to be bleached. In fact, tan colored paper products have proven so popular in Sweden that demand has far exceeded supply.

This is especially relevant given a recent finding that dioxin is not only present in bleached paper products, but can also migrate into the human body. The FDA studied milk packaged in cartons made from pulp manufactured by 15 mills, including one in Lewiston, Idaho. In over a quarter of the cartons sampled, low levels of TCDD were found to have leached into the milk. White coffee filters are another source, so a person taking cream in their morning java gets a double dose.

"Worldwide," says Mary O'Brien of the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides, "the accumulation of dioxins in human tissues is resulting in background levels close to those that cause health damage to lab animals. Some individuals are at risk of adverse health consequences from any additional source of exposure."

Besides retrofitting some mills, the paper industry has responded to the health concerns by lobbying policy-makers.

Trying to avoid publicity, industry representatives met with officials of Oregon, Washington and EPA behind closed doors last May. Manufacturers requested a year of study before the states enforced EPA's new stringent discharge standards. When the requests were denied, three mills filed suit to block Oregon's plans. The cases are on hold until the state completes new regulations, expected in February.

Meanwhile, EPA is continuing to study all possible human exposure to dioxins from paper-making. Its report is due in April.

— Jim Stiak

HOTLINE

Toxic dump was illegal

The largest toxic waste site in Nevada's Washoe County was illegally run by one man. He is Richard Kozlowski, owner of Reno Barrel Recycling, who was recently sentenced to one year in jail. The site was discovered in 1988 by state and local environmental health officials who unearthed 3,500 barrels, most of which contained hazardous materials such as solvents, flammables and suspected carcinogens. Kozlowski had no permits to transport or bury toxic wastes. Workers continue to clean up the site, with a total cost estimated at \$776,000, says Deputy District Attorney Karla Butko. Twenty-one companies that deposited waste at Reno Barrel are funding the cleanup, including the University of Nevada at Reno, Amselco Exploration Laboratories, Caesar's Tahoe and Minwax Co. In the meantime, Kozlowski's lawyer has appealed for a lesser sentence, arguing that "his client is not Exxon ... This is not a murder or rape case," reports the *Reno Gazette-Journal*.



Black Bear

Say cheese

Burglar alarms and cameras are helping biologists find grizzlies near Montana's South Fork of the Flathead River. In a 10-year federal and state program that began in 1988, researchers are capturing wildlife on film with infrared motion sensors and 35 mm automatic cameras, AP reports. Bait attracts grizzlies to the cameras and a camera photographs the animal when a sensor is tripped — succeeding where traditional research methods have failed. Seven grizzlies that managed to elude 61 snare traps over two years were identified by the cameras. Researchers say accurate grizzly counts are important because land-use decisions are based, in part, on bear populations. But grizzlies aren't the only ones having their photos taken. "We've gotten deer, elk, moose, grizzlies, black bears, mountain lions, coyotes, wolverines, fishers, pine martens (and) a couple of archery hunters who waved at us," said biologist Tim Manley, inventor of the camera. The cameras aren't cheap. Each of the 40 units costs \$430, and the bill every two weeks is \$15,000 to \$20,000 for film, salaries for eight researchers and the use of helicopters. In addition to northwest Montana, the cameras are being used in the Cascade Range of Washington, Montana's Yaak Range and in Hawaii to study an endangered bird species.

HOTLINE

Molycorp gets a tailings permit

New Mexico environmentalists plan to appeal the BLM's decision to grant conditional approval for Molycorp Inc.'s new tailings disposal site (HCN, 10/9/89). The permit allows Molycorp, a molybdenum mining company, to build its waste pit on the saddle of Guadalupe mountain, west of Questa, N.M. State Bureau of Land Management director Larry Woodard told the *Taos News* his agency had little leeway in making the decision. "Although we realize the controversial nature of the tailings disposal facility, the BLM is bound by the General Mining Law of 1872," he said. The law allows a mining company to develop federally managed lands as long as it does not cause "unnecessary or undue degradation" to the land. Bob Dreer, an attorney with

the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, says that the mining law is archaic because it does not consider environmental impacts such as groundwater contamination and airborne contaminants that often accompany tailings sites. Dreer also contends that the BLM failed to adequately examine alternative technologies and sites for Molycorp to pursue. "The proposed tailings site is located in some of the most sensitive and beautiful land in New Mexico ... the BLM and Molycorp are ready to turn this pristine area into a garbage dump," he says. The BLM's Woodard, however, says if Molycorp plans to build a functional tailings pond, the permit is impossible to deny. A few obstacles do stand in Molycorp's way. It needs BLM approval for a tailings management plan as well as a permit to build the necessary dams. Molycorp also needs a state groundwater discharge permit.

Is protection a sham?

Two members of a Bureau of Land Management advisory board for timber sales, set up by last fall's congressional legislation, have called the board a "sham." "The BLM seems to be on a one-way path to liquidate the last remaining old growth," said Eugene, Ore., board member Maradel Gale. "We've been sold a bill of goods, and it should not happen again." Gale and fellow member Allan Sorenson said that the legislation is not protecting northern spotted owl habitat, as it was intended to do. In a letter to Oregon Sen. Mark Hatfield, Sorenson asked that Congress stop the timber sales. Daniel Bowman, spokesman for the BLM Eugene district, responded that 40,000 acres of mature and old growth forest have already been set aside to protect the spotted owl. But, he agreed, "there's no question that our sales will have an adverse impact on owl habitat."

Utah takes aim at the Olympics, and at Colorado ski areas

The taxpayers of Utah have decided to enter one of the most demanding and expensive international competitions — the contest to host the winter Olympic Games.

The prize, say supporters, is a golden opportunity to promote the state's sports facilities around the world. To those who run Utah's tourism industry, the U.S. bid for the 1998 winter games means money in the pocket.

But critics worry that economic benefits will come at great cost to the mountains and canyons near Salt Lake City and Ogden. Putting the area on the map as an international winter sports destination, they say, may mean that current low-impact, low-cost use by locals will be displaced by glitzy, high-impact development.

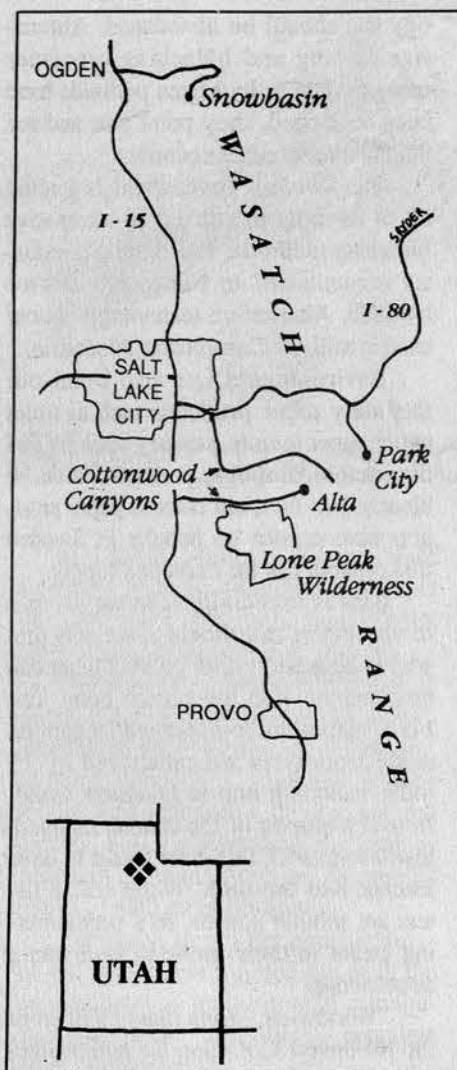
In a referendum in November, voters approved the promoters' vision. They backed, 57 to 43 percent, a move by organizers to use public funds to pursue the bid. Over the next 10 years, organizers will receive \$56 million in sales tax diversions to build the bobsled-luge run, ski jumps and speed skating rink they promised to the U.S. Olympic Committee last June.

While voters in the rest of the state, which would not benefit directly from the games, were divided, the measure received strong support — a "mandate," say supporters — from the populous Wasatch Front.

That mandate came with a promise to environmentalists. The ballot measure guaranteed that none of the Olympic events would take place in Little or Big Cottonwood canyons.

Located just southeast of Salt Lake City, the canyons contain, beside ski areas like Snowbird and Alta, impressive undeveloped backcountry, including three designated wilderness areas. Local residents visit them in the summer for hiking and picnicking and in the winter for backcountry skiing.

The commitment to environmental quality was an important, if not essential, element in gaining support. The Sierra Club, Save Our Canyons and other envi-



ronmental groups were convinced to stay on the sidelines by the promise.

As a result, opposition to the Olympics was limited to economic arguments. Environmentalists say that the game plan now, after the referendum, is to make sure promoters don't break their promise and sneak the games into the canyons.

The Olympic watch is being kept by Alexis Kelner, a leading critic of the bid and author of a popular guide to cross-country skiing in the Wasatch Range. When Kelner saw that environmental organizations weren't going to oppose the bid, he founded Utahns for Responsible Public Spending to campaign on fiscal grounds.

He and others hope to ensure that

taxpayers will be paid back, there will be no deficits, and that no more than \$56 million in tax dollars will be spent. Topping the list is Kelner's biggest concern — that no events be held in Little or Big Cottonwood canyons.

"There's still a lot of room for getting around that promise," says Kelner. "My contention is that once the (Olympics) Committee gets their hands on the area, local authorities will have no control over it."

Peterson of the organizing committee dismissed this concern. "All the officials involved expressed their firm commitment to the promise," he said. "Plus, quite frankly, the canyons aren't as good a site," due to the narrow roads and avalanche danger.

But Kelner argues that many of the elected officials who made the promises won't be in office when the games would take place. And, he says, Snowbird ski area in Little Cottonwood Canyon is still considered a backup site for the downhill ski race and may exert pressure to be included in the games.

Gale Dick, a member of both Save Our Canyons and the Salt Lake Winter Games Organizing Committee, played a key role in protecting the canyons. If Olympic events were held in Little or Big Cottonwood canyons, says Dick, a new road and possibly avalanche sheds would have to be constructed to provide the fail-safe access required by International Olympics Committee regulations. Another concern, according to Dick, was the impact of increased parking lots in the canyons on Salt Lake City's watershed.

Even if promoters keep their promises, however, environmentalists and others are concerned about the indirect growth the Olympics may generate.

"It's a tool to steal skiers from Colorado," Kelner says. "They're saying they are 'America's Choice' — not just for the Olympics, but for everything."

"We'd like to be a winter sports capital for the United States," agrees Anne Wallace, communications director for the winter games organizing committee.

Craig Peterson, vice president for administration of the committee, seconds her, saying that "the issue for us is becoming a winter sports recreation and training center for the western United States." Even if the bid is not successful, he adds, it will generate construction and tourism jobs. "We're in this for the long haul."

But ski industry promoters also argue that the canyons will remain unaffected. They are already about as developed as they'll get, says Wallace. She says the land that is not wilderness is well protected by the Forest Service and environmental regulations.

But Kelner points to unprotected areas he says the ski areas covet, such as White Pine Canyon between Snowbird ski area and the Lone Peak Wilderness. He also cites the Snowbasin ski area, the first choice as the site for the downhill event.

Snowbasin, a one-hour drive north of Salt Lake City near Ogden, with five lifts and no overnight accommodations, is used primarily by Utahns. But the operators, the Sun Valley Company, have proposed expanding the area into a "destination resort," including lodges, condominiums, a golf course, tennis courts, 10 new lifts and a gondola. Expansion is strongly supported by the city of Ogden.

Although the opponents lost one statewide vote, they have not given up on the idea of a referendum, Kelner says. The Olympic organizers "deserve a chance to try and operate within the parameters they've established. But once they start breaking promises, there may be a chance for a full-fledged referendum, like they had in Colorado."

In a book he published last spring, *Utah's Olympic Circus*, Kelner tells the story of Denver's famous withdrawal as host of the 1976 winter games. Shortly after the IOC chose Denver in 1970, writes Kelner, citizen groups began to question the way the Olympics were being planned. With then State Rep. Richard Lamm as a point man, public

(Continued on page 7)

Ski area proposal in Utah runs into heavy sledding

At the base of 9,500-foot Mt. Ogden in Utah's Wasatch-Cache National Forest sits a 49-year-old ski area called Snowbasin. It isn't fancy; there are only five chairlifts, but the area close to Salt Lake City provides year-round camping, hiking, cross-country skiing, snow-shoeing and nature studies.

Now owner Earl Holding wants to develop Snowbasin into a four season "recreation complex" complete with 1,450 condominiums, a golf course, tennis courts, ice skating rink, stores and expanded ski capacity. Holding also owns Sun Valley ski resort in Idaho, Little America hotels and Sinclair Oil.

Before he can bring in the bulldozers, Holding must convince the Forest Service to exchange 1,320 acres of public land for his private land. Environmentalists and some residents of nearby Ogden, pop. 70,000, fear that the proposed land swap and development will drastically alter the quality of life in the area. The residents say they stand to lose inexpensive recreation and gain increases in local taxes and traffic.

But opponents face such political heavy-hitters as Utah Republican Sens. Jake Garn and Orrin Hatch, Republican Rep. Jim Hansen, the Ogden City Council and the Ogden Area Chamber of Commerce. Supporters of the develop-

ment say a bigger resort will improve Utah's bid for the 1998 winter Olympics and boost the region's economy by competing with Colorado's ski resorts.

The land swap also has an environmental advocate. It is the Izaak Walton League, an Eastern-based national conservation organization. Executive direc-

tor, Patricia Honeycutt, the wife of a former Ogden forest ranger, approved the plan after Holding agreed to set aside 500 acres of private land for wildlife use and not seek additional development beyond what is currently proposed.

Other environmental groups don't share her enthusiasm, however. Giving

500 acres of winter wildlife habitat would be "trading nothing that we don't already have," says John Heinz, the former Sierra Club chairman in Ogden. The Sierra Club also opposes the resort because it says it could ruin area water sources and harm wildlife. It is also sited on geologically unstable land, the Sierra Club says.

The Citizens Committee to Save Our Canyons, a Salt Lake City group, organizes its opposition around other issues. The group says any swap will "open the door to constant pressure from other developers and ski industry promoters." Organizer Michael Budig also says the land-swap is not consistent with the 1985 Forest Plan or with established multiple use policies.

The Forest Service was scheduled to announce its decision this past July. Due to the large number of public comments received, it delayed its decision until February. For more information, contact Citizens Committee to Save Our Canyons, P.O. Box 58671, Salt Lake City, UT 85158-0671, or Wasatch-Cache National Forest, 8230 Federal Building, 125 South State, Salt Lake City, UT 84138.



—Mara Rabin

HOTLINE

Jackson airport battle is renewed

Managers of the Jackson Hole Airport in Wyoming want a longer runway. With more room, commercial jets could operate more safely and with less noise, says airport manager Richard Crosman. The airport, however, is inside Grand Teton National Park, and Terri Martin of the National Parks and Conservation Association says expansion could mean more planes, more noise and further erosion of the principle that airports don't belong in national parks. The only airport within a national park, it has been a battleground for environmentalists and business interests for more than two decades. In 1983, the Sierra Club unsuccessfully sued to stop the introduction of commercial jet flights at the airport and opposed a new permit granted to the airport board. That permit, negotiated by Interior Secretary James Watt, gave the board broad powers to run the airport until 2033 but specifically forbade runway extension unless the Park Service agreed. A firm that monitors the noise abatement program at the airport is now studying the expansion proposal. Martin would like the Interior Department to conduct an independent study.

Utah Olympics...

(Continued from page 6)

opposition to the games forced the issue to a vote.

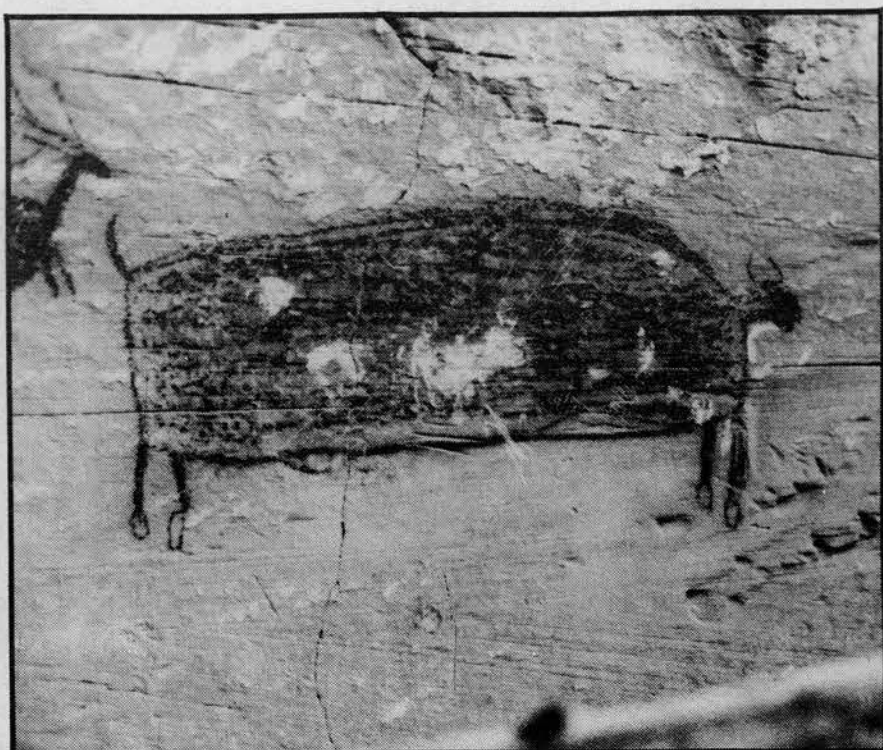
In 1972, both state and city voters passed measures banning use of public funds for the Olympics, causing Denver to withdraw. Kerner sees what he calls the "miracle of Denver" as a model for what could happen in Utah if Olympics promoters break their commitments.

Utah's attempt to host the winter games goes back over two decades. After winning the U.S. nomination for the 1972 Olympics, the state lost in international bidding to Sapporo, Japan, in 1966. Since then, Salt Lake City has run up a string of defeats, losing the U.S. bid for the 1976, 1992 and 1994 games. (The 1994 winter games were instituted so that the summer and winter games, both of which occur every four years, would not occur in the same year.) Last June the U.S. Olympic Committee gave Salt Lake City the U.S. bid for the 1998 games. Utah beat out Anchorage, Alaska, the winner of the 1992 and 1994 bids, and Lake Placid, N.Y.

The skiing events are proposed for Park City, located east of Salt Lake City on I-80, and Snowbasin, north of Salt Lake City near Ogden. Ogden may be the site for a new speed skating rink, although Utah County, south of Salt Lake City, is also interested. The bobsled-luge run and ski jumps are expected to be located at a single "Olympic Park" in Summit County, east of Salt Lake City.

Utah's Olympic promoters hope its proposed facilities, combined with the state's hosting of international competitions, such as the recent opening of the World Cup ski racing circuit at Park City, will impress the International Olympic Committee. Utah considers its most formidable rival to be Nagano, Japan, located in the "Japan Alps." Jaga, Spain, Oestersund, Sweden, and Sochi, USSR, are also bidding for the 1998 games. The IOC will make its choice in 1991.

— Devin Odell



National Park Service

Rock art vandals sought in Utah

"It looks like people threw rocks at the figures and chipped the pigment away," says Park Service staffer Larry Thomas. Sometime between Dec. 15 and Jan. 1, someone vandalized this Ute rock-art panel in the Maze District of Canyonlands National Park. Since then, several organizations, including the Utah Rock Art Resource and the Wasatch

Mountain Club, have contributed to the Park Service reward fund, which has reached \$1,200. So far, the only leads are the names "Jake 89" and "John MS '90," scrawled in charcoal on the canyon walls. The vandals gouged big chunks out of the two big figures and completely obliterated a small humanoid figure, Thomas says.

— Mara Rabin

Lethal trains in the West

The Air Force plans to remove 50 MX missiles from silos in Wyoming and place them on trains in seven states, including Wyoming, North Dakota and Washington. Trains carrying 20 nuclear bombs each will not be roaming the countryside, Col. Richard Farkas told a Casper, Wyo., audience Jan. 11, but will remain in reinforced buildings except in time of crisis. Then the trains would be dispersed at the President's direction onto more than 120,000 miles of commercial track, the *Casper Star-Tribune* reported. Thirteen peace groups in the West said that the Air Force's real plan may be to keep the trains constantly traveling. Marla Painter, an organizer for the Rural Alliance for Military Accountability in Carson City, Nev., said a Pentagon advisory panel to the Defense Department recommends that some MX missiles must always ride the rails. The advice, given in a memo, was leaked to the *Los Angeles Times*. The first of 25 trains, each with two 10-warhead missiles aboard, will be on alert at Air Force bases by December 1992, and all trains will be readied by 1994. Congress voted money last year to place the missiles in rail cars and left the site choices up to the Air Force. For more information, contact the Rural Alliance for Military Accountability at: 502 E. John St., Suite D, Carson City, NV 89706 (702/885-0166).

Oregon's redwoods spared

Some of the last of Oregon's coastal redwoods have received a stay of execution. Siskiyou National Forest Supervisor Ron McCormick announced a one-year moratorium on the Grapevine timber sale, which would have removed 147 of the 1,300 acres of old growth redwood still standing in Oregon. McCormick cited intense public pressure for the decision, and said a task force will be formed to decide whether any logging should resume in the area, which is at the northern limit of the coastal redwoods' range.

New Mexico sheep and wildlife may not mix

A northern New Mexico cooperative's sheep will be confiscated if they graze illegally in a state wildlife area again. State Game Commission Chairman Gerald Maestras delivered that message to the Ganados del Valle cooperative during a Dec. 15 commission meeting, according to *The Albuquerque Journal*. Last August the cooperative moved its herd into a state-owned wildlife area (HCN, 11/6/89). In the ensuing controversy, Ganados leader Maria Varela said research showed grazing benefits wildlife. That view was echoed at last month's meeting by wildlife commissioner Bob Jones, a rancher. But Bill Huey, former director of the state Game and Fish Department, said he believes the relationship between livestock and wildlife is more complicated than is now understood, and that while research was needed, it is not the commission's job to provide study areas. The Game Commission had experimented with allowing grazing in two other wildlife areas, but decided to phase out the program earlier this year because of damage to the land.

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PEOPLE DON'T KNOW ABOUT OREGON II

In Medford and Klamath Falls
the Cascades stack against
Trinity Alps like soldiers

You can see smoke on the
western horizon from the
Crescent City mills

You can watch fog
slip through Grant's Pass like
ashes for the dead

Folks here nail warnings
on tires from California
You can see threats

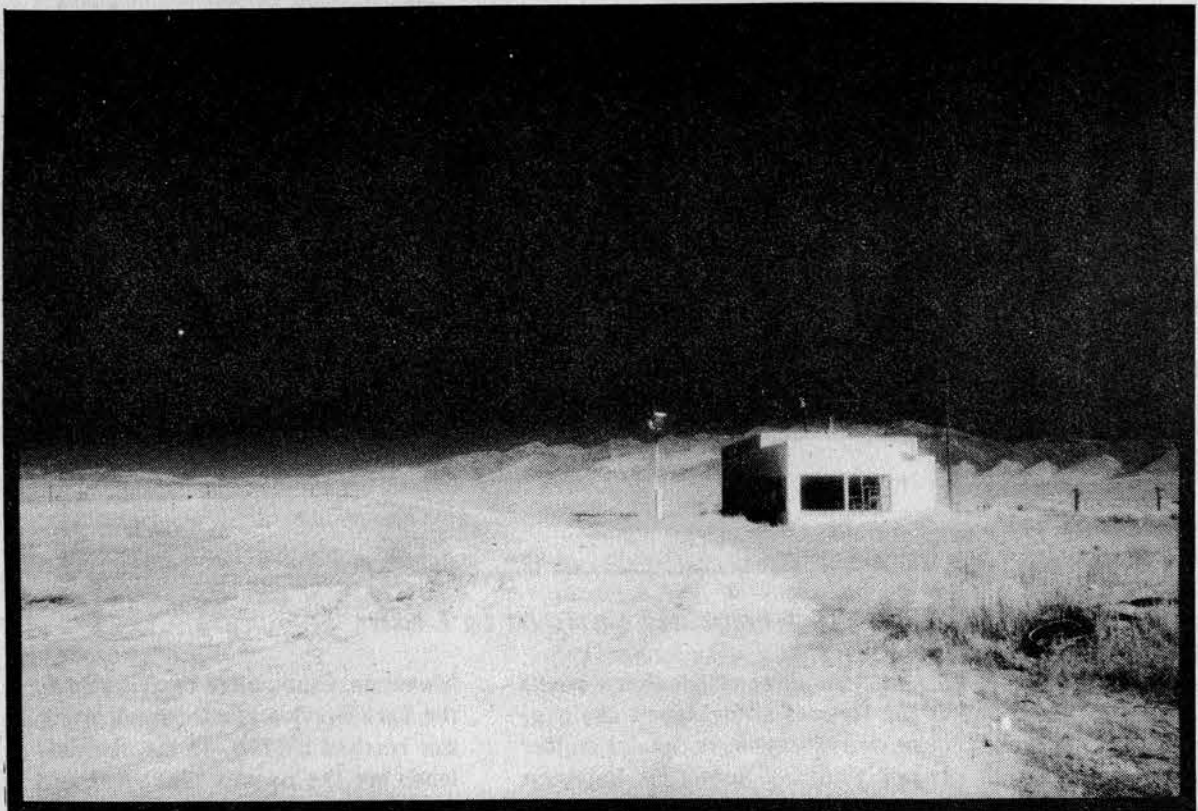
On bumpers in the lot
at Crater Lake where
tourists comfort in numbers

But to the east there's
still distance and
the fine curve of the planet

States blend simply
into cloudless land and
animals search for things

At night, you can't tell
the town's lights from campfires
from the cool, flat stars

Hart Schulz
Oxnard, California



Doug Rhinehart

HIDDEN CONTINENT

TO FLATHEAD LAKE

Brain of the best of us
Roiled with kokanee dazed by stocking
Made bottomless, gray by north wind
Vicious and lovely at your one returning edge
Vicious and lovely in the dolly varden's jaw
Moving at every impulse of God

Burning away each day, you set us on fire
We float on you and lose our forms
Burning in snow cold
Eaten up in the mile-wide drift,
north to south, of river current
We become the air at last
We make the breathing sky-arch, ridge to ridge

And you give up little, despite all that
Take down the trash, whole boats, the barrel-rolling jet
At 400 feet, memory is blind
Lines and logs drop in dark toward
the unspoiled, near-frozen now
Brain in the best of us, swimming
We doubt you exist

Richard Robbins
Mankato, Minnesota

LITTLE DRUM DREAM

In the eastern thrust of the wind,
I rode over sagebrush and cliffrose
to the Little Drum Mountains
where constellations sparkled
at the earth's curve.
Rubbing a coarse collar
against the day's parching,
I pressed mosquitoes into the plaid grid
and sipped coal-fire coffee
under a rising moon.

A clattering of hooves
in the shale behind:
snorting horses, lost
by Cortez, still exploring
a continent they know to be
trapped in alkali
and scorpions.

They'd dropped into camp unannounced,
where none had been before
on their sweep across the desert.
I wondered if I'd figure
in their common memory.

At dawn I found no tracks.
Packing my bedroll in the wind, I rode on,
forever eyeing the bajada,
a tongue for Spanish horses.

Margaret Pettis
Hyrum, Utah

THAT PIONEERING SPIRIT

arc of hurled stone
gashes in the mountainside
ax in hand

end
of Indian Summer, Interstate 70
Denver to Glenwood Springs

tire burns and the carcasses
of eleven deer, strewn

by the side of the road,
a day's kill, carrion

Sodom and Gomorrah
and Vail, a small world
of time

sharing condominiums,
starved angels locked inside
each room.

Charlie Mehrhoff
Boulder, Colorado

REMNANTS OF A MONTANA TOWN

-----for Mother and Nic-----

Western Union left first.
The yellow sign's still peeling
off the window. No one's rented it.
Clyde sweeps the empty office,
a thirty-year habit,
talks of the time the machinery
hummed louder than the traffic.
Now, all's quiet. That's Margie
Baker's chair. Broke her heart
to go on welfare. Nic's in Tucson.
Hunting not as good as Wolf Creek Canyon.
Wife cries every night.

Anaconda went next. No pretending.
the whole town shuddered on that one.
More women went to truckstop cafés
in white uniforms and stiff shoes.
No one home to see the kids out of school.
Notes on formica table-tops
on what to get for dinner.

Uncle Walt saw his whole family splinter,
Salt Lake or Spokane, wherever the job.
They'd filled a whole block in Black Eagle;
worked forty-one years overtime for that block.
For Sale signs now.

Word has it the airbase is next.
Never happen, they say. Uncle Sam
wouldn't do that to a town. Wouldn't
pull the long-nosed Minuteman from frozen earth.
There's a whole country to protect.

But in the bar, a word—obsolete—
ominously drifts above the smoke.
An ashen-faced teller looks out the window
at the Greyhound bus to Seattle
rolling slowly out of town.

Priscilla Orr
Montclair, New Jersey

WESTWARD EXPANSION

You got someplace and stayed
and didn't get your ass
kicked soon enough. Began
to think you owned the view

and water. Then the cut
wire, wildfires at the edge
of acreage. Even
rocks knew, playing out their

last gold, that your time
was through, the new screaming
goshawk meant poverty
just like before, but in

new clothes: it was never
going to be about land
again. Bleeding to all
four skies, all flags blowing

in their winds, it's never
about land when you look
for a way back to center.
Here on the horizon

your feet touch, you're too rich
still to know. You can't do
a thing but home in on it
crossing and recrossing

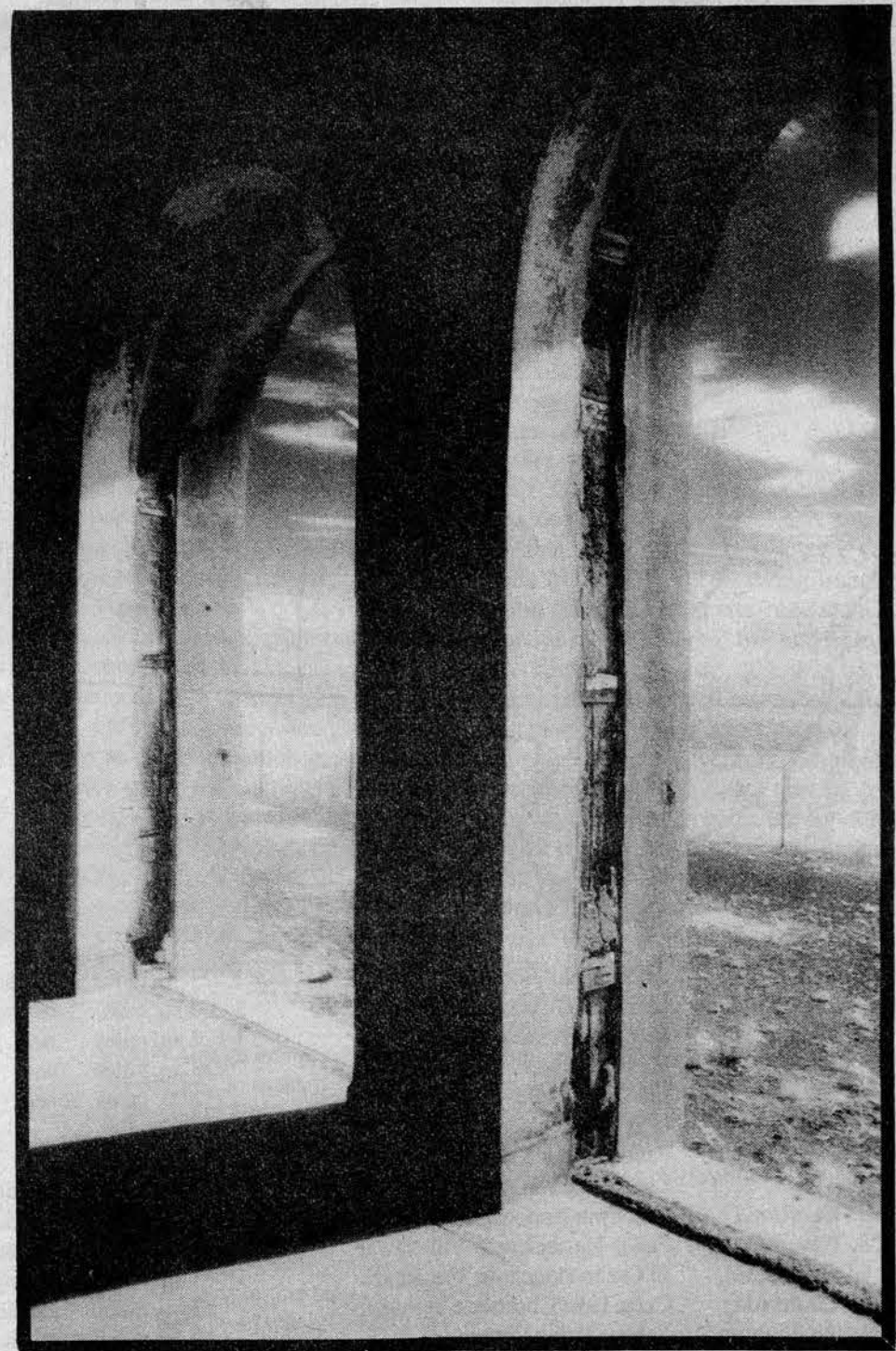
this hidden continent.

Richard Robbins
Mankato, Minnesota

Doug Rhinehart



Doug Rhinehart



Bombing the West ...

(Continued from page 1)

als, said, "they won't be able to convince us as to the need. They don't have a national coordinator in the Pentagon. It's a case of empire building."

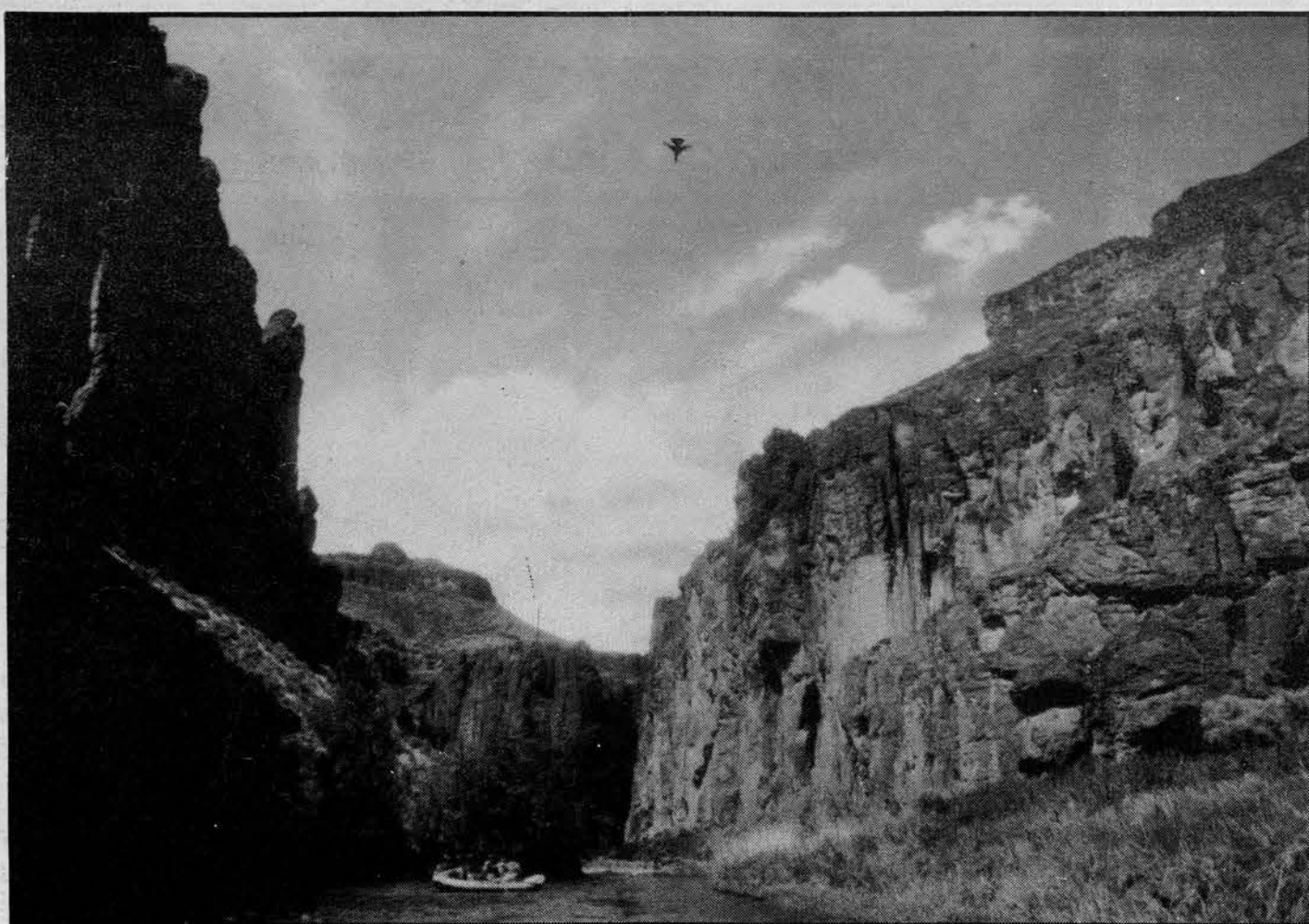
Retired Rear Adm. Eugene Carroll, a Washington, D.C., consultant on defense issues, said there is no reason why the Air Force and Navy could not share ranges. "It would save millions of dollars and prevent the loss of public land wherever possible," he said.

But in today's era of \$350 billion annual military budgets, he said, "the true motivation is to expand the control of your organization. The more people, the more money, the more resources, the better. Each branch of the service is always looking for more ways to expand their operations. The competition can get very strong and programs can become very redundant. It's the bureaucratic imperative."

Gary Vest, Air Force deputy assistant secretary for environment, safety and occupational health, denied any grand strategy. He said each range proposal emerged from specific training needs for various kinds of weapons, aircraft and tanks for each military branch.

"These things are not linked or hooked together," Vest said. The military must expand existing ranges and build new ones to prepare soldiers and pilots for realistic combat, he added. Because new weapons are more sophisticated, they require more space for training; and the National Guard, bearing a heavy responsibility for the nation's defense, must be as ready for combat as regular troops.

"You're seeing a revolution in technology," said the Brookings Institution's



Steve Bly

An Air Force jet flies over a rafting party on the Bruneau River in southwestern Idaho

Kolb. "That's the impetus for all these ranges." Ranges built in the 1950s and 1960s, for example, are not large enough to accommodate planes flying at supersonic speeds, Kolb said. World War II-vintage tanks traveled at a crawl and fired from a standstill. The new M-1 tanks move at 40-55 mph, shoot larger shells and fire on the run. After the Vietnam War, the military became an all-volunteer force, meaning that National

Guard troops acquired a larger role in the nation's defense.

The demands for military readiness in the National Guard have become intense, according to Idaho Army National Guard officials. The responsibility of National Guard units throughout the United States to master specialized weaponry and equipment and conduct realistic maneuvers and gunnery training has steadily increased, they add. Because

guardsmen have full-time jobs in the private sector, it's important to locate training ranges close to home to maximize training time, guard officials said.

Opposition to expanding Saylor Creek bombing range in Idaho has been fierce. More than 1,000 people jammed into crowded meeting halls in a series of a four public meetings to express outrage at expanding the range by 15 times (HCN, 9/25/89).

In Utah and Montana, the proposals are newer and hearings have yet to be held.

In Nevada, a long-established pro-military state, Bukowski said the politics have changed. "Anyone who backs the military now is out," she said unequivocally.

Vest, who oversees Air Force range expansions around the globe, said Idahoans have raised more of a ruckus over Saylor Creek than any other proposal he can remember. Not surprisingly, state politicians have been ducking for cover after trumpeting the initial announcement that Mountain Home Air Force Base would receive 96 F-4G "wild weasel" aircraft and 2,000 personnel from George AFB, Calif. Air Force officials did not disclose the need to expand Saylor Creek range until a few months later. The actual basis for bringing the aircraft to Mountain Home Air Force Base involves a curious twist of logic buried inside a Pentagon document called *Base Realignments and Closures, Report of the Defense Secretary's Commission, December 1988*. On Page 76, the document says, "The recent expansion of the electronic-combat and weapons ranges in the Mountain Home area provides the capability to relocate operational and training assets, which will increase efficiency and enhance mission effectiveness."

Saylor Creek has not been expanded since the 1960s, yet the commission used the proposed expansion of the range as a reason for transferring the 37th Tactical Fighter Wing to Mountain Home AFB. That prompted several cattlemen to ask Vest and Idaho's congressional delegation whether the expansion is a "done deal."

In a hotly debated public meeting



recently, Vest told a group of outraged ranchers and sportsmen that "there has not been a decision. I'm not sure how many times I have to say that before you believe it."

In fact, Vest has conceded that the Air Force may choose to satisfy its training needs at the Electronic Test and Training Range in northwest Utah and leave Saylor Creek alone. However, the fighter wing from George AFB is scheduled to come to Mountain Home AFB regardless of the outcome.

Bukowski said the NIMBY (not-in-my-backyard) syndrome is hard at work over the bombing ranges. "There's a lot of NIMBY going on in Idaho," she observed. "And I told those guys, hey, come on, we're all in this together. You don't want to shove your range into Utah."

The military is approaching public involvement and environmental review gingerly. Because of Idaho's strong resistance, the Air Force split the environmental impact statement process into two "tiers." The first tier will study the basic outline of the range proposal and the issue of supersonic flight and airspace withdrawals. The second tier will focus on a variety of specific range proposals. The entire process is expected to last until 1993 or beyond.

The Air Force is also trying a new concept for allowing Idahoans greater involvement in framing a compromise. A large working group, consisting of persons representing every major interest in the project, will oversee the EIS process and make a final recommendation to Congress. In Montana, however, the Bureau of Land Management has yet to commit to writing a specific environmental impact statement on the National Guard's one-million-acre withdrawal. The National Wildlife Federation's Griffiths has told the Bureau of Land Management that an EIS is essential, but officials are balking.

Any process that prevents citizens from having a major role in the outcome could trigger protests at each statehouse. Unlikely coalitions of ranchers, sportsmen, civilian pilots, peaceniks and environmentalists — groups that normally lock horns over public lands issues — have emerged to fight the military. Public support for the projects has become limited to the military subcommittee members of the chambers of commerce near the bases. The unprecedented outpouring of public opposition has been heartwarming to Bukowski and Citizen Alert, which have been battling the military for seven years. Nevada is home to two immense training areas near Nellis AFB and Fallon AFB.

"We've been feeling pretty lonely on this issue for a long time until now," Bukowski said. Citizen Alert has been working with groups in Idaho, Utah, Montana and Nevada to pinpoint any duplication in training range proposals and present a united front of opposition.

"For the first time, I think we're on the offensive and the military is on the defensive," she said.

After years of complaints about illegal flyovers, sonic booms and live bombing in Nevada, the chairman of the House Interior subcommittee on public lands, Rep. Bruce Vento, D-Minn., held a hearing Jan. 4 to hear citizen complaints about the military's stewardship on existing ranges. Though the Bureau of Land Management has been somewhat neutral on the prospect of surrendering millions of acres of public lands to the military, Vento said, "The military's growing appetite for more public lands on which to practice war games

appears to be out of sync with the warming of relations between the U.S. and the Soviet bloc. We should be cautious in cordoning off large parcels from which the public is excluded and in which the land resource is extensively harmed."

To Bukowski, the choice is clear. She says the Navy has made life miserable for rural homeowners and Indian reservations that get buzzed regu-

larly by low-level supersonic flights originating from Nellis AFB and Fallon AFB.

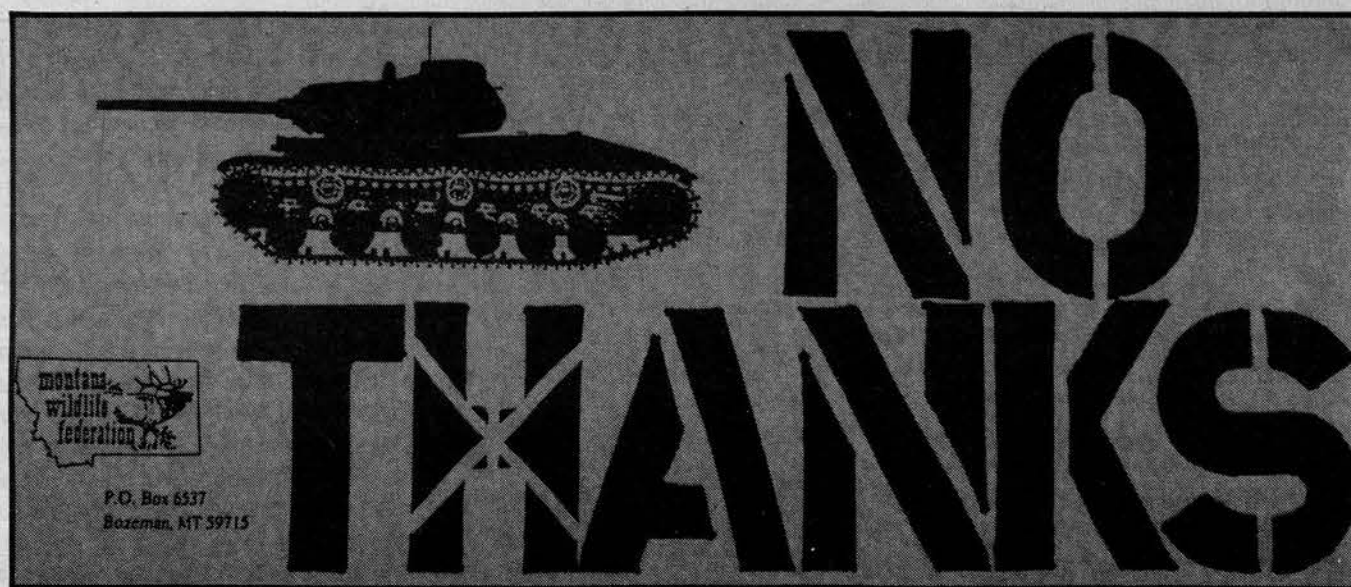
The worst example is that of Dixie Valley. Five years ago, the Navy promised the citizens of Dixie that hunting, fishing and ranching could continue on a supersonic bombing range near Fallon AFB. Today, Dixie is a ghost town. Homes were burned and bulldozed and

the wildlife has fled the mountains, Bukowski said.

Dr. Richard Borgen, a Gabbs, Nev., physician and civilian pilot, said the town of Gabbs has suffered more than \$20,000 in damage from sonic booms in the last two years. Gabbs is 15 miles south of a supersonic range.

Borgen said his persistent fight

(Continued on page 12)



Bumper sticker in Montana

Foes unite to fight military proposal

by Bert Lindler

A proposed one-million-acre training center on the rangelands of eastern Montana has led to what once was an unlikely coalition between area ranchers and wildlife groups.

In January representatives from citizens' groups in Nevada, Kansas and Washington joined about 250 Montanans for a two-day meeting in Glasgow, Mont., where the Montana National Guard's military training center would be based.

Jay Copeland, president of Preserve Rural America, based in Kansas, urged Montanans opposing the center to join together and to work with groups from other states.

"People in rural America help each other," he said. "There's a sense of caring. If we unite as one and shake each other's hand, can we win? I believe we can and that's why I'm here tonight."

Gary Sylvester is the third generation of his Kansas farm family to be forced off the land because of the expansion of Fort Riley. Fifteen years ago, Sylvester had to start over after being forced off his farm. Now, Fort Riley wants to take over that land as well.

"We've had enough," Sylvester said. "We're gonna draw the line."

Grace Bukowski, a member of Rural America for Military Accountability in Reno, Nev., said rural Nevadans had been forced out of their homes so supersonic air-training could be conducted.

"The homes were burned to the ground," she said. "I know it's a horror story, but it's true ... I don't want to see this happen in Montana."

The Department of Defense controls four million acres in Nevada and recently closed an additional 160,000 acres after finding 1,400 bombs on public land, she said.

Albert Engebretson, a member of the Ellensburg, Wash., city council, said the Army's Yakima firing range is proposing a 63,000-acre expansion, bringing it to within seven miles of town. The military seems to be making

huge appropriations of land at the expense of rural residents, he said.

"With the current atmosphere in the world, there is no need for this kind of expansion anymore," Engebretson said.

After the meeting, Montanans opposing the military training center formed a group called Alliance for Rural Montana. That alliance joined with the other groups represented at the meeting to form a coalition known as the Alliance for the Preservation of Rural America.

Ranchers in eastern Montana are still smarting from a decade-long battle in which the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service — with the support of environmentalists — cut grazing by one-third on the C.M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge to benefit wildlife.

The Montana National Guard's proposed training center includes a bombing, artillery and gunnery range on Bureau of Land Management lands north of the refuge. The BLM lands, which were used as a bombing range during World War II, support sage grouse and have some of the state's best hunting for trophy antelope.

The Montana Wildlife Federation focused its attention on the training center shortly after the proposal was announced.

"It's pretty bad when you have to rely on environmentalists to find out what's going on," lamented one Valley County official who felt the National Guard hadn't been completely forthcoming.

When area ranchers testified against the training center during a House Interior Committee hearing in January, they were supported by The Wilderness Society.

A blaze orange bumper sticker saying "No thanks" to tanks is the symbol of the Montana Wildlife Federation's campaign against the training center. In Montana, blaze-orange fence posts mean: No Trespassing.

"If sportsmen and women, ranchers and Valley County citizens join together, we will put a stop to this proposal," the federation said in a flyer soliciting support for its campaign.

The Montana National Guard originally proposed a 981,000-acre training

center with a northern maneuver area and a southern bombing, artillery and gunnery area. The maneuver area could support up to a brigade, with 3,400 troops, 300 tanks and other vehicles, helicopters and aircraft.

Alternatives under consideration by the BLM in an environmental statement include a 687,000-acre scaled down version of the original proposal, a 572,000-acre maneuver-only proposal for the northern area and a 260,000-acre air-operations-only proposal for the southern area.

The BLM administers the majority of the lands within the training center, although some state and private lands are included.

More than 100 ranchers with grazing leases or private lands in the proposed training center could be affected. So could the integrity of fragile soils in the area, as well as sage grouse, antelope, sharp-tailed grouse, deer and other wildlife.

Montana's Gov. Stan Stephens encouraged the National Guard to train within the state, so Montana would benefit from money spent during training. The National Guard has been training out-of-state. The Guard has said it wants to know the concerns of ranchers and environmentalists so it can address them in the environmental impact statement.

Besides the governor, some Montanans support the military training center because it would boost the depressed rural economy. Military center supporters in Glasgow also question the role of out-of-state groups in the controversy.

The Bureau of Land Management has estimated it will cost \$6.8 million for the studies needed for an environmental impact statement on the Guard's original proposal. Gov. Stephens is appointing representatives from state natural resource agencies to a working group that will advise the BLM during the statement's preparation.

□

Bert Lindler writes about environmental issues for the *Great Falls Tribune* in Montana.



Richard Bergen

Bombing the West...

(Continued from page 11)

against the military in Nevada led to the revocation of his pilot's license, precluding his ability to fly to remote areas swiftly in times of a medical emergency. He has filed a federal lawsuit against the Federal Aviation Administration and awaits his day in court.

At existing ranges in Nevada, pilots often miss the intended targets, endangering citizens who might be nearby. In November, two Navy attack planes, training in the Chocolate Mountain Aerial Gunnery Range near El Centro, Calif.,

dropped a dozen 500-pound bombs two miles outside of the range border. The bombs slightly wounded a man who was camping several hundred yards away from the point of impact.

That same month, the Navy discovered thousands of bombs, scrap, ammunition, flares and rockets in a sweep of public lands outside the Fallon bombing ranges in Nevada. Searchers found 123,375 pounds of bomb scrap metal, 1,389 live bombs and 2,230 duds. Both Citizen Alert and Nevada government officials blasted the Navy for the secret cleanup mission.

Bukowski said it's time for the military to stop bombing defenseless citizens

and be honest with the people as to its true intentions for military training areas in the West. Now that the issue has caught the attention of Congress and the media, she expects the tide will turn.

In Idaho, where the campaign is called "Idaho is Too Great to Bomb," citizens seem ready to fight to the end. Even conservative Republican Sen. Jim McClure has issued a strong statement to the Air Force. "One of the problems that

many people have with this proposal is that it sometimes seems like the Air Force is just trying to ram the thing through," said McClure. "I don't need to tell you," he said to Air Force officials, "that that would be extremely unwise."

□

Steve Stuebner is a reporter for the *Idaho Statesman* in Boise, Idaho.



CAPITOL HILL

Torn between cows and jets

WASHINGTON, D.C. — If there is one thing a conservative Western Republican in Congress will almost always do, it is vote for a strong national defense.

If there is one thing a conservative Western Republican in Congress will almost never do, it is vote against the interests of the ranchers who make a living from the public lands in his state.

If there is one thing a conservative Western Republican in Congress will try to avoid, it is being forced into a position of having to choose between the two.

Yet that is the dilemma facing conservative Western Republicans, as well as their congressional colleagues, as the result of a proposed Pentagon land grab of more than four million acres, mostly in Idaho, Montana, Nevada and California.

Most of the acreage belongs to the Bureau of Land Management, and is used for grazing, recreation and wildlife habitat. The military wants to "withdraw" the land and turn it into aircraft "maneuver areas," bombing and artillery ranges, and training terrain for tank and infantry units.

Many of the proposals are running into vigorous opposition from an unlikely coalition of ranchers and environmentalists, groups that rarely find themselves on the same side of a public lands issue. They are taking their case to Congress, which must approve the withdrawals for the regular military, though not for the National Guard.

At a recent hearing before the House public lands subcommittee, opposition to the military withdrawals centered on a single, indisputable fact: after the Air Force bombs a piece of land, or after the Army shells it and runs tanks around on it, it is not good for much else for a long time.

The Defense Department acknowledges that. Deputy Assistant Defense Secretary Robert Stone, the Pentagon's top land manager, said that land that has been hit with live ordnance has to be closed to human use permanently. The best efforts to remove unexploded bombs or shells cannot completely clear an area, he said.

Other effects of military use are less dramatic, but equally damaging. Tanks destroy rangelands and fragile desert environments, and they also kill wildlife and ruin its habitat. Several witnesses pointed out that the California desert still bears the scars of tank maneuvers conducted by Gen. George Patton's Second Armored Division a half-century ago.

Even when the land itself is left alone, military activity can have profound effects on the psyche of wildlife, domestic animals and humans alike, witnesses said.

Residents of Nevada's Dixie Valley

are being driven out by Navy aircraft using the area for low-level flights at supersonic speeds, one witness told the subcommittee.

In both Nevada and Idaho, areas being proposed as new training grounds for military pilots are rich in wildlife and, in the latter case, are so unspoiled that they are being considered for permanent protection as wilderness.

The conflicts between Herefords and howitzers produced an uncommonly thoughtful discussion on a subcommittee better known for regional and partisan bickering.

Rep. Larry Craig, R-Idaho, who has often opposed wilderness protection as "single-use" management that "locks up" public lands, seemed somewhat more receptive to the idea of setting large areas aside for the military. He called for managing the bombing ranges for "multiple use blended with some special uses and some single uses."

Similar support for military withdrawals came from Reps. Robert Lagomarsino of California and John Rhodes III of Arizona, both GOP conservatives. They said that an easing of East-West tensions should not be used as an excuse to reduce U.S. military preparedness.

Interestingly, subcommittee chairman Rep. Bruce Vento, a liberal Minnesota Democrat, made much the same point. A reduced American military presence in Europe, with attendant reductions in training facilities overseas, might increase the need for places to train at home.

Furthermore, a shrinking of the regular military would place a greater reliance on the National Guard and reserve units, Vento and others noted. Those units might also need expanded training facilities, they said.

Rep. Pat Williams, D-Mont., summarized the problem. The challenge, he said, is to somehow balance the military's unquestioned need to train its fighting men with the concerns "of those of us out West whose land and lifestyles are at stake."

Twenty-five years ago, at the height of the Cold War, satirist Tom Lehrer wrote a song about this issue:

*Amid the sagebrush and the cactus
We can watch the fellows practice
Dropping bombs
In the clear desert air.*

The Cold War may be drawing to a close, but the fellows appear likely to be out there, sharing the desert calm, for many years to come.

□

Andrew Melnykovich writes a column from Washington for the *Casper Star-Tribune*.

Voters could bomb bombers

by Pat Ford

The Air Force's planned expansion of the Saylor Creek bombing range in southwest Idaho burst upon Idahoans with little warning last summer.

The public outcry that followed has made the Air Force slow down, and probably scale down, its plans. But foes of the expansion have also come to realize they are in for a long, uncertain fight.

The plan to lay a 1.5 million-acre electronic warfare range over the Bruneau River canyon and surrounding high desert plateaus brought immediate, vocal protest from area ranchers, sportsmen, conservationists and some nearby communities.

That forced Idaho's congressmen and the Bureau of Land Management to lean on the Air Force for a slower, more open process. As a result, BLM, which manages most of the affected land, is now a "cooperating agency" in preparation of a two-tier environmental impact statement that will take three-plus years.

The first-tier draft EIS, due out this month, will examine expansion of Mountain Home Air Force Base, training needs and options for the aircraft coming to Idaho in that expansion, as well as the issue of airspace withdrawals above 5,000 feet.

Saylor Creek Range expansion will be one of the training options analyzed (along with, for instance, using existing ranges in Utah or Nevada), but precise boundary and management options for Saylor Creek expansion will apparently wait until the second-tier document. The Air Force plans a 45-day public comment period.

The BLM has also assembled a large "working group" — 45 people attended the first and so far only meeting — representing all interests affected by range expansion.

Most opposed or seriously questioned the range expansion. But so far, the group's members say they don't know whether their job is to inform, analyze, advise or decide. BLM has

neither specified a charge nor asked the group to develop its own.

There may be vocal resignations unless the working group gets both clearer and more democratic soon. It meets next after release of the draft EIS.

Early coverage of the Air Force plan played up the unlikely alliance of area ranchers and conservationists against it. But to date those groups are neither meeting to develop a strategy nor closely communicating with each other. Both have focused on organizing their own people, and both are split internally on whether they can or should cooperate with people who remain their adversaries on many other issues.

For its part, the Air Force is developing scaled-down alternatives to their original proposal — a tacit admission that the original is dead.

Lt. Col. James Cooper recently told an Idaho Wildlife Council meeting that a one million-acre option is being put together. Cooper said that's about as low as the Air Force can go. Odds are the Air Force is also plotting where to locate that million acres for minimum impact on ranchers. If the ranchers can be mollified, Idaho's congressional delegation could end up mollified as well.

But a joker entered that calculation with Sen. Jim McClure's January announcement that he will retire after this year. Two of Idaho's four seats in Congress thus become open since Rep. Larry Craig will leave the House to seek McClure's seat. The 1990 election will see a real dogfight for those berths in Congress.

If Idaho conservationists have their way, Saylor Creek will be a big issue. Given the dynamics of modern electioneering, it will be hard for candidates — especially those for the open seats — to follow the incumbent delegation's current strategy of staying roughly in the middle.

□

In Boise, Idaho, Pat Ford covers the Northern Rockies for *High Country News*.

Military sweep turns up bombs and controversy

It has been a very busy six months for Nevada's military watchdog groups.

First came the report that the U.S. Navy had accidentally dropped tons of hazardous debris on public land near its bases over the last 30 years. This was uncovered by a reporter who found out about the surreptitious cleanup effort this fall.

Then came eyewitness accounts of a 30,000-gallon jet fuel spill on BLM land

just miles from the Stillwater Wildlife Refuge. Now the watchdog groups, led by the national Rural Alliance for Military Accountability and the Reno-based Citizen Alert, are spearheading an all-out effort to prevent the Navy and National Guard from extending their air and land space even farther into the public domain.

For 40 days this fall, the Navy used helicopters and men on foot to scour BLM land near two air bases 60 miles east of Reno, Nev. What the sailors were looking for was wayward military debris: shrapnel, ammunition and flares accidentally dropped from planes; and bombs and rockets that missed their targets, fired by pilots-in-training.

What they found in the 68,000-acre parcel frequented by ranchers, hikers and off-road vehicle users were 1,389 live bombs, including undetonated, 500-pound sinkers, 2,230 duds, 123,375 pounds of weapon-related scrap metal, and 28,136 rounds of ammunition. Many of the explosives had to be dismantled before they could be removed.

The Navy began clearing away its stray paraphernalia in late October, with approval from the Bureau of Land Management but without any public notification, according to RAMA organizer Grace Bukowski.

Called "Operation Ugly Baby," the cleanup went unnoticed for about a week, until a television station, KTVN, broke the story Nov. 7.

"We were trying to protect the people of the state of Nevada," Fallon Naval Air

Richard Bergen



Unattended weapons on public land near U.S. 50 in Nevada

Station Captain Rex Rackowitz told the Fallon *Eagle Standard* in defense of the operation's secrecy. "People sometimes confuse their right to know with their right to touch and feel and get involved."

Not only was the cleanup a surprise; the very presence of unexploded bombs on public land was also a shock to many, including Nevada's Gov. Bob Miller.

"I'm just appalled this has occurred," the governor told the Associated Press. "There is absolutely no reason why we cannot expect them to stay within the boundaries that were given them."

Following the disclosure of the bombs, Nevada's Department of Environmental Protection issued an administrative order condemning the Navy for not notifying the public of the presence of hazardous materials, and for failing to respond sooner to a "toxic materials spill." The department did not issue any fines.

The Navy is currently studying the hazards to the public that may exist near its other bases in Nevada. Until those studies are complete, the BLM has closed off 35,000 acres to the public.

Citizen Alert and the RAMA have demanded a moratorium on test bombing on all four of the Nevada Naval air stations. One of the stations, known as Bravo 16, will probably be closed, said Bukowski.

"There are a lot of people living within half a mile of the base. Those residents are in a high risk area. We now know

that there's a lack of enforcement of safety regulations in that area. We will succeed there, I think," she said.

The Navy will use the incident to try to garner more of Nevada's public land in the form of "buffer" zones for its flight training, Bukowski said. Currently the Navy proposes expansions of 81,000 land acres and 10,000 square air miles. In addition, the National Guard would like to expand its Nevada base by nearly 700,000 acres.

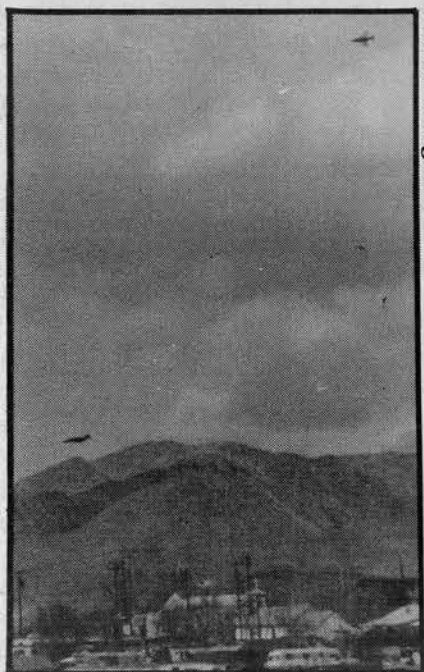
But Bukowski said things are looking grim for those proposals, given the military's track record in Nevada. Her organization is considering filing a lawsuit against the Navy for spilling 30,000 gallons of jet fuel in 1988 near the Stillwater Wildlife Refuge. That incident was kept from the public until two Navy employees went to the press with their eyewitness accounts last month, she said.

"The Navy is under a lot of heat," said Bukowski. "They got caught with their pants down. These two things happened within a few months. They've lost their credibility. People in Nevada have had enough of the military."

— Florence Williams

□

The writer is a staff reporter for *High Country News*.



Two F-4 fighter jets overflying the town of Gabbs, Nevada



Public land near Lone Rock, Nevada, has been used as a bombing range for 40 years. The area is scattered with bomb craters and wrecked military vehicles.

Richard Bergen

Dear friends,

(Continued from page 2)

substantial numbers. For the first half hour or so, everyone stood around in their coats, but eventually the hall warmed up and fingers unfroze sufficiently to allow everyone to eat. Among those who attended were people we had last seen in Paonia. Jennifer and Randy Lampe had stopped by two summers ago on their way to a Utah honeymoon, and Larry Wolf, an attorney with Holland and Hart, had visited us that same summer with his family on their way to Telluride.

Staff wishes to thank Jeff Kessler, an engineer based in Laramie, for providing sleeping-bag space for a small army of HCN staff and interns. The same thanks go to Katharine Collins, a former intern and Casper *Star-Tribune* reporter, who is in Cheyenne temporarily for the legislative season.

Board members who attended the

meeting were president Andy Wiessner of Denver, Michael Ehlers of Boulder, Lynn Dickey, Tom Bell of Lander, Wyo., Sally Gordon of Buffalo, Wyo., Tom France of Missoula, Mont., Jeff Fereday of Boise, Herman Warsh of Santa Barbara, Calif. and Robert Wigington of Boulder.

We could almost have had a board meeting in Boulder the night before, at a party given by the Land and Water Fund of the Rockies — a new public interest law organization founded by attorney Kelley Green. Its purpose is to be a legal aid society on public land and environmental issues, but its first accomplishment was to give a great party. Staff had planned to drop in for a few minutes and then drive on to Cheyenne. We ended up staying three hours, and left hoarse, exhausted and socially satiated.

— Ed Marston for the staff

LETTERS

NO PROTECTION YET

Dear HCN,

The other day I read the Nov. 6 issue of HCN and enjoyed it, as always. However, I would urge great caution in reporting to your readers as you did in "Dear Friends" about the allegedly "new old growth policy" announced by the Forest Service on Oct. 19.

Unfortunately, when you look behind the words and past the fine print to the actual "new" policies on the ground, there isn't anything there. There are no new lines on any maps, no guarantees to protect any more ancient forests, no new regulations — nor will there be any. Our people in the Northwest have been told by Forest Service officials that this "new" policy is really just a cobbling-together of all the older, inadequate policies, plus some new rhetoric about logging better.

Until the Forest Service actually recommends new, unprotected places in the ancient forest for guaranteed protection, there is no new policy. But don't hold your breath until it happens. We're not — that's why we're going to Congress for relief in 1990.

Brock Evans
Washington, D.C.

The writer is vice president for national issues for the National Audubon Society.

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High Country News



Gary Raham, BROOKSTATION

Canyon hikers reflected in a pothole, Canyonlands National Park

Thank you, Research Fund givers, for helping us peer into the West

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OPINION

The premise behind *USA Today* is proven false

Behind the colorful, clean, neatly boxed pages and brief stories of *USA Today* lies a sinister belief: that newspaper readers have neither the mind nor the will to grapple with anything more complex than bite-sized News McNuggets. The *USA Today* assumption is that those who grew up in front of the television must now be spoon-fed simplified, condensed "news."

Were *USA Today* only a nationally circulated, scrubbed and perfumed comic book, it would be of little concern. But its "formula" has been taken up by local dailies everywhere. Newspapers excuse their adoption of the *USA Today* look and philosophy by claiming that they must compete with television in their mutual pursuit of the Six-Pack Johnny and Mindless Milly audience.

The approach of both the *USA Today* mimics and of television is based on denigration of readers and viewers. Shoddy, oversimplified print and electronic reporting is not only excused but defended as an absolute necessity dictated by the stupidity of the audience.

The denigration of readers is also self-fulfilling: shallow newspapers, contemptuous of information and analysis, chase away informed readers and pull the less informed down to the newspaper's level. In addition, debasing readers as fit only to read 300-word articles and 600-word columns sets the stage for journalistic cowardice.

Publishers, editors and reporters won't go out on limbs to speak the truth to readers they hold in contempt. And contempt for Americans lies at the heart of *USA Today*.

Evidence that *USA Today* and its fellow travelers have built their journalistic houses on a false foundation can be found in Wyoming — a state that could contain two New York states within its boundaries, a state with fewer than 500,000 people and no city of more than 60,000, a state that is both conservative and rural. It should be hog heaven for the *USA Today* brand of journalism. But instead it is home to a statewide daily that breaks every rule in the newspaper-as-comic-book formula, and does well.

No McNews here

The newspaper is the *Casper Star-Tribune*. And the rules it breaks are legion. To start with the most obvious, it uses no color beyond black and white. If you are an advertiser, you can have your advertisement in any color you want, but the news pages are black and white. The graphics are also black and white, relatively plain, and are held to a minimum.

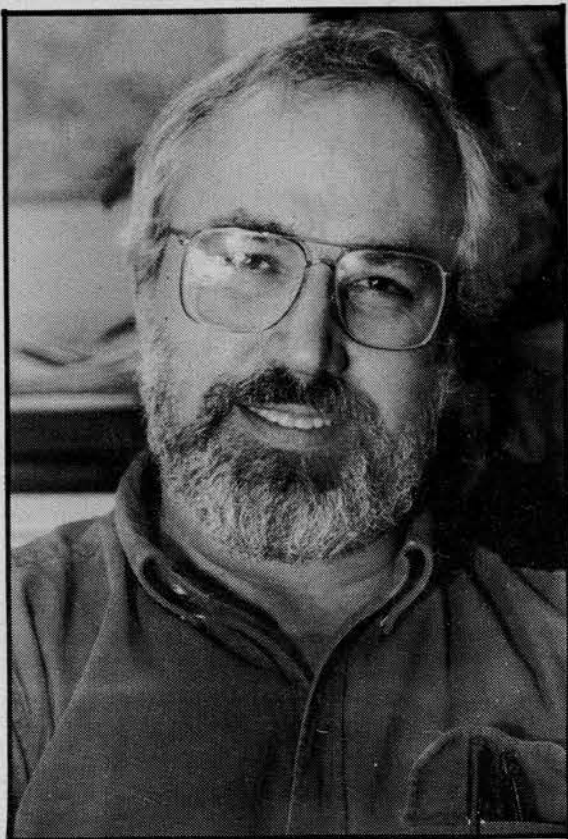
Instead of color and graphics, the *Star-Tribune* thrives on words and photos. It starts six to eight stories on the front page, and then jumps them to the back page or to an inside page. Those stories are often long and detailed, and they are about complex subjects: the construction of a natural gas pipeline to California; a research project that promised to turn coal into a miracle fuel; the taxation of oil, gas and minerals; the problems and opportunities besetting the University of Wyoming; the fight over the Bridger-Teton National Forest; the nomination of James Cason to be political head of the Forest Service; and so on.

The *Star-Tribune* doesn't hit and run these stories. It covers them week after week, month after month. It writes editorials about them, and its readers write letters to the editor — lots of letters. The paper prints virtually every letter it gets, and so one finds page after page in this broadsheet filled with the multiple voices of Wyoming.

A recent letter was especially revealing. A reader, outraged by his home state newspaper's high subscription rate, checked the two Denver dailies to find out what they charge for home delivery. He reported the results in a letter to the editor: the Wyoming daily is much more expensive than the two Denver dailies.

I was struck by the letter because I favor high subscription rates. Newspapers should charge readers for the news they get, and reduce dependence on advertising. I don't know if that philosophy is why the *Star-Tribune*'s subscription rates are high, or even if the letter was accurate (the *Star-Tribune* doesn't censor its letters), but I hope the paper is getting more of its money from readers and less from advertisers.

The *Star-Tribune* not only belongs to its readers,



Richard High

through the letters page and perhaps through the high subscription rates they pay, but it also belongs to its staff. Reporters appear to have easy access to the op-ed page, and they take advantage of it, writing columns that often miff readers. One letter-to-the-editor recently suggested that staff should be treated like readers, with reporters' editorial comments confined to the letters page. In most papers, readers would be pleased with an occasional letter-to-the-editor; in Wyoming, readers want equality with the staff.

Because anyone can appear on the letters page, it makes discussions of issues the norm rather than the exception. People become used to expressing their opinions, and, over time, are less intimidated by the process. And it gives the paper freer rein. The *Star-Tribune* can express views that diverge from the majority, or from blandness, because the majority and the bland can also have their say.

Rule 1: Respect your readers

Any modern newspaper consultant worth her or his salt will tell you, from my description, that the *Star-Tribune* is doomed. Without graphics, without 300-word stories and 600-word columns, without a limit on letters-to-the-editor, without a reporting staff that knows its place (in the news columns, writing short, sugar-coated articles), a newspaper will go broke. That would be especially true in a state like Wyoming, the consultant would say, with vast distances for reporters and circulation people to cover, and with a reputation as a conservative place rooted in cattle, oil, coal and water projects.

The consultant would be wrong. The *Star-Tribune* appears to be thriving. And the architect of this astounding late 20th century phenomenon — a newspaper that respects its readers and seeks out and reports news — has just been plucked out of Casper and promoted to general manager of the Howard chain's largest paper — *The Times* in Munster, Indiana. There, former *Star-Tribune* editor Dick High will also have "some extensive involvement in corporate work in trying to build quality" throughout the chain's 19 papers, he said in a parting interview in the Jan. 25 *Star-Tribune*.

I'm not privy to the Howard chain's financial statements. I didn't even know the *Star-Tribune* was part of a chain until I read about High's departure. But judging by his promotion to the chain's largest newspaper, and into corporate ranks, it sounds as if the *Star-Tribune* has overcome a disastrous Wyoming economy, including the loss of substantial numbers of people, to achieve a healthy bottom line. Now the chain wants High to tell its 18 other newspapers how they can share in that magic.

Of course, there is no magic. There are only old, tested rules: respect your readers, hire bright and hardworking reporters, give them room to run and

even room to make mistakes, don't fear the state's or city's establishment, don't tart up the newspaper, and don't be a coward.

High won't be telling the Howard chain's other newspapers to do anything he hasn't done. Especially in the area of courage, which is the most important newspaper quality of all, High has earned some impressive praise. The former mayor of Casper, Dick Shamley, on learning of High's departure, compared him to Nicolae Ceausescu, the deposed and executed Rumanian dictator. That indicates to me that High, through tough reporting and an open letters page, has achieved a fair amount of clout. Wyoming Sen. Al Simpson also butted heads with High; he was especially angered by letters-to-the-editor critical of him.

But in general, High has taken shots because he has not been enough of a booster. Wyoming's leadership led the state into a disastrous energy and minerals boom and bust and now, like other Western leaders, lack the imagination to create new approaches to earning a living.

Wyoming's leaders — by shoveling money to Char Fuels Corp., by trying to give subsidized loans to a natural gas pipeline, by starving the University of Wyoming — hope to ignite another natural resource boom, and can't believe that the *Star-Tribune* under High hasn't joined the cheerleading.

Although the paper may get low grades from some Wyoming leaders, it gets high grades from readers. A poll by the Wyoming Heritage Society shows that as many people depend on the *Star-Tribune* for information as depend on all other Wyoming newspapers combined. Wyoming has lots of dailies and weeklies, and Casper and environs only have about 15 percent of the state's population.

Is the promotion of High, who has been editor in Casper for 11 years, and who is a Yale graduate with a Stanford MBA, a victory for the Howard chain and a defeat for Wyoming? Not given his replacement. She is Anne MacKinnon, who appears cut from the same journalistic cloth as High. She is an attorney turned journalist who has covered many of the most complex issues over the last few years, including a story about natural gas rate increases that made the paper a runner-up in the Pulitzer Prize competition a few years ago.

The *Star-Tribune* is well stocked with other talent, including two former *High Country News* editors, Geoffrey O'Gara and Dan Whipple, and a former HCN intern, Katharine Collins. And some of the region's most consistent natural resources reporting from Washington, D.C., is found in the *Star-Tribune*, thanks to Andrew Melnykovich. There is every reason to expect the newspaper, even without High, to continue to perform at a high level.

An example to the West

In addition to serving its state well, the *Star-Tribune* is contributing something to the West as a whole — an example. Wyoming is a microcosm of the West, if a 100,000-square-mile state can be described as a microcosm. It has few people, lots of natural resources, a harsh climate, and is relatively new, with few long-time institutions. The *Star-Tribune* points the way toward eliminating one of the West's major lacks: a newspaper that can cover the region as a region.

Dick High and his staff have given us the model to follow. They have figured out how to cover Wyoming — a small town with very long streets — as a whole. The paper has done well in terrible economic times, and it has kept its head and honor despite the panic the tough times induced. If a daily newspaper can do that in Wyoming, then it should be possible for a newspaper to cover the West.

The *Star-Tribune*'s success also speaks to American journalism generally. If it can thrive while remaining a real newspaper, then such a feat should be possible in most places in America. There is no excuse for aping *USA Today*. Newspaper publishers and editors who have chosen to follow the pastel-blue road laid down by *USA Today* should recognize the terrible disservice they are doing to themselves, to their readers and to their communities.

— Ed Marston

16-High Country News — February 12, 1990

BULLETIN BOARD



A READER'S GUIDE TO THE WEST

For students of the West and other voracious readers, Charles F. Wilkinson has just published an invaluable resource: a comprehensive bibliography, *The American West, A Narrative Bibliography and a Study in Regionalism* divides 488 books into four sweeping categories that define the West as the author sees it: events, people, terrain and ideas. Wilkinson, a law professor at University of Colorado Law School, intends his compilation to reach policy-makers who, he believes, need a more integrated understanding of forces driving the American West. Wilkinson recommends mostly secondary sources on topics such as water development and natural history, and he also includes a smattering of his favorite Western novels. Although Wilkinson touches on just about every aspect of the West, he holds a strong bias toward cowboys, Indians and mountain men. This is an excellent jumping-off point for just about anybody.

University Press of Colorado, P.O. Box 849, Niwot, CO 80544; Cloth: \$19.95; Paper: \$9.95. 160 pages. Illustrated with six black and white photographs.

A WILDERNESS MARBLE QUARRY

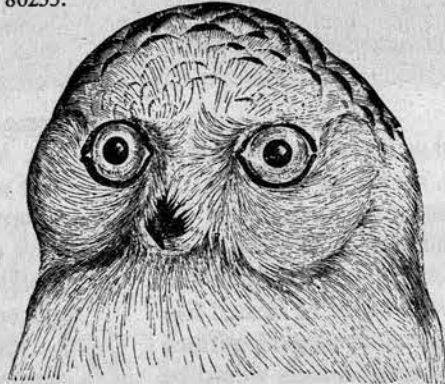
The Forest Service wants to know what people think about a controversial plan to quarry marble near a popular trail in one of the most heavily used wildernesses in the West. The Colorado state Mined Land Reclamation Division has issued conditional approval to Aspen miner Stefan Albouy to remove marble from the historic quarry near Conundrum Creek in the Maroon Bells-Snowmass Wilderness. The Forest Service says Albouy needs no federal permit to work the 472-acre claim, but Albouy has agreed to comply with conditions set by the agency to reduce environmental damage. Those conditions will be hammered out in an environmental impact statement the Forest Service is now preparing. To receive information on the quarrying plan, call the Aspen Ranger District at 303/925-3445. A public hearing is set for Feb. 14 at 7 p.m. in the Pitkin County Courthouse in Aspen. Written comments must be sent by March 16 to Gretchen Merrill, District Ranger, 806 W. Hallam St., Aspen, CO 81611.

LAW AND THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT

Rainforest destruction, global warming and conservation on an international scale are major subjects set for discussion March 1-4 at the eighth annual Public Interest Law Conference at the University of Oregon School of Law. Its theme is a "Grassroots Strategy for our Global Future," and speakers include David Brower, founder of Friends of the Earth and the Earth Island Institute; Petra Kelly, Green Party leader from West Germany; Jay Hair, president of the National Wildlife Federation; and Dennis Hayes, originator of Earth Day 1970 and chairman of Earth Day 1990. The gathering will also feature the second annual "That Ain't a Wetland, That's a Swamp" photo contest and exhibition. The conference is co-sponsored by Land Air Water (LAW), the environmental law society at the University of Oregon School of Law, and the school's Western Natural Resources Law Clinic. For registration and more information contact Penny Buell or Steve Koteff, c/o Land Air Water, University of Oregon School of Law, Eugene, OR 97403 (503/686-3823).

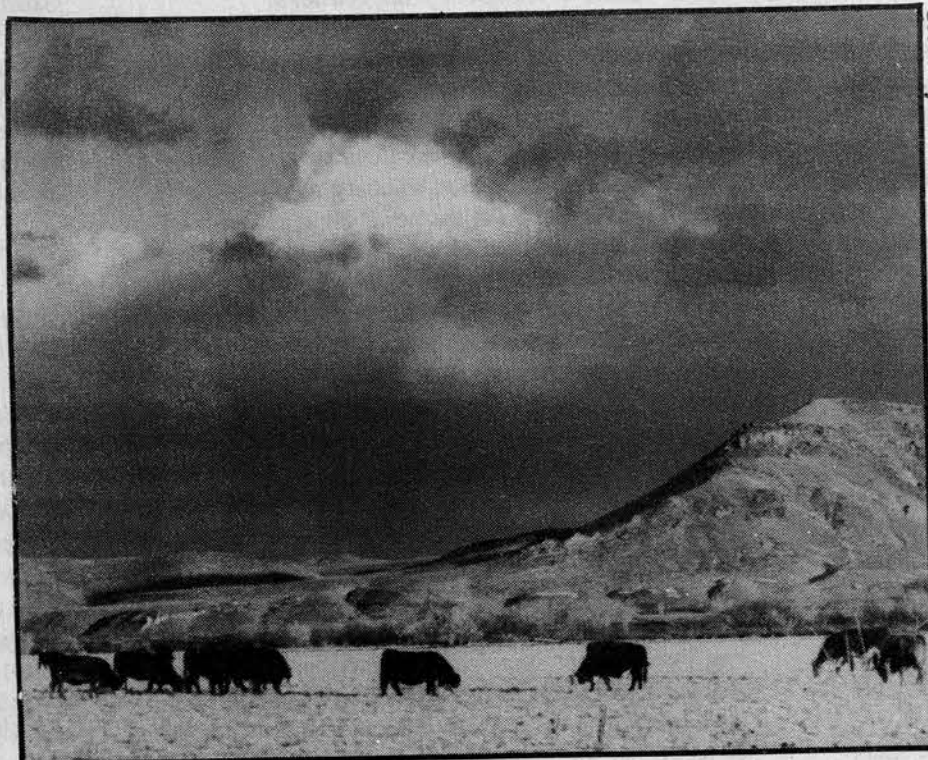
ENVIRONMENTAL TABOOS

Seeking protection for the environment that was more powerful than ordinary law, Aldo Leopold suggested a "land ethic." Marshall Massey, a writer and a Quaker environmentalist, proposes "environmental taboos," community-enforced rules that must never be broken. How do you go about starting a new taboo? In America, Massey answers, you amend the constitution, and that, he adds, should only be done with great care and plenty of discussion. To provide a forum for a discussion, Massey occasionally prints a 10-page *Environmental Amendment Circular*. His most recent, *Circular No. 3*, offers the texts of four proposals. The National Wildlife Federation's amendment, which Massey believes gives too much weight to economic interests, focuses on each person's right "to clean air, pure water, productive soils and the conservation of ... America's natural resources." Massey's amendment, in contrast, prohibits actions which would harm the environment, directs public authorities "to nurture the social bases of a sustainable human relationship with the natural world," and defends the right of citizens to sue in the defense of those provisions. For a \$1.50 postpaid copy of the circular or other publications on the environmental amendment, write Marshall Massey, 4353 E. 119th Way, Thornton, CO 80233.



CELEBRATE NONGAME ANIMALS

Ken Light will play his hand-crafted Native American flutes at the sixth annual Nongame Wildlife symposium in Lewistown, Mont., Feb. 28. The gathering also features films about hummingbirds and other animals as well as discussions about the wildlife of eastern Montana. For more information, contact Deborah Richie, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, 1420 E. Sixth Ave., Helena, MT 59620 (406/444-1276).



Cattle in winter pasture near Austin, Colorado

STILL AILING

A new report prepared by the National Wildlife Federation and the Natural Resources Defense Council says more than 94 million acres of public land in the West have been overgrazed by domestic livestock. Compiled from Bureau of Land Management data, *Our Ailing Public Lands: Still Ailing* says that range conditions have improved on only one percent, or slightly more than one million acres, of public rangeland since a similar report was prepared in 1985. In Colorado alone, the report says, more than

FACING THE LIMITS

Rising environmental costs of agriculture and scarce water are jeopardizing global food supplies, concludes a new Worldwatch publication, *Water for Agriculture: Facing the Limits*. Author Sandra Postel describes how irrigation is loading soil with salts, dropping groundwater tables and destroying the ecology of waterways around the world. Moreover, many regions that now enjoy adequate water supplies could enter chronic shortages in the 1990s, Postel says. The study calls for slowing population growth, improving irrigation efficiency and eliminating wasteful practices such as irrigating hayfields for cattle in the Western United States.

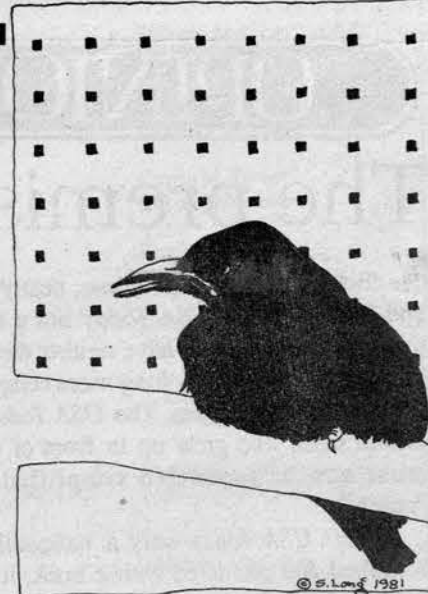
Worldwatch Institute, 1776 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20036. Paper: \$4. 54 pages.

PEACEFUL NETWORKING

Kimberly Mitchell, a resource assistant on the Nez-perce National Forest in Idaho, has begun a nonprofit group for people interested in conservation issues. It's called PEACE, an acronym for People for Ecological Awareness and Conservation Ethics, and it is connected by a bimonthly newsletter, *The PEACE Connection*. The four-page newsletter's objective is to increase awareness of how people's lives affect natural ecosystems, Mitchell says. It focuses on how individuals and groups can become involved in such issues as recycling, energy conservation and air pollution. Mitchell began PEACE last April from her home in Elk City and says it now reaches people all over the country. For more information, contact Kimberly Mitchell, PEACE, PO Box 122, Elk City, ID 83525-0122 (208/842-2386).

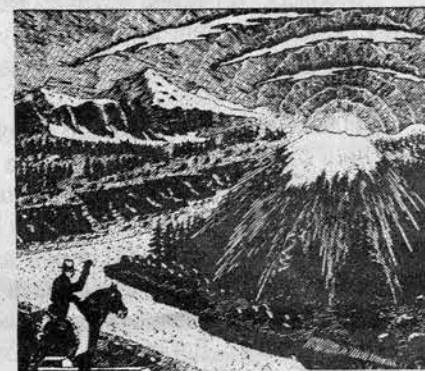
WYOMING SCHOLARS WANTED

Students of Wyoming history, culture and heritage may apply for \$2,000 research fellowships from the Wyoming Council for the Humanities. Proposed projects must include plans for communicating research findings to the public, and must not be for the purpose of completing a degree or meeting job requirements. Applicants needn't have humanities backgrounds but are asked to provide evidence of sufficient education, experience or specialized knowledge to complete their proposed projects. Potential applicants should contact the Wyoming Council for the Humanities, Box 3643, Laramie, WY 82071 (309/766-6496). The deadline for proposals is March 15.



MAKE YOUR BACKYARD GO WILD

Tired of grooming that patch of astroturf-like grass at your home? Why not transform it to a food-filled haven for yellow-rumped warblers, gray-crowned rosy finches and meadowlarks? Backyard wildlife kits offered by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department will help you make the switch. The kit includes a bird feeder with seed, a wooden bird house, chokecherry, sumac and sunflower seeds to plant for wildlife, a wildlife identification poster and bird identification book, plus information on landscaping to attract wildlife. Kits are available for \$20 from Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Alternative Enterprises, 5400 Bishop Blvd., Cheyenne, WY 82006. Third, fourth and fifth grade classroom teachers may acquire kits free; interested teachers should contact their principal.



WESTERN PROGRESSIVISM

Although the Western States Center in Portland, Ore., is young, it has ambitious goals. Founded in 1985, its focus is building networks and encouraging grass-roots activism on issues such as the environment, civil rights, peace and disarmament, women's rights and economic justice. More than 1,000 community leaders from Alaska to Utah have participated in its various workshops, and director Jeff Malachowsky says he plans now to organize in lower-income communities and to use art, music and literature to add vitality to social change efforts. For more information, contact Jeff Malachowsky, Executive Director, Western States Center, 522 SW 5th Ave., Suite 1390, Portland, OR 97204 (503/228-8866).

SOCIALLY AWARE SHOPPING

Would you, from a grocery cart, like to put your money where your ideas are? The new, 1990 edition of *Shopping for a Better World: A Quick and Easy Guide to Socially Responsible Supermarket Shopping*, put out by the Council on Economic Priorities, tries to help consumers do that. It rates 168 companies, large supermarket chains and over 1,800 products in 11 categories such as: charitable gifts, women and minority advancement, military contracts, community outreach, nuclear power, involvement in South Africa, contributions to a cleaner environment, and family benefits for employees. Colorado-based Adolph Coors received top marks in most categories but ranked low in the promotion of women and concern for the environment. Other Western companies rated include Tilamook Cheese (Portland, Ore.), ranking high in concern for the environment but failing to generously contribute to charities; Greyhound Corporation (Phoenix, Ariz.), receiving mediocre marks across the board; and Autumn Harp (Bristol, Utah), contributing to a clean environment but not promoting minorities. To order a copy of the guide send a \$4.95 (plus \$1 postage and handling) check or money order to: The Council on Economic Priorities, 30 Irving Place, New York, NY 10003.