

High Country News

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A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar



Idaho Department of Commerce and Development

by Lisa Jones

When Bill and Marlene Pace moved onto their 40-acre plot of land near Aztec, N.M., in 1978, there were six buried fuel transportation lines crossing their land. Now there are 11.

"I guess I watered them well or something," laughed Marlene Pace. "With TransColorado it'll be 12."

The TransColorado Gas Transmission Co.'s pipeline would link up with lines heading for markets in the Midwest and the Southwest. It is one of at least six proposed lines racing to join reserves in the Rocky Mountain West and Canada with California — one of the biggest new markets in the country.

Policy makers in California consider natural gas an environmentally acceptable fuel for satisfying the state's growing energy appetite. And the gas industry touts the economic growth that increased gas drilling and transportation will bring to the West. But concerns about routing, environmental impacts and energy policy have arisen in the Paces' back yard and beyond.

"Why should we bear the burden for California?" asks Bill Pace, who says the pipeline companies have compensated him and his wife a total of about \$10,000.

For some of the Rocky Mountain states involved — Wyoming, Colorado and Utah — the answer is: to sell gas that has been locked up for years with no direct route to the burgeoning California market.

Competition for a place in that market is fierce. Encouraged by the initiation of market-oriented policies both in California and the federal government, the proposed pipelines either reach California or link up with lines that do. The only catch is that there isn't room for all of them.

This is just fine with California's energy planners. "Let the games begin," says Claudia Barker, assistant director of the California Energy Commission. "Whoever can provide the best deal for the customer — the best gas at the lowest price — should go in."

But in Bountiful, Utah, where the proposed routes of two competing pipelines come close to town, there is outspoken opposition.

Half of the proposed pipelines originate in the central Rockies. Gas interests there are eager to right the "radical imbalance" between their vast reserves, estimated at one-fifth of the nation's total, and the one-percent slice of the California market they currently serve. California now imports 80 percent of its gas needs — 20 percent from Canada and 60 percent from the Southwest. The state accounts for nearly one-eighth of the nation's gas consumption.

"The reason for the imbalance," says John Wold, chairman of the Wyoming Natural Gas Pipeline Authority, "is that we haven't had a direct line into California." The diminutive amount of central Rockies gas that makes it to California is routed through pipelines to the south first. "It's a roundabout way, and expensive," says Wold, whose group has been working to market

Wyoming natural gas to California for the past three years.

California recently opened up its natural gas transportation market to out-of-state and private companies. Formerly, only in-state utilities could own pipelines in the state. But the state isn't the only player embracing the free market.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), which oversees permitting for all interstate pipelines, altered a requirement that companies prove the need for a pipeline before it would authorize construction. In 1985, FERC started offering "optional expedited certificates" that remove the requirement on the condition the company assumes full financial responsibility for the project. This has shifted the battleground between competing companies from the commission's Washington, D.C., hearing room squarely into the marketplace.

"It's a new ballgame for these pipeline companies," says Mike Ferguson, the director of law and marketing for the Mojave Pipeline Operating Company in El Paso. "The pipeline business has been so pervasively regulated for years and years; when these projects started out the whole idea was that only one of them was going to get a certificate."

Now three companies — Kern River Gas Transmission Co., Wyoming-California Pipeline Company (WyCal), and Mojave — have received optional expedited certificates. Two others — TransColorado and Altamont Gas Transportation Project — have applied

for them. A sixth project, Pacific Gas Transmission Co., has applied for traditional certification.

"The optional certificates have sped the regulatory process up tremendously," said an approving John Wold.

Opposition to the routes, however, has sprung up around communities as diverse as suburban Salt Lake City and South Pass City — an historic Wyoming community with a population of about 10 near the still-visible tracks of the Oregon Trail. Concerns also have been raised in Colorado about the disposal of salty water produced when gas is extracted.

The most organized opposition is in Bountiful, Utah, where the routes of a pair of pipelines — Kern River and

(Continued on page 10)



Pipelines proliferated after WWII: "Now, that's cooking with gas!"



HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

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Dear friends,

HCN in Missoula

Twelve of the 15 members of the High Country Foundation board of directors made it to Missoula, Montana, Sept. 22. Tom France, the National Wildlife Federation's attorney for the Northern Rockies, was acting host. Board president Andy Wiessner, along with Michael Ehlers and Dan Luecke, came up from Colorado. Wyoming's contingent included Sally Gordon and *HCN* founder Tom Bell. Susan Williams journeyed from Prescott, Ariz.; Lynda Taylor from Albuquerque, N.M.; and Karil Frohboese from Park City, Utah. Jeff Fereday drove over from Boise, Idaho, with Pat Ford, our Northwest regional editor. Herman Warsh popped up from his ranch near Emigrant, Mont., and Judy Donald flew in from Washington, D.C. Missing were Bill Hedden from Moab, Utah; Lynn Dickey from Sheridan, Wyo., and Bert Fingerhut from Aspen, Colo.

The potluck dinner that night at the Marshall Ski Area drew some 100 subscribers and friends. They brought an incredibly varied spread of food and a lot of good conversation about the paper and what's going on in the Northern Rockies.

Among those attending the Missoula potluck were Arnold and Helen Bolle, Les and Mary Pengilly, and Wes and Joanne Woodgerd. Arnold is the former dean of the University of Montana Forestry School. Les is a former wildlife professor at the university. And Wes is the former director of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Others included Bruce Weide, a local writer; Cass Chinske, president of the Alliance for the Wild Rockies; and *HCN* correspondent Dick Manning and his bride, Tracy Stone, just returned from their honeymoon.

Tom France, who has lived in Missoula for the past 13 years, and Bruce Farling, the Clark Fork Coalition's deputy director and an ex-*HCN* intern, took visiting staff and board member Lynda Taylor rafting on the Clark Fork the next day. We spotted a bald eagle, who took a big interest in one of the four trout Tom caught and released. Staff caught no fish, of course, out of concern for the host's feelings.

New office

As anyone who has visited *HCN*'s Paonia office knows, we have been falling over ourselves in its 1,400 square

feet for some time. At the last board meeting, held in Paonia June 23, board members trekked around looking at prospective new homes for *HCN*, with little luck. But in Missoula the board was presented with a well-documented proposition to buy and renovate an empty 3,600-square-foot building across the street. The board authorized staff to negotiate a lease-purchase of the building by Nov. 15.

Plans call for consolidating all the functions of putting the paper out, which will mean having our own darkroom, copying equipment and space for mailing. Business, editorial and production also will get more space. There will even be room out back for a picnic spot and no-grass garden, if staff green thumbs are up for it.

New newsprint

The board also gave us the go-ahead to begin using recycled paper for printing the paper. This had been a high-priority item with the board for some time, and staff spent a year looking for recycled newsprint that would maintain the paper's graphic quality. Associate editor Steve Hinchman, who researched the changing recycled paper field, found options that actually improved the "brightness" factor. The board approved Steve's recommendation to use a 50-percent-recycled offset paper with a new whitening process that does not produce dioxins. Although this pro-environment step will increase printing and mailing costs by 15 percent, the board agreed to hold the line on subscription rates for 1991. If all goes well with our paper supplier and printer, we will begin testing the new paper this winter. Stay tuned....

New trail

Trailblazing isn't exactly a new activity in the West, as this issue's lead story reminds us by mentioning Wyoming's historic South Pass and plans to dig it up to lay pipelines for California-bound gas. But when tanned, relaxed Ellen Dudley walked into our office last month, she recounted a tale of trailblazing from West to East that recalled the rigors of yore. She and two other stalwarts are walking and biking across the nation to scout a coast-to-coast hiking trail they hope will catch on like the Appalachian Trail, which runs up the East's spine from Georgia to Maine.

Their project is called the American Discovery Trail.

The trio, which includes Eric Seaborg, the former president of the American Hiking Society, and Sam Carlson, started out last June 2 from the Point Reyes National Seashore just above San Francisco. Their route east crossed the Sierras at Lake Tahoe and passed close by Virginia City, Nev., as part of a plan to link population centers with wilderness areas. Two people either walk or bicycle, while the third drives a Blazer donated by General Motors. They had just traversed Colorado's unique 11,000-foot-high Grand Mesa before dropping into Paonia.

Ellen, who works for the Union of Concerned Scientists in Washington, D.C., said her biggest surprise so far is the discovery of how many trails shown on Forest Service maps no longer exist. Ellen estimated that there are at least 50,000 miles of "lost trails."

Other callers included Annellen Rhodes, who recently moved to Paonia and hopes to start a hospice for animals, and Cheryl Wolfer and Larry Booth of Nederland, Colo., who were on their way home from two weeks' camping in the Grand Mesa area. Bev Koch, who lives in Portland, Ore., and describes herself as a spiritual ecologist, was fresh from the Spirit of Place symposium at Mesa Verde. While very enthusiastic about the speakers and musicians she had heard, Bev said she wished there had been a chance for people from the same areas or with common causes to connect at the beginning of the symposium. She also noted that it took a lot of gas for participants to get around the park, and that carpools or a shuttle bus might be a good idea next time.

We received a very long-distance call from a subscriber in Stuttgart, West Germany: Udo Zindel, a reporter for German Public Radio. Udo, who had a question about a *HCN* story on piping Columbia River water to California, was in the States recently reporting on the Central Arizona Project. He said he'd found that Germans were quite interested in Western environmental issues.

"Hi," said a tiny scribbled message stuck in our door on a Saturday afternoon. "Janet and Dave Oatman—subscribers from IL—dropped by to see this famous place & paper—Read you avidly as a reminder of our Montana roots."

—Larry Mosher and Mary Jarrett
for the staff



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WESTERN ROUNDUP

Hopis protest snake dance by Prescott businessmen

PRESCOTT, Ariz. — After two weeks of sacrifice and secret preparation last August, the men of the Antelope and Snake clans entered the plaza of Shungopavi Village high on Second Mesa, took live rattlesnakes or bullsnakes into their mouths and again reenacted the solemn snake dance their ancestors brought to the Hopi mesa more than a thousand years ago.

To non-Indians, this is perhaps the most famous Hopi ceremony, notable both for its use of dangerous, live reptiles and for the uncanny certainty with which it produces its desired result.

"These dances are prayers or invocations for rain, the crowning blessing in this dry land," wrote Theodore Roosevelt after viewing the ceremony in August 1913. "The snakes, the brothers of men, as are all living things in the Hopi's creed, are besought to tell the beings of the underworld man's need of water."

The gentle Hopis say they offer their prayers for the benefit of all mankind and welcome visitors to their social and kachina dances held from spring through fall. But unlike other ceremonial dances, the Hopi snake dance has been closed to non-Indians since 1986. Hopi religious leaders say this was necessary because of disrespectful behavior shown by tourists and those seeking to profit from their religion.

Hopis are particularly upset by what they call the blatant exploitation of their religion through the mimicking of this sacred ritual by a group of non-Indians who call themselves the "Smoki People." First organized here in 1923, the Smokis (pronounced smoke-eyes) today consist of about 125 well-meaning businessmen and their families who say they love Indian culture. They say their only objective is to educate the public, preserve a dying lore, and raise money for the Smoki Museum in Prescott.

For the past 70 years, usually within weeks of the real Hopi snake dance, the Smokis hold their own elaborate pageants, which re-create dances and always end with what they now call their own traditional snake dance.

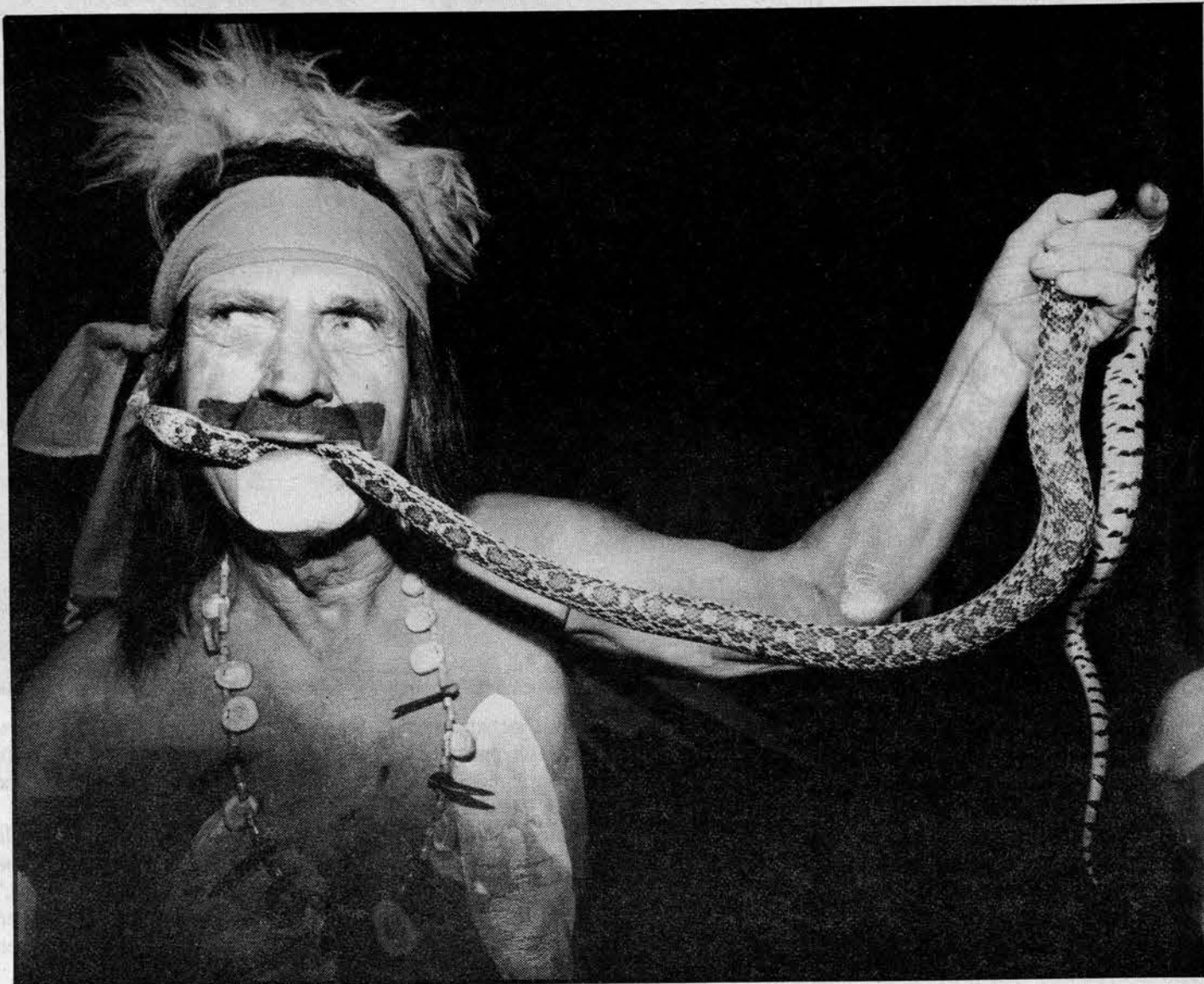
The Smokis are costumed remarkably like Hopi snake dancers, painting their skin brown and wearing long-hair wigs. They clutch huge, non-poisonous bullsnakes in their mouths to perform their version of a Hopi snake dance.

But this year's show, for the first time, included some 50 sign-carrying Hopis outside the Yavapai County Fairgrounds gate, demanding an end to the white men's ritual. Their demonstration began next to the Smoki ticket booth on the tree-shaded town square where hundreds of tourists milled about at an arts-and-crafts fair. Among the demonstrators were the Hopis' top elected leaders and half the tribal council.

"Everybody we've talked to is appalled that this is happening," said Hopi Chairman Vernon Masayesva. "Some people actually thought that Hopis are doing it — doing the snake dances here." He said the continuation of the Smoki dance against the wishes of Indians will give Prescott a "negative image as a very redneck, insensitive town."

While it is unusual for Hopis to protest anything publicly, Masayesva said years of useless diplomacy led his people to travel three hours to this central Arizona city to demonstrate.

"I came here for one reason," said 95-year-old Scott Puhuyouma through a



Tim Rogers

A member of the non-Indian Smoki People performs a modified Hopi snake dance

Hopi-speaking interpreter, "to stop the snake dance from being performed by these people down here."

Puhuyouma, a former Hopi snake priest from the Hopi village of Mishongnovi, said the Smokis didn't have the religious authority to perform the ceremony. That comes only through being born into the proper clan and being initiated into the proper Hopi religious society, he said. Even the name, Smoki irritates the tribe, having been borrowed from the outdated term "Moki" that whites once applied to the Hopis.

The Smokis mean no offense and now have their own tradition to uphold, said Perry Haddon, a second-generation member who wished to make a "peace offering" to the Hopis of free tickets to that night's performance. Haddon said other Hopis have befriended group members, offering them assistance in costume and dance details and inviting them to their reservation homes. He said the group's "chiefs" had visited the Hopi mesas in past years to discuss the tribe's concerns. Last year, he added, a group of Hopis came to view the Smoki performance and went so far as to bless the snakes and dancers with corn meal.

The Smokis appreciate the Hopis' right to protest, but will continue with their annual performances, Haddon said. "We consider this [demonstration] as a minority point of view," he said. "This topic of discussion has gone on for as long as I can remember and we haven't stopped in the past and, no, we won't stop in the future."

The concerns of the Hopis don't affect Alma Jo Stevens, who says all Smoki members take the study of Indian cultures seriously and conduct the annual snake dance with reverence. To her, it's the Hopis who don't understand what the Smokis are trying to accomplish, not the other way around.

"It's just lack of communication. That's the whole thing of it," she said.

"If they understood that it was all in seriousness and it wasn't any sacrilegious thing at all... It's like when you have a TV program about the Bible, about Jesus. It's like a pageant."

Among the Hopis' other criticisms of the Smoki performance is that it commercializes their religion, which they view as a sacrilege. For years, the Smoki Dances have been Prescott's biggest single tourist draw of the year, often bringing in as many as 3,000 people. Prescott, once Arizona's territorial capital, is a small, pleasant mile-high city that is home to retirees and students attending two small colleges and an aeronautical school. Tourism has become the principal industry in Prescott because it is within a few

hours' drive of metropolitan Phoenix.

After this year's Smoki performance, the Hopis were joined in opposing the dances by the Zunis, another Southwestern tribe. Barton Martza, their head councilman, traveled six hours from New Mexico to see the Smokis' presentation of his tribe's Kianakwe dance. He said he was both angry and amused to see white people seriously pretending they were Indians.

"It's just totally out of contact with the real world," he said. "They say they want to preserve the Indian ways, but I'm sure that they can have better luck trying to preserve refried beans in a Mason jar."

— George Hardeen

HOTLINE

Idaho's Leroy to seek nuclear site

President Bush has appointed a national nuclear waste negotiator to break the ongoing nuclear waste stalemate, but it may be one of the least rewarding \$80,000-a-year federal jobs going. David Leroy, a former Idaho lieutenant governor and attorney general, now has two and a half years to find a state or an Indian reservation willing to accept a permanent, national nuclear waste dump. Leroy says he will organize a nationwide search for volunteers, assess whether a site is technically feasible, and conduct public hearings before negotiating a contract, but most observers say he faces a hard sell. Nevada is the only current candidate, and it is balking and refuses to negotiate. Under federal law, Leroy can approach an Indian reservation for a possible nuclear waste repository even if the state's governor opposes it.

Environmentalists push House Clean Air bill

Several Western and national conservation groups have banded together in a major lobbying effort against the Senate's Clean Air bill, while endorsing the House version. The Environmental Defense Fund, The Wilderness Society, the Sierra Club and three Montana environmental groups say the Senate bill would increase Western power-plant pollution by 25 percent over the next 20 years (HCN, 4/23/90). The Environmental Protection Agency says the Senate bill could result in an increase of up to 130,000 tons of sulfur dioxide in the West. Sulfur dioxide is a major cause of acid rain. The organizations favor the House version of the bill because it would reduce sulfur dioxide emissions by 200,000 tons per year more than the Senate version would. The House bill would also require pollution controls on power plants that are found to be polluting national parks and wilderness areas, reports *The Billings Gazette*.

Groping toward a consensus to save the Columbia's salmon

With five species of Columbia River salmon in danger of extinction, the Pacific Northwest is forming a "coordinating group" to craft a new plan to save the fish.

For the many activists concerned with Columbia River salmon, power and water, the best seat in the house will be on a decision-making panel winnowed from the larger coordinating group. Those who get seats will decide what tradeoffs must be made to save five stocks of wild salmon, including four in Idaho's Snake River basin. Those tradeoffs could include raising power rates, limiting irrigation diversions or reducing fish harvests.

The National Marine Fisheries Services decided Sept. 5 to accept petitions requesting that three wild stocks of chinook salmon and one stock of coho salmon be added to the federal threatened or endangered species lists. It already had accepted a petition from the Shoshone-Bannock tribes requesting a study of sockeye salmon for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The agency must complete its status reviews by March 30, 1991, for sockeye and June 7, 1991, for the chinook and coho. At that time NMFS will decide whether to propose listing the species as endangered or threatened. The final decision would be due by 1992.

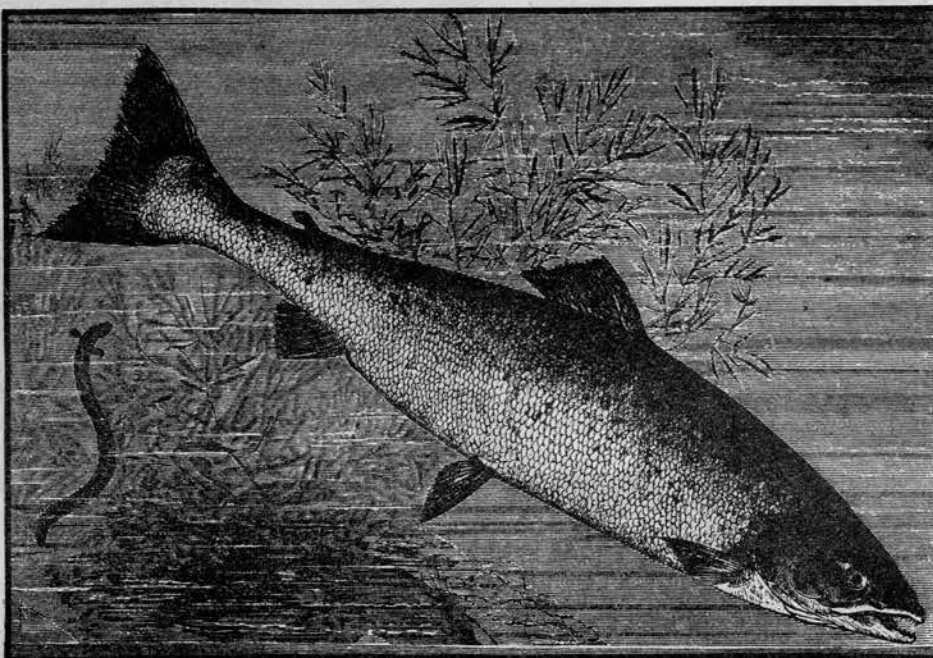
Sen. Mark Hatfield, R-Ore., hopes to head off that process by setting a "predecisional management plan" in place before NMFS makes its decision. The Pacific Northwest coordinating group, which is being organized at Hatfield's request, intends to complete its plan by Feb. 15. That would put it a month before the sockeye decision and also about a month before the spring runoff begins flushing juvenile salmon downstream.

So far, the proposed membership of the group includes representatives from the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho

and Montana; the three tribal groups involved; the Northwest Power Planning Council; the Bonneville Power Administration; the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; the Bureau of Reclamation, and

the one environmental seat.

Sherl Chapman of the Idaho Water Users Association, who will represent Idaho irrigators, said the representation for irrigators also makes no sense,



other federal agencies. Also included are fisheries organizations, environmental groups, sport-fishing groups, commercial fishermen, Columbia River irrigators, Snake River irrigators, a private utility group, and a group representing navigation interests.

The confusing part of the selection process is that no one agency is choosing the members of the panel. The group itself will decide, according to Steve Crow, a Power Council staffer in Portland. The panel is projected to have about two dozen members — about half the number of organizations that could legitimately expect to be represented.

The selection process, for example, forces Trout Unlimited and Idaho Salmon and Steelhead Unlimited to decide which will get a seat at the table. Conservationists from all over the region also have to decide who will get

because of differences in point of view between irrigators in the Upper Snake River Valley and those in the rest of the state.

"What's important is that the people who have been fighting for the fish and who know the Snake River are there," said Ed Chaney of the Boise-based Northwest Resource Information Center, which favors protection for salmon.

"But the people responsible for the problem in the first place already are guaranteed a place," he added, referring to Bonneville Power, the Corps of Engineers and other federal agencies.

Even though the fish that are the center of the controversy come from Idaho rivers, some Idaho groups say it will be almost as hard for them to get on the panel as it is for the state's salmon to get back to the ocean.

Crow responds that it is too early in

the process to say anyone will be left out. "It's a top priority to have adequate Idaho representation," Crow said.

Idaho's fears of being left out of salmon management have historical precedent. When Oregon, Washington and downstream Indian tribes reached agreement on a co-management plan for salmon, known as the Columbia River Compact, Idaho was left out. With only an advisory role, Idaho has no say about how many fish are harvested downriver.

This was dramatically demonstrated Sept. 12, in Vancouver, Wash., where states and tribes met to set additional commercial and treaty fishing seasons for this year. As Idaho's comments were read, many in the audience chuckled and none of its recommendations were accepted.

"I think Idaho has had a bellyful of the Portland, Oregon, mentality," Chaney said. "We are going to stop the chuckles toward the 'rubes' from Idaho."

Jim Goller, a Power Council member from Boise, said the Idahoans' concerns are legitimate. "Idaho should be involved in all decisions that have to do with the river, including harvest," he said. Goller said the panel's size has to be limited, however, or it will be impossible to reach a consensus.

No matter how large or small the group is, bringing all interests together in a plan that will save wild salmon is a formidable task. After all, the Northwest Power Planning Act of 1980 was designed 10 years ago to preserve salmon stocks. Since then, Snake River coho have become extinct, and only one sockeye has been seen in the Snake River this year.

Meanwhile, there is no special protection for the salmon during the time they are under review for listing.

— Rocky Barker

In Butte, some of the best water goes to process ore

In August of 1989, Butte, Mont., firefighters responded to a call to put out a house fire.

When they arrived and turned on a hydrant, it began to leak. Then, when water flowed, the nozzles of the hoses quickly became clogged with mud. Two firefighters were injured trying to fight the fire with clogged hoses. And the house was destroyed.

Until then, Butte-Silver Bow County had paid \$114,000 annually to the Butte Water Co. to maintain fire hydrants. On the day after the fire, payments were stopped and the county began maintaining fire hydrants itself.

The Butte Water Co., which pumps most of its water from the Big Hole River 25 miles south of Butte, has the right to take out 13 million gallons a day. But Butte residents are switching to bottled water or digging their own wells in an attempt to get away from a dilapidated water system.

Residents have complained of green ice cubes made from tap water and showers that smell like shoe polish or bleach, depending on the amount of chlorine that has been added that day.

Water prices, meanwhile, are projected to triple by 2010. The Montana Public Service Commission approved a rate increase in March 1989 and another one less than a year later. The second hike was granted despite a hearing where residents expressed outrage that their

water was unfit to bathe in or drink.

Butte's water woes are aggravated by problems left from past and present mining operations. Water contaminated by tailings with heavy metals such as arsenic and zinc is filling up the Berkeley Pit, once one of the world's largest open-pit copper mines.

The abandoned pit now contains about 11 billion gallons of water, and continues to fill at a rate that may allow water to seep into wells and basements of Butte residences by 1996.

Some residents living close to present mining operations east of the Berkeley blame daily blasting for damaging the city's water distribution pipes.

Last October, ARCO agreed to pay \$120,000 a year to the Butte Metro Sewer to pump and treat mine water that is rising four to four-and-a-half feet a month. The water was then about 20 feet from the level where it could begin to seep into basements and flow untreated into nearby Silver Bow Creek.

ARCO bought Butte mining operations from the Anaconda company and then closed them down in 1981. Dennis Washington, a Missoula businessman, renewed open-pit copper mining in 1986 in a joint venture with ARCO called Montana Resources Partnership.

Washington also bought the Butte Water Co., to guarantee a steady water supply for his mining operations. The Butte Water Co. is one of 14 corpora-

tions Washington owns. In 1989, *Forbes* magazine listed Washington as one of the 400 richest Americans, estimating his fortune at \$400 million.

In December 1988, the PSC ordered the Butte Water Co. to provide adequate service for Butte water residents. When the company failed to comply, the PSC levied fines of \$7,000 a day. The Butte Water Co. was able to get an injunction to block the fines.

When Washington met with Butte officials in October 1989, he expressed his willingness to help pay for repairs if he could get a fair return on his money. This means that customers will have to pay for about 60 percent of the needed system repairs.

Meanwhile, Washington's Montana Resources daily pumps 7 million gallons of pristine mountain lake water from Silver Lake, 25 miles to the west, to its ore concentrator in Butte.

The repair plan proposed by Butte Water Co. calls for spending close to \$30 million over the next three years. The plan budgets \$800,000 a year from 1993 to 2010 to repair and maintain fire hydrants.

In March, the Butte Water Co. presented a revised plan to use innovative filtration systems as part of its renovation. The filtration system, called a Ranney system, pulls water down about 35 feet through gravel into pipes before it is pumped into the distribution system. The

Butte Water Co. would need to install nine filtration systems at a total cost of about \$7 million.

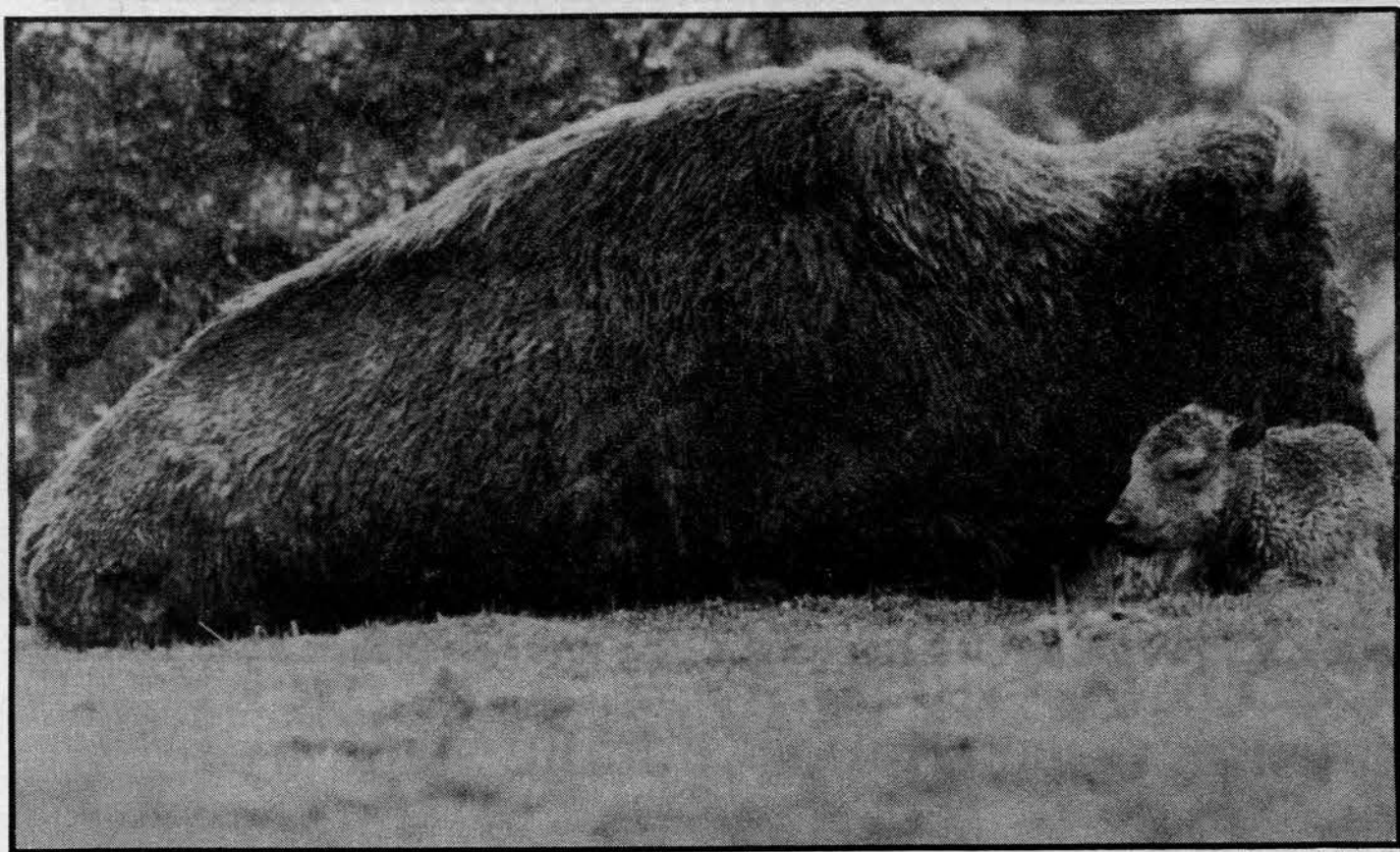
This plan is in part a reaction to an October 1989 suit filed by the Montana Health Department. It said the utility should build filtration systems and cover reservoirs because Butte's water frequently violates state standards for sediment in water.

The most recent lawsuit filed against the utility is a class-action suit filed this spring by a group of 40 Butte citizens. They say the water causes stomach illnesses, higher utility bills from boiling water, and higher grocery bills for bottled drinks, which may result in future health problems for their children.

No matter what the outcome of litigation, the residents of Butte will lose if repairs are further delayed. During the summer, Butte Water Co. began construction on a new covered reservoir for Butte's west side, and the work is well ahead of schedule. But millions more dollars in repairs are needed to upgrade the frail water system, which is failing primarily because of old age.

Residents were warned by the Montana Health Department to boil their tap water before using it for drinking or cooking because water quality can fluctuate throughout the day. This health advisory could remain in effect for as long as three more years.

— George Everett



Robert Bower

Stray bison cows will be shot by officials, their calves neutered and sold to the public, under Montana's new plan

Montana trims its bison killing fields

When 56 bison were gunned down in the winter of 1988-89 by Montana permit holders, the bad national publicity prompted the state's governor to look for a new way of handling the problem.

Montana has a policy of killing Yellowstone bison that wander beyond the boundaries of the park, to prevent the possible transmission of brucellosis to domestic cattle (*HCN*, 9/24/90). A portion of the Yellowstone bison herd carries brucellosis, which can cause cattle to abort. There are no reported cases of wild bison passing the disease to cattle. Montana has been certified brucellosis-free since 1983.

Under a new "interim plan" announced Sept. 24 by the National Park Service and Montana fish and game officials, not all stray bison will be shot on sight by hunters as in past years. Yellowstone bison bulls leaving the park will still be shot by hunters selected in a special drawing. Bison cows will be shot by Yellowstone National Park rangers and Montana game wardens, and the meat will be distributed to the needy by state welfare agencies.

Bison calves, however, will be shot with tranquilizer darts and neutered by veterinarians. Then the calves will be trailered to a holding site and auctioned to the public, with the proceeds going to pay for the cost of butchering the cows.

Montana Gov. Stan Stephens hopes the new plan will defuse negative publicity. But others speculate that the safari-like "Wild Kingdom" roundup of Yellowstone bison will make the state look even more ridiculous.

"From a public-relations perspective, they've really stepped in the buffalo chips on this one," said Don Bachman of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. He said the coalition sees the bison problem as a prime example of why the natural features of Yellowstone need to be managed on a more flexible ecosystem basis, rather than within the severe limits of invisible boundaries on a map.

"This is what we're doing this year to tide us over until we can come up with a long-term plan that hopefully will be more far-sighted than what we're doing this year," said Marcia Karle of the National Park Service. "It's not like we're sitting here doing nothing."

Federal and state agencies already have had time to develop a better solution, but have been "dragging their

"From a public-relations perspective, Montana really stepped in the buffalo chips on this one."

— Don Bachman
Greater Yellowstone Coalition

feet," according to Michael Scott of The Wilderness Society. "I'm dubious about this emergency policy," he said. "After the winter of 1988, the agencies should have put their heads together and really spent some time thinking. That didn't happen, and the bison suffer as a result."

Scott said the agencies need to explore the potential of letting wandering bison range on recently expanded public land outside the park, and on private grazing allotments traded for special use. As far as Montana's policy is concerned, he said, "bison don't exist. In fact, this plan calls for making bison non-existent by shooting them."

"Given that there are legitimate interests on both sides here," he continued, "what needs to be sought is some balance between the interests of the livestock industry to maintain a brucellosis-free certification and the interests of the American public to insure that the bison herds, which are one of the unique features of Yellowstone National Park, have an opportunity to do what comes natural to them. This is to move toward food and shelter in the colder weather. And that balance has not been looked at yet."

Montana, under the new plan, is concerned with "property damage," both from brucellosis-carrying bison and from fence-busting bison bulls. The state law covering bison control, said Ron Aasheim of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, refers to hunting as "only one means."

"We've been working on this since 1985," Aasheim said. "We have suggested that the Park Service try trapping them inside the park and then destroy those that are contaminated and sell the others through auction or relocate them in the park. They said they couldn't do that immediately, because it would be a major action requiring an Environmental Impact Statement."

Aasheim said that animal-rights

activists who have criticized the Montana bison hunt in the past have suggested the very practices outlined in the new plan.

"We're not going to be roping calves or cowboying them," he said. "But this is a tough one. We get all kinds of critics, but none of them have any solutions for us. We've maintained since 1985 that those animals ought to be managed at a number that's compatible with the habitat available inside of Yellowstone National Park."

Yellowstone Superintendent Bob Barbee said the bison in the park's northern herd are more than Yellowstone needs. "We cannot repopulate the Great Plains or the Upper Yellowstone Valley with bison," he said. "We realize we have a responsibility, but there is no way the bison population can be manipulated inside Yellowstone."

Don Bachman of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition said his organization hopes that the interim plan doesn't become permanent.

"The problem is that there's no risk assessment being done on the interaction between cattle and bison," Bachman said. "What we have here is a brucellosis management program, not a bison management program. The primary objective should be to keep wildlife and livestock herds separate. That would include restricting grazing on public lands around the park during months of highest potential transmission of the disease, closing some public grazing areas and encouraging a livestock-free zone in high-risk areas."

Federal and state agencies will hold public meetings in Yellowstone-area towns to discuss long-term bison management planning. The meetings will be in Gardiner Oct. 9, West Yellowstone Oct. 10 and Bozeman Oct. 11.

— Patrick Dawson

HOTLINE

Hanford radiation study neglects Native Americans

An investigation of radiation from the Hanford nuclear weapons plant overlooked the people facing the greatest health risk: the Indian tribes that live and fish along the Columbia River. Phase one of the Department of Energy's Hanford Environmental Dose Reconstruction Study looks solely at the towns of Pasco, Richland and Kennewick and other communities closest to the Hanford reservation in southeastern Washington. Local Indian leaders argue that members of eight tribes in Idaho, Oregon and Washington rely extensively on fish and water from the Columbia and are more at risk than those predominantly white communities, reports *The New York Times*. Between 1941 and 1971, Columbia River water cooled eight of Hanford's nine nuclear reactors, making the Columbia the most radioactive river in the world. The DOE recently revealed that Hanford's plutonium factories secretly released radiation into the air and water from 1944 to 1971. People who consumed Columbia River fish and water between 1964 and 1966 received radiation exposures to their bones and internal organs equivalent to 40 or more chest x-rays, the study said. Higher exposures during the 1950s and 1960s may result in hundreds of cancer cases. According to Dr. John Till, chairman of the study's technical steering committee, Native Americans were not included because of the lack of data. The committee is gathering information on Indians and their eating habits for phase two of the study.

The river is risky

Up to 10 cancer cases a year may be caused by dioxin-contaminated fish in the Columbia River, according to a draft report issued by the Environmental Protection Agency. The agency found that 655,000 Native Americans, Asian Americans and low-income individuals who consistently ate fish from the river ran more than a one-in-1,000 lifetime risk of developing dioxin-related cancer. That rate is 1,000 times greater than what the EPA considers acceptable, reports *The Seattle Times*. The EPA also called for a federal pollution prevention program to stem the flow of dioxin into the river. Dioxins, byproducts of the paper-bleaching process, are dumped in the Columbia River by paper mills (*HCN*, 2/12/90). The study based its findings on the toxicity levels of the fish found near eight mills in Oregon. For a copy of the report, *Analysis of the Potential Populations at Risk from the Consumption of Freshwater Fish Caught Near Paper Mills*, write to EPA 1200 6th Ave. M/S 50122, Seattle, WA 98101 (206/442-1289).

BARBS

It takes one to know one.

Media mogul and recently arrived Montana rancher Ted Turner, speaking before the Helena Chamber of Commerce, warned that wealthy and influential people from other parts of the country who buy land in Montana could change the state for the worse, reports the *Great Falls Tribune*.

HOTLINE

Amphitheater proposal causes confusion

A proposal to build a national amphitheater outside of Moab, Utah, has raised more questions than answers for local residents. Sen. Jake Garn, R-Utah, and Rep. Wayne Owens, D-Utah, have introduced legislation to create the Kokopelli National Theatre, a University of Utah-affiliated facility that would promote Western and Native American culture as well as the performing arts. But the bill fails to state the size or the final cost of the project, which could be as much as \$9.2 million. At a hearing held in August by the Bureau of Land Management, Moab residents expressed concern that the vaguely defined project could cause environmental damage to the surrounding Slickrock Recreation Area. According to Brad Palmer, BLM Area Manager, a bureau panel is now reviewing residents' comments.

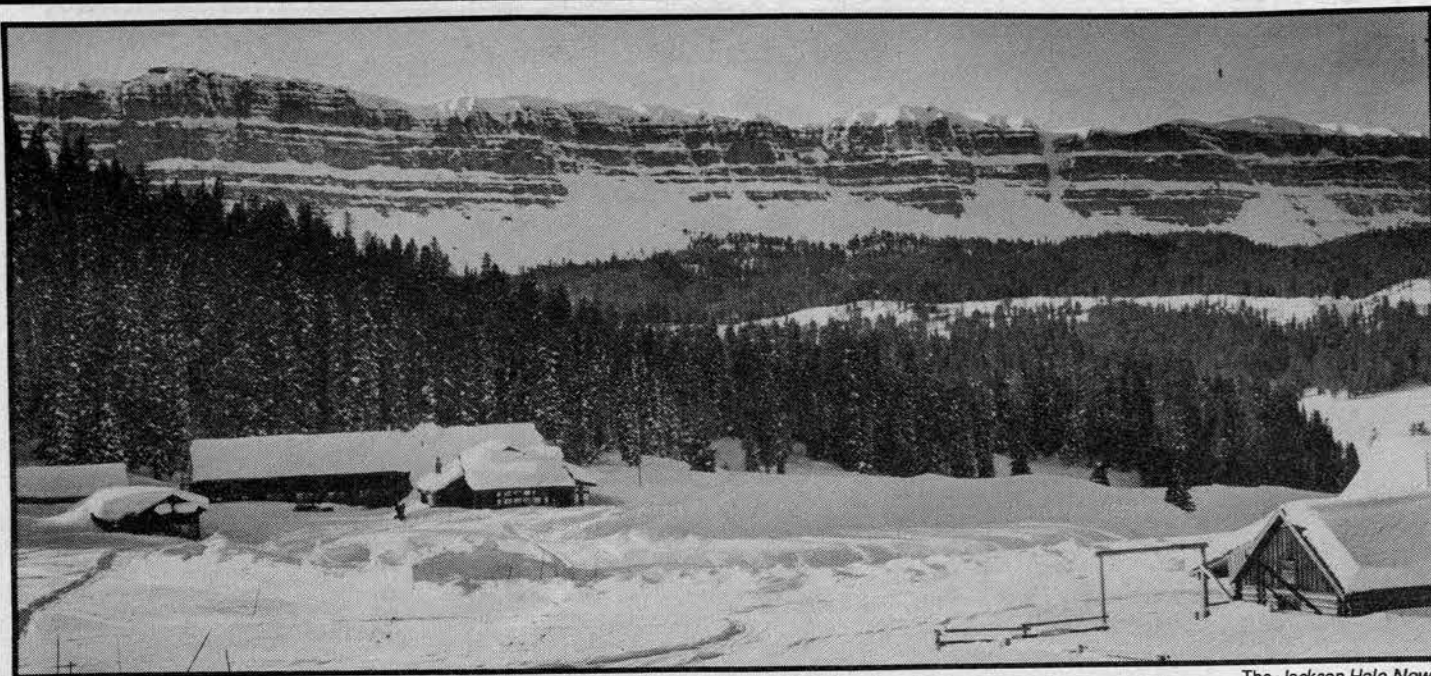
Sugar water

The Environmental Protection Agency has fined the Western Sugar Co. \$185,000 for water quality violations over a 16-year period at its refinery in Billings, Mont. This is the largest environmental civil penalty for Clean Water Act violations in Montana, reports *The Billings Gazette*. The main concern was excess sugar released into the Yegen Drain, a stormwater conduit that empties into the Yellowstone River. Sugar creates a biochemical oxygen demand (BOD) that encourages the accumulation of sludge and slime. High BOD also robs fish of needed oxygen. The penalty calls for the installation of additional monitoring equipment and a study of the cumulative environmental impact on the Yellowstone River. During the mid-1970s, the refinery also released too much suspended solids, including beet pulp. Western Sugar has begun to improve its wastewater discharge in Billings.



Solar energy shines on Hopi

Thanks to an innovative solar power project, traditionalist Hopi Indians in northern Arizona may soon have a culturally acceptable source of electricity. In the past, about 2,500 or 10,000 Hopis have gone without power because of the high cost of modernization and a refusal to allow electricity and power poles in their villages. This summer, Gov. Rose Mofford awarded the Hopi Foundation, a grassroots group based on Second Mesa, a \$150,000 contract to build and install solar-energy systems for members of the tribe, reports the *Arizona Republic*. The foundation plans to erect demonstration projects at its Solar Electric Enterprise Center in Hotevilla. The center will then buy system components in bulk and assemble them into packages that will be sold to Hopi homeowners at discount prices ranging from \$2,135 to \$6,510. Ray Williamson of the state's Energy Office told the *Republic* that traditionalist Hopis say they will accept solar energy because "they see it as a part of nature. It is not coming from something dug up from the earth."



The Jackson Hole News

Brooks Lake Lodge

Forest Service applies 'double standard'

Pristine Brooks Lake lies a few miles east of the Continental Divide near Togwotee Pass, the spectacular eastern entrance to Wyoming's Jackson Hole and the majestic Tetons. Tucked in the folds of the Absaroka Mountains on the edge of the Teton Wilderness, the lake and its surrounding pinnacles are a scenic summer and winter retreat.

Brooks Lake may also be a perfect site for an oil and gas well field. Both the Exxon and Conoco oil companies have identified the area as having high energy potential and have requested permission from the U.S. Forest Service to drill.

Despite the protests of area residents, the Fremont County Commission and the Sierra Club's Wyoming chapter, the Shoshone National Forest will likely offer some 12,000 acres around Brooks Lake and nearby Lava Mountain for oil and gas leasing. A small portion of the area proposed for leasing lies in the Teton National Forest.

The developing fight over Brooks Lake is the latest round in a long-running battle between the oil and gas industry and Jackson Hole's recreation interests. It dates to 1947, when then Interior Secretary J.A. Krug banned energy leasing in the northern part of the Jackson Hole valley. In the past decade, Jackson Hole successfully fought two proposals at Little Granite Creek and Cache Creek, but failed to stop oil and gas drilling at Sohore and Mosquito creeks (*HCN*, 12/5/88).

The current fight has now pushed its way into the Wyoming gubernatorial race. Jackson Hole rancher Mary Mead, the usually pro-development Republican candidate, has called for withdrawal of the area from energy leasing. She said Gov. Mike Sullivan, her Democratic opponent, is waffling on an important environmental

issue by waiting for a federal decision.

Environmental and recreation interests say the Forest Service plan to lease Brooks Lake violates the agency's own rules. Earlier this year the Sierra Club appealed the proposed Shoshone Forest Plan oil leasing provisions and won. Forest Service Chief Dale Robertson ordered the Shoshone Forest to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement on oil and gas leasing. But Shoshone officials now say that EIS will cover the entire Shoshone Forest except for Brooks Lake.

Shoshone Forest minerals specialist Gary Carver says that because of high industry interest, the agency will write a shorter Environmental Assessment for Brooks Lake. The EA is expected later this month, and Carver says it will include a Finding of No Significant Impact, meaning no EIS is required.

The Sierra Club's Meredith Taylor charges that the Forest Service is applying a double standard. "They are talking out of both sides of their mouth," she said. "We're probably going to end up contesting it. They don't have a foot to stand on."

The Forest Service alternatives for Brooks Lake include a no-leasing proposal, which is considered unlikely, and one that would lease the property with "stipulations" to protect the resources. Carver announced late last month that the Environmental Assessment would be delayed because of a new compromise alternative. It would increase the area offered for leasing but add a no-surface-occupancy stipulation.

Stipulations legally bind companies to certain drilling methods, periods of closure or other performance requirements. The no-surface-occupancy restriction allows an area to be leased while banning the construction of roads

and drilling rigs. Drilling could still be done at an angle from a nearby tract that does not have restrictions.

Conservationists, however, are increasingly wary about the durability of stipulations. They note the recent Forest Service internal document that discusses how to speed energy leasing on federal land because of the Persian Gulf crisis (*HCN*, 9/24/90).

That document reads: "Most oil and gas leases contain a number of stipulations to establish a balance between development and protection based on the relative values of resources present at the time the leases were issued. However, relative values change and oil now has to be given greater weight."

"If stipulations were removed or relaxed, operators could drill more locations and find more oil. The Leasing Reform Act of 1987 provides for this to occur after giving the public a 30-day notice."

While Forest Service officials in Washington, D.C., caution that "no move has been made to start that document through the official approval process," it nevertheless shows how tenuous stipulation protections can be.

"We continue to believe that words written on paper are not a sound way to protect sensitive resources such as scenery, wildlife and important recreational areas," said Scott Garland, public lands director for the Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning. "It's obvious now that these words on paper would be the first thing targeted for revision or elimination."

— Angus M. Thuermer Jr.

The writer is managing editor at the *Jackson Hole News*.

Smoking out Colorado's wilderness foes

"I'm trying to smoke out who is and who is not supportive of wilderness," said Sen. Timothy E. Wirth, D-Colo., in introducing an interim five-year wilderness bill last month that would lock up 857,000 acres of federal land in Colorado.

The bill's chances of enactment in the waning days of the 101st Congress are nil. Sen. William L. Armstrong, R-Colo., immediately dashed any hopes of state delegation unity by saying that "the notion of taking all of the areas proposed by anybody ... doesn't seem appealing to me." Armstrong added, "We ought not to create new wilderness until we have solved the water [rights] problem."

If Wirth can't get an interim wilderness bill enacted this year, he might already have succeeded in his other aim. As Wirth stressed, his bill isolated the

wilderness water issue by ignoring it altogether. This would leave the water issue to be decided in permanent wilderness legislation later.

"In none of the areas of this bill are there any water diversion points or water rights that would be affected," he said during a press conference conducted over a conference telephone call. "Water is simply not an issue, although some people keep wanting to make it an issue."

Wirth's bill includes all the wilderness areas proposed in current legislation offered by himself, Sen. Armstrong and Rep. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, D-Colo. All the proposed areas are located in the western two-thirds of the state.

Some of these areas are already threatened by proposed timber cuts, mining and off-road-vehicle use, Wirth said.

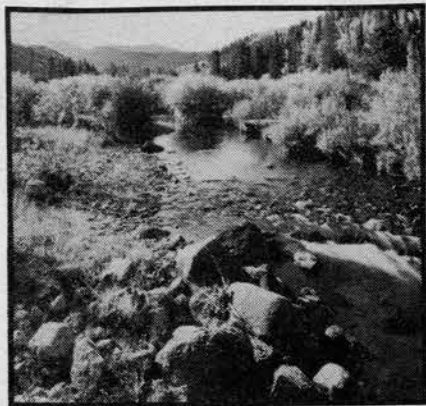
He cited a proposed logging plan next summer in the Sand Bench area of the Piedra Wilderness Study Area in southwestern Colorado, and motorcycle damage to the Fossil Ridge area east of Gunnison.

Campbell said Wirth's bill would go nowhere, but he agreed that it might "smoke out the ones who say they're only opposed to a wilderness bill that has federally reserved water rights, but who simply don't want any new wilderness."

Rep. Hank Brown, R-Colo., who is running for Armstrong's seat next month, endorsed the Wirth measure. "This is obviously just a temporary measure, but it's well worth ensuring protection in the interim," he said. But his Democratic opponent, Josie Heath, refrained from taking a position.

— Lawrence Mosher

BULLETIN BOARD



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DIMINISHING WETLANDS

The United States has lost nearly half of its original wetlands in the last 200 years, according to a new U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service report. Out of an original 221 million acres, the lower 48 states have lost 53 percent, an average of 60 acres for every hour between 1780 and 1980. The report, *Wetland Losses in the United States 1780's to 1980's*, is the first of two commissioned by Congress. It assesses the total wetland acreage in each state in the 1780s and what remained by the 1980s by using historical data or records that document land conversion, mostly for agricultural purposes. In 22 states, including Colorado, Idaho, Nevada and North Dakota, more than half of the wetland areas have vanished. One-third of the nation's total loss, 36 million acres, has occurred in the Farm Belt states of the Midwest. California has lost the greatest percentage — 91 percent of its original wetlands. The second report, available in January 1991, will examine changes in wetlands from 1970 to 1980. To obtain either report contact Bill Wilen, Project Leader, National Wetlands Inventory, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Room 400 Arlington Square, 1849 C St. NW, Washington, DC 20240, or call 703/358-2201.

STUDY TIES LEUKEMIA TO NUCLEAR FALLOUT

Researchers have confirmed a link between leukemia deaths in Utah and nuclear tests in Nevada, according to a new study by the University of Utah and the University of Southern California Medical School. Yet the study holds back from anything more than ruling out chance as an explanation. Fallout from over 100 above-ground nuclear-weapons tests between 1951 and 1958 may have caused 3 to 6 percent of the leukemia deaths that occurred in Utah over the 30-year period from 1952 to 1981. The study, *Leukemia in Utah and Radioactive Fallout from the Nevada Test Site*, was funded by the National Cancer Institute and is the first to calculate the actual radioactive doses that individuals received from fallout during the testing. It covers the entire state, although most of the fallout was detected in southwestern Utah. All of the individuals studied were Mormons. The study indicates that fallout may have been the cause of leukemia in victims who were 20 years old or younger when exposed, and who died within 10 years of exposure. The research team is gathering data for a study on the effects of radiiodine in milk and its link to thyroid diseases in the fallout area. For more information, contact University of Utah Health Sciences Center, Salt Lake City, UT 84132.

LAND AND LITERATURE

A writers' conference titled "The Eastern Front: Literary Landscape" will be held Oct. 11-13 in Choteau, Mont. A celebration of Montana's literature and land, the conference will honor Pulitzer Prize winner and Choteau area resident A.B. Guthrie, Jr. Other participating Montana authors include James Welch, Richard Ford and William Kittredge. Registration is \$475 including meals and lodging; \$150 for the conference only. Reservations can be made through Mary Sexton, Pine Butte Swamp Preserve Administrator, Box 34B, Choteau, MT 59422 (406/466-5526).

WOUNDED KNEE: LEST WE FORGET

One hundred years ago, 146 Sioux Indians, more than half of them women and children, lay dead in the snow at Wounded Knee, S.D., while 18 soldiers of the 7th Cavalry earned the Congressional Medal of Honor for the bloody massacre. In recognition of this tragic event, the Buffalo Bill Historical Center in Cody, Wyo., is sponsoring an exhibition titled *Wounded Knee: Lest We Forget*. "The Sioux people really believe their story has not been told," says Claudia Iron Hawk, president of the Wounded Knee Survivors Association. "The world must know the truth." The exhibit includes newspaper clippings and photographs, military murals and clothing. The 65 items portray the Sioux's experiences in the late 1800s and the events that led to the massacre. Also on exhibit are the decorative garments of the Ghost Dance, a religious practice believed capable of ridding the land of the white man and bringing back the buffalo herds. The exhibition will be at the Plains Indian Museum in Cody through Nov. 30. For more information contact Shari Pullar, Buffalo Bill Historical Center, PO Box 1000, Cody, WY 82414, or call 307/587-4771.



COLORADO ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

A one-day course in Colorado and federal environmental law will be offered Oct. 22 in Denver and Oct. 29 in Grand Junction, Colo. Intended for business executives, developers, contractors, bankers, lawyers and others affected by environmental and hazardous-waste laws, the curriculum covers federal and state regulation of hazardous waste, environmental liabilities under Colorado's common law, lender liability in hazardous-waste cases, environmental issues in bankruptcy, and environmental insurance affecting real estate, as well as other topics. Registration is \$375 and does not include lodging.

For more information or an application, contact Miss J.K. Van Wyks, Federal Publications Inc., 1120 20th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036 (202/337-7000).



NETTING BEAR STORIES

Bear Net, a new regional newsletter on bear issues, is calling for interested writers, biologists and other citizens to share their success stories. Its editor, Margaret Pettis, says she hopes to establish a sounding board and network for activists wanting to develop strategies to help rescue the West's bears from baiting and hounding. For information, write Bear Net, 455 E. 400 S., #306, Salt Lake City, UT 84111, or call 801-359-1337.

WATER TRANSFERS IN ARIZONA

The transfer of water from agricultural to urban areas is one of the most controversial water issues in the modern West. The University of Arizona's Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy's latest report focuses on the value conflicts that make those transfers so controversial. *Does Anybody Win? The Community Consequences of Rural-to-Urban Water Transfers: An Arizona Perspective* is written by Cy R. Oggins and Helen M. Ingram. They surveyed 317 community leaders in 12 regions of Arizona, New Mexico and western Texas in 1988 and 1989, and concluded that in the arid West, water is not merely an economic commodity. "It is also tied to important community values of security, opportunity and self-determination," say the authors. Most Arizona transfers, they note, mean sacrificing a rural area's environment and economy for the future growth of Arizona's urban corridor (HCN, 11/20/89). The report offers a few alternatives to water transfers that include reserving minimum amounts of groundwater for counties of origin and compensating areas of origin for the negative impacts of water transfers. The 75-page study, with an appendix of graphs and charts, can be obtained by writing the University of Arizona, Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy, 1031 North Mountain, Tucson, AZ 85721.

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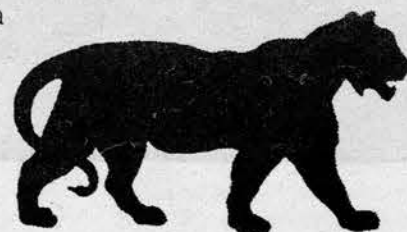
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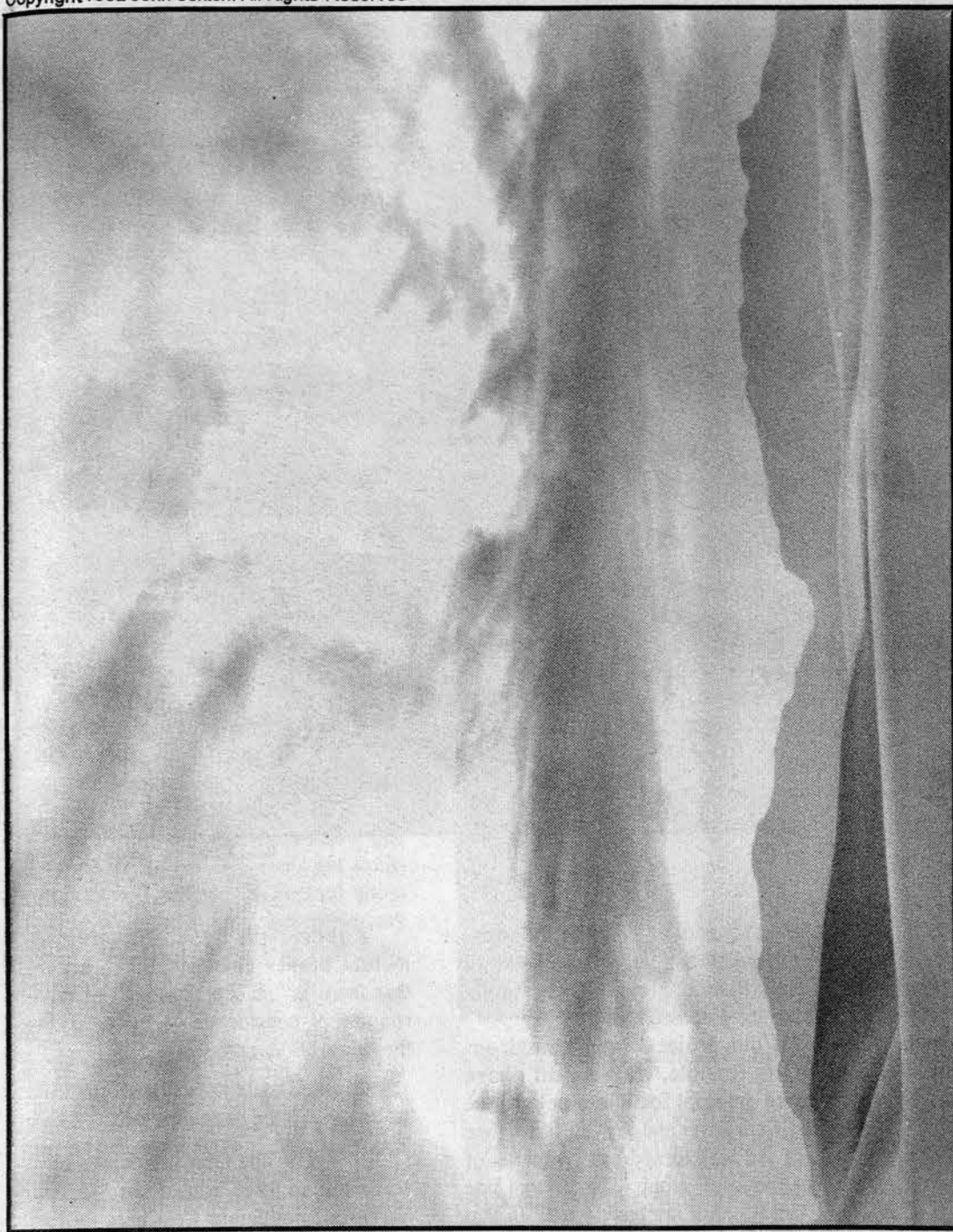
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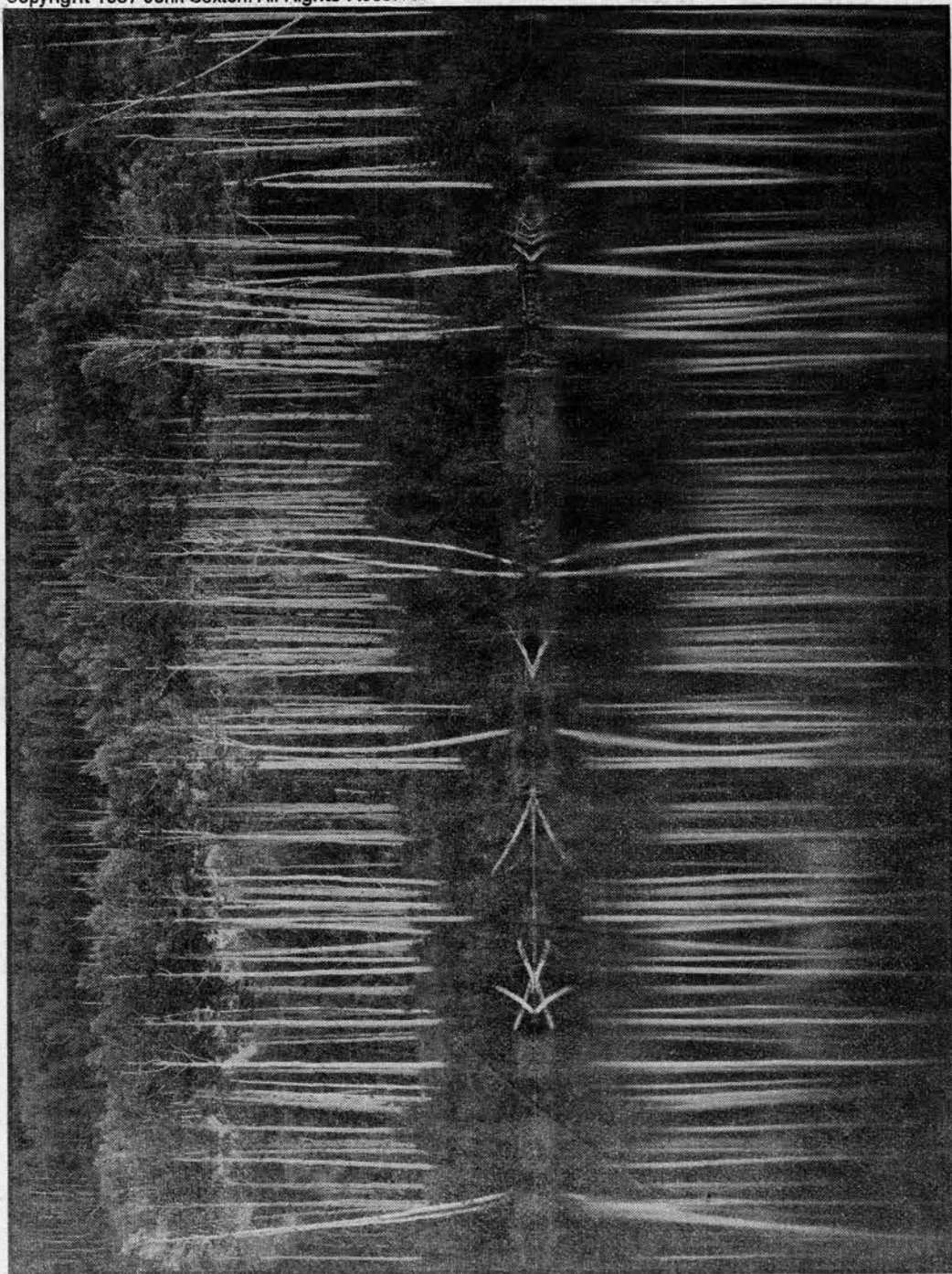
Shiprock and Telephone Poles, near Farmington, New Mexico

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Dunes, Dusk, White Sands National Monument

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Aspen, Reflections, near Snowmass, Colorado

Quiet Light

Following in the steps of his longtime friend and mentor Ansel Adams, John Sexton photographs the West in the quiet light found only before sunrise or after sunset.

"At dawn and dusk," Sexton says, "the soft light simplifies. It models the shapes. Objects glow, as if lit from within. That, I find, is where the magic lies."

Striving to capture something beyond the objects he sees

through his lens, Sexton, after "making" his photograph with his camera, continues his work in the darkroom, where he agonizes over "tonal nuances so elusive that perhaps only he will see them," says a colleague.

The results, some of which are seen here, are chronicled in his new book, *Quiet Light*, a Bullfinch Press Book published by Little, Brown and Company.

Rocky Mountain high ...

(Continued from page 1)

WyCal — traverse the foothills of the Wasatch Mountains near town.

"How is it that the pipeline has to go through one of the most populous areas of Utah, through our watersheds and recreation area?" said Dave Brown, a director of the Bountiful Hills Residents and Concerned Citizens Association Inc. The group was formed in February 1988 to oppose the Wasatch Variation — a 154-mile length of the route that comes near Bountiful, a bedroom community of some 30,000 people.

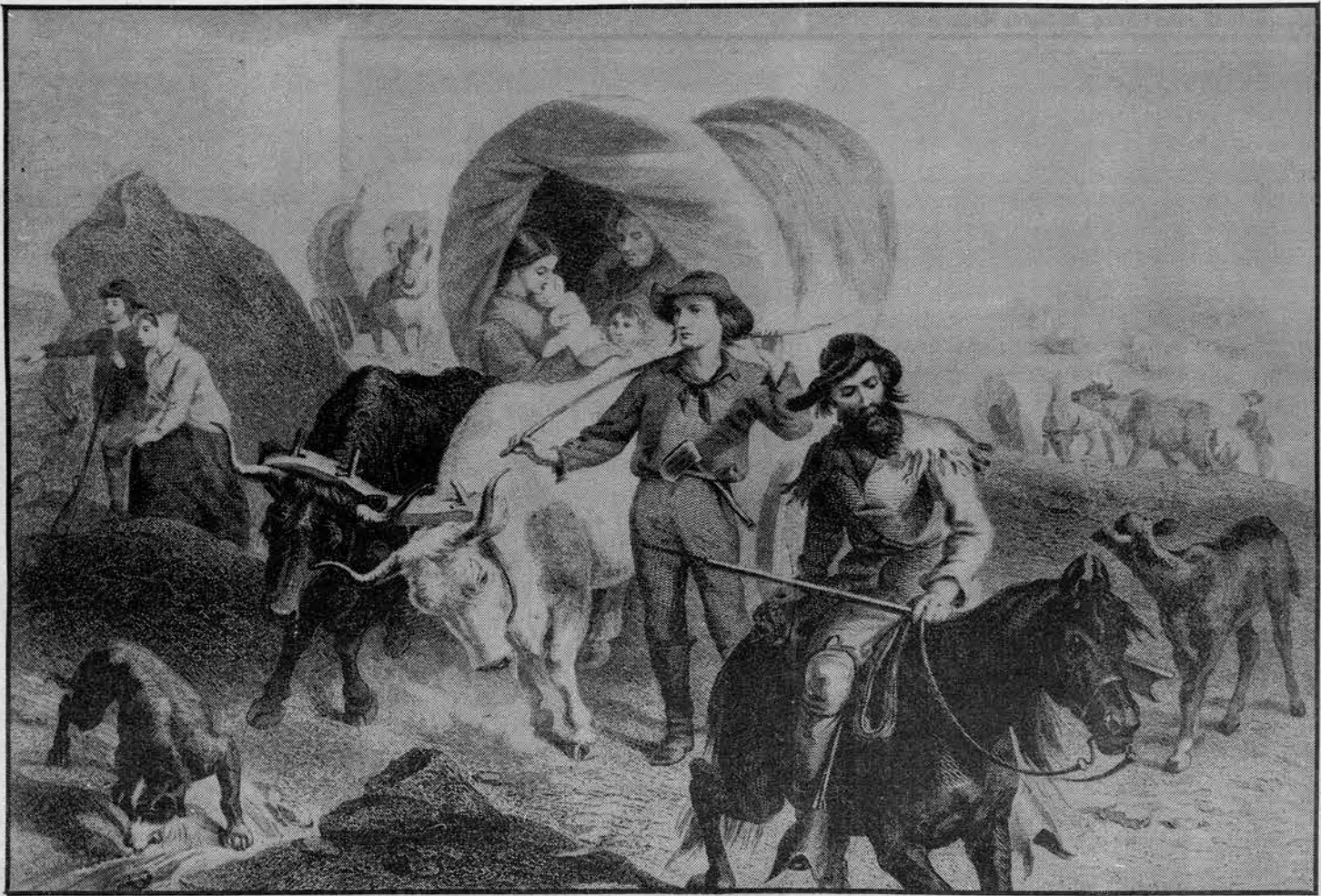
A coalition of organizations including the Bountiful group, the Utah chapter of the Sierra Club and the Utah Wildlife Federation filed a petition in July with the 10th Circuit Court of Appeals in Denver to re-examine the route.

"The route crosses nine active mudslides and the Wasatch Front earthquake fault line," said Kenley Brunsdale, who represents the petitioners. "It's a question of trashing our quality of life in Utah for somebody's economic opportunity."

Brunsdale, a Democrat, is running for Congress against incumbent Rep. R. Jim Hansen, and has made the issue a pillar of his campaign. He challenges everything from the Wasatch Variation to FERC's certification process to the final use of much of the gas — to help extract heavy oil from wells in the Bakersfield area.

"Does it make sense to use a clean fuel like natural gas to get more of a dirty fuel, like oil?" he asks. "This gets to the larger point — we live in a country that doesn't have an energy policy."

"FERC has never seen a pipeline they didn't love and has created a monster with these optional expedited routes," he said. "What you have is numerous pipelines ripping and tearing across the country, ripping up land, condemning people. It's needless destruction just because they aren't willing to make decisions, and are letting the marketplace make all the decisions."



Pioneers on the Oregon Trail

Pioneer Museum, Lander, Wyoming

Brunsdale charged that the Natural Gas Policy Act is being undermined, as well as the National Environmental Policy Act. The former gives pipeline companies the authority to condemn land, but assumes it is in the public interest.

"There was no public-interest determination made," he said. "They just delegated it to the market.... This Wasatch Variation is driven entirely by the profit motives of Kern River and WyCal."

Wayne Tiller, the director of public relations for WyCal, says Brunsdale is "barking up dead trees."

"The optional expedited certificate process has been upheld in the courts," he said, adding that his company wasn't condemning land. "We are still trying to negotiate with the landowners to resolve those issues without even discussing or considering condemnation."

Bill Weygandt, the director of west-

ern operations for the Williams Companies — one of the parent companies of the Kern River project — energetically defends the proposed route.

"If our project wasn't environmentally feasible, we wouldn't have received approval for this pipeline," he said. "Kern River and WyCal have gone out of the way to address concerns of that [Bountiful] group. The bottom line is, 'Get it out of my back yard.' In that situation we're never going to successfully convince them otherwise... The bottom line is that environmental impacts can be mitigated. We've done it before and we'll do it this time."

Robert Arvedlund, the environmental branch chief at FERC, argues that there is "no short change" of environmental considerations in certifying the Wasatch Variation.

While Utah politicians have come out in force against the Wasatch Variation, politicians from neighboring Wyoming have plugged for pipeline development. Sen. Alan Simpson, R-Wyo., who reportedly called Wyoming "the Saudi Arabia of natural gas," chastised Brunsdale and other Utah offi-

Wyoming's pipeline race

Two pipeline companies racing to build a natural gas line from Wyoming to California are playing a \$1.4-billion game of pipeline poker.

Together, the companies already have spent some \$180 million on plans and pipe. Both companies say they intend to start construction late this year or early next year, no matter what the other does. But neither Kern River Gas Transmission Co. nor the Wyoming-California Pipeline Co. expects two lines to be built.

Meanwhile, the state of Wyoming is proposing to loan \$250 million — more than \$500 for every person in the state — at as little as 4 percent interest for 15 years to the company that builds the line. The controversial program originally was designed to get the pipe built. But WyCal and Kern River each say they will build whether or not the state makes its loan.

Now loan backers say the sliding-interest-scale loan will help insure that Wyoming gas flows through the line — a proposition a number of economists have questioned. Under the loan proposal, the interest rate would drop as more Wyoming gas is transported through the line.

Wyoming Gov. Mike Sullivan has indicated he is inclined to give final approval to the loan, even though no study of its effectiveness has been undertaken.

WyCal's \$577-million line would carry 600 million cubic feet of gas per

day from Opal, Wyo., in the southwestern part of the state, to a point south of Las Vegas, where it would hook into a gas line owned by California utilities.

Kern River's \$853-million line would initially carry 700 million cubic feet per day along the same route running through Bountiful, Utah, and on to Las Vegas. But the Kern River line would continue to Bakersfield, Calif., where much of the gas would be used to create steam to inject into tar-like oil fields to facilitate recovery of the oil.

After two years of operation, the Altamont pipeline from Canada would be built to hook into the Kern River line, which would then carry 1.2 billion cubic feet of gas per day.

If WyCal builds the line instead of Kern River, the Altamont Gas Transmission Co. says it would not proceed with its project.

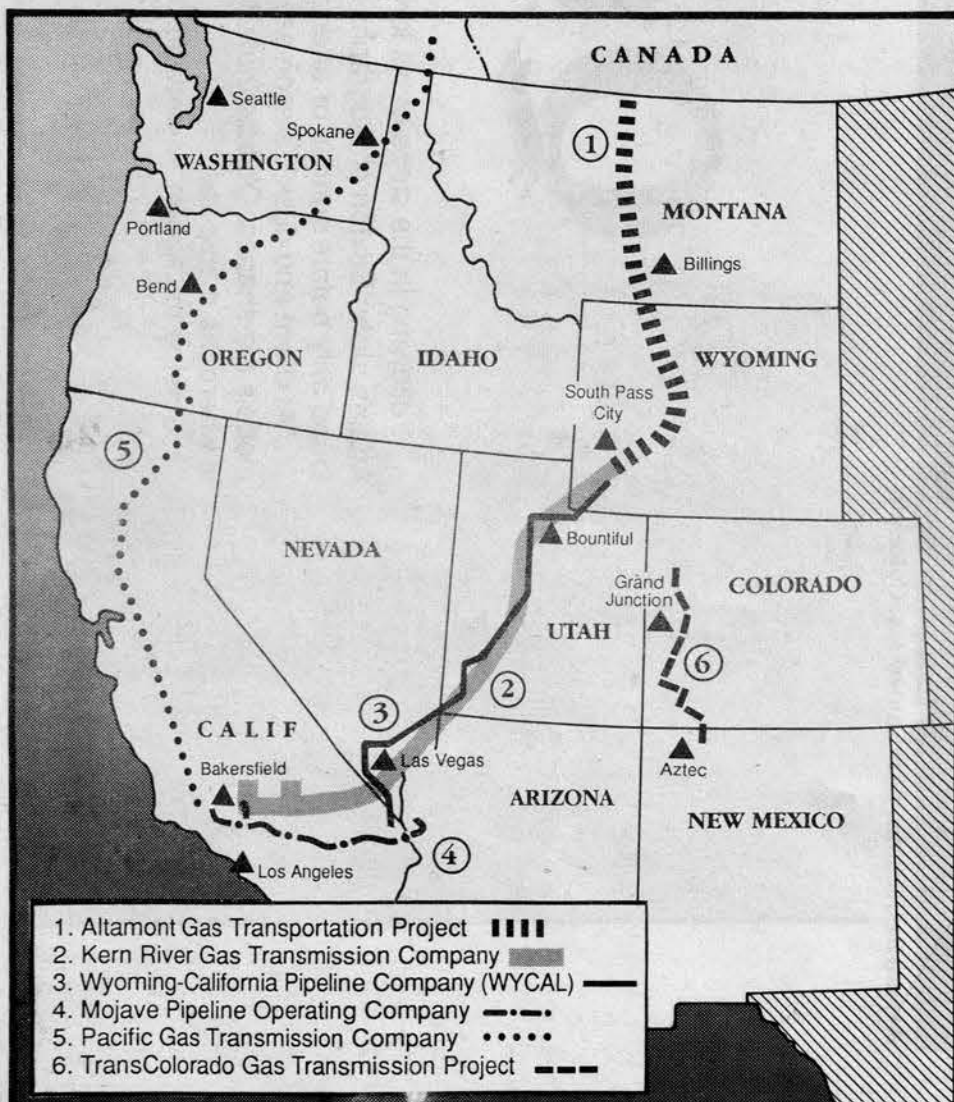
Both WyCal and Kern River have announced they have signed up more than enough customers seeking to transport gas on their lines. However, many of the customers have hedged their bets by tentatively signing up with both lines when they plan to use only one.

Thus far, WyCal has spent about \$150 million on the project, and Kern River about \$30 million. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has indicated it will let market forces decide which company will win the race.

— Bill Lazarus

Bill Lazarus is a reporter for *The Casper Star-Tribune*.

PROPOSED NATURAL GAS PIPELINES



cials in the *Salt Lake Tribune*:

"The stakes are our energy future and how we as rural states are going to compete and survive in the midst of the growing urban centers," he wrote. "We lose jobs and talented individuals, young and old. We are witnessing and experiencing a 'brain drain.' Without the development of commercial resources, our human resources will simply dwindle away."

A gas pipeline could be a financial boon to Utah, too, says Wold. "This business of being provincial about moving our resources is something that the founding fathers never subscribed to," he maintains. "It can be good for producers in Utah as well as Wyoming, although Utah doesn't have the gas reserves that we have. But it isn't impossible for them to hook onto these lines as they go by, and there is gas down in the Uintah Basin of Utah. It can be very beneficial to Utahns, plus they'll get tax revenue from the pipeline right-of-way."

Wold adds that burying a gas pipeline causes less environmental disturbance than putting in a country road. "You bury the pipeline and seed it over and in a few years you never know that the pipeline's there, so I can't get excited about it. I wouldn't be excited about having a pipeline being laid under my house, for gosh sakes. But that's my own personal feeling."

Others in Wyoming disagree. Concern has arisen around the South Pass area, where the still-visible ruts of the Oregon Trail cross the Continental Divide. The Altamont project plans to transport primarily Canadian gas through a pipeline three or four miles from the historic town of South Pass City.

"It is unthinkable that such a huge industrial construction project should penetrate the historic South Pass area," Lander historian Tom Bell wrote in the *Lander Journal*. "This area remains essentially untouched by man's impact. And the elevation, the climate and short growing season, the geology and soils, and the scant vegetation all defy any kind of successful mitigation or restoration of the area."

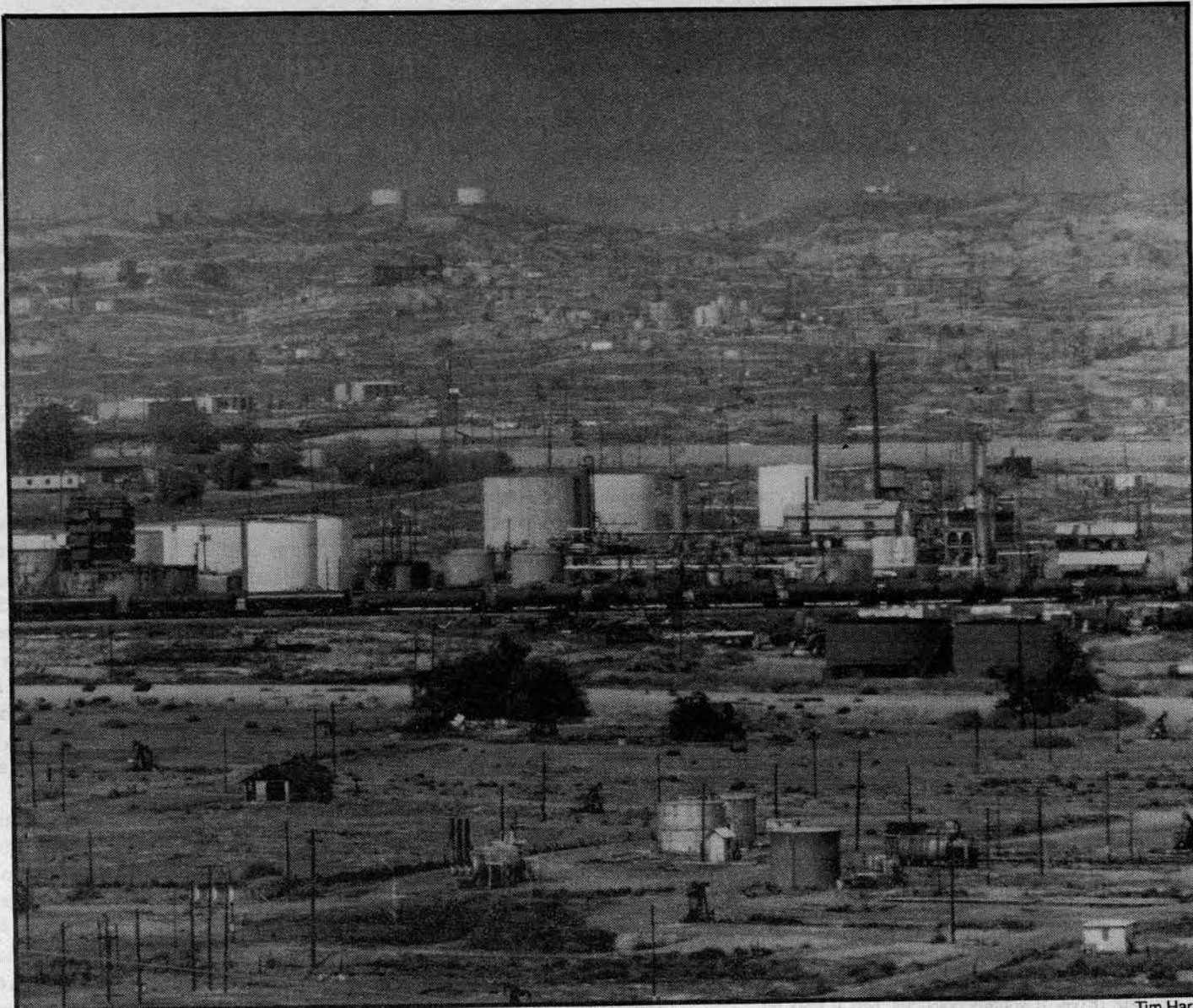
Bell — who emphasized he isn't against the production and transportation of gas, but believes it should be done "on Wyoming's terms" — holds that such a pipeline would open a Pandora's box in the region: "One opens the way for a dozen more," he said.

Although Altamont is looking at several alternate routes, including one close to a nearby highway, it still favors the South Pass area. "We're hopeful and expect to go as planned," said Bernie Hanna, the technical manager of the Altamont project. "With mitigation we think it'll be acceptable."

The route is not acceptable to the Wind River Tourist Association and the Fremont County Commission. Wyoming Gov. Mike Sullivan also has written to Altamont urging that the South Pass area be carefully studied.

"If the final choice is to choose between the protection of the Oregon Trail and South Pass or the natural gas pipeline, I would have to choose the first," wrote Sullivan. "It is my hope that the process does not end in such a simplified decision. I will look for a complete assessment of environmental impacts to be made, so that a sound basis for decisions exists."

Yet when it comes to marketing its own gas, Wyoming is aggressive. The state may provide a subsidized low-interest loan of up to \$250 million for the construction of a pipeline — carrying Wyoming gas — from the state to



Tim Hart

A Kern County, California, oil field

California. Sullivan, who has called a Wyoming-to-California pipeline "critical to our future," activated the Wyoming Pipeline Authority in 1987 to "make every effort that Wyoming gas would be sold in the burgeoning California market."

Kern River and WyCal are in the running for the loan, which has already been authorized by the Wyoming Legislature but is awaiting the final approval of the governor and attorney general. A Wyoming-California pipeline would generate at least \$50 million per year in taxes and royalties in the state, as well as create employment, said Wold.

In western Colorado, the Trans-Colorado project plans to connect to the Piceance Basin, which has an estimated 800 "shut in" natural gas wells that have been drilled but have no access to pipelines. It also has large reserves of coal bed methane. The Black Canyon Audubon Society, however, argues that coal-bed methane drilling — a gas-extracting technique — could produce heavily salted water, creating a serious disposal problem.

"There are areas in the Piceance where they may tap into a bunch of water," said Frank Keller of Denver-based Barrett Resources, one of the most active companies in the basin. "It's a real problem, because first of all you drill a well for half a million dollars and you end up producing water out of it for a year and a half. So you have no product to sell, and you are faced with disposing of the water." He added that his company has had no problems encountering briny water.

The environmental advantages of using more natural gas, however, are considerable. As the industry says, it is inexpensive, plentiful and clean-burning.

"It's the cleanest of the fossil fuels," says Bob Yuhnke of the Environmental Defense Fund's Boulder, Colo., office. Natural gas emits 80 to 90 percent less carbon monoxide than does

gasoline, says Yuhnke. It produces 60 to 70 percent less non-methane hydrocarbons, and about 25 percent less greenhouse gases, he adds.

Even Bountiful, Utah's Dave Brown says he's not against it. "It's tapped, it's clean. We just think there are better ways to get it to California," he said.

All this makes natural gas very attractive to California, where the Los Angeles area is home to "the worst air in the nation," according to Bill Kelly, a spokesperson for the South Coast Air Quality Management District. He says the area breaks at least one federal health standard for air quality nearly two-thirds of the time, and that the area's peak levels of air pollution are nearly triple the allowable federal standards for ozone, and double the standard for fine particulates.

In the oil fields near Bakersfield, "the air is awful because of the crude oil burned in those fields," says the California Energy Commission's Barker. The oil is burned to make steam, which is injected into the ground to loosen up the field's especially heavy, syrupy crude oil.

One barrel of oil is burned for every

three extracted in the area, which produces about two-thirds of the state's daily yield of about a million barrels a day.

Using gas to produce steam in the oilfields is the largest new market for gas in California, according to Barker. By the year 2009 the process is projected to use more natural gas than the entire city of Denver. Other uses for the gas include electrical generation, industrial and residential use, and fueling cars.

No one, however, is predicting a return to the 1970s energy boom. Fred Julander, a Denver energy investment banker, merely predicts a "good, strong, sustainable growth" in the natural gas-producing states. "It will take a while, but it will be sustainable," he said.

Julander also is on the board of Natural Fuels Corp., which hopes to open six gas stations selling compressed natural gas as car fuel in the Denver area by the end of this year. This suggests that the Rocky Mountain West has more to gain than just selling its natural gas to California. The switch from gasoline could help clear its own skies, too.

The advantages of natural gas

Natural gas isn't a favored fuel only in California; it's coming into its own in markets all over the country.

National consumption of gas has been increasing by about 5 percent per year since 1986, according to Julie Stewart, the manager of public information for the American Gas Association in Washington, D.C. She added that the level is down slightly this year because of a warm spring. More than 30 applications for new pipelines are pending at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, she said.

"The big advantage of natural gas is that it's a domestic fuel," said Stewart. "Ninety-three percent of what we'll use this year is from the

United States; almost all the rest is from Canada. It's not subject to the political disruptions that we get in the oil situation."

There is 60 years' supply of natural gas remaining in the United States if the current level of consumption and the current economic climate prevail. And if "non-conventional" reserves are included, there is 200 years' supply left.

"There's definitely a lot more natural gas in the lower 48 states now than there is oil," said Stewart. "Even the oil companies are much more interested in getting gas. They're out looking for gas, rather than finding it incidentally. It's a definite trend."

—L.J.

ESSAY

'So long as I am Secretary ...'

Part II

by T.H. Watkins

Harold L. Ickes, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior, once described himself to a congressional committee as being "as hard-boiled a conservationist as there is in this country."

This self-portrait was accurate but incomplete. There existed within his single curmudgeonly bosom all the elements of the dichotomy between utilitarian conservation and preservation that had characterized the conservation movement at least since John Muir and Gifford Pinchot had clashed over the question of damming California's Hetch Hetchy Valley in the years before World War I.

It is symbolically convenient, then, to note that it was Ickes who stood and delivered the principal speech in San Francisco in October 1934 celebrating the delivery of the first water from the reservoir that had flooded Hetch Hetchy. It is equally useful to note that less than four months later he could stand in defiance of his own president and rail against the building of a highway into Great Smoky Mountains National Park: "I am not willing that our beautiful areas ought to be opened up to people who are either too old to walk, as I am, or too lazy to walk, as a great many young people are who ought to be ashamed of themselves. I do not happen to favor the scarring of a wonderful mountainside just so that we can say that we have a skyline drive. It sounds poetical, but it may be an atrocity ..."

He won the highway battle, too, one of many such victories for which a later generation of conservationists could thank him, though few understood what they owed him.

That debt was considerable. There was, for example, the Taylor Grazing Act. He did not initiate this measure, but he supported it enthusiastically, and when it was passed in 1934, persuaded Roosevelt to ignore howls of outrage in the livestock West and use the new law to withdraw from entry under any of the thousands of frequently corrupted and corruptible land laws more than 140 million acres of public domain.

For all the flaws in the Taylor Grazing Act — and there were plenty — for the first time in history the livestock industry was reined in and given some measure of control, however imperfect. It was the first time the federal government began to entertain the notion that these lands should be governed under principles of stewardship, not simple disposal — the

beginning of a revolutionary change in policy that would be validated with passage of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

An American Hitler?

Ickes' desire to exercise stewardship extended beyond the boundaries of his own department. It was a compulsion that led to one of the most colorful territorial squabbles in American bureaucratic history, the fight for control of the national forest system, which resided in the Department of Agriculture but which Ickes believed belonged in Interior.

Unfortunately, the pyrotechnics of this conflict tended then (as they do now) to obscure the fact that it was not merely a mindless quest for bureaucratic empire that drove Ickes, but an utterly sincere conviction that the natural resources of this nation were ill-served by a division of responsibility and that the national forests were particularly vulnerable to the whims of passing political administrations.

That certainly had been true during the Coolidge and Hoover administrations, when the timber industry had been allowed to operate so freely that it brought down the wrath of Gifford Pinchot himself, the originator of the U.S. Forest Service during President Theodore Roosevelt's reign and the nation's first chief forester.

It was a good deal less true after 1933. Agriculture Secretary Henry Wallace and his chief forester, Ferdinand A. Silcox, were hardly tools of the timber industry, and Franklin Roosevelt himself was an amateur silviculturist.

Ickes nevertheless believed that the Interior Department was the proper repository of the forests and all other natural resources. In early 1933, not long after he took office, it seemed that such a transfer would take place without much of a ruckus at all. With "Brain Trust" Rexford Guy Tugwell acting as intermediary, Ickes and Wallace reached a verbal agreement whereby both forests and the Biological Survey — one of the elements of what would become today's Fish and Wildlife Service and charged with responsibility for the national wildlife refuge system — would come over to Interior once Roosevelt reorganized the executive department.

Then Wallace went on a trip during which he visited several national forests. The foresters he encountered apparently persuaded him that transfer to the Interior Department — not without its own history of corruption and exploitation in the years before Ickes, after all — was a ghastly idea. When he returned, he informed Tugwell and Ickes that he had changed his mind.



American Heritage

Ickes was understandably furious, but not deterred. To give further weight to his claim to stewardship over the forests, he decided that the name of his agency should be changed to the Department of Conservation, and then went on to use every means at his disposal to get his way in a 10-year guerrilla war against the rival agency — including the fashioning and promotion of congressional legislation, bald-faced manipulation of the media (yes, even then, folks), the constant hectoring of Roosevelt, and noisy offers of resignation.

While Roosevelt waffled, at turns encouraging his Secretary of the Interior and then frustrating him in a strange administrative saraband, Wallace and Silcox gave as good as they got, even bringing in Gifford Pinchot again, who charged that Ickes was maddened by a "lust for power" and well on his way to becoming "an American Hitler."

It was one of the least elegant struggles in the history of American bureaucracy. But if it was ugly, and if Ickes failed to get either the forests or the change in his agency's name, the fuss he kicked up did pry the Biological Survey, with its millions of acres of refuges, out of the hands of the Department of Agriculture, and the Bureau of Fisheries, with its control over the offshore fishing industry, out of the hands of the Department of Commerce.

In the administration of both these new agencies, he demonstrated such fiercely protective instincts that it is difficult not to speculate whether the national forests might not in fact have been in better hands with Ickes. It is at least possible that he would have so transformed the management policies of the Forest Service during his time that the frenzy of cutting that followed World War II might not have been quite so devastating.

The Park-Maker

Speculation over the fate of the national forests aside, there is no question about what Ickes did for the national park system. From the beginning of his term, he fought the expansion of concessioner facilities, road systems and other civilized amenities in the parks, often sitting on his own National Parks director, Arno Cammerer, in the process.

"So long as I am Secretary of the Interior and have anything to do with the parks," he said, "I am going to use all of the influence I have to keep them just as far as possible in their natural state," a declaration from which the present generation of park managers (those in Yosemite, for instance) might take a useful lesson.

Ickes could not (and did not) claim credit for Great Smoky Mountains, Shenandoah or Everglades national parks — all of which had been authorized earlier but not added to the system until the 1930s. But his personal intervention, in concert with such private groups as the Sierra Club and such citizen activists as journalist-historian Irving Brant, was central to the creation of California's Kings Canyon National Wilderness Park, a 461,000-acre unit carved out of national forest lands (and over the furious opposition of the Forest Service).

The same coalition was instrumental in creating 900,000-acre Olympic National Park in Washington (again with the Forest Service fighting the park every step of the way).

In addition to establishing these two great parks, it was Ickes who encouraged Roosevelt to invoke the Antiquities Act of 1906 to create Joshua Tree, Death Valley and Organ Pipe Cactus national monuments. In 1943 — again, over the opposition of the Forest Service, this time allied with a gaggle of stockmen — FDR was persuaded by Ickes to use the same law to establish Jackson Hole National Monument in Wyoming's Snake River Valley beneath the snaggled-toothed magnificence



Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Library/print courtesy of T.H. Watkins.

Harold Ickes and Franklin D. Roosevelt share a lunch at a Civilian Conservation Corps camp

of the Teton Range; the monument was later added to Grand Teton National Park. Big Bend and Capitol Reef national parks were children of Ickes' administration, and so was Cape Hatteras National Seashore, the country's first such park unit.

He did not get everything he wanted. He wanted a Green Mountain National Park in Vermont, but could not get backing for it. He wanted a Katahdin National Park in Maine, but could not overcome the opposition of the state delegation. He wanted a four-million-acre Escalante National Monument in southern Utah's canyonlands country, but his proposal was so whittled away by local opposition that he had to abandon it. He wanted a whole system of national seashores, but Cape Hatteras was all he got (he would have taken pleasure in the present system of 10 units).

Even without these desired additions, the national park system grew under Harold Ickes as it would not again until passage of the Alaska Lands Act in 1980. But as important as the size of the system he established was the character of its management. In much of this he was so far ahead of his time as to be nearly unthinkable.

A Preservationist Revealed

As a boy, Ickes had escaped the relentless demands of a large family under the thumb of a drunken father by going to the tangled, woodsy beauty of the hills and hollows around his hometown of Altoona, and as a young man, he had escaped the concrete and politics of Chicago by heading west — particularly to the glories of Yellowstone and Glacier national parks.

"I love nature," he told listeners over NBC's Blue Network on March 3, 1934. "I love it in practically every form — flowers, birds, wild animals, running streams, gem-like lakes, and towering, snow-clad mountains."

He meant every word in this string of clichés. Ickes, the refugee of the streets and saloons of turn-of-the-century Chicago politics, the cynical newspaperman, the builder of dams and bridges and sewer plants, the pragmatic, dictatorial administrator and bureaucratic infighter, the hard-boiled conservationist — this nearsighted, pear-shaped politico was the first highly placed government official in United States history not only to recognize the fact that there was an important place for wilderness preservation in the scheme of things, but that it was necessary to actively pursue it.

"I think we ought to keep as much wilderness area in this country as we can," he told a doubtless astonished Conference of State Park Authorities on Feb. 25, 1935. "It is easy to destroy a wilderness; it can be done very quickly, but it takes nature a long time, even if we let nature alone, to restore for our children what we have ruthlessly destroyed."

This sentiment lay behind Ickes' endorsement of the 4.2 million acres of administrative wilderness areas that Robert Marshall, later the principal founder of The Wilderness Society, established on the Indian reservations in 1934 (the designations were rescinded by the Eisenhower Administration).

It drove him to announce to his staff at the outset of the fight to establish Kings Canyon National Park that "this park will be treated as a primitive wilderness" and to urge that it be named the John Muir National Wilderness Park. The name change failed

(although "Wilderness" remained in the language of the enabling legislation), but from the day of its creation in 1940 to now, it has been managed just as Ickes said it should be. So have Great Smoky Mountains, Everglades, and Olympic national parks and Joshua Tree, Death Valley and Organ Pipe Cactus national monuments.

But such management was a matter of administrative responsibility, Ickes knew, and as such was subject to changing attitudes and administrators. To prevent any policy changes in the parks — and to establish even more wilderness preserves — he had drafted and submitted to Congress legislation that would have given the President authority to proclaim the designation of wilderness areas in any national park lands.

"I want these wilderness areas so protected," he told San Francisco's Commonwealth Club in February 1939, "that neither I, nor any future Secretary of

done as much as any man in our history to transform the modern history of the land of long horizons — that when this man expressed in deed and word his conviction that the untrammelled natural world provides sanctuary for the spirit and health of our civilization, he stepped whole-souled and unafraid from the heart of the industrialized civilization in which he had been born into the realm of a poetic new world.

No one had ever quite forgotten the Easter Sunday afternoon in April 1939 when about 75,000 people had put aside the wretched baggage of prejudice and freely joined at the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., to witness the glory of Marian Anderson's voice.

Ickes had helped to make that moment possible, so perhaps it was natural that his friends would seek to recreate the day as a tribute to his memory. On

April 20, 1952, about 10,000 gathered again at the Lincoln Memorial. The presiding minister prayed: "For his life of integrity, for his impatience with racial barriers, for his courageous championship of unpopular but good causes; for his warm friendship and for his selflessness, we are a grateful people."

Oscar Chapman, Ickes' successor as Interior Secretary, then spoke briefly. "We meet again," he said, "at the foot of Lincoln's shrine, where 13 years ago Harold L. Ickes presided at an open-air concert demonstrating that America's faith in its basic ideals remains strong."

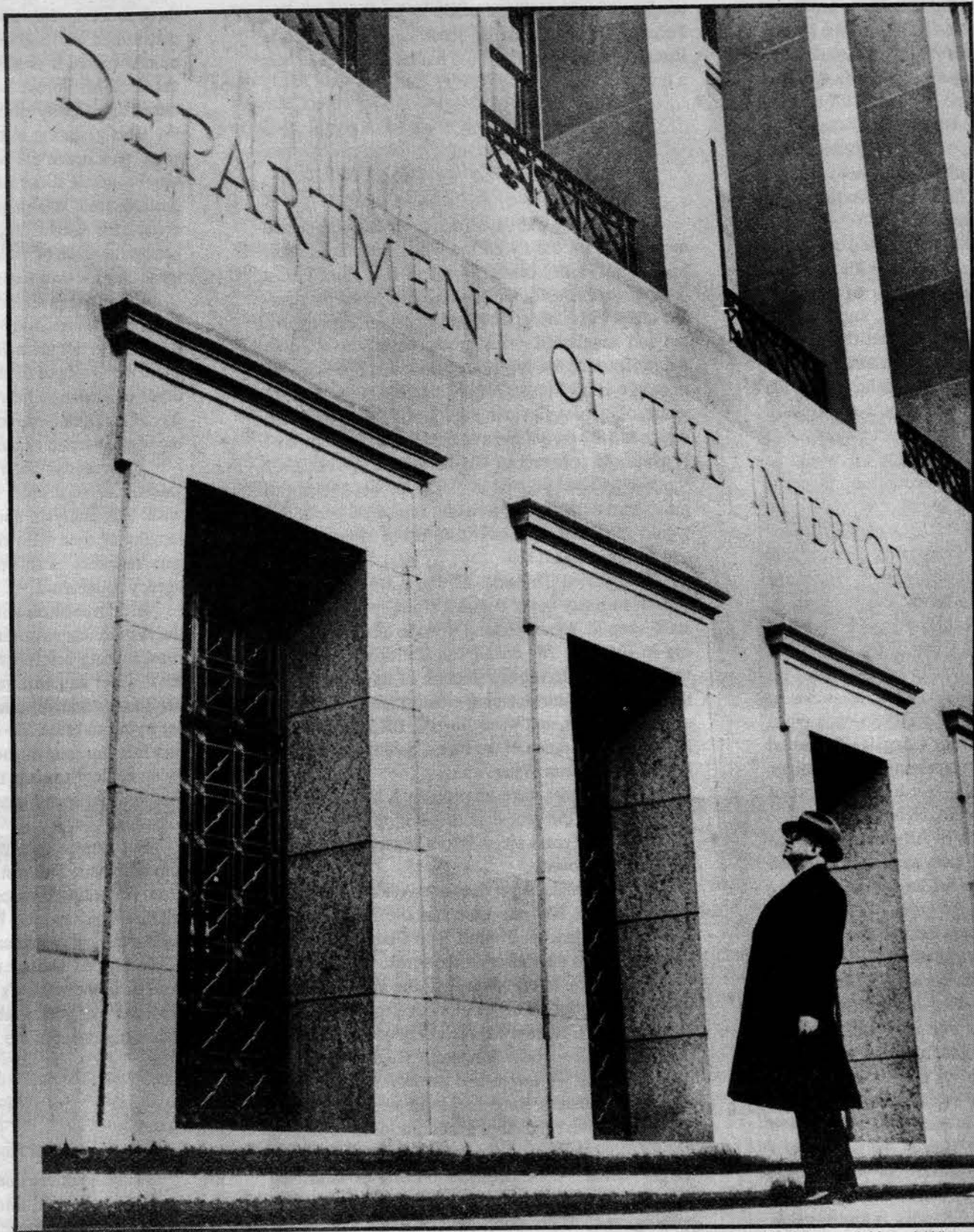
Then from behind one of the great pillars of the monument stepped Marian Anderson again. Dressed in a sweeping blue taffeta gown and carrying an armful of blood-red roses against her breast, she strode to the microphone as a standing ovation filled the air. When the applause subsided, her accompanist began the opening bars of Bach's "Come, Sweet Death," and soon that unearthly voice rolled out over the crowd once again. After "Come, Sweet Death," she sang the "Ave Maria" as she had in 1939, then the same bittersweet spirituals, and finally, the whole audience on its feet now to sing it with her, "America, the Beautiful."

When the last notes of that simple, moving song had been carried

away by the wind, the audience cheered for a very long time, perhaps recognizing in this moment a final gift from the irascible, righteous old pilgrim whose dedication to the protocols of liberty had done so much to shape the world of their inheritance.

Our world.

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 in the 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 in September.



Harold Ickes surveys his domain

Franklin D. Roosevelt Memorial Library

the Interior, can lower their guard merely by signing an administrative order."

The Ickes Wilderness Bill never got out of committee and it was never reintroduced. When he resigned his office in February 1946 after a fight with President Harry Truman over the appointment of oil man Edwin Pauley as Secretary of the Navy (Ickes did not trust Pauley with the administration of the Naval Oil Reserves), the idea of an official system of wilderness was no more than a vagrant dream.

It was still a dream when Ickes died on Feb. 3, 1952, at the age of 77. But four years after that, Sen. Hubert Humphrey introduced another Wilderness Bill, and after eight years of struggle this one did become law.

The Wilderness Act of 1964 and the more than 90 million acres of wilderness that have followed cannot legitimately be said to be the direct legacy of Harold L. Ickes, nor do I claim it for him.

But I do claim this: That when this hard-boiled conservationist, this definitive bureaucrat who had

ESSAY

Metamorphosis at the Forest Service

by Ed Marston

Sixty of us are standing in yet another riparian zone — this one on Wyoming's Big Horn National Forest, about 40 miles from and a few thousand feet above Sheridan.

The small drainage is a regular stop on range tours because it is neatly divided into two zones. The upper part of the creek is bare of willows. The old stream channel — 150 or so feet wide — is covered with blue grass and dandelions growing out of ground compacted to a concrete-like consistency. The low hills bordering the creek on the far side from us are scarred in many places by bare dirt, where the ground has slumped en masse down toward the channel.

Downstream of this compacted, eroding area, the stream is in much better shape. Willows still envelop the creek and, when we stamp our feet, the soil is spongy giving way to swampy. There is greater diversity of vegetation and everything is lush, greener. But it is not perfect. The conifers are invading; even here, the willows are under siege.

That's the stage: a small, sunlit mountain drainage bisected by a dirt road lined with vacation-home cabins. Less permanent features of the landscape are our idling Powder River bus, and a couple of dozen cows, oblivious of the fact that they belong in another part of the grazing allotment and are therefore in trespass. No fishermen are in sight, but we are told that they use the area. And were it a couple of months later, the area would be filled with hunters.

Twenty, ten, even five years ago, we would be here to admire the scenery, the productive range, the mix of uses. The valley, if you don't stamp on the ground and note the slumping and lack of willows and vegetation in the upper part, looks good. In fact, with the clear blue sky and the rounded, green Big Horns in the background, it looks great.

Today, while some are still admiring of what they see, a variety of tunes are being sung by the tour participants. Although everyone wants to be agreeable, the conversational music often borders on the discordant.

The participants are singing partly to each other, but mostly to one man: Gary Cargill, Regional Forester of the 16 forests encompassing 35,000 square miles of land in Region II — Colorado, most of Wyoming, South Dakota, Kansas, Nebraska.

For all I know, Cargill is of Albanian stock, but he reminds me of a shrewd, alert, tough, genial Irish politician. I was partial to him before our first meeting yesterday. By my standards, the quality of the supervisors on the two forests I know best zoomed upward when Cargill replaced the incumbents.

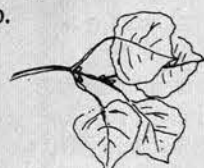
I am also partial to him because I am here, a speaker and participant at a three-day meeting in late July of the Regional Forester with his Forest Supervisors, Deputy Forest Supervisors, regional staff members and the like. It has given me a chance to see that the two supervisors I know best are not anomalies. There are some real standouts among the dozen men who administer the 16 forests. Most of them have been appointed by Cargill since his arrival four years ago.

My presence at this policy meeting of the Rocky Mountain Region of the Forest Service is another sign of change. Yesterday I had an hour on the program to talk about "media." I spent the time describing the Don Oman story (*HCN*, 5/13/90), which had not yet hit the front page of *The New York Times*. I told how ranchers in Oman's Twin Falls, Idaho, ranger district, probably with the help of one or more members of the Idaho congressional delegation, convinced the Forest Service's Intermountain Regional Office in Ogden, Utah, that Oman would be happier pushing paper elsewhere in the Forest Service rather than administering land on the Sawtooth National Forest.

I did not hide from the audience that Oman had made a tactical mistake or two. Nor did I hide that he was a dedicated man — not fearless, but, unlike many bureaucrats, capable of overcoming his fear and doing his job. When asked what kind of people the Forest Service needed, I said they should be willing to resign on principle, as I think Oman was prepared to do, rather than act against their best judgment.

Although the talk was delivered softly, out of

respect for my hosts and for whomever had gone out on a limb to invite me, the message was unmistakable, and Cargill had politely disagreed with that message. It was not Forest Service policy, he said, to transfer employees in response to political pressure. He didn't say it hadn't happened in this case; he just said that if it had, it was unique. Cargill aside, it was not the most comfortable topic I could have chosen. The audience sat quietly enough, but they emitted discomfort — I could almost see people squirm. The talk, given on the second day of my three days with the group, strained but did not seem to break whatever unspoken compact I had made in coming here. The Forest Service, I think, is becoming experienced in listening to messages it would not have chosen to hear a few years ago.



That was yesterday. Today, in the compacted meadow, I am the fly on the wall, watching Cargill butt heads with his staff. First, a Big Horn Forest ecologist sketches how cattle have degraded the riparian area. Then the grazing permittee — cowboy-hatted and sunglassed — disagrees. As we can see from the softly rounded Big Horns around us, he says, the drainage is all Mother Nature's doing — millions of years of geology. Mountains and drainages erode, which is why the Midwest is flat. Where geology isn't responsible, it is moose. Or the state of the soils. Or the yet-to-be-explained aversion of the beavers to move into the upstream area and create the ponds that would raise the water table and bring in the willows and soften the hard soil.

That joined the battle. All but a few of the forest supervisors stay out of it. But Cargill's regional office staff jump in, some speaking in code and some speaking in English. The ones I can understand say: The meadow is producing at a fraction of its potential, cattle are causing the slumping erosion we see along the streamside hills, and water flowing off the Big Horns is carrying too much of the forest, and may be in violation of the Clean Water Act.

Cargill agrees there are problems, but it has taken 100 years for the problems to develop, and he indicates that 100 years seems like a reasonable time for the land to recover.

The staff and a supervisor or two tell him the land may survive a 100-year wait, but the Forest Service doesn't have that much time. The Forest Service no longer controls the timber on the forest we are touring — a court does. In the Northwest, the agency is about to lose control of its biggest timber-producing region to the courts, Congress and members of the Bush cabinet. Unless the Rocky Mountain Region moves on the drainages we are in and on hundreds of other degraded drainages, some staff indicate, riparian areas could be the next chunks of ground it loses.

Of course the message is compelling to me, but Cargill resists — he is not eager to bring the influential Wyoming congressional delegation down on him by pushing on cattle permittees. Failure to act aggressively may bring him a riparian lawsuit someday, from fishing or environmental interests. But he knows he will get instantaneous political and legal pressure from the cattlemen the moment he pushes too hard on them.

That is no surprise. What does surprise me are some of the people this cautious but smart administrator has surrounded himself with. They are no-men, insisting in this quasi-public arena on telling their boss things he would rather not hear.

Why does Cargill put up with invited speakers who tell him about rebellious district rangers and with a staff that pushes on him to make life hard for ranchers and loggers — the very people who have been the backbone of the agency's constituency for most of Cargill's career? Because, I think, he has no choice if his goal is institutional and personal survival.

Events have already flattened the agency in ways its old-timers would not have believed possible a few years ago. Either the Forest Service comes to terms with these forces, and then figures out how to get

back to the head of the parade now cobbling together a radically new forest policy, or it is a lost agency. Cargill, attached though he is to the old ways and the old constituencies, knows the Forest Service must change. His job is to accommodate those new forces while remaining as loyal as possible to the old.

Standing there in the meadow, surrounded by ecologists, young staffers, and some forest supervisors eager for change, he reminds me of a father — an executive or professional type — surrounded by his anti-establishment kids. He doesn't quite understand them, but he knows they are the future. So he cuffs them about the ears now and then, but he also listens, determined not to give way to them and their ideas a minute before it is absolutely necessary. But, unlike many of his Forest Service colleagues, also determined to give way when it becomes necessary.

This gathering in the meadow is not an academic exercise. Later in the week, decisions will be made on how to spend some of the region's money, what to push for from Washington, D.C., and so on. Less concretely, the discussion is helping all the forest supervisors get a sense of what they should do with riparian areas on their own forests.

But my impression of the group is that the forest supervisors have a lot of latitude. I do not sense that the Rocky Mountain Region is being run in a rigid, top-down way out of the Denver office. But there are other constraints, more binding in some ways than directives from Denver would be: They are bound by the very structure of the Forest Service's organization.

An academic once did a study of how many outsiders, and what kind, Forest Service employees met with. His analysis showed they spent about equal lengths of time with environmentalists as with loggers, ranchers, et al. From that, he concluded that the agency is unbiased.

A conversation with a forest supervisor revealed the flaw in that reasoning. The supervisor said he was reorganizing his forest so that his staff dealt with land, water and soil, rather than with the commodities those resources produce. His is not the only forest trying to break the old commodity headlock. The fact that our tour of the riparian area was conducted by an ecologist rather than a range specialist showed that the Big Horn Forest was also trying to get down to basics.

But forests attempting such reorganizations run into problems. The rest of the Forest Service is organized according to uses: grazing, timber, recreation, wildlife. It is, and has been for decades, organized to get the cut out, whether the "cut" is units of grazing, board feet of timber or days of downhill skiing. Implicit in the agency's organizational structure is the production of goods rather than the understanding of and management of the land.



I have no doubt that the academic study correctly counted the beans, and that Forest Service people were indeed spending equal amounts of time with all interests. But the timber person on a ranger district spends time with an environmentalist the way an assistant district attorney spends time with an accused criminal: The goal is to convict rather than to reach an unbiased judgment. Institutionally, a timber staff member is incapable of fairly weighing the issues.

Now some forests are trying to reorganize so that they can better manage the land rather than just manage the cut and the AUMs of grazing. But they must cope with an agency still largely organized along board feet and AUMs. For example, if the Big Horn does try to bring back the riparian area we are standing on, the grazing permittee is likely to complain to a U.S. senator, and the U.S. senator will complain to the Washington, D.C., office of the Forest Service. Then a grazing person in Washington will call the Big Horn National Forest and this person will not ask for the forest ecologist. The Washington grazing person will expect to speak to the Big Horn grazing person.

But sooner rather than later, Washington may have

to revise its expectation of who is going to be on the other end of the line. The forests are reorganizing not just because of environmental pressures that demand a broader look at land and water, but also because in these days of Gramm-Rudman, it doesn't make economic sense to have the range people with their maps and inventories, the timber people with their data, the minerals people with their information, and so on. There is dollar pressure to look at the land in a basic, integrated, efficient way. The Forest Service may no longer be able to afford a variety of empires.

Such integration causes problems, but my sense during the three days was that most of the forests are maneuvering to redefine themselves. And it seemed that Cargill was giving the supervisors their head.

This is a marked change from Craig Rupp, the last long-time regional forester in the Rocky Mountain Region. Rupp had the reputation of personally managing not just each of the 16 forests in his region, but of managing each of the several ranger districts on each of the forests.

Rupp's style of micromanagement was consistent with the top-down organization of the Forest Service. This style suits lots of interests. It is much easier for loggers, ranchers, oil and gas companies and national environmental groups — all of whom have strong presences in Washington, D.C., — to deal with a top-down Forest Service than it would be for them to attempt to get their way by bringing pressure to bear on each ranger district.

Under the present organization, if an interest group can influence the top, it can determine how the land will be managed on the ground. The system allows, for example, U.S. senators Malcolm Wallop and Alan Simpson to manage forest lands in Wyoming, and, less frequently, it allows a Sierra Club or Wilderness Society or National Wildlife Federation to manage lands in the West or in Alaska.

It is this highly centralized organization of the Forest Service — replicated everywhere in our federal system — that has set the stage for the enormous power of PACs and our money-driven political system. The special interests, contributing to congressional campaigns on a national basis, send people to Washington, D.C., and those people then deliver for them back on the ground.

With this as context, the real significance of Idaho District Ranger Don Oman (I could have told the Sheridan meeting) was that he publicly and dramatically refused to participate in the Forest Service's messenger-boy approach to land management. Oman refused to listen when the Idaho ranchers got the Idaho congressional delegation to tell the Forest Service to call Oman off. He would not be called off.



The interesting thing about the three days in Sheridan is that I left the meeting convinced that many of the Forest Service officials there, in a quieter way, are also undermining the messenger-boy system.

They are not doing this because they have suddenly felt a strong urge toward independence. It is because top-down, centralized management by U.S. senators, logging company executives and national environmental groups no longer works.

The only thing that works in these contentious, litigious, ornery times is good, tough, independent people, located as close to the ground as possible, making their best decisions. Those agency employees who need to have someone from the top tell them what to do are no longer able to get their jobs done. Only independent types can handle today's pressures and survive.

That rule applies to district rangers and to regional foresters. Ten years ago, Cargill might have tried to micromanage the Rocky Mountain Region à la Craig Rupp. But such an approach would have ended in a series of large and small disasters. Instead, I would guess, Cargill, sensitive to his times, picked the best people available to him, huddles with them periodically on matters of general policy, and lets them do the best they can.

I was witnessing in Sheridan yet another example of the West's brand of perestroika, with beer and barbecue substituted for vodka and borscht, and with lots of Gorbachevs scattered throughout the agency. The Forest Service's Gorbachevs undoubtedly have opponents fighting against reform. But arguments from hardliners that the Forest Service should stick to the

old ways can be countered by citing the Denver Water Board and its Two Forks disaster, or the plummeting fortunes of another old-line agency — the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation.

How should those outside the Forest Service view this evolution? Certainly it's a welcome event, coming long after many of us had given up on the agency. But the transformation is no sure thing. The agency's mistakes in tying itself so closely to commodity production, in abandoning its loyalty to the land, and in abetting the destruction of so much of the nation's public lands may mean it can never recapture forestry leadership. Leadership is not just a matter of using green rhetoric. Over the years, the Forest Service has abandoned the ground, retreating into its offices and its messenger-boy system. Into this vacuum moved both organized interests like the loggers and grazers, and disorganized, destructive forces, like the ORVers. Neither will easily surrender the land they now occupy.

But the ultimate outcome is for time to tell. Certainly, all who believe that the nation's forests are best managed by putting the land first, and by creating a partnership between a professional agency and those who care about and who depend on the land in a long-term sense, must wish the Forest Service reformers Godspeed.



Ed Marston is the publisher of *High Country News*. He is on sabbatical at Stanford University's Department of Communications.



LETTERS

KNOTHEADS, STAY AWAY FROM JAMISON

Dear HCN,

Ed Marston's July 2 editorial ("Yet another political hack at the BLM") is wonderful, because it offers an opportunity for me to disagree, for the first time, with someone taking a swipe at the Bureau of Land Management.

Lord knows BLM needs a bunch of improvement. The agency's lousy reputation is well deserved. It was earned with fumbling leadership that was jerked along by shortsighted politicians and moneyed interests, none of whom cared much for the land. One of the great tragedies observed in my 20 years of Washington, D.C., duty has been the lot of dedicated, capable BLM employees who were frustrated at every turn by politically appointed stupidity and insensitivity. There's plenty of mediocrity still in the Interior Department, but that rat pack does not include Cy Jamison.

Thank God for "political hacks" like Jamison. The new BLM director is trying to awaken BLM from eight years of Reagan sleep, and he is beginning to succeed. He will make some mistakes, such as the recent "soft" decision on old-growth cutting in the Pacific Northwest to protect spotted owls. But let's watch where the big lumbering BLM machine is headed and not get too taken with a few minor detours.

Jamison has BLM's fish, wildlife and

recreation budgets rising. He has partnerships with a host of national conservation organizations, such as Ducks Unlimited and Trout Unlimited, for cost-shared habitat improvement projects. He has launched a program to restore BLM rangeland, including reduction in livestock use where needed. He takes news reporters out on the land to show them the bad, the good, what should be, and how he hopes to get there.

My only fear is that some of the invisible knotheads over Jamison at Interior will pitch a stink bomb into this breath of fresh air.

Lonnie L. Williamson
Washington, D.C.

The writer is vice president of the Wildlife Management Institute.

LOGS TO JAPAN

Dear HCN,

Log exports may make sense? Come on, now. Forest economist Randal O'Toole (HCN, 8/27/90, Page 5) seems to assume that the Japanese will buy just as much milled as unmilled lumber from us even if the price goes way up, which it undoubtedly would. He also seems to assume that American mills cannot or will not become more efficient, even though the technology exists and it would pay them to do so.

Frankly, I don't really care very much if the Japanese do cut more of

their own trees than they get from us, or if they get 40 percent of our wood exports, or, really, if the U.S. imports twice what it exports. What matters to me is that 25 percent of those exports are going to support millworkers in Japan at the expense of millworkers in Washington and Oregon.

Economists such as O'Toole cannot save old-growth forests; they can only tell us how quickly they will use them up. Saving old-growth requires a longer and broader view, and an appreciation for values not found on dollar bills.

John McGill
East Glacier Park, Montana

GRUMBLINGS ALONG THE POWWOW HIGHWAY

Dear HCN,

I hope you do not expect me to feel sorry for David Seals ("Strange Tales Along the Powwow Highway," HCN, 9/10/90) being ripped off by the mighty white sharks!

If Mr. Seals was so worried about the integrity of his book, *The Powwow Highway*, why did he sell the movie rights to those white Indian-lovers in the first place? Why didn't he try to have it produced himself by applying for grants for the arts? Oh, those are run by white people — sorry! How about Indian Art Institute grants? He could probably call up R.C. Gorman and get money from him; he's very philanthropic to other

Indians' projects.

It seems to me that it would just take too much effort by Mr. Seals to see that his project was carried out the way he wanted. He "took the money and ran back to the reservation" — or did they drive up in a limo and hand it to him?

How are white people supposed to deal with Indian health, alcohol and social problems when Indians like David Seals don't want to have anything to do with white people unless they want something?

Nancy Neskauskas
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Dear HCN,

David Seals is an irate young whippersnapper with a spitfire style and mostly correct opinions. However, he is confused in saying that moderation and respectability are only "Judeo-Christian traditions." Confucius, himself a sort of quasi-Indian, had a word or two to say on the subject.

Mr. Seals' large group of bogeymen — New York editors, New Age saps, liberals, misguided hippies, sweet and good Californians, preachers, teachers, scientists and filmmakers, Siskel & Ebert, even poor Shirley MacLaine — have a point to make to him. Accommodation with one's enemies is inevitable to the survivor, and it teaches truths the spitfire is blind to.

Joleen Vorkeoper
Flagstaff, Arizona

OTHER VOICES

Games (non-Native) journalists play



In 1988, I worked as a Native American intern for *High Country News*. Arriving in early autumn to start my internship, I was told my immediate supervisor was out on an extended river rafting trip and that I would have to begin by my own supervision. Meantime, I was told to read through a stack of newspapers and odd mail, to clip out any articles related to Indians or the environment, and then give these to the top editor.

After a few days, I realized that clipping through newspapers sharpened in me a sense of critical judgment — the ability to accept or reject news articles based on their relevance to my work. It was easy. But as the editor returned the clipped articles to me, on them she wrote mysterious codes: (possible RUP?) and (Do HOT). I looked in my trusty Associated Press stylebook, but the terms weren't there. I felt that if I asked what a RUP was, I could reveal my ignorance, but I decided to at least preserve my sense of humor. A RUP was a puzzle to be solved in this new game of journalist. I looked over at the circulation manager and asked her. Eventually I caught on that *High Country News* prints several categories of news stories, among which are medium-sized stories called Roundups (RUPs) and shorter items called Hotlines (HOTs).

As I was *HCN's* Native American intern, my responsibility and privilege was to concentrate on Indian issues. I read several of the Indian papers, made pertinent phone calls, interviewed, wrote and revised. Often my submitted words were returned entirely red-marked, as if some howling, tempestuous editor had poured red paint all over them. I never took this personally, but heeded the remarks and rewrote.

In time, I felt I had mastered the routine and I decided to come into the office solely to pick up my newspapers and mail, which I then took back with me to clip in the sanctum of my apartment. I felt satisfied. But when my immediate supervisor returned from his rafting excursion, he felt that I should come into the office and remain there through the day. He said it was good for everyone's morale, and that I'd benefit to interact daily with the *HCN* staff and fellow interns.

I agreed, but I was also wary about too close identity with the *HCN* people. The *HCN* office is

located in a part of western Colorado where the Utes once lived before being removed to the reservation system. The town of Paonia is now a predominantly Europeanized place.

Annually the town puts on a chili cookoff, in which townspeople dress up in ludicrous costumes and compete to see who makes the best chili. *HCN* had entered its interns in the chili cookoff, and *HCN* expected me to participate. The only thing was that the recipe *HCN* used for its chili required beer as an active ingredient, and I don't believe in conspicuous use of alcohol, even for cooking. Another unspoken factor was that several of the townspeople were dressed up like Indians. I refused to participate.

They nebulously accepted my boycott. So, to underscore my position, I then refused to help out with the bulk mailing. I reasoned that since I was never told about bulk mailing in my job description, I shouldn't set precedent to do it, because future Native American interns might be "expected" to do it without being asked. Because of this, I was politely accused of reverse discrimination. I wound up helping out, but insisted they had to be clearer from then on about their expectations of Native American interns.

Most of the time, people accepted me on the merit of my writing talent and on the "fact" that I worked for *High Country News*. But I discovered that when I didn't expressly identify myself as a Dakotah or as a Native American over the phone, state and federal officials would speak to me off the record, to berate and bad-mouth the existing Indian organizations. As an Indian I found such off-the-cuff remarks despicable. And yet, since they were made off the record, I realized that, as a journalist, I couldn't expose the rotten words of the officials, nor was it my job to debate with them on why Indian organizations were viable.

Truth is easily disguised and distorted in the world. To work on a story about a Havasupai traditional site, I read primary documents and the appropriate legislation, and then I interviewed two lobbyists in Washington, D.C. One supported the Havasupai and the other supported mining interests. This latter one submitted to *HCN* his own editorialized interpretation of the issue. Since I had read through

the literature, I could see that his version stretched certain points and excluded certain points. He wrote beautifully, though, and it was his ability to present words that allowed him to get printed in *HCN*. The fact that *HCN* printed him meant they couldn't always screen the letters adequately, especially letters that addressed Indian topics. Most professional writers are unfamiliar with the Indian world.

Sometimes I called up Indian news offices to find that the staff was composed of older teenagers, or that the one working staff member was out, unable to be in two places at the same time. Often lines were out of order, and many numbers had been disconnected. All this usually caused me to chuckle, but I was also frustrated. More of us need to write, to man telephones and to voice ourselves on the issues of our own news — because if we don't, our white colleagues will, and we have already experienced their hackneyed attempts at it.

Every day we meet with cultural problems, and the mark of the Indian journalist is that he and she must actively confront these problems. Our responsibility is to hold on to truthful reporting. By doing so, we will not only achieve good writing but will uphold the ethical standards of the tribes, and perhaps will newly articulate these verities down the long run. By holding on to truth, we earn our people's respect for the words, even if the words are inadequate or come from a 10th-grade level. It's the beginning point.

As I left *HCN*, I realized that the cultural problems were a reflection of necessary struggle, and that Indian journalists should never be averse to confrontation. The ignorant voices may disrupt objectiveness; threaten, deceive and attempt to delay the participation of our people. They have done this. But the journalists, if only the Indian journalists, must create brand-new versions of writing, and give all of us the most honest and one of the strongest ways to fight back and to survive.

— Kevin Lee Lopez

The author lives in Tucson and works with Native Seeds/Search for the preservation of traditional crops in the Southwest.

GUEST EDITORIAL

'Whose mountain is it, anyway?'

by Peter Shelton

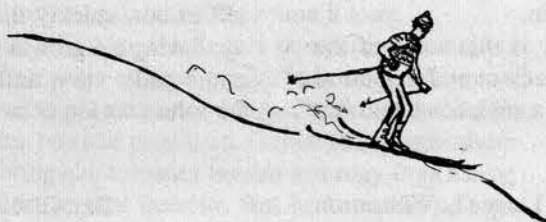
Sitting back in their Connecticut and New York City offices, the editors of *Snow Country* and *Ski* have gone on the attack. They see signs of rebellion in the colonies. And they want a new Colorado playground.

Both editorials this September focused on the proposed ski and lakeside resort development at Lake Catamount, seven miles south of Steamboat Springs in Routt County (*HCN*, 9/24/90). The skiing would be on 9,900-foot Mount Baldy, which sits in Routt National Forest.

It seems the forest supervisor up there polled local residents and discovered a majority of them didn't in fact want to see another ski mountain developed. They cited such negatives as unwanted population growth, transportation problems, and the impact on their rural values and lifestyle. The supervisor indicated that he might deny the permit to build based on grounds of "socio-cultural concerns."

Dick Needham at *Ski* called the polling "insidious and potentially devastating, since it takes from the American public its right to enjoy and use its public lands." *Snow Country's* John Fry titled his essay, "Whose Mountain Is It, Anyway?"

Fry went on to say, "Skiers from Chicago and Los Angeles, from Texas and New York, not just Coloradoans or residents of Lake Catamount, have a claim to its use." Right you are, John, and any one of those skiers can come walk up Mount Baldy any time



he pleases, put on his skis and slide down. What he doesn't have is a right to dictate the future economic, cultural and aesthetic life of a community that may have a different view of the future.

Fry continued, "Given the USFS's mandate to develop all its resources — recreation as well as timber and mining ... Lake Catamount would seem like a reasonably agreed-upon site to accommodate healthy, vigorous outdoor winter-sports activity by 8,000 Americans in a single day."

Mandate to develop? Whoa! Welcome to the 1990s, John. The Forest Service is changing in response to an evolving public awareness, local and national. "Stewardship" is probably a better word now, with a strong emphasis on conservation of fragile (and vanishing) resources, a notion that might include untouched mountains like Mount Baldy.

And where are these 8,000 people you're talking about? The ski industry, to use its own euphemistic term, is "flat." Has been for years. In fact, it's — uh,

close your ears if you don't want to hear this — down. Colorado's existing areas are scratching hard for an ever bigger piece of a shrinking pie.

We're looking ahead to a time when big timber and mining operations on public lands won't be able to run roughshod over the local communities where their impacts are felt. Witness Idarado Mining Company's forced cleanup of its toxic messes in southwest Colorado, and San Miguel County's lawsuit to demand local control over (or at least recompense for) Louisiana Pacific's logging operations. Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre and Gunnison national forest planners quite rightly went back to the drawing board last year when local residents challenged their timber-biased proposals.

Developing a ski resort is not a use by right.

Skiing at Lake Catamount would be an amenity in an immensely profitable real-estate game. Needham and Fry know that. They also surely know that that game is likely to offer as prizes reams of hyperbole, absentee ownership, soaring land prices, bulldozed meadows, grandiose mansions, shrinking diversity and shattered peace. Any community that doesn't want to play the game deserves to be heard. And the USFS is right to listen.

Peter Shelton is a free-lance writer in Ridgway, Colorado.