

SEP 24 1990

High Country News

Vol. 22 No. 18

September 24, 1990

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar

Locals fight to protect rural way of life

West's ailing ski industry turns to all-season mega-resorts

by Florence Williams

For Bob and Elaine Gay, Pleasant Valley is aptly named. Bob, 75, and his son raise hay and cattle on 2,000 acres just south of Steamboat Springs, Colo., on land settled by Bob's parents in 1898. Elaine is famous throughout the valley for her apple pie.

It's a profoundly American way of life, but the Gays and their neighbors feel threatened by another American phenomenon that is challenging the West anew — large-scale recreational land development. The Gays' ranch sits at the base of Mt. Baldy, slated to become a huge all-season resort with 69 ski runs, two mountaintop restaurants, 3,700 houses and condominiums, and two championship golf courses.

Although their ranch is worth millions of dollars to developers, the Gays refuse to sell. If the Lake Catamount resort gets built, they will continue ranching as long as they can. "It's just not compatible to have that many people here," Bob Gay says. "We can't use four-lane highways to move our cattle."

The ski industry, once welcomed in the West, is turning into a pariah. As it gets harder to make a ski hill turn a profit, developers are pushing all-season destination resorts. But that concept, with its attendant off-hill development, threatens to overwhelm their host communities and has turned many mountain towns against the ski corporations.

Pleasant Valley's ranchers are not alone in opposing the Lake Catamount project. In fact, two polls conducted in Routt County, population 14,000, show that between 52 and 68 percent of residents there do not want Lake Catamount built.

But despite such strong public opposition, local politicians show no will to stop the developer's bulldozer. Routt, like so many other rural counties in the Rockies, lacks strong planning capabilities and receives little guidance from the state. The energy bust has left Routt County officials grappling for dollar signs and anxious to boost development.

The county's two traditional economic mainstays were coal mining and ranching until the Steamboat ski area, one of the three most popular in the state, was built in 1963. It promised a relatively clean, stable industry.

After Steamboat's success, the county approved plans for two additional ski areas in the early 1970s, one at the Catamount site and another one up the valley, called Stagecoach. But both ventures went bankrupt, and left considerable investor bitterness and environmental scars in their wake. The Catamount venture, which first dammed the Yampa

River, ended in lawsuits over flooding.

Now there is a new Lake Catamount joint venture. The company, made up of former Steamboat Ski Co. officials and the Houston-based Mitchell Energy Corp., says a luxury, year-round "destination" resort will help stabilize a seasonal economy, provide jobs, and boost the cultural amenities of the valley.

"We're a Fortune 500 company, with staying power and stability," says Richard Browne, a senior vice president of Mitchell Energy. "The Steamboat area will be greatly enhanced by Catamount."

The attitude of Steamboat Springs residents, however, has changed. They have seen the Aspen phenomenon, where affordable housing for local people has disappeared as the rich move in. Aspen has become the classic example of how not to grow. Wage earners there now commute as far as 70 miles a day one way, creating city-like traffic jams down the Roaring Fork valley all the way to Glenwood Springs.

Steamboat Springs residents like things the way they are. A poll sponsored by the Routt National Forest this spring found that 90 percent of respondents wanted to preserve existing values and lifestyles. Even more — 92 percent — wanted to maintain the farming and ranching heritage of the area.

"This [development] puts an incredible stress on the community," says Joan Hoffman, who runs an art gallery in Steamboat Springs. "There is no better place than where I live. The fact is, if Catamount is built, I'll be displaced. It

won't generate more business because I'll be out of business. The idea that bigger is better is not true at all. It will only bring in more low-paying jobs. People won't be able to afford to live here."

Cindy Wither, a local activist, fears that the new resort will ruin the highway between Steamboat and Catamount. Now a scenic drive over Rabbit Ears Pass, it could soon resemble the condo and fast-food strip between Vail and Eagle on Interstate 70. "Instead of quantity for this valley, I'd like to see quality," she says. "Quality is what makes Steamboat more competitive."

Rich Tremaine, a local lawyer, agrees. "I moved here from northern Virginia a year and a half ago, and have seen what happens when you plop a new town in the countryside. The big problems there were traffic and air pollution. Your quality of life changes dramatically."

Citizens have turned to the local government to put the brakes on growth, but stopping Catamount is no simple matter. In fact, the county finds itself in a bit of a bind. In 1972, it issued the original conceptual approvals of zoning changes at the base of Mt. Baldy, from agricultural forestry to recreation. Nearly 20 years later, the county commissioners say they could not renege on that decision even if they wanted to.

Says Commissioner Dennis Fisher: "I'm not sure I like the idea of my community being a playground for the rich, but I'm not sure we have any choice in

the matter." He says the project's fate now lies with the Forest Service, which must approve or deny a permit to lease 6,600 acres of Routt National Forest land for ski runs, lifts and restaurants.

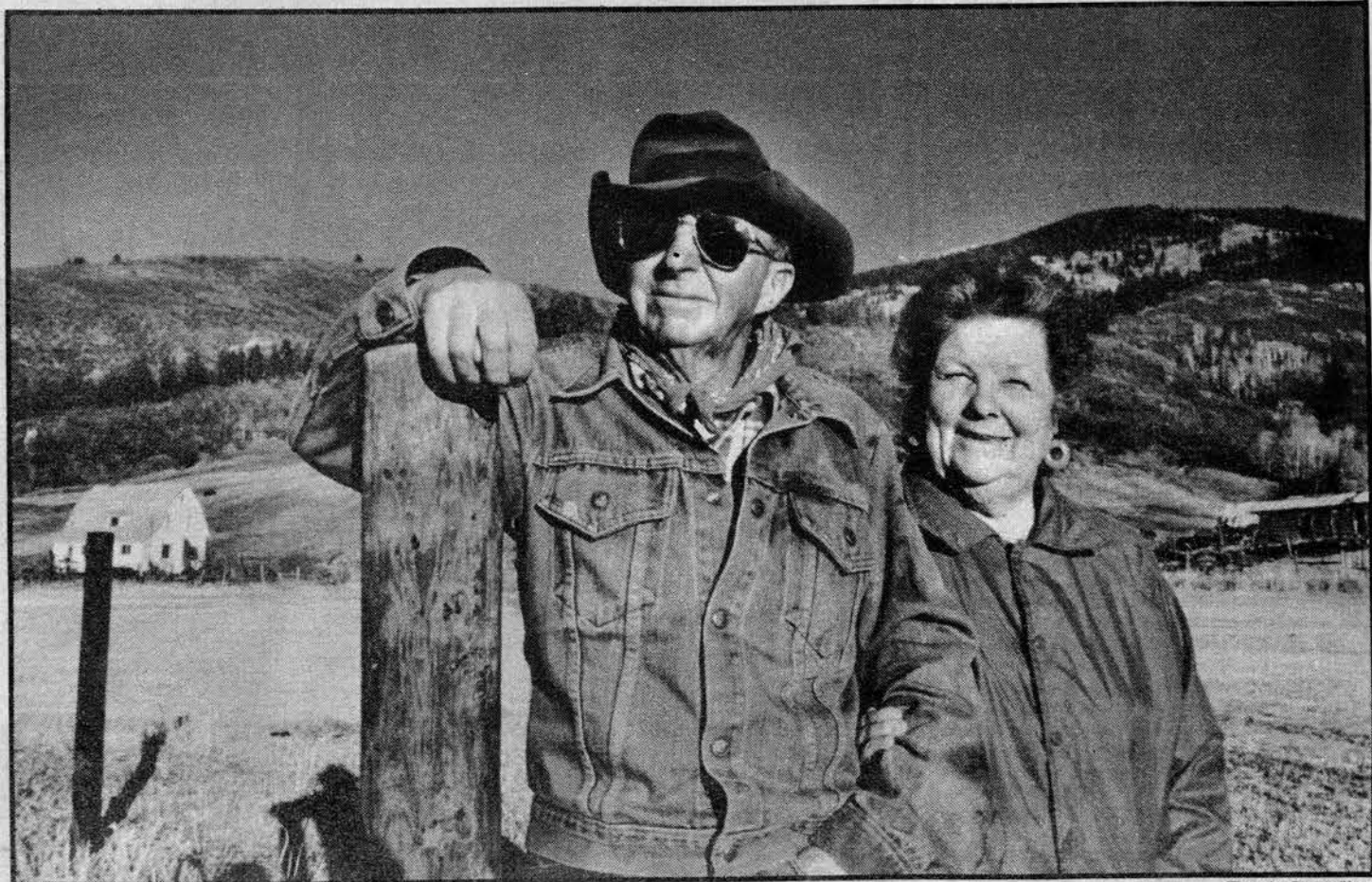
Both sides of the Catamount debate are now waiting to see what Forest Supervisor Jerry Schmidt decides. If he rejects the ski permit, the venture will either die a slow death or use its own private land — 3,000 acres surrounding the Gays' ranch — for golf.

The final environmental impact statement, on which Schmidt will base his decision, won't be ready until later this fall. That document has gone through numerous transformations as citizens insisted that every aspect of the project, from fireplaces to traffic lights, be studied. Schmidt's office received 2,000 letters commenting on the draft EIS that was issued last year.

Citizens were dismayed over the predicted environmental impacts. The document says Catamount would violate federal clean air standards, destroy 140 acres of wetland habitat for sandhill cranes, herons, muskrats and kingfishers, and displace deer, elk and black bear from 2,000 acres of range. Catamount would also encroach by several hundred acres into a proposed wilderness area.

Right now, Schmidt says, he is leaning toward approving the resort, or at least parts of it, assuming the environmental problems on the national forest land can be mitigated. He notes, howev-

(Continued on Page 10)



Bob and Elaine Gay on their ranch south of Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Travis Spradling



HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

(ISSN/0191/5657) is published biweekly, except for one issue during July and one issue during January, by the High Country Foundation, 124 Grand Avenue, Paonia, Colorado 81428. Second-class postage paid at Paonia, Colorado.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to HIGH COUNTRY NEWS, Box 1090, Paonia, CO 81428.

Subscriptions are \$24 per year for individuals and public libraries, \$34 per year for institutions. Single copies \$1.00 plus postage and handling. Special Issues \$3 each.

Tom Bell
Editor Emeritus

Ed Marston and Betsy Marston
Publisher and Editor on Leave

Lawrence Mosher
Editor

Mary Jarrett
Deputy Editor

Linda Bacigalupi
Associate Publisher

Steve Hinchman
Associate Editor

Lisa Jones
Staff Writer

Pat Ford
Northwest Regional Bureau

C.L. Rawlins
Poetry Editor

Diane Sylvain
Production/Graphics

Cindy Wehling
Desktop Publishing

Ann Ulrich
Typesetting

Kay Henry Bartlett
Circulation/Bookkeeping

Gretchen Nicholoff
Claire Moore-Murrill
Business

Lisa Rathke
Diane Grauer
Interns

Tom Bell, Lander WY
Lynn Dickey, Sheridan WY
Judy Donald, Washington, D.C.
Michael Ehlers, Boulder CO
Jeff Fereday, Boise ID
Bert Fingerhut, Aspen CO
Tom France, Missoula MT
Karl Frohboese, Park City UT
Sally Gordon, Kaycee WY
Bill Hedden, Moab UT
Dan Luecke, Boulder CO
Lynda S. Taylor, Albuquerque NM
Herman Warsh, Emigrant MT
Andy Weissner, Denver CO
Susan A. Williams, Phoenix AZ
Board of Directors

Articles appearing in *High Country News* are indexed in *Environmental Periodicals Bibliography*, Environmental Studies Institute, 800 Garden St., Suite D, Santa Barbara, California 93101.

All rights to publication of articles in this issue are reserved. Write for permission to print any articles or illustrations. Contributions (manuscripts, photos, artwork) will be welcomed with the understanding that the editors cannot be held responsible for loss or damage. Enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope with all unsolicited submissions to ensure return. Articles and letters will be edited and published at the discretion of the editors.

Advertising information is available upon request. To have a sample copy sent to a friend, send us his or her address. Write to Box 1090, Paonia, Colorado 81428. Call *High Country News* in Colorado at 303/527-4898.

Dear friends,

Dear staff

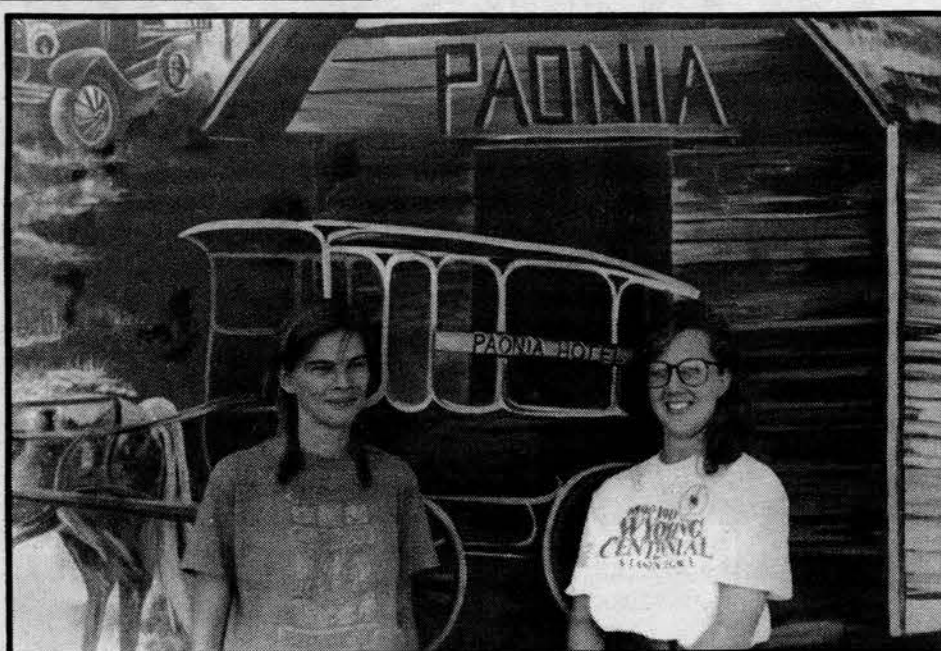
High Country News' publisher Ed Marston sent in his first "Dear staff" letter, portions of which we would like to share with our readers. Ed and Betsy, *HCN's* editor-on-leave, were en route to Palo Alto, Calif., where they will enjoy a year in academe. After reaching the north rim of the Grand Canyon, Ed recounted:

"The shocking thing is how clean everyone looks. Scrubbed, ironed, mascaraed, pleated, combed and shaved. A German tour group we saw at Bryce National Park is traveling in a huge sleeper bus with German license plates. (Did they bridge the Atlantic while we've been traveling?) One woman and her husband approached a bench outside the Bryce Lodge. It looked spotless to me. But the woman wouldn't sit on it. Too *schmootsig*, she said — a word I recognized from my Yiddish.

"Despite the cleanliness, we love the national parks. People come prepared to appreciate them. All you hear is, 'beautiful,' 'awesome,' 'I can't find the words.' They are also quiet campers — very respectful of others. Even the big travel trailers turn off their generators by 8 p.m. "And the fireside talks are well-attended, although they are often delivered in a high-pitched kindergarten tone. A wonderful exception was Chaco Canyon, where 30 miles of washboard keeps most of the 'clean people' out. We took a wonderful hike over the plateau and felt as if we were on a self-propelled raft trip. The park ranger gave a great talk about Chacoan astronomy and a great tour of one of the ruins the next day...."

Visitors

On a couple of summer afternoons, so many people popped in to our jumbled little office that it looked and sounded like a stand-up cocktail party. The shift from



Diane Sylvain

Lisa Rathke, left, and Diane Grauer disembark in Paonia

summer into fall has condemned us to a quieter social life. One of our few visitors was Irene Walkiw of Albuquerque, who was on her way to Alaska via Seattle. She will be a fisheries observer for three months. Last spring she performed the same duties aboard a Soviet trawler off Bergen, Norway.

From Durango, Colo., came Andrea Avantaggio and Peter Schertz, on their way to a family reunion in Conifer. Andrea is a wilderness ranger. We also welcomed a Gray Panther honcho — William E. Rhodes, who chairs the Denver chapter. In 12 years with the University of Denver and as first director of the Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities, Bill told us, he had covered the state pretty thoroughly, except for this pocket. So now he has seen it all!

Two new interns

Lisa Rathke comes to us from the East Coast — Burlington, Vt., where she

worked as a reporter for a small weekly newspaper, as an editorial assistant for *Harrowsmith Country Life*, and, most recently, as an editorial assistant for Camden House Publishing. We are honored that she chose a three-month unpaid sojourn here at *HCN*. Lisa says she is here to learn more about environmental reporting and the West.

Diane Grauer, who was born and raised just outside Detroit, Mich., is a junior at Dartmouth College. She is a religion/English major and a member of the women's crew team. Diane says her interest in the West and Western environmental issues began last summer, when she worked at a dude ranch in Dubois, Wyo. This interest led her to take a course at Dartmouth in social and political aspects of the environment. She says the things she learned while taking this course, combined with her love for the West and her desire to become a better writer, were what made her decide to come to *HCN*.

Our ski story

The photo on the left shows teenagers in Steamboat Springs, Colo., protesting another ski development at nearby Lake Catamount. When former staff reporter Florence Williams began her assignment on Colorado's distressed ski industry, we thought it would be just that. But our recent expansion into the Pacific Northwest brought us another story, by former *HCN* intern Lisa McKhann, about another proposed ski resort in central Washington. When we read both pieces, we realized our story had just expanded.

To this mix we then added a third story by our new staff reporter, Lisa Jones, about a very small ski facility proposed in New Mexico. The Hummingbird project, however, would have to go on a slice of the Gila Wilderness Area. This may well doom it. But the Hummingbird story adds a significant comparison to our coverage of the economic trend.

On the mend

Associate editor Steve Hinchman fell off his horse late last month, which was bad enough. But he also broke his right arm at the wrist. Since then Steve has been bravely scratching out his editing work in a wavery left-hand scrawl. We are grateful for his perseverance, and look forward with him to the day he can break his cast.

—Larry Mosher and Mary Jarrett
for the staff



WESTERN ROUNDUP

Forest Service 'mitigates' oil situation

In response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the U.S. Forest Service may consider loosening environmental protections that limit oil and gas drilling in national forests and grasslands.

An in-house Forest Service document, titled "A Proposed Strategy for Mitigating Persian Gulf Situation," recommends abbreviating environmental impact studies and reviewing cases to see if drilling can be encouraged by modifying environmental safeguards.

"Even without the Persian Gulf problem there are good reasons for re-examining our role in providing energy from national Forest Service lands," says the document, which cites a drop in domestic production of oil and an increase in imports, as well as revenues lost when land isn't leased in a timely manner. It adds that if there aren't enough personnel in a given area to meet drilling requests, specialized teams should be assembled from other forests.

"Drilling should be given the same urgency and management attention as fire," it says.

Written by the Forest Service's minerals and geology staff, the proposal was leaked to *The Washington Post* this month. Agency officials emphasize that the proposal is an "idea document" that is still being developed and hasn't yet been submitted for approval.

David Fredley, assistant minerals director for the Forest Service, told the *Post* that the proposal would not curtail environmental protections. "There is no way that any proposal would receive serious consideration in the Forest Service that reduced the level of environmental concern," he said.

"We will only authorize the development of oil and gas resources in an environmentally responsible manner," said a memo attached to the four-page document. But environmentalists view the proposal dimly.

"I was shocked when I read this," said David Alberswerth, the director of the public lands and energy program at the National Wildlife Federation. "And I was disappointed, because we'd been working hard with the Forest Service

and had made some progress." He added that the National Academy of Sciences and the General Accounting Office had recently made recommendations to improve planning for oil and gas leasing on federal lands.

"To the Forest Service's credit, they had acknowledged some of these problems," he said. "But at the first opportunity, they'll just throw it all out in some kind of panicked effort to suck all of the oil out of national forest lands."

Phil Hocker, of the Mineral Policy Center in Washington, D.C., called the proposal "not only environmentally irresponsible, but simply foolish." Pointing out an amendment authored by Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, that could pave the way for more drilling on public lands, he added, "While we sort of understand some members of Congress panicking, we're particularly disappointed that the Forest Service, which is supposed to be the responsible steward over the long term, is trying to outdo Congress in panicking."

— Lisa Jones

Raw-log export ban helps Northwest

Trees cut on state lands in the West can no longer slip past local mills onto foreign-bound ships. The partial ban, contained in the Customs and Trade Act of 1990, is expected to ease the effects of spotted-owl protection on mill closures in the Pacific Northwest.

"It's good news for Oregon," said Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., who championed the raw-log export ban along with Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore. "Our mills need the logs and our millworkers need the jobs."

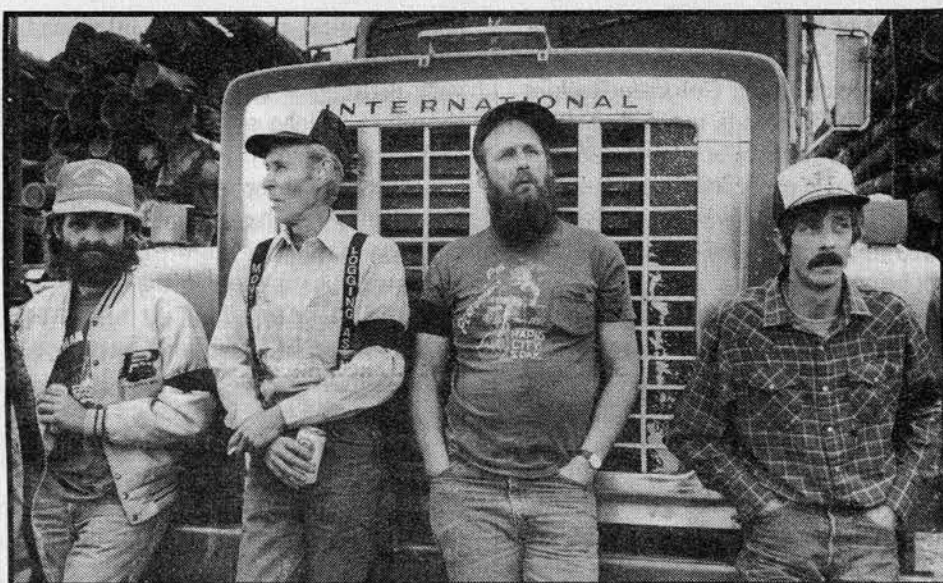
Although the ban applies to all Western states except Alaska and Hawaii, it will have its biggest impact in Oregon and Washington. State lands there have provided 600 million board-feet a year of log exports — one-sixth of the region's total. Washington state, whose Department of Natural Resources is the region's second biggest log exporter, will still be allowed to export a quarter of its timber. But requiring that the rest of the timber be milled in the United States will save about 6,000 jobs, including longshoremen's jobs, according to Dave Stere of the Oregon Department of Forestry.

The bill also makes permanent the ban on exports from federal lands, which has required annual legislation since 1974, and eliminates the "substitution" loophole that allowed companies to export private logs while buying federal logs from the same area.

The export debate now shifts to the region's private lands, which produced some three billion board-feet of raw logs for export last year. The region's lawmakers are considering new taxes on log exports and other tax incentives to encourage domestic processing. President Bush also has been asked to ban private log exports on the grounds that domestic timber is in short supply. The Weyerhaeuser Co., the region's biggest exporter, opposes such a move.

Rep. Bruce E. Vento, D-Minn., also has introduced a bill to create an "ancient forest preserve" to protect 6.3 million acres of old growth in Oregon, Washington and California. Vento is chairman of the Interior and Insular Affairs Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands.

Vento's bill directs federal agencies



Kurt Wilson

Loggers at the 1988 Great Northwest Log Haul protest in Darby, Mont.

to sell only three billion board-feet a year in the Northwest, instead of the annual average of 4.2 billion board-feet during the 1980s. The bill would protect millions of acres of timber for three years while old growth is inventoried, and would require "new forestry" techniques. It also calls for increasing the counties' share of federal timber revenues. Most of the Northwest congressional delegation opposes the bill, which makes its passage unlikely without substantial modification.

The House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior also approved a spending bill last July that would lower the timber cut on Northwest national forests to three billion board-feet, from 3.85 billion board-feet last year. This is higher than the 2.7 billion board-feet suggested by Rep. Sidney Yates, D-Ill., the panel's chairman, and the 1.5 to two billion board-feet suggested by environmentalists.

The Forest Service, meanwhile, has announced that timber sales in Oregon and Washington will end up almost 10 percent short of the 7.7 billion board-foot target set by Congress last year. The Forest Service is already behind in preparing fiscal year 1991's sales, which means that it may not be able to meet next year's goal.

Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson, who has survived repeated rumors of his impending demise and calls for his

resignation, has admitted that only about 10 percent of the Northwest's "old trees" remain, and that half of those may be cut over the next five decades. Robertson told Vento's subcommittee July 24 that about six million acres of old growth still remain on Northwest national forests. About half are protected from logging and half are scheduled to be cut over the next 30 to 50 years, he said.

— Jim Stiak

BARBS

Did he catch any suckers?

When George Bush went fishing in Wyoming last July, the state Game and Fish Department stocked the creek he fished with 212 trout so that the Chief Executive would not go home empty-handed, reports the *Casper Star-Tribune*. The President caught a number of trout ranging from eight to 14 inches.

At those prices, you can hardly afford to stay home.

A new study shows that a week of skiing in Aspen — including air fare to and from New York or Los Angeles — costs just under \$3,000 for a couple, not counting food and drink. The Aspen Skiing Co., which commissioned the study, says the results show that Aspen is an affordable resort.

HOTLINE

'Sparred' owls found

In news that could be out of the pages of a supermarket tabloid, spotted owls have been found crossbreeding with barred owls. Wildlife biologists have found two of the hybrids, nicknamed "sparred" owls — one in the Washington Cascades and the other in southern Oregon. The barred owl has extended its range south from British Columbia into northern California over the past two decades, biologists believe, because of its ability to live in logged areas. The scientists also say it's impossible to tell yet if this is the first sign of the evolution of a new owl species. The discovery should have little immediate effect on the listing of the spotted owl as "threatened," say U.S. Fish and Wildlife officials.

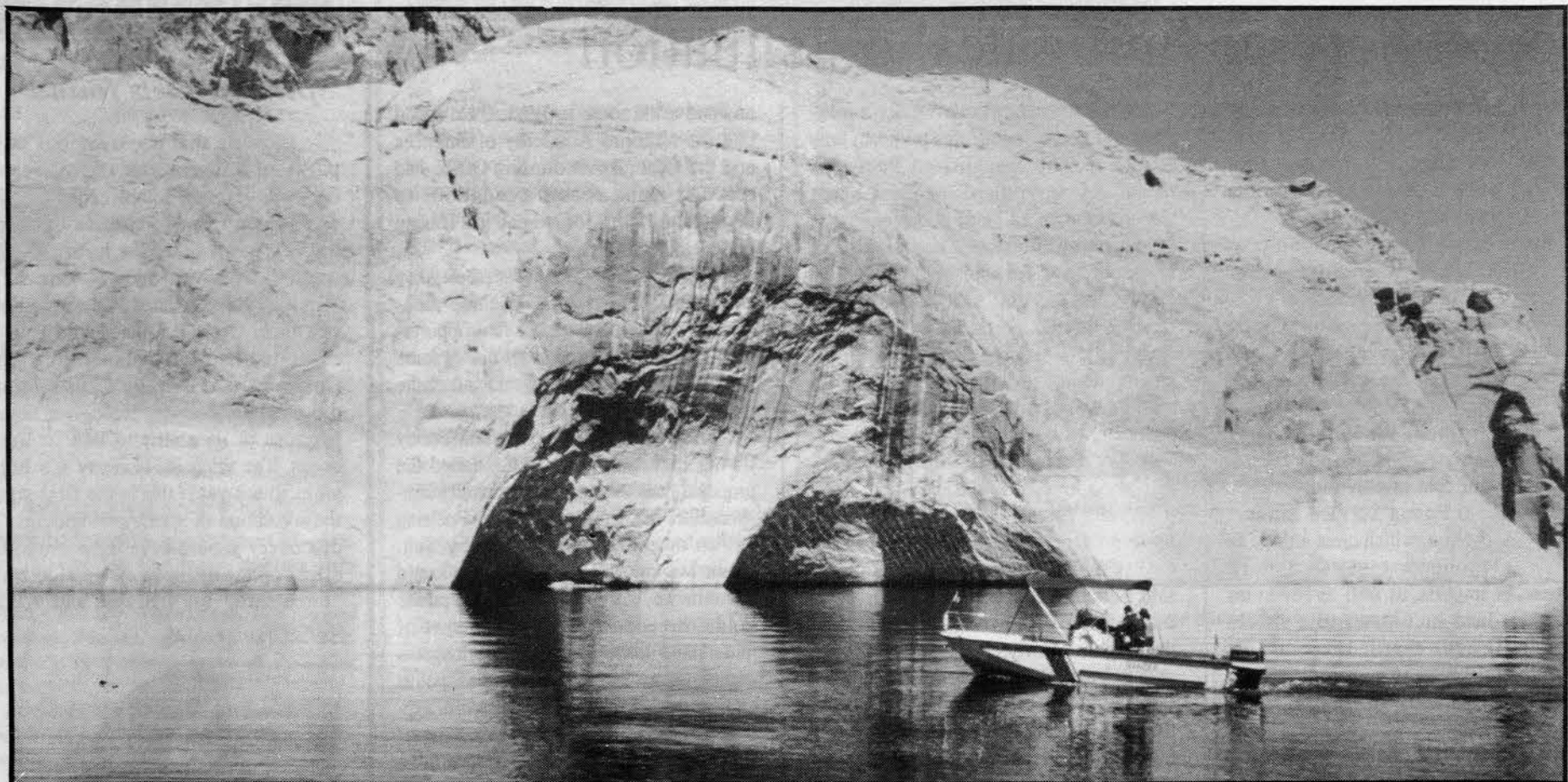


EPA pulls up stakes in Wyoming

Wyoming officials have asked the Environmental Protection Agency to reconsider its decision to close its sole state office, in Casper. The EPA announced that it would close the office Oct. 1 because it now has six staff members at its regional headquarters in Denver, Colo., dealing with Wyoming hazardous-waste issues. Moreover, with increased state authority over hazardous wastes, the agency says its daily presence in Wyoming is no longer needed. But state officials say the closing is premature, especially in light of the number of ongoing and newly discovered hazardous-waste problems plaguing Wyoming's oil and gas industry (*HCN*, 11/20/89). In a recent letter to the EPA, Gov. Mike Sullivan, D, protested that until the state legislature regulates hazardous wastes, "it is imperative that EPA maintain an active presence in Wyoming," reports the *Casper Star-Tribune*.

Benefits of Symms' trail bill questioned

A proposal to use \$50 million in federal off-road-vehicle gas taxes to maintain recreational trails has come under attack by conservationists who argue that the proposal will undermine current land management practices. The bill was introduced by Sen. Steve Symms, R-Idaho, and drafted with the help of the Blue Ribbon Coalition, an off-road motorists' group. Under the plan, state trail advisory boards would submit grant applications for trail improvement to a federal panel that would approve funding, reports the *Idaho Falls Post Register*. However, Mike Medberry of the Idaho Conservation League believes the state board would serve limited interests. "The state board is not fairly balanced. It's heavily weighted toward off-road-vehicle users," he said. Medberry also fears the review panels will do more harm than good. "It's clear that the allocation of money will be a political decision, rather than a natural-resource decision, and it ties the hands of the federal agencies." Trevor Norris, a spokesman for Symms, says that Medberry's fears are unfounded.

M. Ging, *The Arizona Republic*

A white "bathtub ring" is evidence of declining water levels at Lake Powell

Hydro generation pulls the plug on Lake Powell

PAGE, Ariz. — Bill Briggs slowed his motorboat to a crawl. He pointed to the top of a 30-foot-high white "bathtub ring" staining the towering orange walls of Lake Powell's Navajo Canyon.

"The water was up *there* this time last year," said Briggs, a Park Service ranger at Glen Canyon National Recreation Area. "I hate to think where it's going to be in the future."

One answer is, another 20 feet lower by next March, said Larry May, assistant park superintendent. His estimate is based on Bureau of Reclamation and National Weather Service predictions of continued below-normal moisture in the upper Colorado River basin.

The plug is being pulled on Lake Powell because of increased hydroelectric generation at Glen Canyon Dam and the downriver water deliveries established by the 1922 Colorado River Compact. Lloyd Greiner, area manager for Western Area Power Administration in Salt Lake City, said the lake is expected to lose more than four million acre-feet of water this year.

"Under the Colorado River Compact, there has to be 8.2 million acre-feet released annually at Glen Canyon Dam for the lower states," Greiner said. "All the projections we have so far indicate that there will be only four million

acre-feet of water added to the lake for 1990."

Snowmelt in the Colorado Rockies and the Utah uplands more than compensated for releases at the dam in past years. But two consecutive dry years — this spring's runoff was down by two-thirds — have dropped Lake Powell 58 feet below its capacity.

Park Service officials are especially worried about recreational uses of the lake. The number of visitors has rapidly increased during the past decade to about three million people a year.

"We can't even begin to mark all the hazards now in Lake Powell," May said. "It would be wall-to-wall signs."

The Park Service already has spent \$1.5 million to lengthen its four boat ramps at the Utah-Arizona state line, Halls Crossing, Bullfrog and Hite areas, May said. A concrete extension 80 yards long had to be added at the state-line ramp.

An inlet that once connected Bullfrog and Halls Creek bays near Halls Crossing dried up seven months ago as the lake's level dropped. Boaters must now travel an additional 12 miles to get from the center of one bay to the other.

May said he is "extremely concerned" about the impact of off-road vehicles on previously inaccessible

archaeological sites as other inlets and channels dry up. Law enforcement is very difficult at the lake, which has a shoreline as long as the distance from Mexico to Canada.

The drop in the water level already has destroyed a large number of clam beds by exposing them to air, with unknown consequences to the underwater habitat, May added. It also has uncovered about 100 boat batteries, which contain sulfuric acid and lead, in the Wahweap Lodge and Marina area.

The lake is now at its lowest ebb since the 1970s, when it was being filled after its christening in 1963. In 1983, devastating floods almost wiped out the dam's spillways and led to record releases down the Colorado River. The lake remained full until three years ago, when the current drought began. Bureau of Reclamation officials now say it will take at least five years of above-normal precipitation to fill the lake again.

Conversations at the lake these days center on whether it will be safe to go boating next year. Assistant park superintendent May frets the most about what's going to happen to the main channel between Castle Rock and Antelope Island near Wahweap. That channel is the primary route for houseboats leaving the marina for the heavily visited

tourist areas to the north, like Rainbow Bridge.

If the predicted additional 20-foot drop occurs by March, the channel will be impassable except by very small boats, May said. This would add nine miles and one hour to each houseboat trip. Park Service officials are considering dredging the channel.

"People have gotten spoiled because all we've seen is a bigger lake each year. But we're watching a spiral in the other direction now," said Betty Jo Roundtree, manager of the Wahweap Marina. The marina has been moved three times in the past five months. Twenty-five houseboats are launched daily from the marina on tourist trips, Roundtree said.

May also fears that a large-scale invasion of tamarisk trees will occupy the newly exposed beaches. The long roots of the tamarisks would most likely foul boat propellers for years after the lake again rises.

"This is definitely a new lake and a new adventure," Roundtree said.

— Mark Shaffer

Mark Shaffer covers northern Arizona for *The Arizona Republic*.

HOTLINE

Timber cuts slashed

Foresters in eastern and central Arizona's 2.1-million-acre Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest are slashing timber quotas in the forest's 10-year management plan. For the next three years, at least, timber harvests will drop 29 percent below projections. The action stems from prodding by the public and Forest Service staffers who said overcutting would damage wildlife and forest production for centuries, reports *The Arizona Republic*. Apache-Sitgreaves Forest Supervisor John Bedell said, "If we're going to sustain an even flow of timber for the next 100 to 120 years, we have to do something now." When Bedell discussed the situation with staffers, he said, he "found that no one was comfort-

able with what we were doing." The reassessment is the result of an agreement among the agency, conservation groups and timber companies and focuses on old-growth management, the endangered spotted owl, timber suitability and wood-products demand. The agreement also forbids cable-logging in canyons with live streams.

Logging reduced in biggest forest's plan

Oregon's Willamette National Forest, the biggest timber producer of the country's 154 national forests, has released a new forest plan that calls for a 23 percent decrease in logging, widespread use of "new forestry" techniques, and a two-year delay in logging



the contested Opal Creek roadless area. The plan calls for cutting 491 million board feet a year, down from the 640 million average of the past decade. Willamette Supervisor Mike Kerrick says that level will drop further if spotted owl protection plans are implemented. Timber industry officials protested the reduction, but the Oregon Natural Resources Council still wants a timber sales level of 150 million board-feet. Natural Resources Council president Tom Giesen compared the Willamette to a battleship: "It takes a long time to turn around," he said. "What we need to do is lift it out of the water and swap ends."

DOE lends a hand to Western states

The Department of Energy has agreed to help 10 Western states develop safety plans for the transportation of radioactive waste to the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad, N.M. Under the DOE agreement, the Western Governors' Association will receive a \$1.5 million grant from the department to create programs for accident prevention, emergency procedures and public information on the transportation of radioactive waste to WIPP, reports *The Associated Press*. States with WIPP routes that are participating in the agreement are Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Utah, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, California, Nevada and Arizona.



Montana Department of Highways

Buffalo at Montana's National Bison Range

Plans vary on controlling infected bison

Federal and state agencies are working on plans that will decide the futures of bison in Montana and Wyoming.

Half the herds in both states are believed to carry brucellosis, a disease stockgrowers fear can be transmitted to cattle and lead to spontaneous abortions of calves. Infected cattle must be destroyed.

To prevent spread of the disease, agencies now allow the shooting of bison that wander from protection zones into cattle-grazing areas. Wyoming killed its first three strays in July, but Montana has hunted bison that wander beyond Yellowstone's boundaries since

1988. Since that first hunt, when 500 bison were killed, the event has turned into an annual confrontation between hunters and animal-rights activists.

Now the National Park Service, the Forest Service and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks are combining efforts to develop a management plan for Yellowstone's wide-ranging bison. In mid-July, the agencies released a document outlining six management proposals, ranging from continuing the hunt to allowing the bison free migration. An Environmental Impact Statement is expected in about two years.

In Wyoming, Game and Fish Department officials hope to have a plan of attack by Nov. 1 aimed at eradicating brucellosis in that state by the year 2010. The department has special impetus since a Dubois rancher filed a \$1.13-million damage claim against the agency. The rancher had to destroy his brucellosis-infected cattle herd in 1989 and charges that they caught the disease from wild animals.

Send requests for copies of the Yellowstone document to: Bison Management Plan, P.O. Box 168, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190.

— Ken Wright

Colorado's wilderness water still moot

It's back to square one in the court battle over water rights in Colorado's wilderness areas. The 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver has struck down former U.S. District Judge John Kane Jr.'s landmark 1985 ruling on the 1964 Wilderness Act.

That decision specifically recognized federal reserved water rights in all of Colorado's 24 wilderness areas. In throwing out Kane's ruling last month, the appellate court has pacified the water developers without touching the basic issue of whether the Wilderness Act established reserved water rights. The circuit court held that the case should not have been heard at all because the Sierra Club, which had initially sued the U.S. Forest Service, did not allege that a specific wilderness was at risk.

The Sierra Club had argued that the Wilderness Act automatically established reserved federal water rights to all the water in order to guarantee the land's "primeval character and influence, without permanent improvements or human habitation." The appellate court said it did not doubt the legality of the Sierra Club's argument. But it held that the courts had no authority under the Wilderness Act to review the Forest Service's water management decisions unless "an irreconcilable threat" to the act's mandate had been alleged.

Water developers oppose any definition of federal reserved water rights that gives wilderness all the water. The reason has to do with location.

With one exception, all of Colorado's wilderness areas are headwaters regions, and therefore upstream of water rights holders. Allowing all of the water to flow freely in the high mountain areas poses few problems.

But the water providers are concerned that in the mid-1990s, when Bureau of Land Management lands become eligible for wilderness designation, a reserved water right precedent could prove to be an obstacle. The BLM lands tend to be lower in altitude and downstream of existing private water rights. Water developers fear that, should a reserved right be granted for the BLM wilderness areas, upstream municipalities and agricultural interests will literally be left high and dry.

Soon after the Kane decision, Sen. William L. Armstrong, R-Colo., announced that he would block any wilderness legislation until the water rights controversy was resolved. Under Senate protocol, wilderness bills must have the blessing of both senators in a given state, so Armstrong's wilderness moratorium carried clout.

Following a failed attempt at compromise, Armstrong and Sen. Timothy E. Wirth, D-Colo., introduced competing wilderness bills. The water language in the legislation remains the largest obstacle.

Wirth aide John Frew predicted that the issue of reserved water rights is going to be decided, either by the courts or Congress. The appellate court ruling "doesn't deter Tim in the slightest," he said.

But if Wirth remains adamant, so do the water interests. Harold Miskel, who has served as point man for the Colorado Water Congress and helped draft Armstrong's bill, said the circuit court decision has helped his cause. "It's a very favorable decision for us, but it doesn't solve the problem," Miskel said.

Lori Potter, of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, downplayed the importance of the decision. "It's a detour of sorts, but we're winning the war on wilderness water."

Indeed, wilderness bills in Nevada, New Mexico and Washington in the past two years have included language similar to that proposed by Wirth. And even in overturning the Kane ruling, the circuit court virtually invited another lawsuit from conservationists. Appeals Court Judge Frank Theis wrote that Kane's initial ruling "may well be vindicated in the appropriate case."

Potter wouldn't rule out filing another federal lawsuit, but said the best way to obtain permanent protection for wilderness water is through Congress, not the courts. And any congressional resolution would have to wait until at least 1991. Wirth has no incentive to work out compromises with Armstrong, a lame duck. Instead, Wirth will await the results of Colorado's Senate race and try to hammer out a wilderness bill with Armstrong's successor.

— Barry Noreen

Barry Noreen is a reporter for the Colorado Springs Gazette Telegraph.

HOTLINE

Las Vegas water grab protested

Thirsty Las Vegas' plans to divert water from rural Nye, White Pine and Lincoln counties have elicited a record number of protests. Las Vegas wants 865,000 acre-feet of water from rural aquifers to accommodate its rapid population growth (*HCN*, 5/21/90). Christine Thiel of the Nevada Water Resources Division said her office received over 3,600 protests against the plan, reports The Associated Press. "The volume of protest was tremendous, and it's much more than we have ever received on a single project before," she said.

Oregon chainsaw hits spike

A chainsaw wielded by an Oregon logger on Aug. 8 struck a ceramic spike driven into a tree in the Siuslaw National Forest. The logger was not injured by the spike, which was in a timber-sale stand that had been a site of protests. Earlier in the year, forest headquarters had received letters warning of spikes. A survey by an Oregon logging group has documented 23 such acts of "ecotage" against logging operations over the past two years. The Associated Oregon Loggers survey found \$380,000 of damage from tree-spike and equipment vandalism.

Banned but not forgotten

Like an unwanted ghost, DDT is coming back to haunt Carlsbad Caverns in southern New Mexico. Bats were recently found contaminated by the pesticide in levels not seen since 1973, a year after it was banned from the United States. Scientists are hunting for the source of the chemical, reported the *El Paso Times*. The pesticide enters the bats through insects the animals eat. Once ingested, DDT concentrates in fat cells and is passed on to young bats through the mother's milk. During arduous migration flights to Mexico, the chemical is also released into the bloodstream, killing the bats. Milford Fletcher, chief scientist for the Park Service's Southwest region, said bats from the caverns feed primarily on insects in the Pecos Valley, which was a DDT "hot spot" before the ban. He said wet and dry weather fluctuations may draw out DDT residues left over from the pre-ban days, and if that is the case, the problem is out of anyone's control.

Garrison rides again

Despite recommendations from the Bush Administration and the Department of the Interior to cancel funding for North Dakota's giant Garrison water project, Congress has granted the troubled irrigation project a reprieve (*HCN*, 5/21/90). In August, the Senate approved an energy and water development bill that included \$35 million for the project, which was begun in 1965 but is still \$1.2 billion away from completion. Previously, the House had approved \$30 million for the diversion, reports The Associated Press. Sen. Quentin Burdick, D-N.D., said the decision shows Congress is committed to the project, "despite the Bush Administration's attempts to block Garrison money."

Arizona's mountain wetlands thrive on sewage effluent

Wetlands don't come to mind when you think of Arizona. Yet, some of the most productive marshland in the nation has been created from sewage effluent in the White Mountains of east-central Arizona.

Rising from 6,000 to 11,590 feet in elevation, this 1,800-square-mile area is the state's primary watershed. Outdoor recreation, timber harvesting and livestock production provide the basis of the economy for several small communities with an average population of 5,000.

The lakes and streams of this mountainous pine belt have always sheltered families of migrating waterfowl. But, since the first man-made marsh was built 10 years ago, the population of migrating waterbirds has tripled.

On any given winter day, half-frozen lakes shelter several hundred ducks, geese and heron. Rocky Mountain elk, mule deer and wild turkey water at daybreak, and within earshot of residential areas, eagle and osprey find refuge.

It hasn't always been that way. With residents dumping sewage into backyard leachfields for more than 30 years, the creeks, shallow wells and one spring had become dangerously contaminated by the 1960s, although the deeper aquifer remained clear.

Glynn Valerie, a Lakeside resident since 1924 and chairman of the board of the local sanitary district, said, "The Arizona Health Department was on our backs. Farm Home put a moratorium on financing new homes in the area."

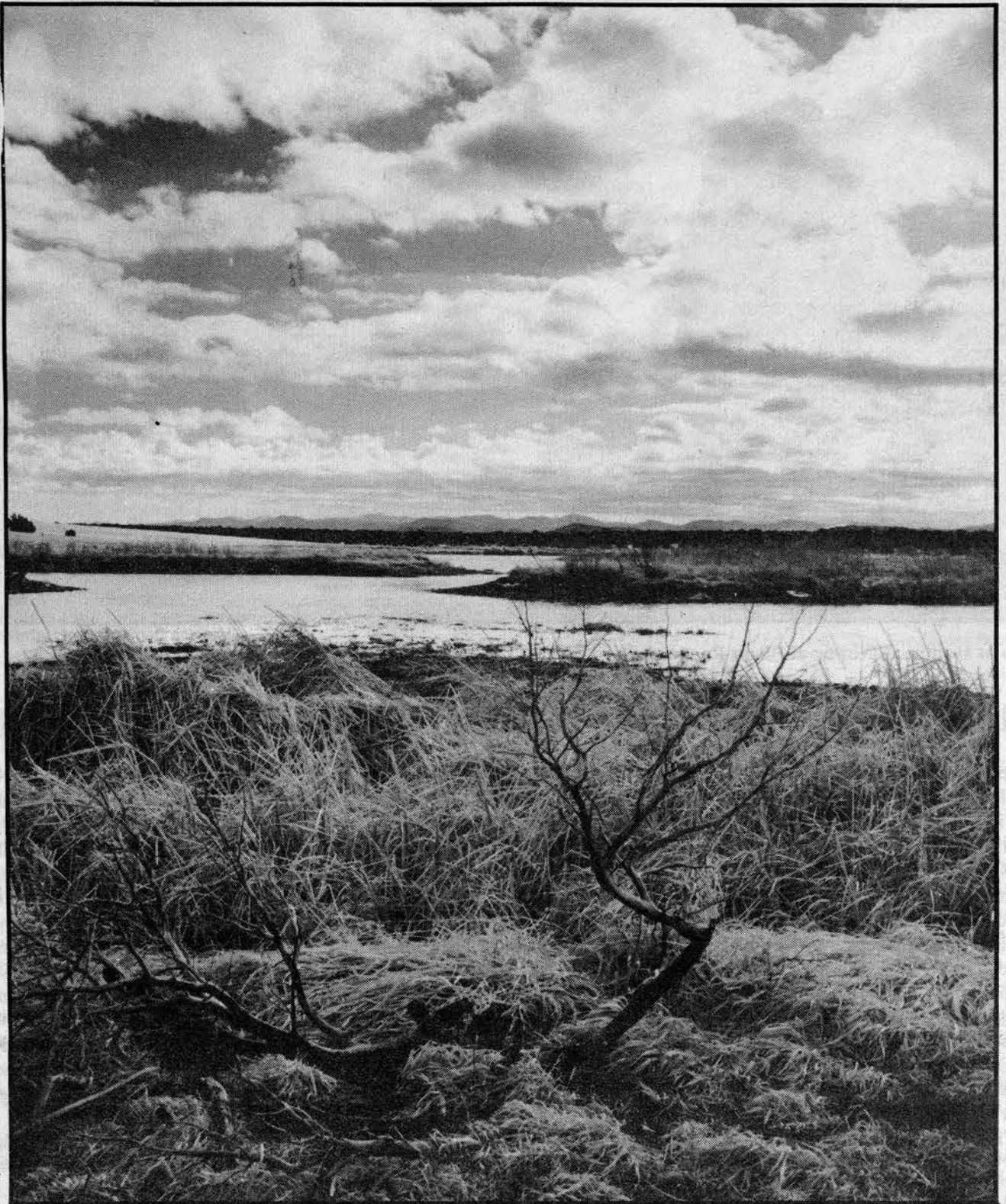
In the early '70s, Valerie and a handful of other citizens formed a sanitary district for the unincorporated towns of Pinetop and Lakeside to avert a health crisis. An engineering firm was hired, and work began on a town sewage system, but homeowners complained about the high cost of hookups due to the presence of basaltic rock. It took another 10 years, until the towns incorporated in 1984, to mandate hookups. About half the Pinetop-Lakeside area and 80 percent of Show Low, 10 miles north, are currently on sewers.

The next snag the sanitary district hit was finding a place to dump effluent from the new \$4.5 million treatment plant. Fearing offensive odors, the town of Show Low said no to diverting the water into a drainage that ran their way. But the new plant eliminated odor and most contaminants and a secondary treatment process purified water to specifications set for wildlife.

Then Valerie and John Snyder, manager of the sanitary district and a wildlife biologist, decided to avoid towns entirely. They negotiated an agreement with the Forest Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department and the sanitary district to pipe secondarily-treated effluent a mile from the plant to a meadow on the national forest.

Secondary treatment means that approximately 500,000 gallons of raw sewage go through pre-treatment to remove non-biodegradable substances. Then the sewage goes through oxidation channels where solid substances are broken up by bacteria. This slush is dumped into ponds that allow solid material to settle to the bottom and clear water to rise to the top. Measurements are taken daily for coliform bacteria and chlorine is added to reduce the bacteria count. Because it is used by wildlife, the water is not over-chlorinated.

The success of the swamp-sewage treatment led to imitation. The neighboring town of Show Low outgrew its evaporation ponds by the 1970s. When the



Dale Schicketanz

A marsh on the shores of Pintail Lake

city applied to the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest for permission to dump partially treated effluent on national forest lands, Forest Service wildlife biologists met with Arizona Game and Fish habitat specialists to devise a plan that could benefit everyone.

In 1980, with the help of federal funds, Show Low built Pintail Lake two miles northeast of the city. It also built three small marshes with islands to protect nesting waterfowl from predators. Livestock were fenced out to allow the growth of young trees and marsh vegetation.

Treated effluent from Show Low was also diverted to Telephone Lake west of Pintail. To further purify the effluent, shallow channels were dug, forming a riparian area leading from the lake to a new marsh called Redhead. With the cooperation of cattle permittees, the Forest Service fenced off 2,700 acres of riparian area for five years to protect cottonwoods, native willows, bullrushes and food sources such as millet and smart weed.

In 1983, the town of Springerville followed suit by developing a wildlife marsh on 160 acres of land owned by the Arizona Game and Fish Department. The town paid for the construction of the five ponds and 15 nesting islands and assumed maintenance costs. Springerville Marsh is closed to hunting, fishing, camping and swimming, but open to bird watching and photography.

Hunting in season is allowed at both

Jacques and Pintail, on national forest land, but no fish have been stocked. "We don't want to establish an attraction for fishing. It would conflict with the purpose," said Mel Wilhelm, biologist for the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forest.

A high population of fathead minnows in the marshes attracts a variety of birds, from bald eagles to mergansers. "We seem to be getting more species every year," Wilhelm said. "We have black-crowned night herons nesting now, and last year a double-crested cormorant attempted to nest."

Wilhelm said, "A win-win situation is uncommon. In this case, everybody is a winner. Out here we never had the water before. We're not restoring anything; we're creating it. We've learned there are a lot of creative things you can do with effluent."

Word of the project's successes has gotten around. Mel Wilhelm of the Forest Service and Sam Lawry of the Arizona Game and Fish Department say they have been asked to speak to national and international groups

about how the marshes work. In a nutshell, Wilhelm said, "We've just tried to duplicate natural systems."

Because so many people have expressed interest, Wilhelm said a national conference is planned in the White Mountains this fall. "We'll be able to share what we've learned and gain information from experts in other areas," Wilhelm said.

—Joan Baeza

Joan Baeza is a free-lance writer in Pinetop, Arizona.



Federal confusion obscures Mount Graham observatory

Loggers were within hours of starting to clear forest in Arizona's critical Mount Graham red squirrel habitat when a temporary court order scuttled the plan Sept. 5.

"It was a cliffhanger," said Bob Witzman of Phoenix, the conservation chairman of the Maricopa Audubon Society and an opponent of the University of Arizona's proposal to build a \$200-million observatory complex on top of Mount Graham. The mountain, in southwestern Arizona's Coronado National Forest, is the only habitat of the endangered Mount Graham red squirrel, a small rodent with a maximum estimated population of 140.

Cliffhangers are par for the course in a controversy that has enveloped the squirrels and the observatory since the project was proposed in 1984. After years of wrangling between environmentalists, astronomers, members of Congress, and government agencies, the U.S. Forest Service announced last month that it would authorize the construction of three telescopes to proceed.

But the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, representing a coalition of environmental groups, filed for an injunction against construction, claiming that further study of the effects of the project was needed. The Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco granted the injunction, and a decision whether construction will be further delayed pending an appeal is expected any day.

"We say there should be a study on whether telescopes and squirrels can coexist," said Mark Hughes, an attorney with the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund.

This is the latest chapter in a saga that one official called "so crazy you



would not believe it."

A U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service task force concluded last month that further study of the biological impacts of the telescope project was warranted. But in 1988 the Service issued a biological opinion that said the project wouldn't jeopardize the squirrels if certain environmental safeguards were observed. (HCN, May 21, 1990) That opinion formed the basis for the Arizona-Idaho Conservation Act of 1988. The act, in turn, was the basis for the Forest Service's decision last month to authorize construction of the project.

"This is classic eighth-grade

civics," said Bill Zeedyk, the director of wildlife management for the Forest Service's southwestern region. "The Congress passed a law, the executive branch interpreted it, now the judicial system is trying to see if we interpreted it correctly. Our three branches of government are involved here and have been over and over again."

In addition, Rep. Gerry Studds, D-Mass., introduced legislation this month calling for construction on Mount Graham to be halted pending further studies. And a House Interior Appropriations subcommittee may reduce funding for projects on Mount Graham pending

resolution of the issue.

The General Accounting Office report on the issue contained allegations that Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., threatened the job of Jim Abbott, forest supervisor in Tucson, for not pushing the project along hard enough. According to *The Arizona Republic*, the GAO report alleged that McCain told Abbott that "if he did not cooperate on this project he would be the shortest-tenured forest supervisor in the history of the Forest Service." It added that McCain later apologized to Abbott and held out the prospect of more funding for recreational projects. McCain told the *Republic* that he never made a threat, although "I certainly displayed my unhappiness that the process was taking so long."

Mount Graham rises from the desert floor at 2,500 feet to a height of 10,720 feet. Its clear, dry air makes it an observatory site coveted by the Smithsonian Institution, the Vatican, and the Max Planck Institute of West Germany. All are sponsors of the controversial observatory.

Because of its varied elevation and life zones, it has a high ecological value. The mountain gains nearly 8,000 feet in elevation in less than three miles. "It's probably the richest bear habitat in North America," said Thomas Waddell, a regional wildlife manager for the Arizona Game and Fish Department. He added that there are 11 trout streams on the mountain.

"It's just this beautiful mountain, and they're putting a foreign object right in the middle," he said. "It just kills your imagination. It's like having a beautiful Christmas tree and putting a beer can on top of it."

— Lisa Jones

Montana's wilderness wrangle splits conservationists

Despite the historic settlements reached by wilderness advocates and labor unions representing lumber mill workers, Montana's decade of wilderness discord continues. The state's pro-wilderness camp is now split, making a political solution even more difficult.

Sen. Max D. Baucus, D-Mont., attempted to capitalize on last June's conservationist-labor accords on the Lolo and Kootenai forests (HCN, 7/2/90) by introducing another bill that mirrored their terms. But some environmental critics believe the issue can now only be solved by "nationalizing" the process. (See Pages 8 and 9 for essays debating the conservationists' divergent strategies.)

Sixteen conservation organizations opposed the accords, complaining that they had not been involved in the negotiations. They said 27 roadless areas were sacrificed, and that none of the released areas in the accords could ever again be considered for wilderness.

"Sagebrush conservationists just gave away 500,000 acres of public lands on the Lolo without considering the cumulative impacts of development," said Steve Kelly of the Friends of the Wild Swan. "Champion International's bulldozers and sawmills are devouring Montana's remaining wilderness."

But other groups not party to the negotiations also complain that their interests were ignored. "Snowmobilers, trailbike and ATV [all-terrain vehicle] enthusiasts were not only not asked to participate, but feel as if they've been lied to — and lied about, as well, says Montana Trail Vehicle Riders Association land-use coordinator Linda Elli-

son. About 300 miles of trail, which are open to motorized use by the current Lolo National Forest travel plan, stand to be lost. Two hundred miles of trail are at stake in the Kootenai proposal."

The accords would set aside 681,610 acres of wilderness in the two forests, which comprise the state's prime timber lands. Some 615,890 acres would be released for nonwilderness management, which includes logging. Of the 372,000 acres of roadless lands in the two forests that the U.S. Forest Service identified as suitable for logging, only 52,810 acres were also listed as potential wilderness.

"The bottom line for our members has been how much timber is being made available for timber harvests," said Jim Cullen, president of the Lumber, Production and Industrial Workers local at the W.I. Forest Products mill in Thompson Falls. "Under the terms of this agreement, 97.8 percent of the suitable timber lands on the Kootenai National Forest will be available for timber harvest. And even though some of the suitable timber being proposed for wilderness designation lies near Thompson Falls, our members are comfortable with the compromise."

The Lolo and Kootenai accords have been accepted by Champion International and Asarco, the two largest employers in the Libby area. Yet some 50 persons representing agriculture, timber, mining and motorized recreation met with Sen. Conrad Burns, R-Mont., to protest the accords. Burns, who early this year introduced the most anti-wilderness bill of four pending measures, early this year, proposed creating

citizens' councils for each national forest in order to fashion a statewide bill.

Montana has about 6 million acres of roadless areas, or potential wilderness, to settle. Conservationists have sought at least 2.8 million acres for wilderness designation. Burns' bill would provide only 790,000 acres as wilderness, and some 3 million acres for timber and other uses. Baucus' first bill offered slightly more wilderness.

Wilderness remains a deeply partisan political issue in Montana. Burns may owe his Senate seat in part to wilderness opposition. During the final days of Burns' 1988 campaign against Sen. John Melcher, President Reagan vetoed Melcher's wilderness legislation, which would have set aside 1.4 million

acres as wilderness. Melcher attributes his defeat in part to opposition to his wilderness bill in western Montana.

The Melcher legislation, however, offered only 375,900 acres in the Lolo and Kootenai forests as wilderness, which is slightly more than half the acreage provided in the union accords with the Montana Wildlife Coalition. The conservationist split came after the Melcher veto, which disillusioned many pro-wilderness leaders. One of them, Mike Bader, formed the Alliance for the Wild Rockies to forge a new wilderness strategy that could leapfrog the state's politicians.

— Bert Lindler

HOTLINE

Poachers get stung

A nine-month undercover sting led by the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Department netted seven arrests in August and may have broken one of the largest poaching rings in the state's history. Law officers say the poachers illegally killed hundreds of animals in Montana, and thousands of dollars' worth of big-game meat, skins and antlers were recovered in the operation, reports *The Great Falls Tribune*. The biggest catch was Richard Fertterer Sr., a 60-year-old Great Falls businessman, who allegedly took a pair of undercover Fish, Wildlife and Parks agents on two illegal nighttime hunts — a bear hunt on the Blackfoot Indian Reservation and a second hunt

inside Glacier National Park. According to an affidavit filed with the charges, Fertterer said that he makes \$100,000 a year running illegal hunts and trafficking in animal parts. He was arrested on Aug. 29 with a pickup truck full of deer and elk meat he was apparently going to sell to the agents. A slew of charges were brought against him, including three counts of felony criminal mischief for killing three bull elk, six deer and a mountain lion. The criminal mischief charges carry a maximum 10-year prison term. Among the six other men arrested in the sting were three of Fertterer's sons. A federal grand jury may bring additional charges in the case.

Montana's wilderness imbroglio:

by Ken Knudson and Bryan Erhart

*There once was an issue called
wilderness,
Two decades of Montana bitterness.
Then, most had agreed — a consensus
achieved!
Yet politics wanted paralysis.
— Limerick, circa 1990*

The oddest, most unexpected coalition in the history of wilderness issues recently produced a consensus solution for Montana's Lolo and Kootenai forests. Sawmill workers and conservationists, traditional opponents in the "jobs vs. wilderness" debates, first started talking nine months ago, with little hope for an agreement. Meeting almost weekly over the course of nearly six months, we discovered that we had far more in common than previous rhetoric led any of us to expect.

The product of those negotiations, the Kootenai and Lolo Accords, was recently reported on the front page of *The San Francisco Examiner* as a solution so unusual that it might eventually prove to be a crossroads in the history of environmental politics in America. Final parties to the accords included organized workers at seven large sawmill, paper and plywood plants — a majority of the mills that depend on the Kootenai and Lolo forests; the statewide trade association representing guides and outfitters; over 50 environmental groups, including the Montana Wilderness Association; and the vast majority of groups local to the two forests that have long-term involvements in these wilderness debates.

The timber workers among us sought resolution because timber-reliant communities are approaching a point of no return. Hundreds of jobs already have been lost, and more will disappear in the months ahead. The longer the roadless-area debate goes on, the more these effects spread throughout northwestern Montana. Since the Kootenai and Lolo forests alone produce nearly two-thirds of the annual harvest on the state's national forests, resolution of these timber-supply issues is particularly crucial.

Conservation leaders hoped negotiations could depoliticize wilderness decisions, and with good reason. President Reagan vetoed a statewide Montana wilderness bill just days before the 1988 elections. This unprecedented veto had nothing to do with the value of the lands in question, but rather was intended to assist Conrad Burns in his "anti-wilderness" senatorial campaign. The starting point in our often grueling negotiations was to determine which areas had the finest wilderness quality, and which areas had the highest value for sustained-yield timber management.

Many of the conservationists at our sessions already had fought for two decades for wilderness designation of these areas they knew personally and professionally. Likewise, some of the timber negotiators were third-generation workers who had labored and hunted in the same forests with their fathers and grandfathers.

Much of the historic "job vs. wilderness" debate turned out to be "hokum and smoke" once we looked at maps, acre by acre. Even at the beginning, there was less land to "fight" over than we expected. This kept us going, and six difficult months later we reached a balanced compromise with remarkable attributes:

- Over 98 percent of the suitable timber base unaffected by wilderness designation.
- Over twice as much land recommended for wilderness designation as in any previous legislation, proposed or passed.
- Better wilderness boundaries than in any previous proposal — written by local sportsmen, conservationists and timber workers with site-specific knowledge of the lands involved.
- Protection for key wildlife habitat, fisheries and long-contested wilderness lands, including the Great Burn, Ten Lakes, Thompson Seton, Scotchman Peaks, Trout Creek Cube Iron, Rock Creek, and Yaak River wildlands and watersheds, and vital additions to the Cabinet Mountain and Bob Marshall Wildernesses.
- Community-strengthening values as a product of grassroots, broad-based citizen involvement.

Wilderness designation benefits from strong and broad-based local support. Without local support, for example, Montana's famed Bob Marshall Wilderness, and even the edges of Glacier National Park, would already have extensive oil and gas exploration. Only steadfast local support has kept the wilderness qualities of these areas intact in recent years.

Broadest consensus ever

One of the greatest strengths of the Kootenai and Lolo Accords is the breadth of their local support. Although agreement is not universal — no resolution to a controversial issue can be — the accords clearly are the broadest consensus ever reached on any Montana wilderness issue. And the consensus gets broader every day.

Since June, a number of additional organizations have endorsed the accords, including the state AFL-CIO (representing over 40,000 workers), the Montana chapter of the professional society of wildlife biologists, numerous environmental groups, the mining company, Asarco, and the timber company Champion International Corp. The latter two are the largest private employers on the forests involved in our agreements. We're still working tirelessly to expand the consensus, and we remain open to honest, site-specific discussion with any and all other groups.

Our new coalition still meets weekly, and we plan to continue working together on a wide range of future forest management issues. This portends a radically different, and more productive, face for all kinds of issues. One of the strongest shared commitments to emerge from our negotiations, for example, concerns the need to achieve real, sustained-yield management on Montana's forests.

Here is the national message of our accords: When the people most affected by a controversy are truly prepared to "bury the hatchet" and talk honestly about common interests, it is very possible they will reach better solutions than society would through a process of political posturing. As the distinguished former dean of the school of forestry in Montana, Arnold Bolle, recently remarked: "People who demand all or nothing usually get nothing." Clearly, the accords represent a triumph of individual people of all kinds, and the failure, not success, of political manipulations.

The main thing now obstructing Montana's Kootenai and Lolo Wilderness Accords is political rhetoric. Some candidates, elected officials and a vocal minority of citizens on both sides of the issue continue to perpetuate the kind of innuendo and misinformation that for too long have kept this state's wilderness debate both bitter and seemingly hopeless. It strikes us that the Kootenai and Lolo Accords provide hope, as well as a concrete model, for Americans working to resolve other environmental disputes.

This would be even more true if Congress enacts our agreements into law. What a powerful incentive for better communication among all of us: the first citizen-written wilderness bill in history, passed by Congress. For those of us who want to resolve controversies rather than just continue fighting them, passing the Montana Accords would send the signal: Bury your hatchets; it can be done.

Ken Knudson represented the Montana Wildlands Coalition in the Kootenai and Lolo Accords negotiation. Bryan Erhart represented over 800 mill workers in the negotiations.

"When the people affected by a controversy are truly prepared to talk about common interests, they will reach better solutions than society would through a process of political posturing. This is the message of the Kootenai and Lolo Accords."



Bonner mill workers Jerry Bush, left, and Brian Erhart, right, and John Gatchell, center, director of the Montana Wilderness Association, bury a hatchet symbolizing an end to timber vs. wilderness disputes

Melissa Blunt

VOICES

Two views on how to end it

by Mike Bader

Since the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act, protection of public wildlands has been a contentious and drawn-out process. Following the Forest Service RARE I and II (Roadless Area Review and Evaluation) disasters, Congress agreed that federal wilderness designation would occur through the passage of statewide omnibus bills written by each state's congressional delegation. Congress then rubber-stamps the agreement.

Recently the emphasis of roadless-lands legislation has shifted from wilderness preservation to "release" of wilderness for development. The 1964 Wilderness Act has ceased to be the guiding framework for wilderness legislation. Currently, wilderness legislation is being used to achieve other agendas such as timber supply, restrictions on appeals and judicial review, election of congressional candidates, and other issues unrelated or diametrically opposed to wilderness preservation.

The classic example of that is the Northern Rockies. The last few roadless lands bills introduced for Montana and Idaho don't even contain the word "wilderness" in the bill titles. Virtually every bill calls for the release for development of over four times as much de-facto wilderness as would be protected. In all cases, the bills stipulate that almost all areas containing suitable timber, mining claims and snowmobile trails must be released for multiple-abuse development. They would virtually eliminate native forests and nullify current efforts to protect old-growth and wildlife.

It is unlikely that the individual congressional delegations in the Wild Rockies states are even capable of producing wilderness legislation that is in the national public interest. The most recent National Environmental Scorecard produced by the League of Conservation Voters shows that congressional representatives from the Wild Rockies region have the lowest conservation voting rating in the country, voting pro-environment just 28.75 percent of the time.

In 1988, the Montana delegation succeeded in passing a bill, only to have it vetoed by President Reagan. The veto was inspired by partisan politics designed to capture a Senate seat, and had nothing to

do with public land management. It may have been the end of the "delegation" process, where each state's congressional delegation decides the fate of federal roadless lands.

That leaves two alternatives: the local approach vs. the national approach. When federal public lands debates are played out at the local level, the wilderness and wildlife resource lose virtually every time, particularly in the resource-dependent Western states. At this parochial level, 20 sawmill jobs (which are doomed anyway by mechanization and cut-and-get-out corporate philosophy) are thought to be more important than the condition of the land in perpetuity. As with the coastal old-growth forests of the Pacific Northwest, a national constituency must be developed and involved, or we can say goodbye to the forest.

Why "accords" fail

The local approach has been shown to fail in the recently introduced Lolo-Kootenai National Forest Management Act. The bill is based on "accords" negotiated secretly by a few conservation groups, union sawmill workers, and mega-corporations like Champion International and Asarco.

With this flavor, it is not surprising that 98 percent of the timber suitable for harvesting on the two forests is released for logging. While the number of wilderness acres looks good, it is a "rock and ice" wilderness bill. It doesn't protect wildlife habitat, migration corridors, endangered species, old-growth, fisheries, water quality or recreation. Wilderness without trees is ridiculous.

Concessions made after the accords were signed released even more wilderness lands to intensive development. The timber industry also won new language that may exempt Forest Service planning decisions and timber sales on released lands from judicial review.

The local approach cuts the American public out of the process. National forests are federal public lands that belong equally to all Americans, regardless of where they live. Under the local approach, the American public is not only not asked what they think, but they are never even notified that legislation is pending, or that huge tracts of their public wild-

lands are about to be opened to irreversible impacts.

Moreover, forest-by-forest and state-by-state approaches ignore the fact that wildlands, wildlife and wild rivers do not respect artificial political boundaries, but follow topographical and ecological delineations. For example, Idaho and Montana, the only two states yet to pass statewide wilderness bills, share 27 different roadless areas. Under the statewide process, it is conceivable that one state would designate its half of a roadless area as wilderness, while the other state released its half for development. An artificial political boundary usually makes a lousy wilderness boundary: half of a mountain protected, the other side not.

The national approach

A national, bioregional approach eliminates those problems, while capitalizing on national public attitudes and values. A national wilderness bill can have a strong ecological basis and national grassroots support.

The Wild Rockies National Lands Act of 1990 does that. Conservationists have outlined the Wild Rockies Bioregion as an area of special international concern. The region contains portions of five states and two Canadian provinces. More than 17 million acres of roadless lands remain on Forest Service lands alone in Montana, Idaho, northwest Wyoming, northeast Oregon, and eastern Washington. This unprotected public wilderness comprises over 26,000 square miles — an area larger than the states of Massachusetts, Maryland, Connecticut, Delaware and Rhode Island combined! Rare species such as grizzly bear, gray wolf, caribou and pure strains of wild trout still inhabit these wildlands.

The Wild Rockies National Lands Act was put together by grassroots conservation organizations and individuals rather than politicians and corporate leaders. It is designed for one purpose: the protection of our natural forest ecosystems in the Wild Rockies. Wildlands systems are protected as they actually are on the land — as rivers flow and wildlife moves, with a de-emphasis on political and administrative boundaries.

Several designations are included in this citizens' proposal, including wilderness areas, national park and preserve study areas, new Wild and Scenic River designations, Wild and Scenic study rivers, and a National Wildland Recovery and Restoration system.

The Wild Rockies Act seeks a veto-proof approach. A state with a small congressional delegation can be rolled-over. But with a bipartisan approach sponsored by members of Congress from many different states — such as with the Tongass National Forest reform legislation — a veto becomes politically unfeasible. Moreover, a multi-state, bipartisan approach lifts the pressure off of individual state delegations in another way.

Under the current system, small delegations (Montana, Idaho and Wyoming have delegations of four, four and three, respectively) can be subjected to intense pressure from industrial lobbyists and wooed with substantial PAC contributions. When an issue is nationalized, the lobbyists can no longer concentrate on a select few individuals, but must attempt to sway the entire Congress.

It's time to put an end to the delegation process, which allows members of Congress who kowtow to industrial special interests and PAC money to make the sole decisions on how much of America's wilderness and wildlife heritage will remain unspoiled. Just as decisions on the future of Alaskan wildlands and the current debate over the ancient forests have been "nationalized," so must the Wild Rockies debate become nationalized.

Anything less would shortchange the American public and relegate wilderness to a few tiny museum pieces scattered across the land, devoid of most of their native wildlife. It's time for conservationists to think big, both in terms of natural ecosystems that are in need of protection, and in terms of reaching a larger pool of grassroots supporters nationwide who are our natural power base. A better vision can prevail.



Mike Bader is executive director of the Alliance for the Wild Rockies. He lives in Missoula, near the Lolo National Forest.



Lolo National Forest clearcuts in the Ninemile area

Greg Bechle

Lake Catamount

(Continued from Page 1)

er, that the biggest impact will be on the residents of the valley in the form of air pollution, traffic, availability of affordable housing and stress on local services such as schools and health care. And those, he says, are out of his jurisdiction.

Many residents are disgruntled over the apparent standoff between the county commission and the Forest Service in taking responsibility for how Catamount will affect the valley. Bob Maddox, a member of the Routt County advisory planning commission, admits that the county does not have the expertise to regulate growth.

"Quality-of-life decisions are beyond what we normally deal with," says Maddox. "There are so many impacts. Where there were three generations of ranchers, there will now be a Disneyland. How do you mitigate that? We don't have the experience, tools or sophistication to handle it."

Steamboat Springs residents have obtained outside advice from such national experts as Randall Arendt, planning director for the Center for Rural Massachusetts. Arendt advises communities on how to protect their rural character while allowing growth.

Arendt said the county could control sprawl by requiring Catamount to cluster houses together into "nodes" in order to leave open pastures for livestock grazing. He suggested that the county develop a long-term plan that would define the open land and resources that are worth preserving.

"There should be a conservation and development plan in every county across the country," explains Arendt. "Right now, we have 'zoning ordinances,' which merely legalize develop-

ment everywhere. Zoning is not planning. Every town should have a vision statement — what you want to be when you grow up."

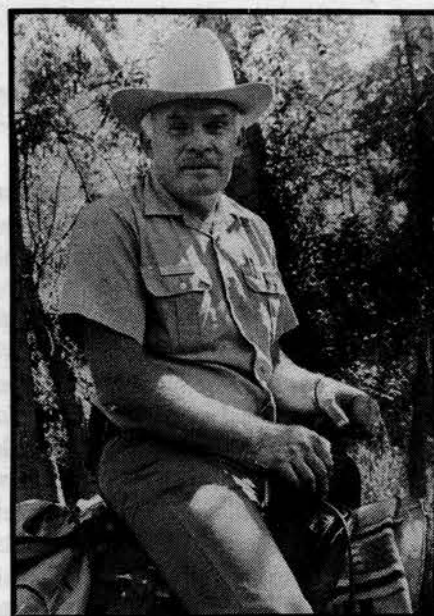
Jackson Hole, Wyo., the resort center of the Teton Mountains, is currently experimenting with such a plan. Working with the Washington, D.C.-based Conservation Foundation in its "successful communities" program, Jackson has drafted a master plan to preserve its community diversity, Western heritage, and natural and scenic resources.

Other communities have been temporarily successful in closing the door to undesired development. In Snowmass, Colo., residents and officials were so hostile to a proposed ski expansion on Burnt Mountain that the developers backed off. In Alta, Wyo., plans to glamorize the Grand Targhee resort are on hold pending a lawsuit filed by the Citizens for Teton Valley.

In Steamboat Springs, however, the standoff between the Forest Service and the Routt County Commission continues, creating confusion and uncertainty over how to control the pending Lake Catamount development.

"We want to make our own decisions," declares County Commissioner Dennis Fisher. "We should be the ones to determine if we can handle this project."

But in the absence of any specific county planning, Forest Supervisor Jerry Schmidt is attempting to establish a framework for future county action by considering a provisional permit with various options, from no project at all to a full-blown facility that could serve 13,000 skiers a day. Schmidt won't reveal his recommendations, but he says they could deal with such non-forest concerns as the number of housing units



Joanna Dodder, Steamboat Pilot

Forest Supervisor Jerry Schmidt

and the size of the highway leading to the project.

This is an aggressive position that shows both a sense of responsibility for the non-federal impact of huge recreational developments, as well as the current void in local governmental ability to deal with the challenges of major change.

"In the past we made decisions and then walked away," Schmidt said. "I want to structure a decision that will allow the community to have control over the rate of growth. My role is as a partner in this."

"This valley puts a high emphasis on quality of life. I'm not sure Steamboat really needs another ski area, but they could have their cake and eat it too if they do it right."

Former HCN staff writer Florence Williams is now free-lancing from Boston. Charla Palmer helped in reporting this story from Steamboat Springs.

Can Hummingbird skiers fly in Gila Wilderness?

Alex Ocheltree thinks that a pair of steep, fir-covered mountains just inside the Gila Wilderness Area in southwestern New Mexico would make a good ski area. He says the project could revitalize a teetering local economy based primarily on ranching, logging and mining.

"A little piece of the wilderness isn't too much to pay in order to save the rest of the area," said Ocheltree, who lives in the nearby town of Gila. "It would allow us to become independent of the extractive industries that drive this economy, and that are dying."

The Hummingbird Ski Area would shave off 1,790 acres of the 558,065-acre wilderness area — only one-third of 1 percent of the total, points out Ocheltree. But some say any amount is too much.

"The wilderness should be absolute," said Howard Smith, a friend of Ocheltree and a Gila resident.

Ocheltree estimated that the small, family-oriented ski area would inject about \$9 million into the local economy annually and receive about 100,000 skier-visits per season. But it is still little more than an idea. About \$20 million in funding and an act of Congress deleting the site from the wilderness area are required before it becomes a reality. Ocheltree is soliciting the \$12,500 needed to fund a preliminary site evaluation.

At least one member of the New Mexico congressional delegation — Rep. Bill Richardson, D, whose district includes the proposed ski area — is leaning against it. "No final decision has been made, but he doesn't feel it really makes sense to amend a wilderness area," said Stu Nagurka, Richardson's press aide.

Local businesspeople, however, overwhelmingly back the project, said Ocheltree. John Alsip, who owns a radio station and a newspaper in nearby Silver City, paid the \$100 to become a lifetime member of the recently formed Hummingbird Ski Club, although he's never skied in his life. He calls the proposed ski area "just a good idea. Catron County is a great place to live, but there's nothing to do out there. There's just ranching and timber and the Forest Service."

A promotional pamphlet about the ski area suggests a piece of land the same size as Hummingbird could be added to the wilderness elsewhere. It also mentions a precedent: Acreage was deleted from Goat Rocks Wilderness Area in Washington state in 1984 to allow for the expansion of the White Pass Ski Area. In that case, the land was deleted as part of a congressional package that also designated more than a million acres of wilderness. But opposition from a coalition of environmental groups has stalled the expansion of the ski area.

The proposed Hummingbird Ski Area site is covered with old-growth Douglas-fir, white fir and aspen that support populations of elk, black bear and deer, according to Mike Gardner, a district ranger for the Gila National Forest. "Any kind of business would improve the economy here, I'm sure," he said. "But where do you draw the line? Maybe this is the place."

—Lisa Jones

Ski resorts face uphill climb

Colorado's famed ski industry is on the skids. The number of skiers declined last year for the first time since the 1970s, when the industry blossomed. In 1989, "skier visits" decreased by 3 percent, after a five-year period of modest 1 to 3 percent annual growth.

The number of ski facilities in the nation has shrunk to 650, barely half what it was 10 years ago. In Colorado, many smaller resorts have failed, and only one — Beaver Creek, near Vail — has opened since 1980.

"These are real warning signs," says Jerry D. Jones, Beaver Creek's former president. "Many resorts do not make money and haven't for some time. If any new areas get built, it's beyond me. The climate is not right."

Jones says fewer young people are hitting the slopes as the baby-boom generation grows older. He predicts that skiing will lose out to other activities, such as golf, as the nation's population ages.

Some industry analysts are predicting a small growth curve of 2 percent a year, but David Peri, marketing vice president of the Breckenridge resort, laughs at that. "That's not growth!" he argues. "Investors are better off putting their money in the bank. I'd be reluctant to open a new ski area." Peri believes new facilities



would merely lure skiers away from other established areas, instead of attracting new skiers and boosting overall ski income.

In addition to Lake Catamount in Steamboat Springs, two other Colorado ski resorts are in the planning stage. They are Adam's Rib, on Mt. Adams near Eagle, and East Fork, near Pagosa Springs. If all three were built, they would increase the state's skier capacity by 18 percent — from 167,000 skiers a day to 197,000.

"We've never had that type of increase before," says John Korb, who heads the Forest Service's recreation, special uses and winter sports office. "I don't think they'll all come on at the same time, but I would expect to see at least one in the next few years."

Charles Goeldner, a University of Colorado economist, agrees there isn't room for three more ski resorts in Colorado now. "If they all came on at once, it would be too much," he says.

Smaller ski areas, including Purgatory, Crested Butte, Berthoud Pass and Powderhorn, are in financial trouble; last month Powderhorn, located near Grand Junction, was sold to a creditor to avoid foreclosure.

Also last month Adam's Rib was put on indefinite hold by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers because the project would destroy 69 acres of wetlands. Adam's Rib, which would handle twice as many skiers as Aspen, has been dogged by a decade of environmental lawsuits and organizational woes. It had received its Forest Service permit and was ready to go until the Corps denied a dredge-and-fill permit under the Clean Water Act.

East Fork, located in a remote valley in south central Colorado, still faces significant financial problems, and has yet to receive a Forest Service permit. Its base has no water, electricity, gas or telephone service, all of which would have to be provided by its developer, Balcor Corp.

The Forest Service, according to its 1983 Rocky Mountain regional plan, favors expanding existing ski areas rather than developing new ones. The agency had already committed itself to study Lake Catamount, Adam's Rib and East Fork when the plan was written.

—F.W.

Big is not better in the Methow Valley

by Lisa McKhann

The Methow Valley, in north central Washington, is an outpost of the rural Northwest. Farmhouses dot the fields and orchards along the Methow River, below the forests and wild peaks of the North Cascade Range. A few small towns, none bigger than 1,000 people, bead the 60-mile-long valley. Some 3,500 residents form the Methow's valleywide community.

But waves of change are rolling. Next year Early Winters Resort Inc., wants to break ground for Washington's largest "destination" resort, bringing 10,000 new people to the Methow (pronounced Met-how). If all goes according to schedule, carpenters will be pouring the foundations for condominiums, restaurants and ski shops where today only a few marmots hole up.

Until now, the isolated Methow Valley, tucked into the eastern edge of the Cascades, has been shielded from the bumper-to-bumper traffic and urban explosion that mark the west side's Pacific Rim trade boom. The Methow is a refuge of open space and slow pace. Yet these assets may be its downfall, for they are marketable to the wet, urbanized west side.

Crossing the Cascades, the greater Seattle escaper sees the curtain of clouds lift on cue. Dense gray skies give way to blue. Ahead, the valley rises toward rugged mountains, adding alpine scenery to a fair climate and beckoning hikers, climbers, hunters, fishermen, horsepackers and backcountry skiers to the Pasayten Wilderness and North Cascades National Park. All this is within five hours' drive from Seattle.

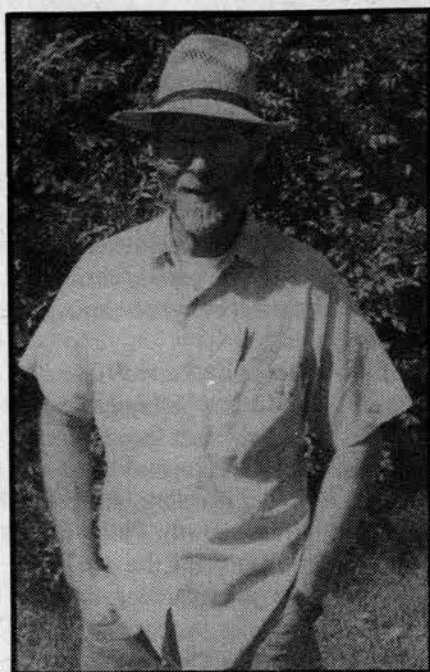
Aspen Ski Corp. first proposed a ski area on Sandy Butte in the Methow's upper reaches in 1974. Today, Aspen's successor, Early Winters Inc., has a grander plan — a \$300-million, four-season resort on a 4.5-mile-long tract where Early Winters Creek runs from the Cascades into the Methow River. A 1,170-acre "village" has been laid out in the forested bottomland, with capacity for 10,000 visitors. It includes hotels, condos, retail stores, restaurants, two golf courses and a riding stable.

The site is near Mazama, which today boasts a general store and gas station, the Mazama Country Inn, a community center, the Rocking Horse Stables and a realty office. Steve Devin is Early Winters' site manager, but he and his father have owned a 100-acre ranch at Mazama for 25 years. "It's hard, farming here," Devin says. "You have to bale and sell snow."

Steve Barnett also lives in Mazama, on seven acres he bought 10 years ago for a secluded mountain home. "It's just a real quiet hole in the wall," he says. "We like living here." Like many in the valley, Barnett has an adaptable, opportunistic lifestyle as a photographer, writer and skier.

Barnett lives a few miles downvalley from the resort site; the properties to either side of his are now owned by realtors. Riding the land-speculation wave, they are pushing for zoning changes to allow five houses per acre where there is now one per five acres.

"We'd like to build a bigger house, but don't know if we should," Barnett says. "We're surrounded by wheeler-dealers. Suddenly we might have 200 condo units next door." Property taxes on Barnett's land have gone from \$40 in 1980 to \$950 today.



Lisa McKhann

MVCC's Dave Sabold

In addition to taxes and land speculation, transportation may affect people the length of the Methow Valley. Everyone lives along or near Highway 20, a two-lane road as winding as the river it follows. When the road above Mazama over the Cascades closes each winter, Highway 20 is the only way those 10,000 visitors could reach the resort.

Winthrop, 16 miles south of Mazama, looks like a Wild West stage set. Weathered wood storefronts line the boardwalks. Hand-lettered signs above shop doors carry out the mandatory Old West theme. The bank parking lot sign says "Bank Corral." Nearly all the town's 402 residents are involved in tourism; its six real-estate offices are open seven days a week for visitors wanting to buy their own piece of the Methow.

"Overall, Early Winters should be quite a tremendous boost to county economics," said Okanogan County Commissioner Arlie Clinkenbeard. "It would be a positive benefit not only to businesses, but also to the county in terms of revenue." Clinkenbeard said the resort would complement and help diversify

the economy, now based on agriculture, wood products and tourism.

But even in Winthrop there are those who don't welcome the resort, at least on the scale proposed. "I could see a cross-country ski center up there," says Dave Sabold. "That would fit in better with the lifestyle here." Sabold and his wife, Marilyn, own a nursery and landscaping business near Winthrop. He is also president of the 800-member Methow Valley Citizens Council (MVCC), which has researched and litigated its way to become Early Winters' most serious obstacle.

Since Aspen first proposed a ski area in 1974, MVCC and resort boosters have competed for the hearts and minds of their fellow residents. Early infighting among valley residents has given way to battles at the state and federal levels.

"It's a real David-and-Goliath story," MVCC's Sabold said. "All our elected officials, from the governor on through, are in favor of getting things going on this ski hill." Sabold reeled off the list: the town mayors, county commissioners, state representatives, Gov. Booth Gardner, and all but two of the state's 10-person congressional delegation.

MVCC has waged an extended legal contest, too. The Okanogan National Forest, where Sandy Butte lies, began writing an Environmental Impact Statement on the ski area in 1981. That EIS process is still going on today.

The Forest Service's original EIS was released in 1984. The Citizens Council — joined by the Washington Environmental Council and the Sierra Club, and represented by Washington environmental attorney Dave Bricklin — promptly appealed. In 1987, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the EIS failed to address impacts on Pasayten Wilderness air quality and on mule deer migration in the narrow upper

valley, and failed to analyze alternative ski-area sites in the region. The court ordered that a supplemental EIS be prepared.

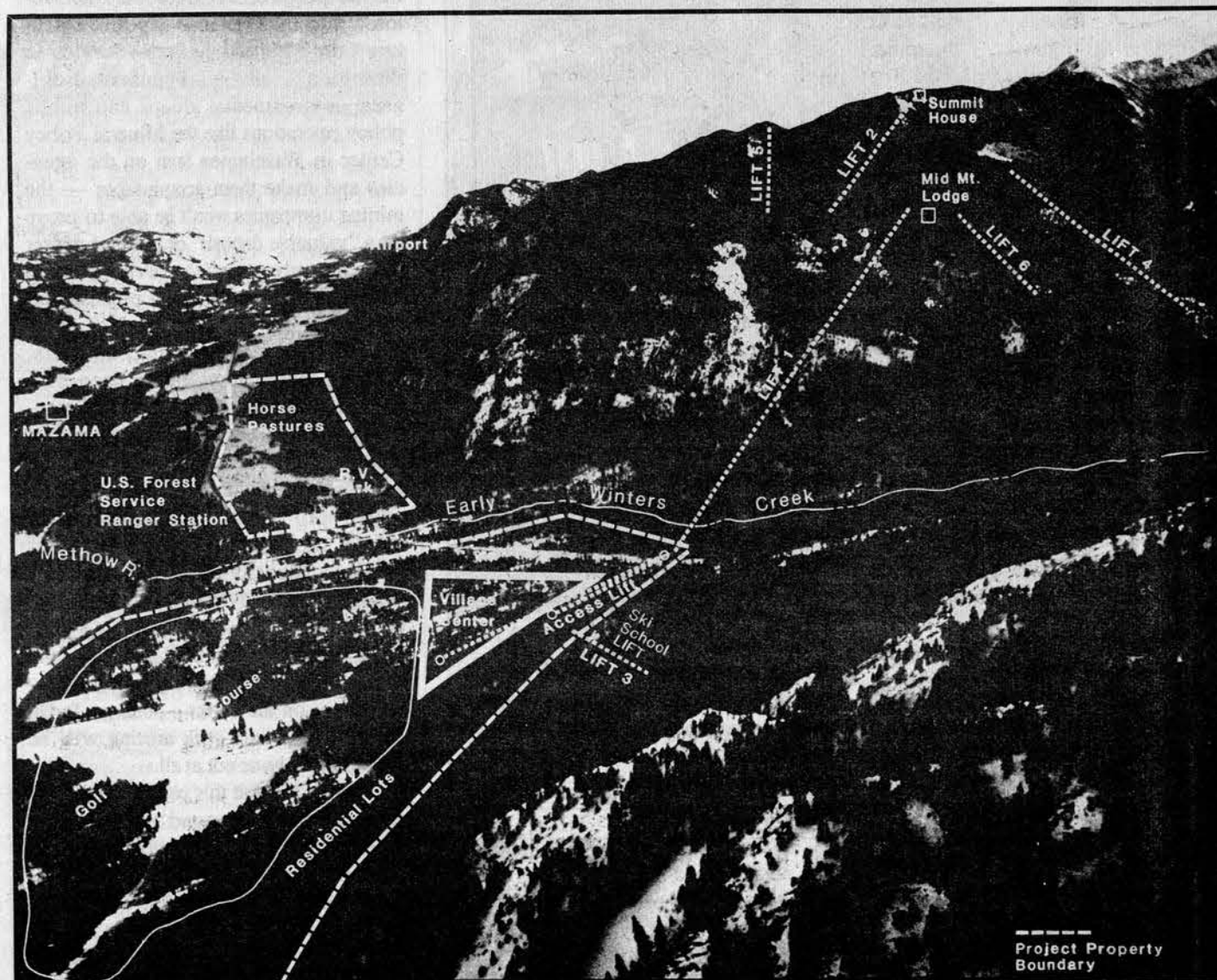
This February the Forest Service released the draft supplement, which Bricklin promptly denounced. "It's really a disgrace," he says. "The Forest Service is so incompetent at times that the agency is the project's worst enemy. If I were the developer, I'd be pulling my hair out." The alternative-site analysis, for instance, consisted of a one-page description, and rejection, for each of four existing ski areas where expansion is being considered. MVCC also says the supplement's air-quality data show that pollution of the Pasayten Wilderness will violate the Clean Air Act.

In August the Forest Service conceded that the draft supplement was unsatisfactory. Okanogan National Forest's Mike Johnson said his office will file a notice of intent to begin a new draft in November. The court awarded MVCC, *et al.*, \$260,000 in attorney's fees.

While the Forest Service slogs through the permit process for Sandy Butte, critics are charging that Early Winters' actual project is not a resort at all, but a real estate package. Last February a 1988 Early Winters investors' prospectus appeared "on the doorstep" of an MVCC member. It described the project as a two- to three-year investment, after which, with land and permits in hand, Early Winters and its investors would sell out. This contrasts sharply with Early Winters' public assurances over five years that the company would carry the resort to completion in partnership with the community.

When MVCC publicized the prospectus, Early Winters president Harry Hosey reacted angrily. In paid ads in local and Seattle papers, Hosey said

(Continued on Page 12)



The proposed development on Sandy Butte above the Methow River

Methow Valley

(Continued from Page 11)

the prospectus was outdated and MVCC's distribution of it illegal. He threatened a lawsuit, but has neither pursued that nor made public the new prospectus he said has replaced the 1988 one.

Hosey failed to return calls for this article, but his site manager, Steve Devin, downplays the ski theme the company once led with. Today he talks about golf courses and riding stables. "Early Winters is, and always has been, a real estate project," he says. "The ski hill is like the swimming pool at a motel." Devin says the change of emphasis is a response to Washington's recreation market, but MVCC's legal success in the long battle over the ski hill is a clear factor, too.

Critics go further. "They never intended on developing the ski hill," says Tom Robinson, who owns a farm in the lower Methow Valley and is active in Friends of the Methow, a Seattle-based support group. "They intended to get some of the permits, and then sell those rights and the property. This entire process is based on land speculation and making a buck."

Early this year, a bill making "destination" resorts eligible for state industrial revenue bonds — thus making public funds available for building Early Winters' infrastructure — was quietly introduced in the Washington Legislature. Friends of the Methow persuaded Washington unions to oppose the bill, since revenue bonds are intended for projects

that create long-term, high-paying jobs. It died in committee.

Early Winters also made a move in Congress. Within the company's property on the valley floor, a 123-acre national forest inholding separates the planned village from the riding stable. Early Winters asked Rep. Sid Morrison, R, who represents the area, to legislate a land swap. Okanogan Forest officials didn't know about the move until project opponents told them.

"We liked to think we had a partnership [with Early Winters]," says Jim Greg of the forest. "But this isn't our land exchange; we can't accept this way of doing it. We have our own procedures that follow NEPA, and it's an open process with public involvement."

Friends of the Methow and MVCC fought the land-swap bill in Washington, D.C., because they saw it as another move to stifle the public process. Co-sponsored by Reps. Norm Dicks of Bremerton and Sid Morrison, it would also require the Forest Service to complete the SEIS on Early Winters within 12 months of enactment. After 20 years of flawed EIS's on Sandy Butte, MVCC has little confidence that the Forest Service can produce a satisfactory document in that time. The bill also aborts the appeal process.

Today Early Winters still faces a stack of hurdles that will probably delay groundbreaking until at least 1992. Last spring the state Ecology Department decided to require an environmental statement before granting a water permit. Also, attorney Bricklin promises to appeal the SEIS for Sandy Butte if it doesn't measure up, and Early Winters won't submit its rezoning application

until the draft EIS is done. Meanwhile, MVCC has sued Okanogan County for weakening the financial requirements for Early Winters in its new resort ordinance.

So it appears 1991 will come to the Methow Valley like any other year. People like Steve Barnett will sit frozen in limbo as another building season begins, unable to proceed with future plans but unwilling to give them up. Neighbors like Barnett and Steve Devin will side-step discussion of the resort, choosing instead some subject everyone can agree on, like the weather.

But, whether or not Early Winters is ever built, the Methow Valley has been discovered, and now must face the consequences. The resort proposal has been a catalyst for better planning, yet better planning catalyzes growth. Plans for a sewer system to protect the valley's quality water propose reaching beyond the resort boundaries to serve existing and smaller growth. Yet where the sewer lines go, high-density development must

follow to pay for them.

Even if Early Winters disappears, Sabold says MVCC will continue to challenge anything that attempts to fill the void. "It would be nice to get Early Winters off our plate so we could deal with all the other little jackals who want to carve up the valley," he said.

Jeane Hardy, who lives near Twisp, captured part of her community's predicament in her *Omak-Okanogan County Chronicle* column. "You can't mix city and country because city costs too much," she wrote. "Country isn't condominiums fashioned of cedar and stone. It's a squat, square little old farmhouse set smack in the center of a big field."

Lisa McKhann, a former HCN intern, is a free-lance writer in French Creek, Washington. She also does solar-powered desktop publishing.

LETTERS

MINING REFORM: ENFORCE EXISTING REGS

Dear HCN,

I enjoyed your June 4th special edition on the General Mining Law. A lot of good stuff. In another incarnation, I once took a cut at trying to wrestle the 1872 statute into the 20th century. Ultimately, I came to agree pretty much with Steve Hinchman's view that "enforcing the regulations that now exist" posed a more promising avenue for making things better than getting Congress to buck firmly entrenched mining interests.

The approach is this: Mining companies only have a right to mine (and to patent mineral rights) on public land if they prove up a "valuable deposit." Forest Service and BLM regulations now require agency-approved mining plans which will, among other things, protect the environment. All costs of implementing the mining plan, including environmental protection costs, should be factored into the "valuable deposit" calculus. If the BLM and the Forest Service do their jobs — that is, if concerned citizens, environmental groups and public policy operations like the Mineral Policy Center in Washington lean on the agencies and make them accountable — the mining companies won't be able to prove up a "valuable deposit" of mineral unless they can truly protect the environment in the mining-and-reclamation process and still make a profit. The costs of safeguarding (or reconstructing) aquifers, assuring revegetation, filling open pits, protecting nearby streams from sedimentation and airsheds from excessive dust pollution, and making sure that wildlife migration routes aren't irreparably disrupted will often be astronomical (or, indeed, incalculable). Thus, otherwise-valuable deposits may well lose their "value," once environmental costs are internalized.

In short, the law as it stands — and as amplified by relatively new regulations now on the books — can go far in ensuring that hard-rock mining will be done prudently, or not at all.

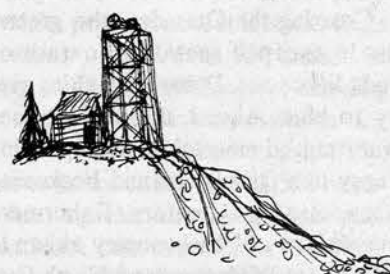
The rub is that this path for "reform" requires on-the-ground vigilance — action by persons and groups willing to put appropriate heat on the land management agencies. This, in turn, will enable those agencies to stand up to the mining interests and do the job that should be done.

Although this may seem like tougher

sledding than "changing the law," don't believe it. Ask Mo Udall.

Robert J. Golten
Boulder, Colorado

The writer is an attorney.



SCIENCE, NOT FICTION

Dear HCN,

Good to see Bert Lindler's work on wolf "recovery" in Montana. But since they were once "as common as the buffalo," the fact that there are "as many as 68 wolves in northwest Montana and southern British Columbia" makes the term "recovery" a sorry joke. Like Mark Twain's putative demise, reports of wolf recovery have been greatly exaggerated.

Bert has done good yeomanly work in the main, so it pains me to have to bust him hard on his foolish slur against Farley Mowat. To say it is unfortunate that most people get their ideas about wolves from one of the world's foremost naturalists and most knowledgeable nature writers is simply to bare his own ignorance and to moon your readers with it.

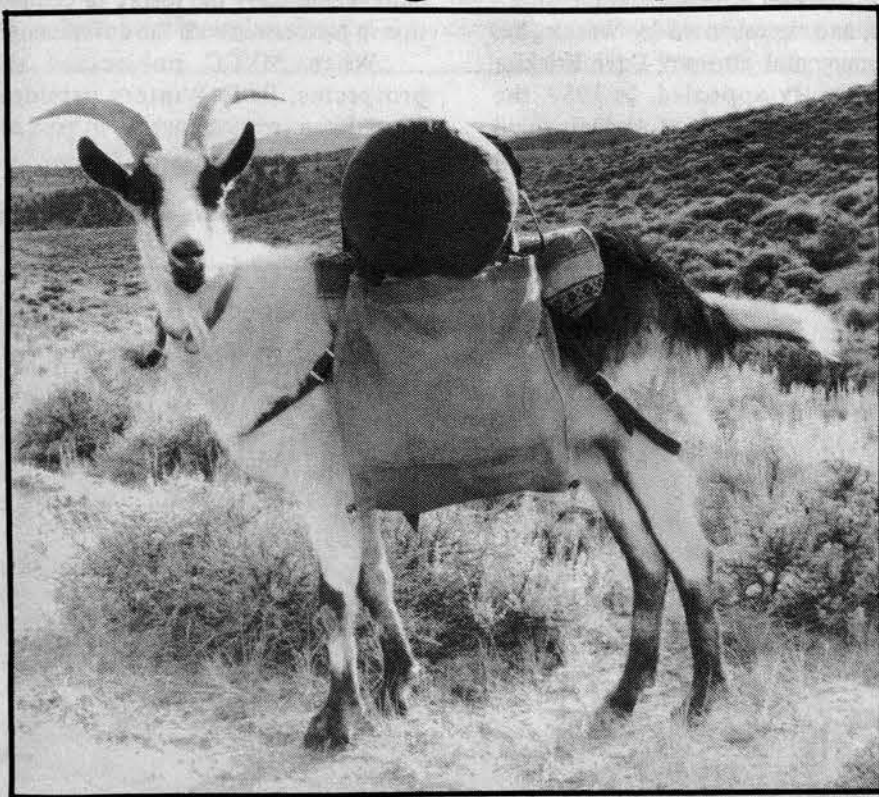
There are no "fictions" in Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*. It is a scientific study of the behavior of wolves on the northern tundra of Canada. It was undertaken because Canadian bureaucrats wanted a reason to exterminate the arctic wolf on grounds that it alone was destroying the native caribou herd and that overhunting and habitat loss played no part. Mowat found it wasn't so.

Mowat's studies were in part based on documented observation that when the herd was in its far northern migration, wolves lived for long periods of time on a diet consisting largely of mice.

Sure, the movie made from the book put this in cutesy-poo form, but that doesn't change the facts. Lindler needs to go back to Rule #1 for journalists: Check your facts against your prejudices lest you be forced to eat crow. Or mice...

P. Edwards
Pacific Palisades, California

Don't forget to pack



Judith E. Strom

High Country News

☐ One year - \$24

☐ Two years - \$42

*☐ One year, institution - \$34

*☐ Two years, institution - \$60

*Institutional rate applies to subscriptions paid for with a business, government, or other organization check. Public and school libraries may subscribe at the \$24 rate.

☐ My check is enclosed, or, ☐ charge my credit card

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard: acct. no. _____

Expiration date _____ Signature _____

☐ Please bill me

Name _____

Address _____

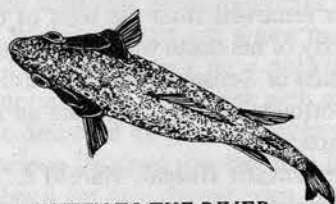
City, State, Zip _____

Please mail to: HCN, Box 1090, Paonia, CO 81428

BULLETIN BOARD

DIVERSITY AND SURVIVAL

For those interested in biological diversity and its link to human existence, the Center for BioDiversity at Pennsylvania State University is offering a program on "Biodiversity and Landscapes: Human Challenges for Conservation in the Changing World." The multidisciplinary conference will be held Oct. 22-25 at University Park, Pa., and will address biological diversity from cultural, scientific and ethical viewpoints. The agenda includes how to save tropical forests, biodiversity conservation, and an optional wetland ecology field trip. The registration fee is \$50. For more information write Conference Coordinator, BioDiversity and Landscapes Event, 306 Ag. Administration Bldg., Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA 16802, or call 814/865-8301.



LISTEN TO THE RIVER

"What the River Says: The Water Conference," sponsored by the Grants Pass Branch of the American Association of University Women, will focus on Oregon water issues. The conference will be held Oct. 13 at Rogue Community College in Grants Pass, Ore. There will be presentations on Oregon water use, hydrology and water rights. Speakers include state Sen. Bill Bradbury, Bob Doppelt of the Oregon Rivers Council and Sue Kupillas, Jackson County commissioner. Cost is \$18 including lunch. For more information contact Rachel Winters, conference coordinator, at 2560 Sand Creek Rd., Grants Pass, OR 97527, or call 503/476-6243.

TO BURN OR NOT TO BURN

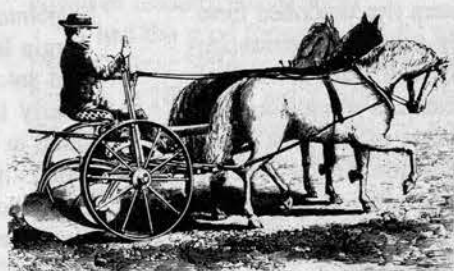
The Park Service has extended its deadline for public comment on Yellowstone National Park's Wildland Fire Management Plan to Oct. 5. Currently the Park Service is exploring a number of options that are described in a statement available to the public. To get a copy or to submit comments, write the Superintendent, Wildland Fire Management Plan, P.O. Box 168, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190.

STUDENT ENVIRONMENTAL CONFERENCE

Building on the momentum created by Earth Day, a National Student Environmental Action Conference will be held at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana campus, Oct. 5-7. Sponsored by the Student Environmental Action Coalition, the conference will give students from all 50 states the opportunity to draft a Declaration of Environmental Rights as well as meet and hear environmental, labor and minority leaders. Last year SEAC organized the THRESHOLD conference, which attracted 1,700 students and featured speakers such as Barry Commoner and David Brower. For more information contact CATALYST at 305 West Elm St. #20, Urbana, IL 61891, or call 317/333-9561.

FUTURE OF LAND TRANSPORTATION

Ralph Nader will be the keynote speaker for "Innovative Land Transportation in the 21st Century," an international conference promoting alternative transportation design and technology. The three-day conference, held Oct. 8-10 in Snowmass, Colo., will feature panel discussions, technical sessions and exhibits. Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan, D-N.Y., chair of the Senate Water Resources, Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, will speak on government support of transportation systems. Thirty other panelists will discuss topics such as the future of high-speed rail, personal rapid transit, advanced propulsion systems, the automobile of the future, and more. Registration is \$400 without lodging and \$500 with lodging. Limited scholarships are available. In conjunction with "Innovative Land Transportation," the 11th Annual Pedestrian Conference will be held in Boulder on Oct. 3-5. For more information, write to: Transportation 2000, P.O. Box 8005, Suite 384, Boulder, CO 80306, or call Merry Havens at 303/499-0243.



THE REOPENING OF THE WESTERN FRONTIERS

A century after the Western frontier was declared closed, a gathering of scholars and artists will convene in Gunnison, Colo., to discuss how this frontier is more wide open than ever. "Headwaters I: The Reopening of the Western Frontiers" will be held at Western State College Oct. 5-6. Participants include *High Country News* publisher Ed Marston; John Nichols, author of *The Milagro Beanfield War*; historian Patricia Nelson Limerick; and David Seals, author of *The Powwow Highway*. Other speakers include Western Colorado artists and scholars such as composer Rod Ash, philosopher Reyes Garcia and Western State College anthropologist Mark Stiger. Admission to the conference is free. For more information contact George Sibley at Western State College, Box 145, Gunnison, CO 81231, or call 303/943-2055.



OUR OLDEST TREES

In many regions of the world, complete ecosystems are being destroyed before the mechanics of how they work have been fully understood. In the United States, one region succumbing to this fate is the old-growth forests of the Pacific Northwest. Writer David Kelly and photographer Gary Braasch, in *Secrets of the Old Growth Forest*, tell us that for over 11,000 years a complex web of life has evolved around these centuries-old trees. But for the last 100 years, these ancient forests have succumbed to logging and other human practices. In California, for example, only 4 percent of the original redwood forests remain. Color photographs graphically reveal the hidden beauty and destruction that now envelops this region. Released originally in 1988, this paperback version has been updated to reflect the changes in conditions of the forests in just two years.

Peregrine Smith Books, 1877 E. Gentile St., Layton, UT 84041. Paper, \$15.95. 128 pp., illustrated with photos, maps, bibliography and appendices.

GUIDE TO FOREST PLANNING

The U.S. Forest Service has compiled a guide to the planning process for the Arapahoe and Roosevelt national forests and Pawnee National Grassland in Colorado. Forest plans, revised every 10 years, establish objectives for the forest's management and the practices needed to reach these goals. This 20-page, tabloid-format guide solicits comments from public conservationists, campers, neighbors or anyone else who wants to help shape the 1994 forest management plan. Articles explain the revision process, suggest ways to get involved, and present background and varying points of view on controversial issues. Comments on the plan will be accepted until Nov. 1. Copies of the guide can be picked up at Forest Service offices in Fort Collins, Boulder, Idaho Springs, Granby, Greeley, Estes Park and Lakewood, or can be requested by calling 303/498-1013.

CLASSIFIED

HIGH COUNTRY NEWS classified ads cost 30 cents per word, \$5 minimum prepaid. Display ads are \$10/column inch if camera-ready; \$15 per column inch if we make up. Send your ad with payment to: HCN, Box 1090, Paonia, CO 81428 or call 303/527-4898 for more information.

"OUTDOOR PEOPLE" lists 50-word descriptions of active, outdoor-oriented Singles and Trip Companions nationwide. \$2/copy, \$10/ad. OUTDOOR PEOPLE-HCN, PO Box 600, Gaston, SC 29053. (6x15 pd)

"OUTDOOR SINGLES NETWORK," ages 19 to 90, national, no codes, no extra charges, first names and addresses published, published bi-monthly, 1-year subscription \$15, place ad \$15, trial issue \$3, free ad form for SASE, 1611 Cooper #7, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601. (4x19p)

NEW WATER PUBLICATION: An Introduction to Water Rights and Conflicts with emphasis on Colorado. For information please write: Network Marketing, 8370 Warhawk Rd., Dept. HC, Conifer, CO 80433, or call 303/674-7105. (12x16p)

SOLAR ELECTRICITY

Complete water pumping & remote home power systems. Gas refrigerators, wind generators, etc. Design & local installation available. \$2 catalog **YELLOW JACKET SOLAR** Box 253, Yellow Jacket, CO 81335. PH (303)-562-4884



400 ACRES ON THE WILD AND SCENIC DOLORES RIVER, totally surrounded by BLM in a majestic red cliffed valley near Gateway, an hour from Grand Junction. 1.5 miles of Dolores River runs through, beautiful building sites under big cottonwoods, 160 day growing season, abundant, free, gravity flow water for 65 acres of row crop land now in alfalfa. Breathtaking — a little Monument Valley! \$274,000. Treece Land Sales, Jack Treece, Grand Junction, CO. 303/243-4170. (2x17b)
 YYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY
 I PURCHASE MORTGAGES — anywhere in the U.S.A., Full or Part, Large or Small. Call and get cash. 303/526-4885. (2x27p)
 YYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYYY

RECYCLED PAPER THE RIGHT MESSAGE

COMPARED TO VIRGIN PAPER, producing one ton of recycled paper uses half the energy and water, saves 17 trees, results in less air and water pollution, and saves landfill space. Show others you care with beautiful note cards, stationery, gift wrap, and holiday cards made from recycled paper. Printing, office, copy, and computer papers are also available. Send for your free catalog.

EARTH CARE PAPER INC. Box 14140, Dept. FC, Madison, WI 53714 (608) 277-2900



DAN FOGELBERG



Where The Beauty Is Real And The Passion Is True.

DAN FOGELBERG. "THE WILD PLACES."

The Much-Anticipated New Album Featuring "Rhythm Of The Rain." On Full Moon/Epic.



Produced by Dan Fogelberg. Management: H.K. Management. Full Moon is a trademark of Full Moon Productions, Inc. "Epic," Reg. U.S. Pat. & Tm. Off. by CBS Records Inc. ©1990 CBS Records Inc.

ESSAY

Ickes: Interior's noisy reformer

Part I

by T.H. Watkins

I have just come up after more than five years of immersion in another human life. One of the pitfalls of the biographer's trade, of course, is that you can become so profoundly involved in the twists and tangles of your subject's passage through the world that you lose sight of your own. I have managed to evade the worst of the syndrome (I still have a wife and a job, for instance), but I have not yet fully escaped the man; at one level or another, Harold L. Ickes will be with me for the rest of my life.

There are worse lives to spend some time with. I took on the assignment of writing the story of Franklin D. Roosevelt's spiky Secretary of the Interior with an interest leavened by ignorance. I assumed that it would be a reasonably simple task.

Not until the noxious career of James Gaius Watt would there be so overwhelmingly public a public servant occupying a Presidential cabinet seat. Like Watt, Ickes was noisy, opinionated, controversial. Such men, I reasoned, tend to be simple characters, and if Ickes served almost precisely 13 years (1933-1946) and Watt did not even make it to three (1981-1983); if Ickes was noisy on the right side of most public questions, as Watt was equally noisy on the wrong side; and if his contributions to the national welfare were substantial as Watt's were nonexistent, I still should have little difficulty in sorting things out and offering up a worthwhile portrait.

If life were intended to be that simple, God would not have invented Harold L. Ickes, who was not one man, but several.

The Unrepentant Liberal

First, there was Ickes the professional liberal. He was a man whose progressive roots went as deep as those of any man in our modern history, roots that began at the University of Chicago when it was just a year old, that were embedded even more deeply during the struggles for good government in Chicago in the 1890s, when corruption was as fetid as the garbage that got pumped into the Chicago River.

These progressive instincts survived even a period of his life at the turn of the century when he served as a newspaperman for the *Chicago Tribune*, among other papers. They even survived when he became a lawyer in 1907 and hung a shingle in the Loop. They led him into helping out that secular saint, Jane Addams, at Hull-House, her fortress of hope in a sink of poverty and wretchedness.

These instincts brought him, with Clarence Darrow, to represent arrested strikers during the garment-workers' strikes of 1910 and 1915, and tied him to the career of the first great Roosevelt — Theodore — and to the Progressive Movement that culminated in Roosevelt's run at an interrupted third-term presidency as the Bull Moose candidate in 1912, an unsuccessful try during which Ickes became Roosevelt's campaign manager in Illinois.

It was these instincts that made him a power behind the scenes in the politics of Chicago from his first stint as a mayoral campaign manager in 1903 to the decade of the Stuttering Twenties, when he fought the ghastly corruption of Big Bill Thompson's reign and the dead hand of monopoly exercised by Samuel Insull, the utility king.

They led him to become the head of the first Chicago branch of the NAACP in 1923, led him to slug a Ku Klux Klan marcher during a parade in rural Illinois that same year, made him a co-founder of the Chicago Indian Rights Association, again in 1923.

It was these instincts that led him to break from his Republican traditions to vote Democratic during the presidential elections of 1916, 1920, 1924, 1928, and 1932, when he headed up the Western Independent Republican Committee for Roosevelt, a position that ultimately inspired Roosevelt to offer him the job of Secretary of the Interior.

From 1933 until his death in 1952 at the age of 77, Ickes expanded and embodied the protocols of liberalism as few public men before, with, or after him. As its secretary, he integrated the Department of the Interior from top to bottom, eliminated segrega-

tion from the parks of Washington, and made it possible for the glorious black contralto Marian Anderson to sing on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial on Easter Sunday 1939, when the not so glorious DAR wouldn't let her sing at their inappropriately named Constitution Hall.

"When God gave us this wonderful outdoors and the sun and the moon and the stars," he said to the supremely mixed crowd of 75,000 that afternoon, "he made no distinction of race, creed or color."

Ickes insisted on having a black man, William Hastie, appointed as a federal judge in the Virgin Islands and later fought to have the same man named their first governor. He took action against the Six Companies, builders of Boulder Dam, when they were accused of discrimination; agitated within the administration for passage of a federal anti-lynching law; took on the War Department when it discouraged the hiring of black teachers and again when it refused to use black officers in the camps of the Civilian Conservation Corps it supervised; reprimanded and fired employees for racist acts; and called out the park police to enforce the integration of Washington's public golf courses.

As one of the New Deal's most popular and effective speakers through Roosevelt's three re-election campaigns and all the years between them, he lashed out against fascism here and abroad long before any other major American public figure, and against anti-Semitism — in this country as represented by the infamous Father Coughlin and the Ku Klux Klan and in Europe by the monsters of the Nazi government. He clashed with a dimly reluctant State Department from the mid-1930s clear into the middle of World War II in his effort to get it to allow Jewish refugees from the Holocaust into this country. He argued vehemently against the wartime internment of Japanese-Americans, and when the program was turned over to the Interior Department in 1944, he dismantled the relocation centers (he described them for what they were — "fancy-named concentration camps") scattered from Tule Lake, Calif., to Minadoka, Idaho, as swiftly as circumstances would allow.

After the war, he became one of the most effective spokesmen for the recognition of the State of Israel, for the sharing of information on atomic



Harold Ickes



American Heritage

weapons with the world, and against testing of the hydrogen bomb. Long before the war, he had ridiculed and challenged all the early versions of the witch hunts an obsessive anti-communism inspired, suggested strongly that the FBI be dismembered and J. Edgar Hoover removed from the sight of decent men, and to the day of his death was spitting vituperation in the direction of Senator Joseph McCarthy and his gang of opportunistic allies, including an ascendant Richard Nixon.

As the unrepentant liberal, Harold L. Ickes fought against privilege, manipulation and economic tyranny, spending his entire adult life wrapped in the certitude that the individual was more important than the state, that human life and dignity were precious, that bigotry and oppression were demonstrably evil and should be blasted from the planet.

The Mind of a Commissar

Then there was Harold Ickes the public servant, the consummate bureaucrat, quite possibly the greatest bureaucrat in 20th-century American life. He had, one unfriendly congressman said, "the soul of a meat-axe and the mind of a commissar." Well, maybe, but things got done around Harold Ickes, and got done in a big way.

The Interior Department was one of the largest bureaucracies in the world, with more than 30,000 employees scattered over 48 states and U.S. territories. For most of the 13 years of his tenure, his appointed rounds included the administration of the Virgin Islands, Hawaii, Alaska, Guam, Puerto Rico, and smaller possessions; the administration of the nearly 180 million acres of unappropriated public lands in the lower 48 states, most of them west of the Mississippi; the supervision of the national park system, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Reclamation, the U.S. Department of Education, Gallaudet College, Howard University, Freedman's Hospital, and St. Elizabeth's Hospital, and, after 1939, the national wildlife refuge system and the commercial fisheries of the United States; overseeing the thousands of projects in the Public Works Administration; sitting as chairman for the Natural Resources Board, the National Coal Commission, the National Power Committee, and the Advisory Board of the National Recovery Administration; finally, serving as Petroleum Administrator for Defense and, after Pearl Harbor, Petroleum Administrator for War.

Billions of dollars passed through his hands and the hands of his employees, and not one single instance of corruption, theft or taint of graft was ever successfully laid at the door of the Department of the Interior. That, too, was no accident. The memory of the noisome career of Interior Secretary Albert Fall and the Teapot Dome scandal of the Harding Administration were fresh in Ickes' memory.

He worked 15 or 16 hours a day, used himself and others savagely, and hated the nickname "Honest Harold," but earned it.

Cheops Redux

As one of his earliest and most demanding chores, Ickes took over the Public Works Administration in July 1933, and with a grant of \$3.3 billion that year and another \$3 billion two years later, proceeded to change the physical face of most of America, leading to historian William E. Leuchtenberg's description of him as "a builder to rival Cheops."

Ickes would have loved the description. The quintessential New Dealer — a persuasion in which planning big was as natural to its adherents as mother's milk to an infant — he was ready to dream with

the best of them. "Utopian goals?" he asked in an article in the May 27, 1934 issue of *The New York Times Magazine*. "Yes, Utopian indeed, but I do not apologize for suggesting that Utopia is a proper goal ... We are a spiritual people, and life for us would not be worth living if we did not have this urge to reach for what will always seem beyond our reach."

Some milestones on the road to Utopia, then: By the spring of 1935, 19,000 individual projects in 3,043 of the nation's 3,073 counties were completed or under way — including 583 municipal water systems and 622 sewage systems, 263 hospitals, 522 schools, and 368 street and highway projects. New York got 18 miles of subway, the Lincoln Tunnel, the Queens-Midtown Tunnel, and the Henry Hudson, Grand Central, Cross-Island, Gowanus and Interborough parkways. The PWA built \$238 million worth of ships for the Navy and the Coast Guard and airplanes for the Army Air Force.

The West was not ignored in the PWA sweepstakes. In Colorado, \$25 million in PWA money went for highway construction, while \$4 million helped to launch a 10-year public buildings construction project. Wichita, Kansas, got a new museum. In California, Los Angeles got new dock facilities at Port Hueneme, Long Beach got new schools to replace those destroyed by the earthquake of 1933, and San Francisco-Oakland got the Bay Bridge. In Texas, Lubbock got new dormitories at Texas Tech, Fort Worth got a new sanitation system, and San Antonio got new elementary and secondary school buildings.

Oregon got \$20 million in highway construction and the \$4.8 million Owyhee River Project, while Wyoming got \$8.5 million in highway construction and \$22.7 million for the Army Corps of Engineers' Casper-Alcova (later called the Kendrick) irrigation

project on the North Platte River. Montana got \$49 million in PWA money for another Corps project, the enormous wall of dirt across the Missouri River called the Fort Peck Dam, while Utah got the Hyrum, Ogden River, Moon Lake, Sanpete, and Provo River projects.

PWA money financed most of the construction of Grand Coulee and Bonneville dams on the Columbia River, two projects whose hydropower capacity was so important to the production of aluminum and the development of the atomic bomb that, it has been argued, we could not have won World War II without them.

PWA money also helped finance the construction of Boulder Dam on the Colorado River (Ickes refused to name it Hoover Dam, out of a warm disregard for the former President). It was the keystone in the most expansive river-basin effort west of the Tennessee Valley Authority — the Colorado River Basin Project, which under the aegis of Ickes' Bureau of Reclamation stuffed dams in the main stem of the Colorado River from Boulder Dam at Black Canyon clear down to Imperial Dam just above the Mexican border. The same Bureau took over California's grandiose Central Valley Project, designed to move millions of acre-feet of water from where it was to where it wasn't.

Much of this tearing down and building up, paving over and moving around, has been viewed by moderns as a terrible mistake, particularly the sundry irrigation and hydropower projects that transformed the character and quality of life in the trans-Mississippi West as perhaps no other single phenomenon in the history of the region, not only stopping the flow of some of the wildest, most beautiful free-running rivers in the West, but in the process encouraging the bloat of urban growth following World War II and

accelerating the exploitation of natural resources.

Furthermore, by not enforcing those provisions in the Reclamation Act of 1902, which barred the delivery of federal irrigation water to holdings in excess of 160 acres, critics maintain, Ickes and the Bureau of Reclamation ensured the decline of the small family farm and the uncontrolled boom of corporate agribusiness in the West.

True enough, all of it. But it is one of the paradoxes of the man's career that while his work as administrator of the PWA was instrumental in civilizing — which is not to be confused with making civil — the modern West, with all its attendant urban-industrial malefactions, his work as a committed tree-hugger went quite as far in the direction of saving more of the region's natural landscapes than that of any Interior Secretary in history up to his time, and most since.

Next issue: What conservationists owe — and almost owe — to Harold Ickes.

T.H. Watkins, a former senior editor of *American Heritage*, is editor of *Wilderness* and a vice president of The Wilderness Society. He is the author or co-author of 19 books, the most recent of which was *Time's Island: The California Desert*, published by Gibbs Smith in 1989. His 1973 memoir, *On the Shore of the Sundown Sea*, will be republished by the Johns Hopkins University Press this fall. Most of this two-part article was excerpted or adapted from *Righteous Pilgrim: The Life and Times of Harold L. Ickes*, to be published by Henry Holt this month.

LETTERS

WILDERNESS MANAGEMENT IS CRUCIAL

Dear HCN,

The article by Richard Manning (Guest Opinion, 6/18/90) really missed the mark. Just at the time when wilderness needs the most attention, Mr. Manning is perpetuating the notion that somehow wilderness would be "better served by being ignored." As the 1988 Congressional oversight hearings on wilderness management documented, long-term wilderness preservation is threatened by human activities both inside and outside the wilderness boundary.

While the term "management" may seem paradoxical in relation to the wilderness, wilderness management is not management in the traditional sense of manipulating resources. Instead, wilderness management is the control of human activities to reduce impacts on natural conditions and on the wilderness experience. Some of the strategies typically used to reduce impacts include: educating visitors on no-trace camping practices; encouraging camping only on hidden, durable sites; eliminating high-impact behaviors (e.g., campfires in high-elevation areas); redirecting non-wilderness-dependent uses to areas outside of wilderness and limiting development of road and trail access. Failure to control human activities through these management strategies will result in the preservation of empty shells.

Within the Forest Service, Bob Marshall, Aldo Leopold and Arthur Carhart were early leaders who laid the foundations of the wilderness concept and provided a vision of how these areas should be managed. Contrary to Richard Manning's perception of Gifford Pinchot, Pinchot's writings reveal that he did not view wilderness as incompatible with his conservation philosophy. Indeed, while serving as a Commissioner of Forestry, he initiated a network of natural areas, designed for recreation and research, which served as a model for Leopold's wilderness concept.

Howard Zahniser, primary author of the 1964 Wilderness Act, noted that the development of attitudes that made the preservation of natural areas possible could be traced to Pinchot's broad vision of resource management.

I had the good fortune to attend the Line Officer Wilderness Management Session at Ninemile, and I disagree that the tone was one of harsh criticism and negativism. Indeed, the Ninemile session was incredibly exciting, for it was the first time top-level decisionmakers within the Forest Service came together to spend an entire week discussing wilderness and how to improve the care of wilderness lands. Participants worked in small groups to discuss real-life case studies and determine what decisions should be made to preserve wilderness values within the context of wilderness legislation. By the end of the week there clearly was a greater understanding of the importance and complexity of the wilderness resource, and a sense of commitment to take actions that will insure the preservation of wilderness values. For wilderness is far more than a special kind of recreation area, as Mr. Manning correctly noted.

The Ninemile session was a success because it effectively reached the people who make the decisions that affect wilderness. I urge Richard Manning and anyone else who questions the need to manage wilderness to set up a trip with their local area manager to see firsthand how wilderness management is applied. Balancing wilderness preservation with human use will never be easy, but with active citizen involvement, dedicated managers and sound research, we can ensure that wilderness will be given the care and attention it deserves.

Linda Merigiano
Driggs, Idaho

The author is a wilderness coordinator.

WILDERNESS MANAGERS

Dear HCN,

We would like the opportunity to correct several inaccurate statements made in Richard Manning's article in your June 18 issue.

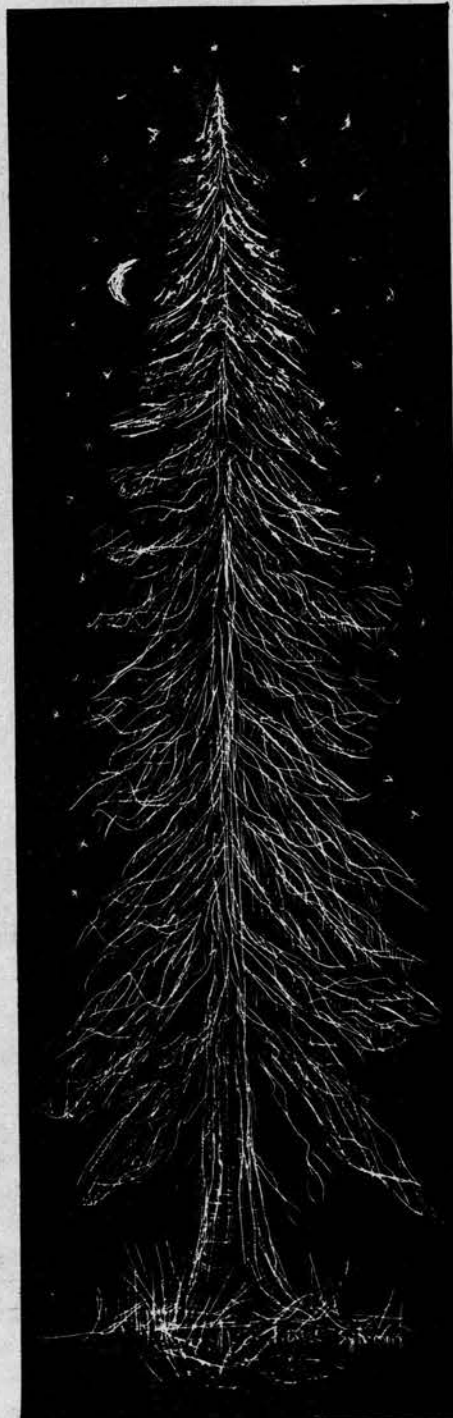
The backgrounds and experiences of Liz Close, Elizabeth Estill and Anne Fege were incorrectly described; none of them were contacted prior to publication to verify the information that Manning gathered. (It seems noteworthy that Manning focuses positive attention on three men while questioning the credentials of three women.)

Close has degrees in recreation management and public administration. She was acting district ranger on the Wasatch-Cache National Forest and has nearly 10 years' experience in transferring research information to field managers. She brings a strong complement of skills to Steve Morton's forestry- and field-based experiences.

Estill has a master's degree in ecology and served as a Loeb Environmental Fellow at Harvard University. She has almost 20 years of experience in planning for and managing natural resources, and has administered nationally recognized programs in environmental education, land stewardship, endangered species propagation and outdoor recreation. Her correct title is Director of the Recreation, Cultural Resources and Wilderness Management staff.

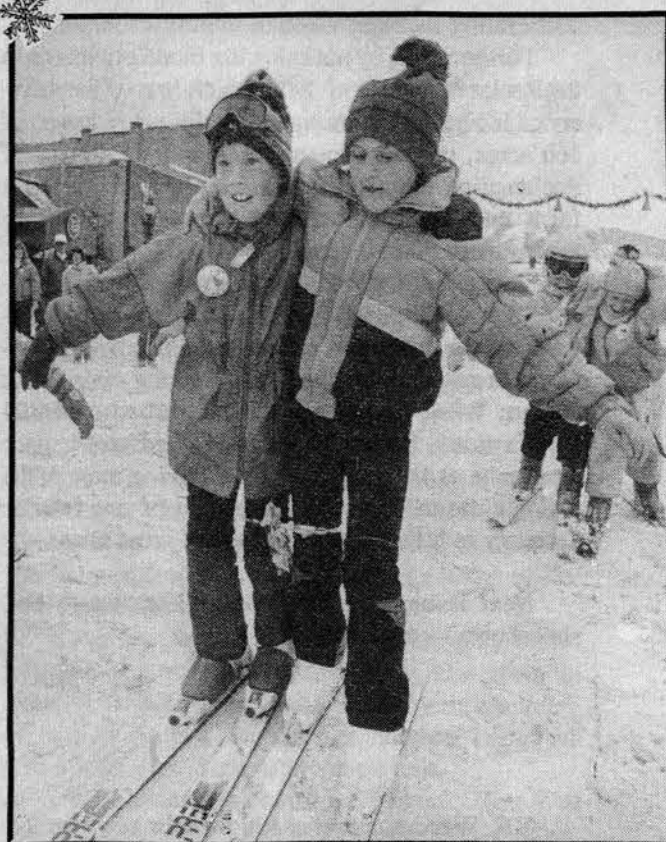
Fege has a Ph.D in tree physiology and has experience as a program manager in such diverse areas as air pollution research, plant physiology and ecology, technology transfer, managing experimental forests, and long-range budget development. She has worked on the Timber Management research staff, but has not come "through the ranks of the timber program."

Manning refers to the "lower reaches of the flow charts." This is probably a reference to the wilderness rangers, a



poor choice of words for the most valuable position in our wilderness management program.

Elizabeth Estill
Washington, D.C.



STEAMBOAT SPRINGS,

Colo., has reveled in its Winter Carnival every February for 76 years. High points include three-legged ski races, father-child sled races, and a venerable favorite, the All Broads Kazoo Band (center).

Photos by
Kevin Dougherty, *Steamboat Pilot*

