

High Country News

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A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar



Idaho savors its waters as region seeks more hydropower

Glenn Oakley

by Stephen Stuebner

BOISE, Idaho — The Pacific Northwest's dawning power shortage is adding new impetus to build more hydroelectric dams in Idaho. But the dams may never get built, because the state's traditionally pro-development politics are beginning to fade. Indeed, Idaho is proudly billing itself these days as "the whitewater capital of the world."

A political showdown over the proposed dams is now brewing in the state Legislature, which experienced a 27 percent turnover in last fall's elections. Of the 34 new members in the 126-member bicameral Legislature, 19 are Democrats and 15 are Republicans. The formerly Republican-controlled Idaho Senate is now evenly divided: 21 Democrats and 21 Republicans.

This political shift reflects the state's demographic changes over the past decade. Boise has grown by 20 percent to reach a population of about 126,000, and many of the state's newcomers are recreation-oriented and want to protect the state's free-flowing rivers and other natural resources that drew them here. State water authorities and legislators can no longer ignore this growing throng of new citizens who seek to protect their playgrounds.

Ultimately, the new dams issue could prove to be an environmental litmus test for Idaho — revealing whether citizens can wield enough political clout to drown out the hydro developers. In

the past, hydro developers have reigned supreme in Idaho, particularly on the Snake River where eight of the new dams are proposed.

On the world-renowned Payette River, river enthusiasts and riverside property owners are rallying to protect the stream's beauty and ferocious whitewater from two proposed hydroelectric projects. Whitewater recreation, buoyed by a revolution in raft design, has skyrocketed by more than 400 percent on the Payette River over the past decade.

The proposals involve eight dams on the middle section of the Snake River, a 500-megawatt pump-storage project on the North Fork of the Payette River, a three-megawatt dam on the Payette's South Fork and a five-

megawatt diversion dam in the scenic Malad Gorge. In addition, dozens of smaller dams are being planned for Idaho's bounty of creeks and streams.

"It's a mini-boom, kind of the second coming of PURPA," said Wendy Wilson, co-chair of the Friends of the Payette River, the state's most active river-protection group. Wilson was referring to the Public Utilities Regulatory Policy Act, a federal law passed in 1978 that spawned the construction of hundreds of small hydro dams throughout the nation, including dozens in the Pacific Northwest. Wilson recently formed another river conservation group called Idaho Rivers United.

Now a new and compelling incentive is pushing hydropower generation

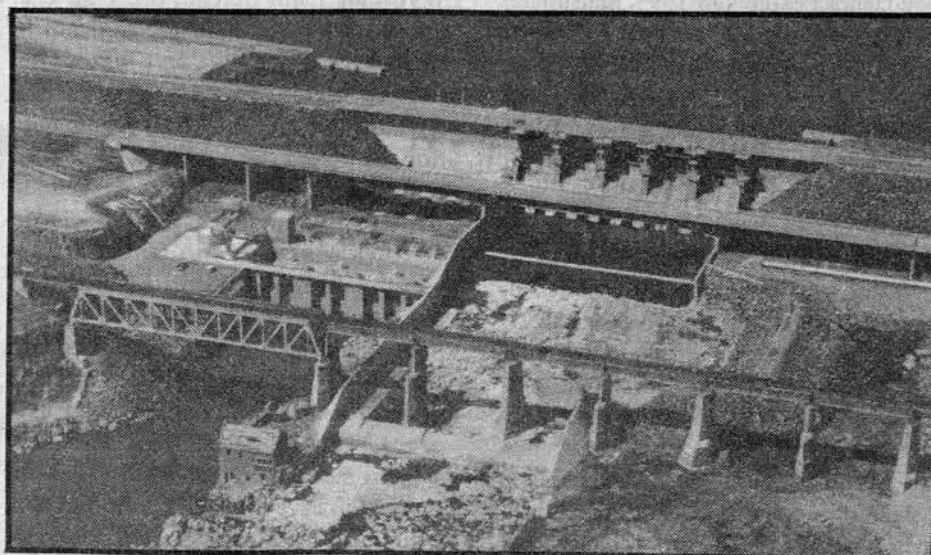
— the population and industrial growth of the Pacific Northwest, particularly in the Puget Sound area (*HCN*, 12/31/90). The region's 10-year energy surplus is fast disappearing, and many areas, including the city of Tacoma, Wash., are eyeing Idaho's rivers as a potential source of new energy.

Idaho Power Co., the state's largest utility and previously the king of hydro development in Idaho, has leapt into the dam-building ring after a 10-year hiatus, competing with developers for the last remaining major dam sites. And a subsidiary, Ida-West Energy Inc., has been formed to work in partnership with small hydro developers to ram through other dam projects.

"The competition is very fierce for the sites," said Jan Packwood, Idaho Power's vice president for power supply. "If we don't compete, the best sites could be lost to other interests."

Contrary to the early years of hydro development in Idaho, when projects were routinely approved, nearly every project faces tough opposition today from the general public, anglers, whitewater enthusiasts and environmentalists. Wilson said she formed Idaho Rivers United to help locals fight for the last remaining free-flowing segments of the Snake, Payette and other rivers.

"We're providing a clearinghouse of information to groups that are working on water development issues," she said. "We're trying to be the matrix that helps all the groups work together."



American Falls Power Plant on the Snake River

Idaho Power Company

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HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

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Dear friends,

Bumble Bees

Subscribers and friends of the *High Country News* converged on the Bumble Bee Ranch some 40 miles north of Phoenix Jan. 26 to enjoy the desert scenery, pot luck and one another. About 60 people and several dogs made it to the out-of-the-way spot, a working ranch tucked into rolling purple hills. When night fell there was a frosty ring and a V-shaped formation of clouds around the moon. *HCN* board members and staff enjoyed the chance to get feedback from readers.

Good news had dominated that day's board meeting at the ranch. Linda Bacigalupi, *HCN's* tireless business manager and associate publisher, reported that the paper's circulation broke 10,000 in January. She also said the paper's renewal rate reached a new high of 72 percent for last year. Associate editor Steve Hinchman announced that the paper will switch to recycled newsprint for its March 11 issue; full details will be reported then. And the board decided to hire an architect to help *HCN's* expansion into new quarters in Paonia later this year. High Country Foundation has signed a five-year lease with option to purchase a building across the street from the paper's present editorial office and will begin a fundraising drive later this spring for the renovation.

The board bade an appreciative farewell to three members: *HCN* founder Tom Bell, who had resigned earlier; and Lynn Dickey and Susan A. Williams, whose terms were ending. Susan's last act was to host the meeting and pot luck dinner. New members joining the board are James B. Ruch of Flagstaff, Ariz.; Geoffrey O'Gara of Lander, Wyo., and Emily Swanson of Bozeman, Mont. Jim is currently the executive vice president of the Grand Canyon Trust. Geoff, a former *HCN* editor, is on leave from the *Casper Star Tribune* to write a book. Emily was executive director of the Montana Wildlife Federation until 1988, when she became operations manager for Patagonia Mail Order. The board also elected new officers: Michael Ehlers, president; Andy Wiessner, vice president for fundraising; Karil Frohboese, vice president



**DONT CROSS THIS FIELD
UNLESS YOU CAN DO IT
IN 9.9 SECONDS. THE
BULL CAN DO IT IN 10**

for board development; Dan Luecke, treasurer, and Lynda S. Taylor, secretary.

Trees (again)

We continue to receive appreciative comments on the Nov. 19 ancient forest special issue. "I have been an avid reader of *High Country News* for a number of years and I am always impressed by the quality of your writing," former New Mexican Tom McKinney writes from Arkansas. "However, the special issue on the ancient forests exceeded even your high standards. The issues affecting the depletion and survival of our ancient forests are very complex and are impossible to reduce to 30-second television broadcasts or even lengthy newspaper articles. Your special issue ... explained all of the interrelated factors...."

Correction

A major water bill that died in the last Congress (*HCN* 12/31/90) did not contain funds to clean up drainage from a mine operated by Climax Metals Co. near Leadville, Colo. The \$1.5 billion bill, which was blocked by California's former Sen.

Pete Wilson, now that state's Republican governor, would have provided \$10.7 million to line part of the Leadville Mine Drainage Tunnel and build a water treatment plant for its mine drainage. Bob Kilborn, environmental affairs general manager for Climax, said his company treats its mine drainage before it enters 10 Mile Creek, which flows into the Dillon Reservoir. The Leadville tunnel drains into the Arkansas River.

Bull alert

A Billings, Mont., reader, Jim Delano, sent in the above photo of a corralled bison bull. When we called him to ask for details, Jim told us his best guess was that the sign in the picture was just a photographer's joke. "But buffalo, at certain times of the year, can be pretty antagonistic — nothing to fool with," he said. He knows, because he's been chased. Jim signed off with another good one. Why do North Dakota golfers wear two pairs of pants? Answer: Because they're afraid of getting a hole in one.

— Larry Mosher and Mary Jarrett
for the staff

HOTLINE

Yosemite stays domestic

Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan won a bid last month to prevent a Japanese electronics firm from taking over the Yosemite Park and Curry Co., the largest tourist concession in the country's national park system. Lujan's highly publicized campaign resulted in tentative agreement by the Matsushita Electric Industrial Co. to sell the Curry Co. to a nonprofit group when the current contract expires in 1993. Matsushita bought the Curry Co.'s parent company, MCA, in December. The deal — struck amid charges that Lujan was "Japan bashing" — intensified scrutiny of the role played by private concessionaires in the national parks. Critics point out that some operators return only a fraction of their hefty profits to the government in franchise fees. The Curry Co. transaction has been called "the tip of the iceberg" that could begin the reform of the way private business is done in national parks. The Curry Co. will be bought by the nonprofit National Park Foundation for \$49.5 million — by all accounts a bargain. The foundation then will donate the concession to the National Park Service, which will aim for a contract with

the new concessionaire that provides more revenue to the taxpayers and the park, reports *The Washington Post*. Lujan's role in the deal gained him points with environmentalists, who contend the parks need more funding and better protection. At least some of them agreed with Lujan's statement that foreigners shouldn't "come in and take charge of our treasures."

Wolf delisting denied

Overtaking a petition from the Wyoming Farm Bureau, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service decided not to remove the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) from the Endangered Species list. The bureau, a staunch opponent of wolf reintroduction in Yellowstone, claims gray wolf populations are no longer a separate species because of interbreeding with coyotes and dogs. But Galen Buterbaugh, Fish and Wildlife's regional director, said a study of captured wolves' mitochondrial DNA showed that "no wolves in approximately the western half of North America contained any evidence of hybridization." Ken Hamilton, a farm bureau representative, said the group will have the denial reviewed by a geneticist, reports the *Casper-Star Tribune*.

Mining company spares Prescott... for now

Phelps Dodge Corp. has dropped controversial plans for a land exchange with the Forest Service to accommodate a copper mine near Prescott, Ariz. The company had considered invoking an 1872 Mining Law provision to receive full ownership of the 9,000 federal acres it sought without conducting an expensive Environmental Impact Study. Instead, to the relief of Prescott citizens, Phelps Dodge has decided to divert development priorities to a potential copper deposit adjacent to its southeast Arizona Morenci mine, already the largest one in the state. The newly discovered Coronado deposit increases the known, mineable ore reserves at Morenci by about 25 percent and could extend the life of that mine several years into the next century. Phelps Dodge has announced that the deposit will be mined by the open-pit method, although the company has yet to decide when. As for the shelved Prescott land swap, local opponent Bob Folkman told *The Arizona Republic* it's only a matter of time before Phelps Dodge resumes the project. "It certainly isn't over yet," he said, "so I'm not jumping up and down saying we won. At some point they'll be running out of reserves, and they'll come back to Prescott."

WESTERN ROUNDUP

New Mexico outraged over WIPP Interior land transfer

The Interior Department has removed the last major obstacle to opening the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in New Mexico. But three years of squabbles over how and when to begin shipping the first drums of nuclear waste have now escalated into an open war between the state and the federal government that could further delay WIPP's opening.

Interior's Bureau of Land Management transferred ownership of WIPP's 10,240-acre site southeast of Carlsbad to the Energy Department in late December. The transfer was required before nuclear wastes could be unloaded into WIPP's 2,150-foot-deep salt beds.

For the past three years Congress has failed to pass transfer legislation, and the Energy Department has had to cancel five opening dates. Now, with its jurisdiction settled, the department plans to begin operations in June or July.

The federal government's transfer, however, has expanded the long-standing environmental opposition to WIPP by galvanizing New Mexico's officials, congressmen and newspapers. The state's congressional delegation is now threatening to block the federal land transfer in Congress, and state Attorney General Tom Udall and environmentalists are considering legal action. Congress must act within 90 days of the

administrative transfer to prevent it.

The state's second largest newspaper, the *Albuquerque Tribune*, accused the Interior Department and the Department of Energy of trying to sneak WIPP's opening through while New Mexicans were diverted by the Persian Gulf war. The Energy Department denied the charge; department spokesman Fred Lash said the two agencies had been working on the land transfer for months.

New Mexico officials are alarmed by the administrative transfer because it ignores safety protections that would have been specified in a congressional bill to transfer the land. The administrative transfer also does not provide the hundreds of millions of dollars that all sides agree are needed to improve roads and build bypasses around major cities on the WIPP trucking routes through New Mexico.

The administrative transfer allows the Energy Department merely to certify that WIPP is a safe place to dump nuclear waste permanently. The bills that died in Congress would have given that power to the Environmental Protection Agency.

"This is a clear and present danger to the citizens of New Mexico and the nation as a whole," said Bill Richardson, a northern New Mexico congressman whose district includes Santa Fe, where hostility to WIPP has run rampant for

years. "DOE has broken faith with the New Mexico congressional delegation and the state government."

Interior officials say they pushed the administrative transfer only because they were tired of waiting for Congress to act. Ironically, Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan, a former New Mexico congressman, had opposed administrative land withdrawal during most of his tenure.

Prior to the Bush administration, the Interior Department opposed transferring the land administratively. Its officials in New Mexico said in court documents that a congressional land transfer was required by law.

Even in the Bush years, the BLM's New Mexico officials had warned their superiors in Washington, D.C., in an internal memo that an administrative transfer would pit the federal government against both New Mexico's congressional delegation and its governor.

"That memo was guidance from the New Mexico Bureau of Land Management," said Lujan spokesman Steve Goldstein. "This was a decision made by the Energy Secretary and the Interior Department. I don't know how much additional guidance can be provided to Manuel Lujan on this issue. He worked on it for 20 years in Congress."

Idaho's Gov. Cecil Andrus welcomed the administrative transfer as a

sign that WIPP could soon open to take the first few hundred of the several hundred thousand barrels of nuclear waste that have piled up since 1970 at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory near Idaho Falls. But Andrus said through a spokesman that he won't end his state's two-year-old ban on importing nuclear wastes for temporary storage in Idaho until WIPP actually opens.

Delays in opening WIPP have threatened to create a logjam of wastes at the now-closed Rocky Flats plutonium trigger factory in Colorado. But Gov. Roy Romer said through a spokesman that he does not want to get involved in the WIPP land issue and has no desire to force WIPP to open "before it is safe."

Congress failed to pass a WIPP bill because of two problems. One was the opposition from critics who want to use computer tests to prove WIPP is safe before putting any wastes into the ground. The tests would take five years to complete. The other was the desire by New Mexico congressmen to get the Energy Department to finish dealing with other issues, such as the transportation routes, before opening WIPP.

— Tony Davis

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

Fight to save Gunnison's gold-medal trout wins reprieve

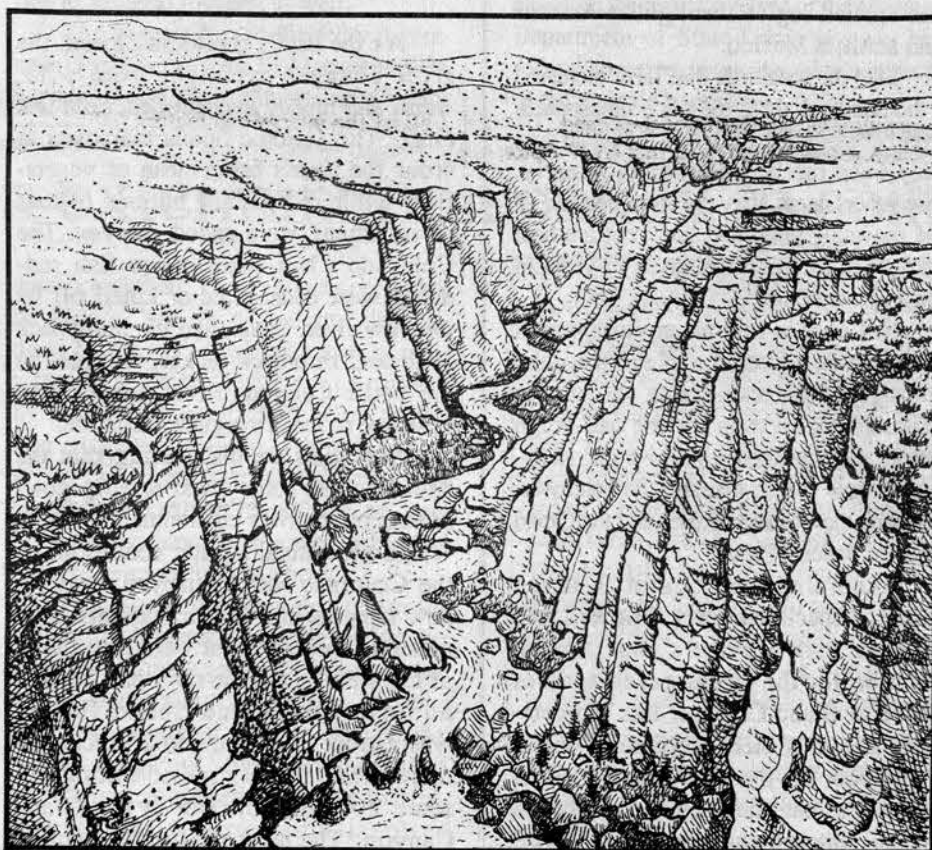
The Bureau of Reclamation has delayed giving the go-ahead to a controversial hydropower project in western Colorado in the face of persistent opposition, much of it from two fellow agencies of the Department of the Interior.

The proposed AB Lateral project would divert water from the Gunnison River and feed it through an existing irrigation tunnel to the neighboring Uncompahgre River. There, the Bureau recommends running a maximum of 950 cubic feet of water per second through a pair of turbines to generate 42 megawatts of power.

The project has long been opposed by lovers of the Gunnison River, which carves its way through the spectacular 2,000-foot gorge in the Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Monument. It then bisects a BLM wilderness study area in a popular boating and fishing run before its confluence with the Uncompahgre River downstream. The Gunnison is a lifeline for endangered otters, peregrine falcons and trout. The project would divert about 41 percent of its annual flow.

The Bureau was poised to issue a Record of Decision on the project last September after publishing a final Environmental Impact Statement. Then it ran into an obstacle: The National Park Service needed time to quantify federal reserved water rights that the Black Canyon National Monument was awarded nine years ago. The court-ordered rights would pre-date the project's water rights. The Park Service is now compiling research to quantify its water rights.

While the water-rights issue was key to the delay, it was only one of a slew of problems that other groups have had with the proposal. The Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management — which also are in the Department of the Interior — contended that the AB Lateral would jeopardize the wilderness character of the Gunnison River. Both agencies, which administer stretches of the Gunnison



downstream from the proposed project's diversion point, rejected all of the Bureau's proposed alternatives for building the project. Local Park Service and BLM officials pressed to have their conflicts aired by their respective Interior assistant secretaries in Washington, D.C.

Meanwhile, the Environmental Protection Agency said the project could violate the Clean Water Act and endanger wetlands along the Uncompahgre River. Several key members of Congress urged the project's delay, and local, state and national environmental groups continued to argue that the water scheme was pointless: It would drain one river and flood another to produce surplus hydropower.

Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Dennis Underwood said the delay will "provide an opportunity to consider additional information on the Gunnison River and allow a decision that balances environ-

mental and economic resource needs."

While the delay has spurred some optimism among project opponents, it is decidedly guarded optimism. Terri Martin of the watchdog National Parks and Conservation Association said the postponement is the minimum the Bureau could have done.

"It's not just an environmentalist-developer controversy," she said. "If [the Bureau] won't listen to their sister agencies about environmental concerns, who will they listen to?"

The AB Lateral project — scaled down from an earlier version — would be funded, built and operated by a New York subsidiary of a French company, the Sithe/Energies Group.

The proposal has been a contentious one in this rural region of Colorado, where agriculture has long been a pillar of the economy but where many consider tourism the area's rising star. Proponents say the

project would generate clean, renewable energy and aid local farmers by using energy revenues to help pay for their existing irrigation system, which was built by the Bureau of Reclamation.

Opponents counter that protection of the Gunnison River, a candidate for wild-and-scenic designation, far outweighs the project's advantages.

One year of government miscalculation in the operation of upstream dams and two years of drought have caused low flows on the Gunnison, producing levels that could become permanent with the advent of the AB Lateral project.

"Nature's given us a preview," said Hank Hotze, who has run a rafting and fishing business on the Gunnison for a decade. Hotze says the low flows make for scrapey rafting, but, more importantly, endanger the river's gold-medal trout fishery. The trout need higher levels both to keep the water cool and to flush away sediment that enters the river in flash floods from side canyons.

"The sediment basically chokes everything," Hotze said, adding that about 20 miles of trout habitat have been lost since 1987.

— Lisa Jones, staff writer

BARBS

Now they're even taking the shirts off our backs.

According to The Associated Press, big-city customers are paying big bucks for used clothes broken in by real Western cowboys. Customers at a New York City clothing store are paying \$65 for "Montana Broke" jeans. These and other used cowboy clothes are certified to have been worn by a Montana bronc rider, roper, rancher or farm hand. The store owner tries to find pants from steer wrestlers, since most New Yorkers are a bit larger than the typical size 30-slim cowboy.

HOTLINE

Public asks change in Glen Canyon operation

Glen Canyon Dam cannot operate at the expense of downstream resources and interests: This is the overwhelming message delivered in almost 17,000 public comments on the Glen Canyon Dam Environmental Impact Statement. The EIS "scoping report" summarizes the concerns and suggestions received last year by the Bureau of Reclamation and other agencies preparing the EIS. At least 15,000 of the submissions expressed concern over the downstream impacts of fluctuating flow releases, and support for an alternative dam-management plan that would protect beaches, riparian habitat, wildlife, and opportunities to raft, hike and fish. Many suggested changing the operation of the power plant from peak power to constant flow production and setting higher minimum and lower maximum flows to mitigate downstream damage. Other suggested alternatives include seasonally adjusted flows, blending water from different reservoir levels to increase the river temperature for endangered fish, and removing the dam altogether.



Erika Zavaleja

The eagles have landed — elsewhere

Because of human error in an attempt to enhance the salmon population of Glacier National Park, eagles are stopping elsewhere in their migratory route, and the park is losing thousands of tourists' dollars. Riley McClelland, a park research biologist, told the *Idaho Falls Post Register* that more than 46,000 people used to come and watch the eagles each fall, but last October and November only 1,000 tourists visited. The salmon run collapsed in 1986 after the mysis shrimp, which was introduced 20 years ago as an additional food source for the salmon, finally out-competed the salmon for the supply of plankton, the fish's primary food. As the salmon disappeared, so did the eagles; as the eagles disappeared, so did the tourists. It is still uncertain where the eagles are stopping, but the tourists are now going to Canyon Ferry Reservoir, just east of Helena, Mont., where the salmon population is booming after salmon stocked for fishermen escaped from the reservoir into the Missouri River below.

Cleaner coal

A patented coal-cleaning technology that produces a more efficient fuel capable of meeting the new Clean Air Act standards could bring another boom to Montana's coal industry. Western Energy Co. recently announced construction plans for a five-year, \$69 million coal-cleaning project near Colstrip, Mont., part of the Department of Energy's nationwide \$5 billion Clean Coal Technology Program. The demonstration plant, which will not begin operations until early 1992, will produce 300,000 tons of the upgraded coal annually. The new compressed coal, which is actually a synthetic, has less water, ash and sulfur than ordinary coal and produces 34 percent more heat per pound. At \$18 to \$20 per ton, the synthetic coal will be twice as expensive. If successful, the technology might mean development of low-rank coal deposits in Montana, North Dakota, Wyoming and Alaska.

Glen Canyon Dam's unexpected bonanza

Longtime Colorado River guide Theresa Yates sensed something strange when she noticed five bald eagles at the mouth of Nankoweap Creek in the Grand Canyon. She was on a late winter river trip in 1987.

It was unusual for the eagles to be there; they're not native to the canyon. But torn pieces of dead trout strewn along the banks of the little creek offered a clue to their presence.

Yates told eagle expert Brian Brown of her find. At first he noticed six to 10 eagles at Nankoweap. In 1988, he documented 18 birds. Last February, in the first year of a federally sponsored study, he looked on, stunned, as 26 of the huge, white-headed raptors engaged in a feeding frenzy on the rainbow trout that use the tributary to spawn. The study resumed in late January.

"This is the biggest thing happening in the whole Southwest with respect to migrating and wintering eagles," Brown says. "It's just off the scale of amazement."

What's happening here is indeed incongruous. The remote and hard-to-reach Nankoweap district of Grand Canyon is best known to river runners for its tricky rapid, towering rocky cliffs and small, thousand-year-old Anasazi Indian ruin built high into the canyon's sheer red sandstone wall. Suddenly arriving on this already dramatic scene are dozens of bald eagles, with perhaps as many as 100 passing through during the winter. This means that approximately half of the bald eagles wintering in the state are coming here, says Brown, who has studied eagles throughout Arizona and northern Mexico.

Like the songbirds that have increased a thousandfold along the once inhospitable river corridor, eagles are now using an area they once rarely frequented. Clearly, researchers agree, they are here because of the spawning trout, and the trout are here because of the much-maligned 27-year-old Glen Canyon Dam.

Not only is this an environmental irony, but the appearance of this particular endangered species heralds yet another philosophical question for the half-dozen federal and state agencies now trying to figure out how best to manage the controversial dam, the Colorado River and the Grand Canyon National Park.

According to Grand Canyon resource specialist Jerry Mitchell, the National Park Service's first concern must be for the endangered species native to Grand Canyon, like the peregrine falcon. If there were some operational plan for the dam that benefited bald eagles but damaged the rest of the system, Mitchell said, the Park Service would probably have to decide in favor of native species over eagles.



Tom Brownold

A young adult bald eagle and a raven at Nankoweap Creek

"I don't think that's going to occur," he added. "I think what's good for bald eagles will be good for the rest of the system, too."

Brown's study of the eagles is just one of about 40 research projects designed to determine what effects the dam's current operation is having on the Grand Canyon ecosystem.

Since the dam's completion in 1963, environmentalists have decried the loss of Glen Canyon, now sunk in a watery grave beneath Lake Powell in northern Arizona. They've also fiercely criticized the dam's impacts on the Colorado River downstream.

Warm and muddy to cold and clear

As the dam's penstocks closed, the river changed overnight from wild, warm and muddy to controlled, cold and clear. The periodic floods that used to scour the river's banks clean of vegetation, while redepositing billions of tons of sediment, were ended forever. The Colorado's half-dozen native fish suddenly were endangered or killed off by the new river. Some, like the humpback chub and razorback sucker, retreated to the Little Colorado River, where they continue to live a marginal existence.

Scientists are discovering that the dam has had some unexpectedly good effects on the river environment as well. While the natural aquatic conditions of the Colorado were destroyed, entirely new riparian and aquatic habitats were created. Rainbow trout were introduced at Lees Ferry, and the river has become an unsurpassed blue-ribbon fishery where trout easily grow to 20 inches or more. The rainbows spread throughout some 200 miles of river in the Grand Canyon. The most productive section remains the 76 miles of clean water between the dam and the still-wild Little

Colorado, and the best of this is at Nankoweap Creek.

Besides the river itself, the five-foot-wide, barely-a-foot-deep creek is the only tributary trout can reproduce in for more than 100 miles. In recent years, the spawn has become so intense that fish often seem as crowded in the water as words on a printed page.

"Some of these fish are so big and the creek is so shallow that they're not even totally submerged," says fish biologist Bill Leibfried. "It looks like a pool of fish with fins sticking out the top."

Overhead, bald eagles returning north between November and March soar on the thermal updrafts rising from the cliffs as they have done for countless generations. Sometime in the past 10 years, says Brown, a few of them discovered what has now become their most important stop along this ancient migratory flyway.

"It's like this incredible coincidence of geography and ecology that put the trout spawn right there," he says. "Even if they weren't aware of Nankoweap, as they're migrating north they would automatically bump into it — see the other eagles there, see the fish, or both."

Brown, Leibfried and other researchers spent 45 days last year sitting motionless in a blind watching the birds a half-mile away through telescopes. Last Feb. 27, more eagles than they'd ever seen at once descended into the creek together to feed.

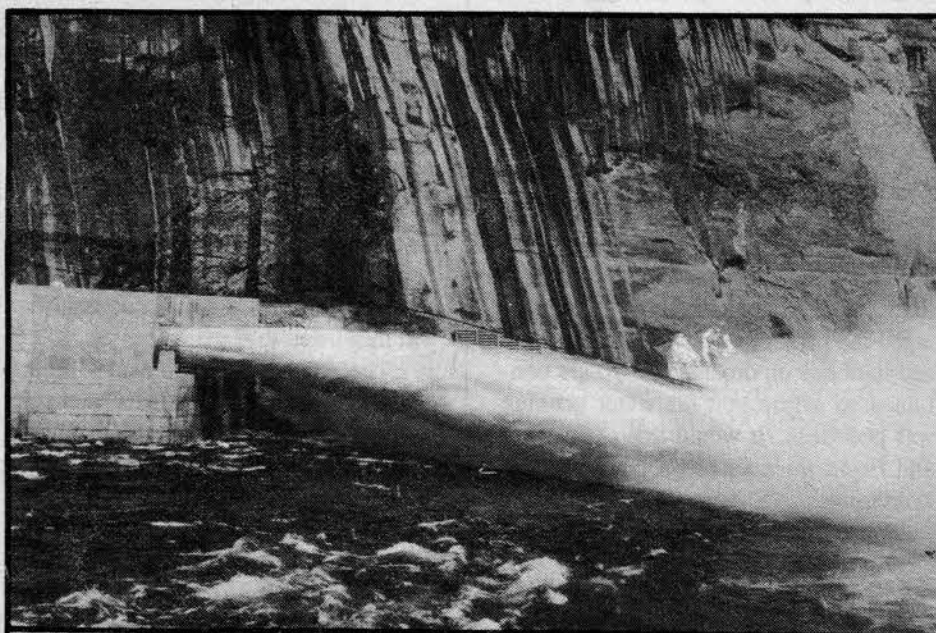
"It's like something you'd see on *Wild Kingdom*," Brown said. "Twenty-six eagles for a couple of hours, and there's blood and guts and dead fish all over the place." The birds would flop down along the creek like big turkeys, walk into the water and totter out with a fish in each talon, he said. "Sometimes birds can just barely fly away."

After a week of eating six or seven trout a day, the eagles are primed for their return north when the migratory urge pulls them away from this easy food supply. In the long run, Brown believes, this will benefit the entire Western bald eagle population. He suggests that as more eagles discover Nankoweap and spend seasonal time there, they'll become stronger, healthier, and longer-lived and will pass these traits on in their genes.

"That's the take-home message for the Park Service," he adds. "It's not just an interesting thing that's happening because of the dam. We should manage the river carefully and take care of the trout spawn even though it is all man-made. It really benefits things."

— George Hardeen

George Hardeen is a free-lance writer in Tuba City, Arizona.



Glen Canyon Dam, Arizona

Patricia Guthrie

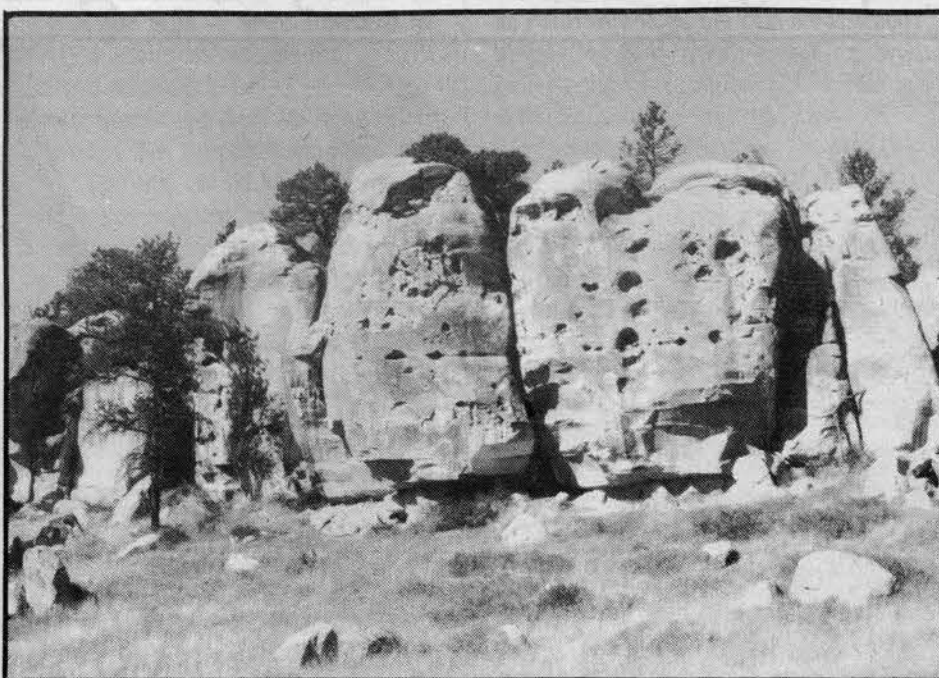
BLM coal swap called 'a gross inequity' and a water threat

A proposal to swap federal coal rights for private recreational lands in Montana has won the support of many citizens in the job-hungry community of Roundup. But nearby ranchers and conservationists say the proposal ignores serious environmental impacts and might end up costing taxpayers millions.

The Meridian Minerals Co.'s mine and proposed land swap lie in the Bull Mountains of southeastern Montana. Meridian, a subsidiary of Burlington Resources, the largest coal company in the world, wants to acquire the mineral rights to 3,674 acres owned by the Bureau of Land Management in exchange for 9,873 acres of prime Montana recreational lands, including stretches along the Big Hole and Madison rivers. Meridian would retain the oil and gas rights to the recreational lands.

Meridian officials and the BLM say the land swap is needed because the checkerboard ownership pattern in the Bull Mountains is preventing development of the area's coal reserves. Meridian says its proposed 3-million-ton-per-year mine could create more than 200 jobs and put around \$5 million in the wallets of local residents. Proponent Cal Cumin, Yellowstone County's economic development coordinator, says the new jobs and stronger tax base are much needed.

But Pete Tulley, president of the Bull Mountains Land Owner Association, says the exchange is just another federal giveaway. "The BLM has valued the coal at 1.7 cents per ton, while coal is actually selling for approximately \$1.60 a ton in the region," he says. "That makes the exchange a gross inequity." He says it violates the 1976 Federal Land Policy and Management Act, which requires that all land exchanges be equitable.



A sandstone formation in Montana's Bull Mountains

Ted Bailey

The BLM study says the Bull Mountains coal "would not become economically feasible for development" for another 20 to 40 years. This would significantly add to the devaluation of the coal in the land swap. Some observers therefore argue that Meridian's real objective is to sell the consolidated subsurface rights at a huge profit.

Others argue that the BLM should lease the coal. W.E. Deegans, the National Wildlife Federation's surface mining coordinator, says the leasing option allows the government not only to retain ownership of the land, but to retain a potential income of \$76.6 million in mineral royalties as well.

The biggest loss to the federal treasury would occur if the BLM approves the exchange and then prohibits mining for environmental reasons. In a 1989 ruling, a

federal court in Wyoming said that environmental restrictions on mining development constitute a taking that must be compensated with monetary damages if the owner so desires. The case, *Whitney Benefits vs. the United States*, is now being appealed by the BLM. If the ruling is upheld it would require the Interior Department or Montana to buy back the coal rights at market prices that would produce a major net loss.

Although the BLM's final Environmental Impact Statement on the exchange says that "impacts would be minimal on both surface and ground water," the director of the upcoming EIS on the mine itself disagrees. Bonnie Lovelace of the Montana Department of State Lands says she has serious concerns about the mine's impacts on the region's hydrology.

The mine will bore through the Dunn

Mountain clinker formations that help recharge the Bull Mountains' springs and intermittent streams. Although Meridian has promised to replace any damaged water supplies, rancher Jeanne Charter fears the company "might ruin something they can't afford to fix."

Charter says a new mining method to be used by Meridian should alarm all the area's residents, not just those with land above the proposed coal exchange. "There is a very real potential to ruin the water resource for the whole area," she says. Meridian will construct a long-wall mine (basically a huge underground strip mine) rather than a room-and-pillar mine that supports the land above it. This method not often used in the West, will cause sinkhole troughs and other ground fractures. Both lead to partial or total dewatering.

Approving the exchange before the EIS on the mine is completed would amount to an "incredible sort of double jeopardy," Charter says. If approved, the exchange will cause either a loss of millions of dollars or a loss of precious water resources. In a letter to the BLM's district manager, the Northern Plains Resource Council, a Billings-based conservation group, called for a more comprehensive assessment of the mine before the exchange is approved "in order to protect the public from expensive monetary damage awards."

The BLM was to have decided on the exchange by mid-February; the second EIS, which addresses the mine's effects, will be completed in the fall. For information contact Bonnie Lovelace at the Montana Department of State Lands, Capitol Station, Helena, MT 59620; 406/444-2074.

— John Horning, HCN intern

Montana's bison extermination policy to continue

A national animal-rights group failed to convince a federal judge that the state of Montana should stop killing free-roaming Yellowstone National Park bison.

In asking for an injunction against the state's "damage-hunt" policy, the Fund for Animals argued before U.S. District Judge Charles Lovell that a recent interim agreement between the state and federal agencies violates provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act.

Wayne Pacelle, national director for the Fund for Animals, said his group had filed an appeal of Lovell's Jan. 15 decision with the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Montana Legislature passed a law in 1985 that allowed hunters to kill bison straying beyond the park's boundaries. The hunt was authorized at the request of the Department of Livestock because bison are believed to carry brucellosis, one strain of which (*brucella aborta*) can cause domestic cows to abort their first calf. Montana was certified brucellosis-free in 1983 after years of culling and vaccinating herds.

Fund for Animals expert witnesses testified that the State of Montana is on shaky scientific ground in its extermination policy. The existing cooperative agreement between the state and the National Park Service "is clearly a complete abandonment of previous NPS policy and amounts to the relegation of Yellowstone National Park to a status scarcely better than that of an outdoor zoo," said Dirk Van Buren, assistant professor of wildlife biology at the University of California at Davis.

Van Buren testified that the Yellowstone herd is the only bison herd in the United States that is descended from a

wild population. The Yellowstone bison, he added, "are the only living descendants of the purported 'mountain bison,' a possibly distinct subspecies believed by many to have existed prior to the near-extinction of bison in the last century. By the interim management plan proposed, the northern bison herd of Yellowstone National Park is placed at serious risk of extinction as a herd."

Van Buren suggested that the problem could be handled in the spring by "innovative management" such as postponing cattle range movements, hastening bison migration, or both. He said the state and the Park Service "have adopted a primitive, outdated approach to pest control that, to be successful, involves the annual killing of bison forever."

During the winter of 1988-89, Montana hunters were issued licenses to kill 569 Yellowstone bison. The carnage proved to be a public-relations nightmare for a state that spends millions touting its natural, unspoiled beauty to potential tourists. In 1990, under an interim plan worked out between the state wildlife department and National Park Service officials at Yellowstone, park rangers and state game wardens were to shoot some bison, other bison would be shot by hunters, and bison calves would be captured alive, neutered and sold for eventual slaughter.

U.S. Rep. Ron Marlenee, R-Mont., blasted the animal-rights people as "Eastern tinhorn snakeoil salesmen" with no constituency, save perhaps "cute little old ladies in tennis shoes they bilk for money." He added, "We eat beef in the state of Montana. It's unlikely these people do."

"Extremists like Marlenee help our

Rancher calls for a managed 'natural state'

"Under our laws, Montana is brucellosis-free. If it were not, we in Montana would suffer tremendously," says Pete Story, who ranches in the upper Yellowstone valley, north of Yellowstone's Gardiner entrance. Story's great-grandfather brought the first Texas cattle into the Montana gold camps in the 1860s. Two winters ago, migrating bison came within 16 miles of his place. Story says he worries that bison and other animals in Yellowstone

are overpopulating and overgrazing the park's ranges and forage base and that park managers are doing nothing to control it — all in the name of natural management.

"The National Park Service is causing damage by letting nature take its course," he says. "Only through management by man can the park be kept in a natural state. Nature is never in balance, really."

— P.D.

cause by galvanizing support and we're delighted to have him there," Pacelle responded.

The court case has fired up debate. Jim Peterson, executive vice president of the Montana Stockgrowers Association, said in a prepared statement, "Under state regulation, if infected with brucellosis, domestic cattle will be quarantined and slaughtered.... No one likes the thought of killing buffalo, but ... when disease threatens, responsible people must act responsibly."

But according to Jay Kirkpatrick, an associate professor of biology at Eastern Montana College, the fear of Yellowstone bison's infecting cattle has no proven scientific basis. Kirkpatrick has a three-year National Science Foundation grant to study the reproduction of Yellowstone bison.

Kirkpatrick says the strain detected in Yellowstone bison has never been identified, and that the state and the National Park Service have only taken blood samples, not tissue samples, from killed bison.

"They test that blood sample for antibodies, and that tells you whether the animal is positive or negative. It doesn't tell

you whether they have the disease. Is it a virulent strain?" Kirkpatrick asks. "Can it cause the disease? I have serious scientific questions, and nobody has answers for them. The data doesn't exist and no one is attempting to collect that data. They're making policy without data."

Bob Raney, a state representative from Livingston, has introduced a bill that calls for suspending bison hunting licenses until a joint state-federal study on the problem can be made. Any further hunting season on bison would have to be reinstated by the Legislature.

"My problem at this point," says Raney, "is that we're killing off members of the last wild American bison in the world without any real plan as to which ones should die or if there is an alternative to killing them. I know what we've done up to this point is not proper. Montana's image is being severely tarnished by this spectacle."

— Patrick Dawson

Patrick Dawson is a free-lance writer in Billings, Mont.

A Denver oil company invades a Wyoming artist's retreat

OWL CREEK, Wyo. — Six years ago, Linda Raynolds bought what she has named the Eagle Nest Ranch, at the far end of a treacherous dirt road on the flanks of the Absaroka Mountains. A sculptor and painter lured by the quiet solitude and beauty of the Owl Creek valley, she made her studio in one of the ranch's historic buildings — built by silent film star Tim McCoy.

"Wyoming was always where I wanted to be," Raynolds says, riding her Arabian horse past a Native American petroglyph near the ranch. "Wyoming was always it, as far as I was concerned."

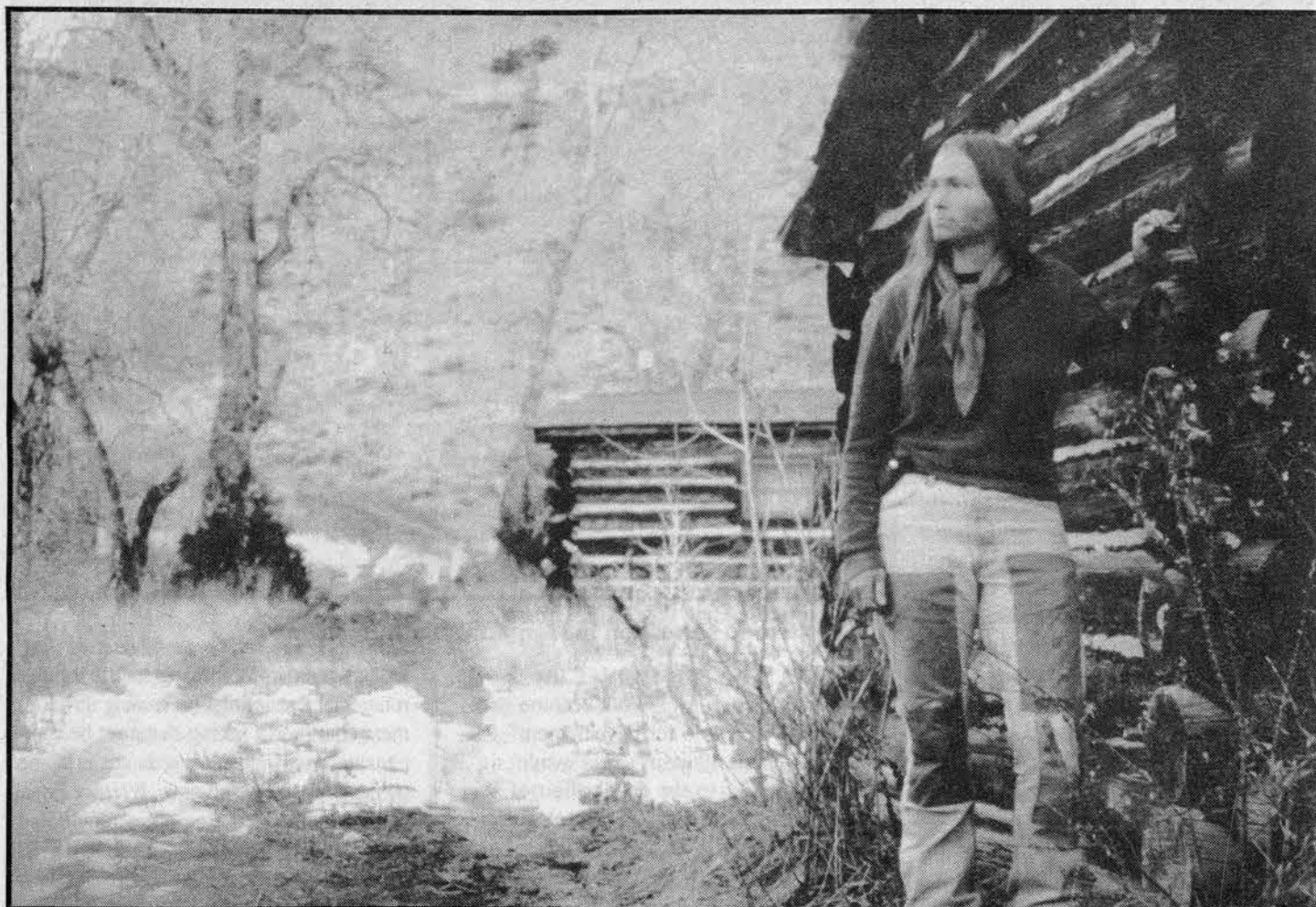
But late last summer her peace and quiet ended. That is when she received her first letter from a Denver-based oil company telling her of plans to quadruple the size of the road through her ranch, bulldozing several old cabins. Widening the road, the firm said, would make room for tractor-trailer rigs to haul drilling equipment to a well site on federal land several miles up the creek.

That move, Raynolds soon learned, had put her face to face with a largely unknown Wyoming statute that gives private firms the right to condemn and take over private property — a right normally granted only to governments. Drawn up less than two decades after Wyoming became a state to allow construction of dams and canals, the law now seems an archaic contradiction of Western land traditions.

But it is rooted in even deeper, overriding traditions of natural-resource profiteering, backed even by the Wyoming Constitution. Article 32 bars seizure of private property for private use, except for "agriculture, mining, milling, domestic or sanitary purposes."

That was upheld by the Wyoming Supreme Court in 1976 as a way to "facilitate development of this state's resources."

Seven days after Raynolds got the letter and was told by a lawyer not to worry since only the government can condemn land, the Denver oil company, BWAB Inc., sued to seize two strips of her property so it could expand the road. BWAB, which refused requests for interviews with its officials, offered Raynolds less than \$500 in exchange. And after spending more than \$5,000 in legal fees



Michael Milstein

Artist Linda Raynolds at the Eagle Nest Ranch

to contest the action, she concedes that "it's really a losing battle."

BWAB's case is bolstered by an obscure Wyoming law first put on the state's books in 1907 and revised 20 times since then. In an effort first to encourage water development and later mining and oil and gas exploration, the state Legislature has given private companies the rare authority to condemn personal property in the state for access to commodity interests.

Similar statutes exist in many other Western states [see story below]. That law gives people and companies the power to take over private land for a laundry list of purposes including road building to mines, farms and logging sites — all considered more important for the welfare of the public than preserving private property.

Seldom used and little known outside the oil and mining industries now, Wyoming statute 1-26-815 allows "any

person, association, company or corporation" to "appropriate by condemnation a way of necessity over, across or on so much of the lands or real property of others as is necessary."

The statute stands today in sharp contrast to most popular Western land customs, which hold private property among citizens' most sacred, inviolable possessions.

"It does sort of go against the code of the West," said Worland lawyer John P. Worrall, who is representing Raynolds. "But you've got to recognize the West was a lot different 50 years ago."

When House Bill 62 passed the Wyoming Legislature in 1907 to become the ancestor of today's statute, there were far fewer people, and there was far less privately owned land in the state than there is now. Lawmakers apparently hoped to encourage economic activity by letting companies take over any lands

they needed.

Today's law also provides for more modest "ways of necessity," or access to land otherwise inaccessible. For instance, if the only way a family could reach its home were through another landowner's field and the landowner refused access, the family could seek to condemn a road through that field.

Both the constitution and statutes in Montana and Wyoming require firms or people seeking property by condemnation to first negotiate in "good faith" to reach an equitable settlement. If that does not work, they can then ask a court for a condemnation order.

"It's an avenue of last resort," said Rick Robitaille, director of the Petroleum Association of Wyoming. "Nobody wants to go to court. But it's not a utopian society. People don't always agree."

If landowners facing condemnation do not accept whatever compensation they are offered, they must then hire a lawyer to defend them, which is what Raynolds did. The court must then appoint an assessor to determine fair compensation for the seized property; if both parties fail to accept that amount, a jury decides on compensation.

Raynolds contends she is being railroaded by BWAB's extensive legal resources since she turned down the company's offer of \$3 for each rod — 16.5 feet — of road through her property. That amounts to about \$480, she said, and the firm has not offered anything more.

"I'm not trying to keep them from looking for oil," Raynolds says, pointing out yellow flags on trees BWAB wants to cut down to make space for large trucks. "I'm just trying to preserve what's special about my place. We probably wouldn't even be in a lawsuit if BWAB had done this rationally. Instead, they just threatened everybody who questioned what they are doing."

In a written response to written questions submitted to BWAB in August, Drilling and Production Manager John R. Keller wrote that three landowners, including Raynolds, "for various business and personal reasons, refused us access and refused to negoti-

Old laws allow 'private' condemnations throughout West

The laws of Wyoming and Montana that authorize a "private entity" to condemn private land are not unique in the West. A survey of 11 other Western states, from the Dakotas to Nevada and New Mexico to the Pacific Northwest, shows that all these states allow similar condemnation action.

Not all statutes specifically mention oil and gas. In many instances pertinent laws date to the earliest part of a state's history — 1897 in the case of Washington — before oil and gas development was a concern. Article 32 of the Wyoming constitution refers to "agriculture, mining, milling, domestic or sanitary purposes."

Laws in Utah allow condemnation action for, among other purposes, development of oil and gas for the "public use." In Idaho the reference is to oil drilling. Arizona, New Mexico and Nebraska permit condemnation of private property for oil and gas pipeline rights of way.

Some statutes are extremely general — and generous. In Oregon, for example, a "private condemner" has the power to exercise the right of eminent domain with the "disputable presumption" that the property in question is necessary for its specified purpose, and that the proposed use is compatible with the "greatest public good and the least private injury."

Other types of resource development are covered under various legal authorizations: toll and logging roads, mines, mills and reduction works (in Washington); mines and other

industrial enterprises, mine tailings, timber access (Arizona); logging timber, working mines, by-roads (Idaho). In South Dakota a company can appropriate water rights for the production and development of certain resources "for the public good."

In many instances, statutes can be read to give condemnation power to oil and gas companies. The Wyoming Supreme Court ruled in 1976 that such action remains a way to "facilitate development of this state's resources."

Of the states surveyed, only North Dakota specifically prohibits private condemnation action other than by public utilities or irrigation districts. Typical takings throughout the country are for electric lines, railroads, telephone services and various water developments, such as ditches, canals and reservoirs.

Sometimes a corporation will use its condemnation power only to gain an easement or right of way across private land. Individuals may have this right, too, usually where a by-road or "way of necessity" is required for access to their property. In other cases a company may obtain a fee simple title to the land.

A period of "good faith" negotiation between the involved parties normally is called for, similar to what is required when a state pursues its eminent domain power.

— Michael Bencic, HCN intern

ate with us at all or on any reasonable basis.

"After reviewing all alternative accesses suggested by these parties and finding there were no practical alternatives, we had no choice except to take legal action to gain access to our well site," Keller wrote. "We have since been able to settle with all but one landowner without having to get a condemnation order. ... Unfortunately, settlement has not been possible in one case; a condemnation order will probably have to be sought in that case."

BLM managers still have not made a final decision on whether to grant BWAB unprecedented exceptions to four special stipulations the firm needs before it can drill. Those stipulations —

including one barring any surface occupancy in the area — were attached to BWAB's lease to protect the area's wildlife and scenic values.

In response to a draft environmental assessment that proposed granting the four exceptions, the BLM was flooded by public comments from residents, conservation groups and even the Wyoming Game and Fish Department opposing the well. The agency is still waiting for a report on the area's cultural and historic resources, including Native American sites and Reynolds' ranch.

Built in the 1920s, the ranch was first owned by Sunday matinee idol Tim McCoy, who starred in such silent Western classics as *The Thundering Herd*. That, said Western Wyoming College

history professor Dudley Gardner, and its status as one of the first homesteaded properties in central Wyoming, will probably make it eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

But under Wyoming 1-26-815, District Court Judge Gary P. Hartman recently authorized BWAB's use of Reynolds' land subject to several restrictions, including that the firm not damage any of her historic ranch buildings. That means the company will have to blade a new section of 40-foot-wide road through the heart of the ranch, now a grassy expanse encircled by cabins.

And an assessor will probably be out in the spring, when the muddy road to Eagle Nest is more easily passable. In the meantime, Reynolds has filed an

appeal of BWAB's drilling plan with the federal Interior Board of Land Appeals, hoping the last-ditch effort will help stall the inevitable truck traffic through her sanctuary.

"It just doesn't seem fair that this can happen to anyone," she says. "Wyoming is special because it's open and free and wild and people can do their own thing. That's why I'm here. And despite everybody's talk about that freedom, there's nothing to protect me from having it all taken away."

—Michael Milstein

Michael Milstein reports for the *Billings Gazette* from Cody, Wyoming.

Colorado considers wild elk sales to ranches

The state of Colorado would be able to sell some of its wild elk to private wildlife ranchers if two proposals under consideration are approved by the Legislature.

Proponents say the plans would remove "surplus" elk from the range and bolster the growing wildlife ranching industry. But critics argue that the sale of a public resource is not an acceptable way to manage it, and wildlife officials say hunting remains a popular and effective way to control the size of the state's elk herds.

"This is a major change of policy in this state, to be able to manage your game through sale," said state Rep. Guillermo DeHerrera, D-Denver, whose proposal would allow the state to sell trapped, live elk to wildlife ranchers. He said buyers of the elk would have to be Colorado residents and holders of game park licenses, which allow them to raise wildlife commercially.

"The elk itself could never be taken out of state, but the progeny is yours to do whatever," DeHerrera said.

The wildlife ranching industry would benefit from the ability to buy native elk from the wild, he said. "We have a need in agriculture for diversity, and wildlife is a very good source of an alternative agricultural industry."

DeHerrera said a recent decision in Colorado to ban red deer, a biological relative of the elk that is popular on game farms in New Zealand and other countries, deprived wildlife ranchers of a promising species. The sale of wild elk to ranchers would help replace red deer in a growing industry, he said.

State officials banned red deer because they feared the animals — which are smaller than North American elk — would escape from game farms and interbreed with native elk, creating a smaller hybrid species in the wild.

DeHerrera said the number of elk

trapped from the wild would depend on animal populations in management units established by the Colorado Division of Wildlife. If the elk population exceeds the target population in a certain area, officials could trap the "excess" elk and sell them, he said.

Another proposal to sell elk is being developed by a group of cattle ranchers in the Gunnison area. Rancher Ken Spann said the plan is aimed at reducing the number of elk in areas where animals are damaging public and private rangeland.

Around Gunnison, he said, the elk population has grown so large in the past decade that the animals are forcing deer out of the area through food competition. "We've had some terrific problems with the elk population being beyond the target [population] and beyond the habitat," Spann said.

He said allowing the Division of Wildlife to trap excess elk and sell them to private individuals or other states would give authorities another tool to control the population. He compared game management to a livestock operation in which ranchers sell cattle when the range won't support them.

"We're asking that the Division be given the tools that we have as livestock managers," Spann said. "They're not getting it done by hunting. They've tried."

Spann said elk could be trapped and sold only as a last resort to reduce a herd. Money from the sales would be earmarked to improve habitat in areas from which elk are taken.

Neither DeHerrera's nor Spann's proposal has been introduced yet in the Colorado Legislature.

The Division of Wildlife opposes the sale of wildlife to private interests, said spokesman Todd Malmbsbury. He disputed claims that hunting is an inef-

fective way of reducing the elk population. The number of elk in Colorado was estimated at a near-record 189,000 animals at the end of the 1989 hunt, and "hunter success" also is high. An estimated 41,000 elk were taken during the 1990 season.

Malmbsbury said that as the number of elk in Colorado has risen in recent years, the Division of Wildlife has responded to problems such as Spann's.

"You can't take care of it in one year," he said. "We are solving the problem in Colorado because we're issuing additional [hunting] licenses and we're having record harvests."

The Colorado Wildlife Federation, a lobbying group, also opposes the sale of public wildlife. Executive Director Kelly Drake said, "The wildlife in Colorado are owned by the people; they're held in public trust. To privatize that public resource is in direct violation of that public-trust doctrine."

Drake and Malmbsbury said the Division of Wildlife's new Habitat Partnership Program is a constructive attempt to involve landowners in wildlife management decisions. In two regions of the state — the North Fork of the Gunnison River valley and Middle Park — wildlife officials sit down with landowners to decide how to manage game herds in the area. The program, which began last year, can address conflicts between wildlife and agriculture without resorting to drastic solutions such as selling elk, Malmbsbury said.

"Elk are a natural resource that belongs to the public," he said. "There are alternatives to selling the state's wildlife to the highest bidder."

—Bob Kretschman

The writer is *The Greeley (Colo.) Tribune's* legislative reporter.

HOTLINE

Bigbourn plans to reduce cuts

Wyoming's Bigbourn National Forest may dramatically reduce its timber cut in a move that could threaten the survival of Sheridan-based Wyoming Sawmills. The forest plan adopted in 1985 calls for a 10-year average annual cut of 14.9 million board feet, but Bigbourn rangers since 1987 have found it increasingly difficult to locate that much timber. Preliminary analysis indicates that Bigbourn can support no more than 2 million to 3 million board feet of cuts annually. Wyoming Sawmills communications director Susie Ponce said that such a reduction "will have a grave effect on our operation" and held out hope for a compromise. But according to Bigbourn public affairs officer Mary Randolph, the forest intends to make a significant amendment to its plan to take effect in 1993. Until then, Bigbourn will allow cuts of 6 to 7 million board feet in 1991 and 1992. Public comments will be accepted through February and can be sent to Mary Randolph, Bigbourn National Forest, 1969 S. Sheridan Ave., Sheridan, WY 82801.

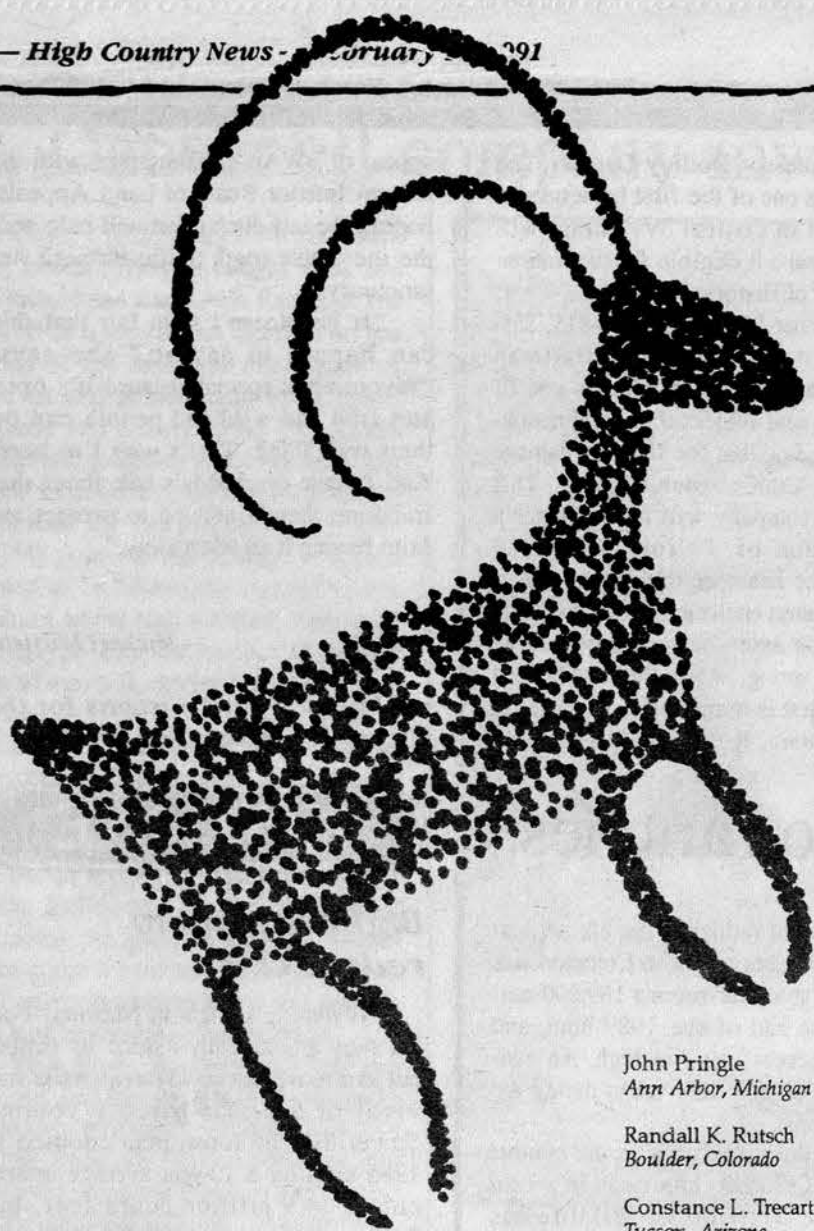
Bungling BIA faces scrutiny

The Bureau of Indian Affairs' inability to account for \$95 million, or about 10 percent of what it spent last year, has prompted the Department of the Interior to tighten controls on the ailing agency. The joint Interior Department-Office of Management and Budget investigation that reported the missing funds found "severe and wide-ranging problems" at the BIA's financial headquarters in Albuquerque. Some 12,000 individuals, many not even BIA employees, had access to the agency's financial records and had made half a million adjustments to them in a single year. "There's no suitable accounting oversight, no rational financial management system," one OMB official told *The Washington Post*. "The current system is like an ATM [cash machine] for BIA employees." New controls on the agency will include the establishment of an Interior Department team to control future adjustments to the BIA's finances. An overhaul of the financial system itself, to be completed by October, will set up additional control mechanisms and replace the Bureau's notorious computer system. Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan, convinced that the BIA is worth saving, is battling budget officials to get more money for the agency next year. However, years of massive mismanagement, fraud and incompetence within the Bureau have many convinced that it has outlived its usefulness.



David Sumner

Two Colorado plans would remove "surplus" elk from the range by selling them to private ranchers



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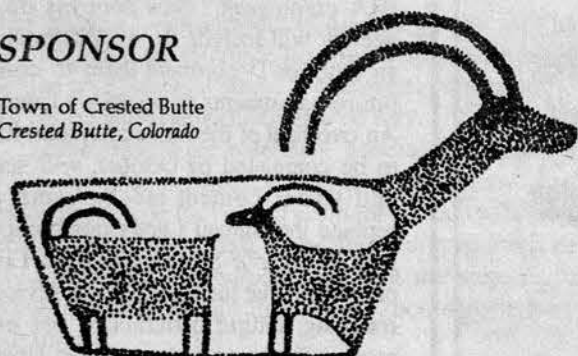
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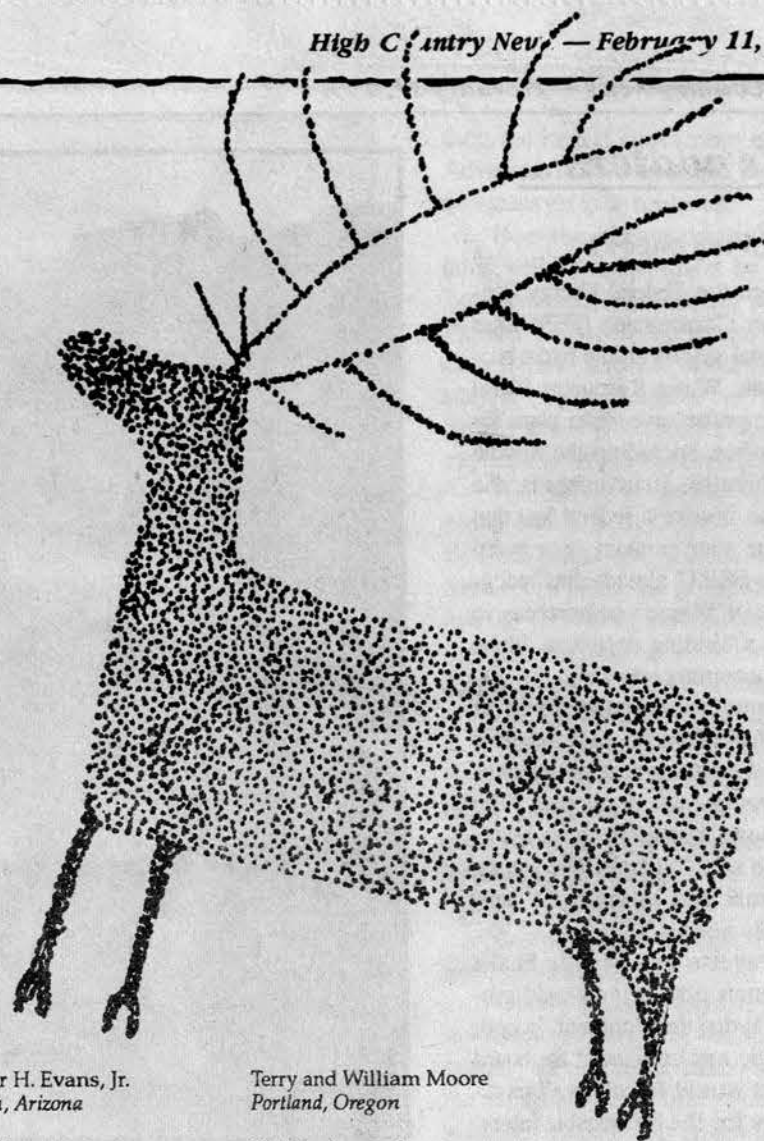
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Idaho's waters ...

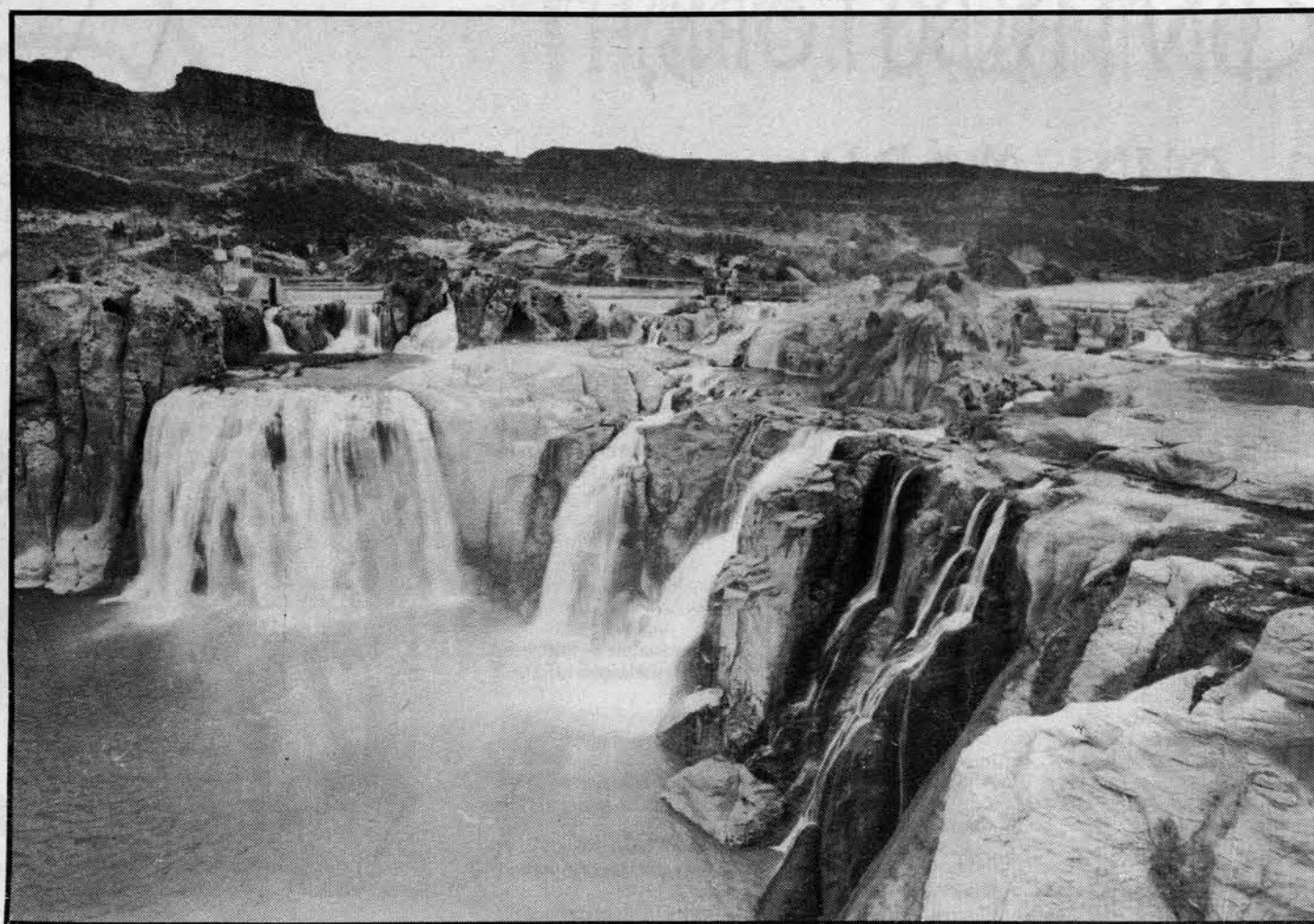
(Continued from page 1)

Although the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has the final say on all the hydro proposals, the state Water Resources Board is crafting comprehensive water plans for five river reaches, including the Middle Snake and Payette. If it succeeds, the board hopes to invoke a federal law that would give the state primacy over hydro development. FERC already has recognized the state of Maine's comprehensive water plan as a binding document. Idaho hopes to win acceptance as well.

Scott Montgomery, co-chairman of the Friends of the Payette, said the plans would allow Idaho to protect its resources from greedy out-of-state developers. "The state plan allows us to set these hydro sites aside," he said. "It's just like putting a river in a bank and saving it for later, when you really need it."

As the Payette and Middle Snake plans are written now, they would preclude further hydro development. In both cases the public has convinced the board that new dams would foreclose all recreational options for the foreseeable future.

Water Resources Board Chairman Gene Gray, a Payette, Idaho, insurance agent, farmer and ex-Marine, put it this way: "If we allow a hydro project to be built on the North Fork, it's irreversible. Our population is growing fast, and people are coming here for one reason: quality of life. If we want to maintain our priorities — clean air, clean water and good jobs — we're going to have to pro-



Tim Palmer

The Snake River plunges a sheer 212 feet over a huge horseshoe-shaped rim ...
tect some resources.

"Recreation on that river has increased something like 400 percent in the last seven years," Gray said. "You add aesthetics, swimming, boating, hunting and camping, and you project that forward 200 years, does that outweigh a North Fork project? The balancing act

on this river doesn't work with more hydropower, at least not right now."

Much is at stake on the Payette, a world-class whitewater river. The North Fork project could impinge on kayaking, fishing, aesthetics and irrigation. It also could flood High Valley, a secluded haven for about 140 part-time residents.

Bob McDougall, an expert kayaker who works as a clothing representative for Patagonia, said he moved to Garden Valley, Idaho, just to live next to the roaring river. "I'd call this area the Yosemite of paddling," he said. "And the North Fork is El Capitan. I've paddled in Russia, Peru, Mexico, Nepal — all over the globe — and the North Fork is one of the whitewater wonders of the world."

On the Snake, the dams could impinge on sturgeon habitat, whitewater recreation and scenery. With 28 dams already operating on the river, residents say the last remaining free-flowing sections should not be surrendered to development.

"The Snake River is overworked and it's tired," said Will Reid, fisheries program coordinator for the Idaho Fish and Game Department. "If [developers] continue to build projects on the Snake River, it will be a dead river for all practical purposes."

A major fish kill last summer in which 28 white sturgeon died in Idaho Power's Brownless Reservoir, suggests that the river already may be dying. The Milner irrigation dam on the Snake upstream from Twin

Falls diverts its entire flow into canals to the north and south. A few miles downstream, fish waste, agricultural pollutants and sediments pour into the river to create thick algae blooms on the shallow Snake.

Reid said the white sturgeon, a state species of special concern, could be wiped out in the Middle Snake if two projects — Wiley and Dike — are approved. Both would be high dams that could ruin spawning habitat for the six-foot-long fish. Also at stake are water skiing and whitewater recreation, and five rare snails that have been proposed for listing as endangered species.

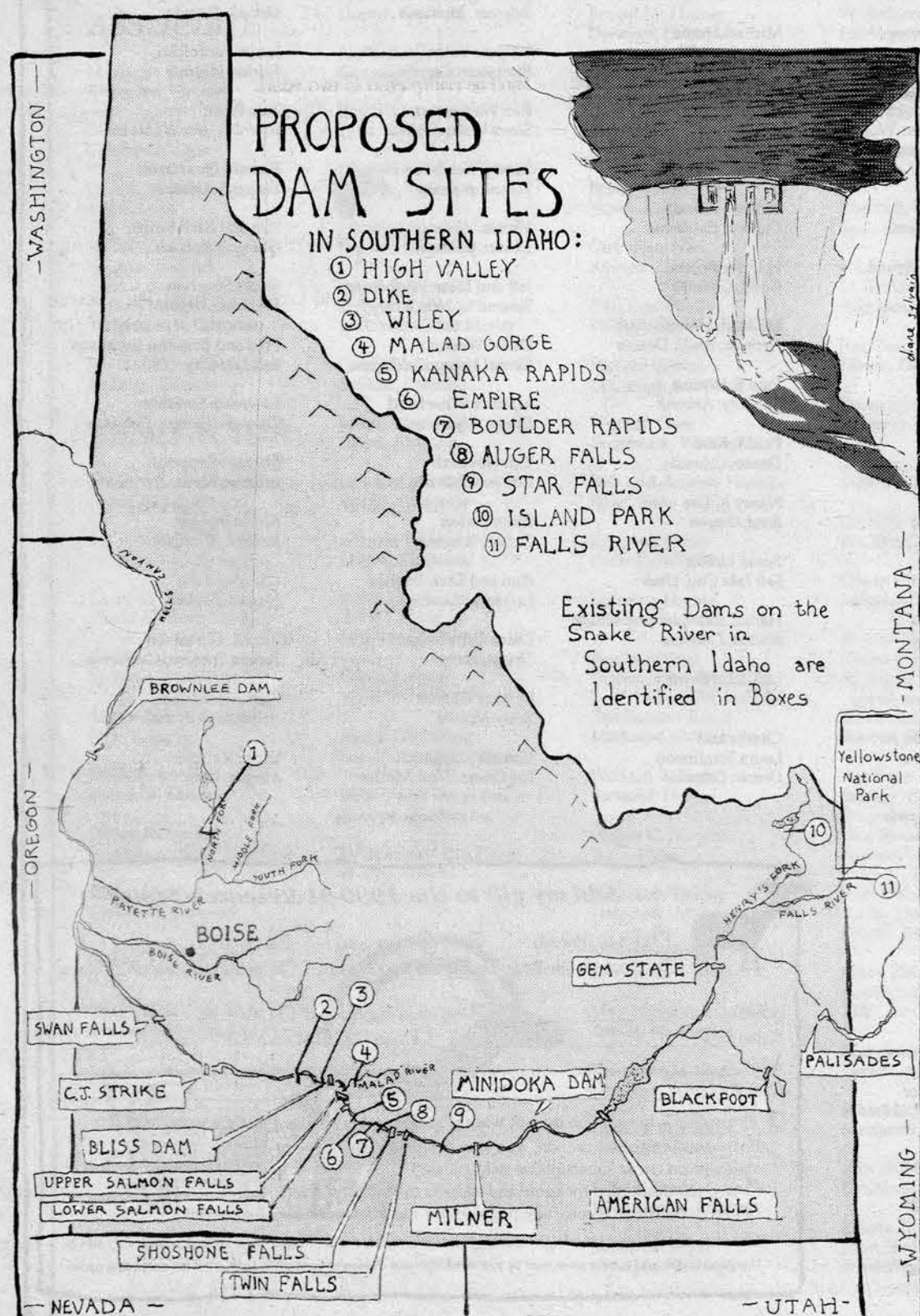
In Malad Gorge, long-time hydro advocate Vern Ravenscroft, a former candidate for governor, has teamed up with Ida-West to propose a five-megawatt hydro project upstream from Devil's Washbowl, a 60-foot waterfall over basaltic cliffs. The state Parks and Recreation Board opposes the project because it's located in Malad Gorge State Park, one of Idaho's "natural" parks.

Carl Myers, a Boise engineer who is a consultant on several Snake hydro projects, said the projects could be designed to minimize environmental damage. "Hydropower is still the cheapest and certainly the cleanest form of energy," he said. "Hydro has been opposed by the public for quite a few years, but now there's an impending power shortage in Idaho and the Northwest. And the question the public has to face is, where are we going to get the power?"

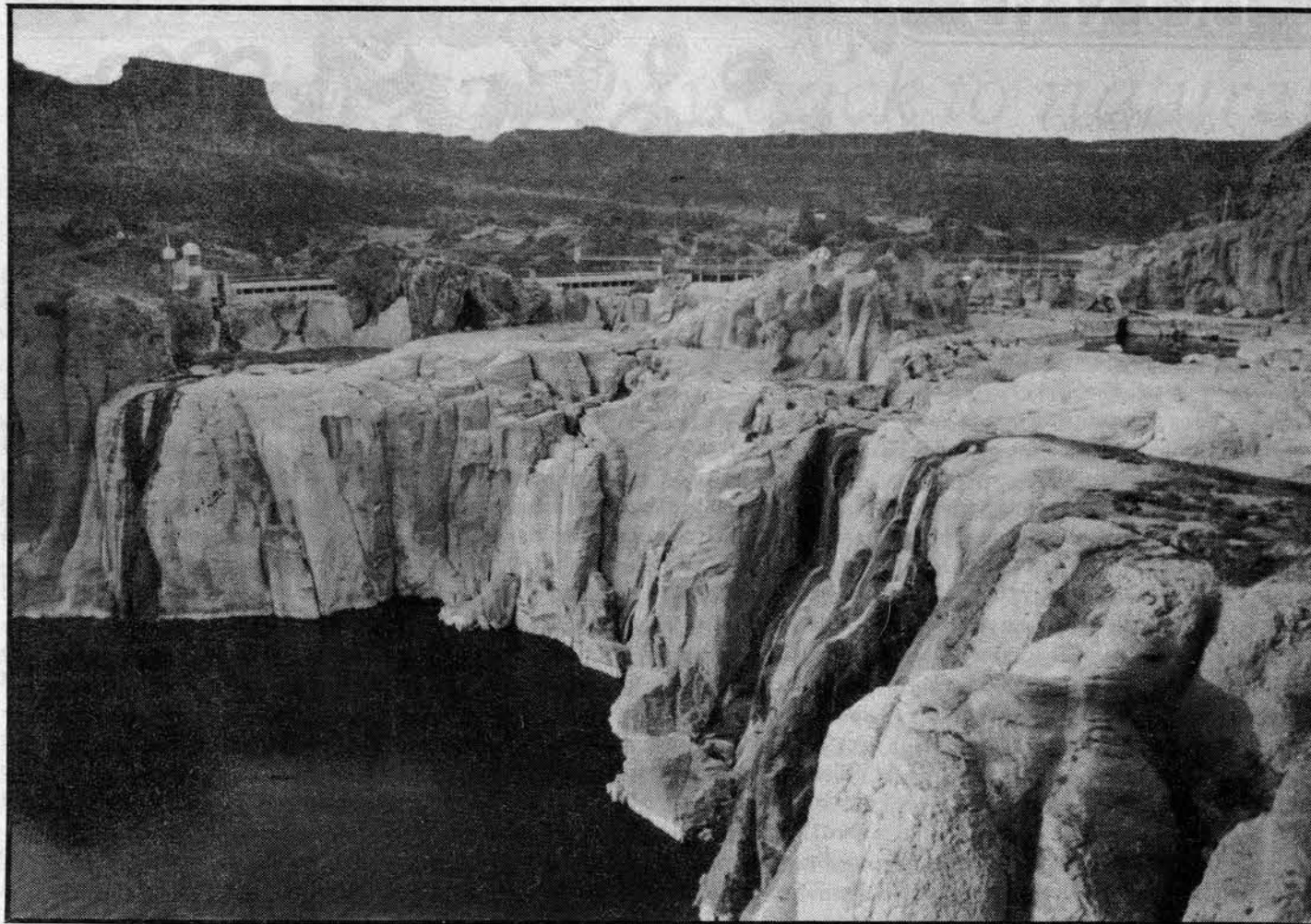
Montgomery of the Friends of the Payette said the state should force developers to maximize the capacity of all existing dams before building any new ones. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 1981 study found that 700 to 1,100 megawatts of capacity could be installed in existing dams, he said. In the past decade, an additional 250 megawatts have been installed, mostly by Idaho Power Co.

Late last month the Idaho Public Utilities Commission approved two Idaho Power Co. hydro projects to upgrade existing dams. The utility plans to rebuild its Swan Falls hydro plant at a cost of \$80 million, and to install a generating plant at Milner Dam, which it also would rebuild. The total Milner cost would be about \$75 million.

The commission said it was motivated by two considerations: to forestall



Diane Sylvain



Tim Palmer

... except when diverted for irrigation

the need to build new dams and other coal-fired or nuclear generating plants, and in the case of Milner Dam, to forestall hydro development by out-of-state interests.

"The retrofitting of a currently existing dam certainly has less of an adverse

effect on the environment than construction of a new dam or of a coal-fired or nuclear plant," the commission said. "There is no doubt in our minds that Milner presents a rare opportunity for the state of Idaho to obtain relatively inexpensive power with little impact on

the ... environment."

River advocates also are pushing Idaho Power Co. and the Northwest Power Planning Council to invest in conservation before building new plants. Idaho Power has yet to install any comprehensive conservation programs for industry or agricul-

ture, the largest consumers in the state. Advocates believe there are big conservation gains yet to be achieved.

How the debate over these dams ends will be determined by the Idaho Legislature in the coming weeks. The Payette plan must be approved by the Legislature, and the water board will seek a time extension for its Middle Snake plan. Political fireworks are expected to erupt over both plans.

"Decisions involving the clear-cut clash between hydropower and free-flowing rivers have to be made," said Sen. Laird Noh, the Republican chairman of the Senate Resources and Environment Committee, who lives near the Middle Snake. "It'll be a tough, knock-down drag-out fight."

Added Sen. Karl Brooks, a Boise Democrat: "We're opening a new chapter in Idaho water management. The severe test will be to convince the Legislature, where I suspect the groups will lobby very heavily."

As for Malad Gorge, FERC will have the final say.

Wendy Wilson says it's time for lawmakers to recognize the strong public support for protecting Idaho's rivers and the state's quality of life. "For 100 years, water development in Idaho has focused on exploitation for irrigation and hydropower," she said. "But the reason people live here has changed. It's time to protect the public trust."

Stephen Stuebner is an environmental reporter for *The Idaho Statesman*. He lives in Boise.

Foes of two dams charge back-room politics

by Kevin Richert

Environmentalists are waging eleventh-hour battles against two Idaho hydroelectric projects near the southwest corner of Yellowstone National Park. But their prospects for victory are not bright.

The Island Park and the Falls River hydroelectric projects have already been approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The Island Park Hydroelectric Project was licensed in October 1988, and the Falls River Hydroelectric Project received FERC's green light in May 1989.

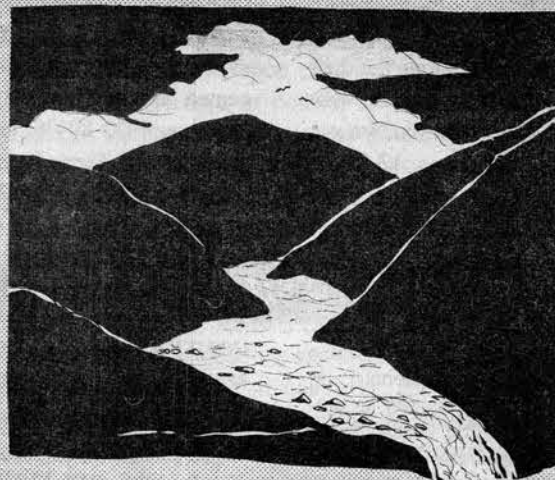
In both cases the proposed generators are relatively small, and at first glance seem relatively unobtrusive. The Island Park project, located at Island Park Reservoir, would attach a 4.8-megawatt generator to the existing Island Park Dam, producing power for up to 3,000 homes or businesses. The Falls River project would divert water through an existing irrigation canal to a 7.5-megawatt powerhouse five miles downstream.

Environmentalists, however, claim that the Island Park construction could severely affect water quality downstream, along the world-famous Henry's Fork of the Snake River. They claim the Falls River project could reduce flows along this popular, pristine stretch of river to little more than a trickle.

Critics also are frustrated with the process itself. They say the Island Park project has survived only through back-room maneuvers by members of Idaho's congressional delegation, and the Falls River project was licensed before they even were aware it was in the works.

The Island Park project has been controversial for several years, but recently the fight has focused on a \$1 million federal appropriation for the project. Developers say the \$1 million will be used to pay for unique environmental safeguards at the dam site. These include a \$600,000 system designed to maintain oxygen levels for trout and \$200,000 to keep an environmental coordinator on site with the authority to shut down the generator at any time.

Congressional backers, including former Sen. James McClure, R-Idaho, and Rep. Richard Stallings, D-Idaho, said the \$1 million replaces a federal tax credit lost by project developers. By the time the pro-



Diane Sylvain

ject finally got its FERC license, after extensive congressional haggling, it could not be built in time to qualify for the 11-percent federal credit.

Critics have argued that the appropriation is little more than a congressional kickback and should not be given to the developer — Bonneville Pacific Corp. of Salt Lake City, which has a shoddy safety record at other hydro projects.

"Bonneville Pacific does not deserve the public's trust, much less their money," said Charlie Sellers, a member of the Idaho Conservation League in Idaho Falls.

Bonneville Pacific holds a 35-year lease to develop and run the Island Park generator. It then would turn the project over to the Falls River Rural Electric Cooperative in Ashton, Idaho, which owns the project license and water right.

Congress approved the \$1 million last fall, but not before Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., took a late shot at the project. Miller, chairman of the Interior Subcommittee on Water and Power Resources, had signed off on the authorization in 1989 on the assumption that the project was not controversial. But he now opposes Island Park.

"There is broad-based national opposition to the project based on the potential impact it could have on the world-class fishery on Henry's Fork," Miller wrote last September.

Early this year, Bonneville Pacific will begin writing a master plan for the generator. It will also reconvene an advisory committee made up of supporters, government agencies and opponents. Construction at the Island Park Dam could begin this fall

and be completed in two years.

The Falls River controversy centers on a lesser-known but also scenic mountain stream. Flowing from its source in Yellowstone National Park, the Falls River eventually slices through a narrow canyon about 11 miles east of Ashton, where developers hope to build their \$10 million hydroelectric powerhouse.

The project would take water from Falls River and feed it through an expanded stretch of the Marysville Irrigation Canal, which now runs parallel to the stream. This water would flow through two generators before returning to the river, producing power for Utah Power and Light, a Salt Lake City utility that serves much of eastern Idaho.

Recreation is a key issue. Developers say Falls River is hardly used by outdoor enthusiasts. Critics say the river — while perhaps a local secret — is popular with kayakers, rafters and anglers.

The developer, Environmental Energy Co., surveyed use on Falls River in 1987 as part of its FERC application. It found only 18 fishermen and four boaters at the project site over a three-week period. Outdoor groups are completing their own recreation survey and want FERC to reconsider its decision.

The FERC license allows Environmental Energy Co. to divert up to 500 cubic feet per second from Falls River and requires the company to leave 200 cfs in the stream at all times. The river runs at under 500 cfs through most of the winter and over 2,000 cfs in May and June.

Leslie Stone, an Idaho Falls kayaker, says a 200 cfs flow would make the river impossible to float. "You could basically walk down the whole thing at that level," he said.

The Idaho Department of Fish and Game thinks even this 200 cfs flow, and the Falls River fishery itself, are in jeopardy. As a result, it too has asked FERC to reconsider the Falls River project.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is now taking its own look at the project. It must determine that the project would not affect downstream water quality, and "probably" will hold a public hearing, a spokesman said.

Kevin Richert writes for *The Idaho Falls Post Register*.

BULLETIN BOARD

CELEBRATING THE DESERT

Desert Conference XIII — four days of field trips, workshops and presentations about the desert — will be held April 25-28 at Malheur Field Station near Burns, Ore. The annual event draws together scientists, artists, activists, historians, writers and others devoted to the desert. The theme of this year's conference is "Spreading the Word," a program planned to inspire and empower participants to bring the values and plight of the desert to a broader audience. Topics will include mining and grazing issues, desert photography and writing, natural and human histories of the area, and environmental protection strategies. Conference participants must register before April 8 to attend. For registration forms or for more information, contact Desert Conference XIII, P.O. Box 15115, Portland, OR 97215. 503/245-3658.

DESERT ETIQUETTE

Anyone planning a visit to the Colorado Plateau should be sure to pick up a free copy of *Desert Etiquette: A Simple Guide* first. Canyonlands Field Institute, a nonprofit educational organization that promotes understanding and appreciation of the Colorado Plateau, has published this pamphlet in an effort to reduce damage caused by unwitting tourists. It explains potholes, artifacts and microbiotic soil crust, the black crust often seen in a desert community, and offers suggestions about how to take care of yourself in a desert environment. The pamphlet is available in Moab, Utah, at stores and at the Canyonlands Field Institute office, or may be acquired by sending a self-addressed stamped envelope to Canyonlands Field Institute, PO Box 68, Moab, UT 84532.



DIOXIN LEGACY

Oregon's entire Willamette River system contains dioxin-contaminated fish. An Oregon State University study reported that dioxin levels in the river consistently exceeded Environmental Protection Agency standards for safe consumption, with fish in the Portland area containing double the levels found in the rest of the river. The study reports that no single source is responsible for the pollution; a combination of activities including pulp and paper manufacturing, plastics incineration, and use of wood preservatives and herbicides have all contributed to the long-term contamination of the system. Many harmful pollutants are no longer used, but Mary O'Brien of the Northwest Coalition for Alternatives to Pesticides says, "They have soaked that soil for so many years that the presence in the Willamette will continue for decades." The study says that dioxins linger in the system long after sources are removed. Commented O'Brien: "It says that there's no room for putting more in."

ANY COMMENTS ON GRAND CANYON DEVELOPMENT?

A Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement assessing a variety of new visitor services at the Grand Canyon National Park's North Rim is now available for public review and comment. The new services are set forth in the North Rim's development concept plan, which supplements the park's 1976 Final Master Plan and Environmental Statement. The proposed services, in both the North Rim Inn and Grand Canyon Lodge areas, could include a 100-unit motel, an expanded campground and certain traffic improvements, but alternatives, ranging from no development to the substitution of cabins for the motel, have also been evaluated. Public meetings on the proposed development will be held in February. The deadline for comments is March 29.

To receive more information on the draft SEIS and the development concept plan, write to the Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023, or call 602/638-7708.



GREAT BOOKS FOR ENVIRONMENTALISTS

The 1991 Island Press Environmental Sourcebook should be of interest to environmentalists. The sourcebook includes over 180 titles on subjects ranging from wetlands to wildlife, toxic waste to global warming, and air pollution to public lands. Many of the books, like Randal O'Toole's *Reforming the Forest Service*, are practical and solution-oriented. Island Press, publisher of *High Country News*' two books, *Western Water Made Simple* and *Reopening the Western Frontier*, has been publishing innovative books focusing on environmental problems since 1984.

For more information write to Island Press, Box 7, Covelo, CA 95428, or call 800/828-1302.

GREEN ELEPHANTS

Not all Republicans oppose environment and wilderness: That is the message Environmentally Concerned Republicans hopes to get across. The newly formed group wants to elicit the opinions of environmentally concerned Republicans and report them to elected officials in an effort to improve representation of their views. ECR is looking for individuals interested in expressing their opinions and in actively helping to organize the effort. "A lot of people have the impression that all Republicans are anti-environment," says co-organizer Dick Scar. "We can either prove them right or prove them wrong." For more information about the group's monthly meetings, write Environmentally Concerned Republicans, 2898 S. Olympia Circle, Evergreen CO 80439; or call Dick Scar at 719/395-8001, Sherry Randall at 303/674-1824, or Anne Willhardt at 303/674-3949.

SOLUTIONS TO POLLUTION

A new catalog of environment-related research reports, conference proceedings, manuals and directories is available from the National Technical Information Service. NTIS, a branch of the U.S. Department of Commerce, is the primary source of information on scientific and technical studies sponsored by the U.S. Government and universities and private groups. The free catalog includes over 150 popular titles, and lists phone numbers that can lead you to thousands of studies of related interest. Reports cover the areas of solid and hazardous waste minimization and cleanup; air, water and soil pollution; pesticides; and municipal waste.

For more information call 703/487-4650 and request PR-868/KON, or write to NTIS, 5285 Port Royal Road, Springfield, VA 22161.

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GUEST OPINION

Managing our way back to nature

by George Wuerthner

One frequently hears from resource managers — foresters, wildlife biologists or range managers — that we “need” to manage the resource in question and that people just don’t “understand” it. These managers are truly baffled by the alternative vision espoused by conservation biologists, environmental organizations and others. While admitting that past management practices have often been failures or inadequate in scope, such resource managers say they now have the answers. We have “New Forestry,” “Holistic Resource Management” and other techniques designed to give us “better” management.

New Forestry and Holistic Resource Management may be steps in the right direction. Yet their practitioners and advocates fail to understand that many of their critics take issue not only with the way they manage, but with the basic assumptions of human manipulation. The true confrontation is between two radically different paradigms, or models, of the role and goals of humans in natural ecological processes. The schism goes far deeper than a mere debate over which technique may be better in a particular situation.

The management paradigm espoused by, say, foresters implies that natural processes need to be manipulated to maintain “healthy” forests or “healthy” wildlife populations. In most cases this is a bill of goods sold to the public to justify massive manipulation that not only benefits certain commercial interests but also ensures jobs for managers. It would, of course, be equally false to assume that humans don’t influence natural processes or that we can avoid all manipulation.

This dominant paradigm — the one that influences most natural resources management agencies as well as natural resources schools in this country — is that humans need to manage resources, first to keep them healthy and secondarily to provide goods and ecological services for society. Those who view the world this way believe that humans not only have the ability to make “rational” decisions based on the “facts,” but that they have all the “facts” necessary to make wise decisions.

The other model takes a nearly opposite view. For the more one learns about ecology, the more one recognizes and appreciates the limits of human knowledge. Ecology teaches a healthy skepticism of anyone who claims to “know” how to manage anything more complex than a bicycle or some other human innovation. Even our most complex inventions, such as spaceships and computers, are, by comparison to natural systems and processes, incredibly simple. People who view the world through the ecological paradigm don’t believe that humans make fully rational decisions or that people even have the knowledge to do so.

As is probably obvious by now, I embrace the views embodied by the second paradigm, and when managers tell me how we “need” to manage our resources, I find their statements not only arrogant but naive. For instance, in my part of the country one continually hears foresters assert that we “need” to manage our forests so we don’t have “outbreaks” of pine beetles, tussock moths, wildfires and a host of other natural events. Such “disasters” make it easier to sell the public on the idea that we must manage our forests or face the “destruction” these “calamities” engender. But to an ecologist, the absence of beetles, moths, fires, blowdown, heart rot and all those other things foresters tell us are signs of “unbalance” or “decadence” may be indications of a sick forest, not a model of salubrity.

What foresters and other managers have done is to take the values of the resource extraction industries and impose them on natural systems. A forest doesn’t care if a wildfire sweeps through it. The only thing fires do is make trees unsuitable for direct human use as timber. Seen through the eyes of an ecologist, such a natural event cannot be viewed as having a negative impact upon the forest.

Foresters would be more honest if they suggested that the reason we manage forests is to provide wood to consumers. But they must also inform consumers of what it really costs — economically as well as ecologically — to meet human demands. To do this, resource managers must honestly calculate what such manipulation costs. This would include obvious things like the loss of scenic values when our mountainsides are scarred with a patchwork of clearcuts and roads. It would include loss of habitat for some wildlife species. And it would include the ecological costs of management prescriptions that deviate from natural processes and events.

For instance, deciding to suppress wildfires because they might burn up trees we want for timber brings the cost of additional fire suppression as fuels build up year after year, beyond the time when the forest would otherwise burn. Disease and insect attacks often naturally result when conditions for them are favored. To eliminate or control all these elements introduces additional costs to the game of forestry. Thus management is increasingly expensive and probably is practical only on the best growing sites, which certainly do not include the high-elevation forests of the Rocky Mountain West.

In recent years we have heard some very persuasive arguments that humans can and should manage resources to benefit both the resources themselves and human use of them. For example, there is Allan Savory, an advocate of “better” range management. Savory asserts that we need to graze rangelands or they will become “decadent” and deteriorate. Conveniently

for stockgrowers, Savory also believes the best animals for such manipulation happen to be domestic cows and sheep. And Alston Chase, author of *Playing God in Yellowstone*, chastises the National Park Service for not managing its resources “better.” The irony of it is that Chase actually advocates a greater human role in management: We need to trim big-game herds like elk to “prevent” range “damage.” We need to set “prescribed” fires to prevent “unnatural” fires like those that swept Yellowstone in 1988. But all of these assertions assume that we have full knowledge of our choices and full knowledge of the ecological impacts of our actions — that somehow we know how many elk are really the “right” number or how many acres of forest we should burn annually to emulate what occurs naturally. If this isn’t playing God, what is?

This is not to suggest, as Chase and others often seem to do, that ecologists feel we can and should do nothing. Most ecologists recognize that it is almost impossible to extract the human influence from any ecosystem; in most cases, humans have always been part of the natural scheme of things. Indians, for example, set fires on our Western rangelands, which kept trees from invading and favored grasses over shrubs. Indian predation on wildlife no doubt influenced the animals’ movements and population densities.

At the same time, it is not unreasonable to strive for a philosophy of management that minimizes human manipulation, intervening no more than is necessary to maintain natural processes. For instance, the restoration of wolves to Yellowstone is an active management decision, which if carried out will result in an ecosystem closer to natural than one without wolves. It will still be an ecosystem that will “need” occasional human manipulation. But the reintroduction of wolves to cull big-game herds such as bison is more natural, relatively speaking, than having hunters and game wardens shoot the beasts with rifles.

I think most of our confrontations over natural resource management are the outcome of these two diverging views, and I believe that, in the end, management based upon ecological parameters is the only economically sustainable kind. The problem for humans is trying to figure how we can utilize natural resources without systematically destroying the natural processes that maintain them. This, then, is the challenge that managers face today, and it is a decidedly more difficult challenge than managers of the past ever dreamed existed. Our success or failure to implement this new set of values may ultimately test the true success of humans as a species.

A photographer and free-lance writer, George Wuerthner lives in Livingston, Montana.

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LETTERS

GLEN CANYON DAM

Dear HCN,

What is the basis for the assertion, reiterated most recently by Tom Wolf (HCN, 12/3/90) that "Glen Canyon Dam never would have been built if the Sierra Club had not accepted it in lieu of the proposed dam at Echo Park in Dinosaur National Monument"?

The charge that the Sierra Club "lost" Glen Canyon suffers from the same faulty reasoning that invalidated the contemporary Republican charge that the Democrats had "lost" China: Glen Canyon was never the Sierra Club's to lose.

Owen Stratton and Phillip Sirotkin established beyond a reasonable doubt more than 30 years ago (*The Echo Park Controversy*) that Echo Park Dam was defeated in part by the National Park Service and conservation organizations, of which the Sierra Club was by no means the most influential, but also by two other groups, each at least as important as the conservationists — the cost-benefit analysts in and out of government to whom Echo Park Dam, indeed the whole Upper Basin Project, simply did not make economic sense, and also the southern Californians, fearful of the economic impact of a reduced supply of Colorado River water. A Sierra Club

"deal" appears neither possible nor necessary.

While it's refreshing to find anti-establishment sentiment still alive and well, successful historical revisionism must be based on more than nostalgia for the '60s.

Nelson Van Valen
Belen, New Mexico

FACADE OF PROGRESS
MASKS 'BUSINESS AS
USUAL' AT BLM

Dear HCN,

Lonnie Williamson is one of the best and most respected environmentalists and writers in Washington, D.C., but his letter (HCN, 10/8/90) addressing Ed Marston's editorial about Cy Jamison (HCN, 7/2/90) indicates a lack of understanding about how BLM works or does not work at the field level. Increased wildlife and recreation budgets and implementation of agreements with Ducks Unlimited and Trout Unlimited are a facade, and it keeps BLM critics off-balance and deceives the public into thinking progress is being made.

Improved management of wildlife on public lands only can be achieved by curbing the mismanagement of grazing, timber cutting, and energy/mineral

development, not by implementing isolated fish and wildlife projects within the wildlife program. Also, at least in the state of Wyoming, the wildlife budget has been used to support non-wildlife programs and staff. Certainly the business-as-usual-and-damn-the-wildlife-and-wildland-resources continues unabated in the Worland District, which is the one that we know best. Recent examples include the anti-wilderness proposal announced by the Worland District, the district's inaction on predator-control abuses, and the outrageous proposal by BLM to permit surface access through miles of riparian/wetland habitat for an exploratory oil well in crucial big game winter range. We suspect that these examples are being repeated many times over throughout the BLM.

Cy Jamison has been in place long enough to implement real changes in the "good ole boy" management style within BLM, but has not had the commitment and/or backbone to confront the widespread mismanagement. The "good ole boy" commodity managers have to be systematically purged from BLM before significant headway can be made in improving fish and wildlife habitat on our public lands.

It is possible that Cy Jamison, rather than a breath of fresh air, may be a worse disaster for BLM than Burford because he is peddling surface-gloss

progress within the wildlife and recreation programs, while allowing continued growth of the malignancy within the grazing, timber cutting and mineral programs. Until Cy Jamison shows progress in improving management within these three commodity programs, we reluctantly have to assume he is just another BLM hack and is no more of an improvement over Burford than Hodel was over Watt. They both had the same agenda, but Hodel used more finesse in perpetuating commodity interests while ignoring environmental issues. At least with Burford, the public knew where BLM was going.

Dick Kroger
Bismarck, North Dakota

Chuck Neal
Cody, Wyoming

Dick Kroger was transferred after nine years as a BLM biologist. Chuck Neal, a BLM soil scientist for 11 years, is retired.

NICER COMPANIONS
THAN A GUN

Dear HCN,

I was rather shocked by Linda Hasselstrom's "peaceful woman" essay in your December 31st issue. I am a single woman who travels alone a lot, as well as frequently hiking and camping alone. I have never owned a gun and would never consider doing so. I believe that I have a better solution for protection, namely a big mean dog or two! I have never had an incident happen to me such as Ms. Hasselstrom describes, but I almost always have at least one of my two dogs with me. Their keen senses keep me extra aware of what or who is around me. They also protect my home when I am gone and make most pleasant companions, unlike a gun.

Barbara Evans
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Dear HCN,

I enjoyed the article by Linda Hasselstrom explaining why she chooses to rely on a gun for an extra measure of personal protection. I was especially glad to read how seriously she takes the responsibility of carrying a firearm, including the possibility of having to fire it at another human being in self-defense. However, I would recommend that she consider arming herself with a more effective caliber than .22 Magnum, in case the worst happens and she does have to fire her weapon at an assailant.

Charles Wilson
Newport News, Virginia

Dear HCN,

Linda Hasselstrom's voice rings rather stridently. Her reasons for why a "peaceful" woman (one is reminded that our military refers to a type of nuclear missile as a "Peacemaker") carries a gun may be valid from her personal experiences. It is not an article appropriate to your publication.

This thinly disguised piece of anti-male chatter is, perhaps, today's politically correct posture. Physical violence, or the threat of doing physical violence, does seem to be in vogue for many women these days. But it is an opinion more worthy of Oprah or Phil, Ms. or *Cosmopolitan*.

It has little to do with the West and nothing to do with conservation. I hope this is not a new editorial bent. Please stick to what you do best — reporting on Western environmental issues.

Lawrence Williamson
Boulder, Colorado

The West: Where men are men, and women shoot them

by Valerie P. Cohen

You see him everywhere out here, wearing his Cedar Builders cap and driving around in his big white GMC 4x4 pickup, with maybe a couple of buddies, the kind of guys who honk and make kissing noises when they pass girls on the street. They might even stop along the roadside to take a leak, and toss out the empties while they're at it (like Abbey says, it's not the cans that are ugly, it's the highway). And of course there's a rifle on the gun rack across the back window of the truck.

Hey, guns're part of life out here! There's stop signs and varmints to shoot at, not to mention you might need to protect yourself. After all, for tens of thousands of years, people have been utilizing force and violence in order to grab the real estate from one another.

"Who are those guys?"

That's what Sundance asks Butch Cassidy when they can't seem to lose the posse. Who are those roving packs of male *homo sapiens* in white GMC pickups of whom Linda Hasselstrom's so scared that she's got to have her very own gun?

Probably they're just guys going to work, like everybody else. If they do frighten, or even harm, the females of their species, if they do piss in roadside ditches and drink too much, maybe they do these things out of... loneliness, disappointment, stupidity, despair? Hell, I don't know what makes people act that way. Maybe they feel frantic with guilt because they didn't pay the child support last month. Maybe they never learned to read very well and can't get a decent job.

Me, I don't even know these guys, but I do know that shooting them isn't the answer.

.357 Magnum

I had my own gun during the 10 years I worked as a seasonal law enforcement officer for the National Park Service, in Yosemite and Grand Teton national parks. I needed it, because many of the drunks and wife-beaters and other assorted miserable human beings I dealt with carried their own firearms. At night I wore a bullet-proof vest.

Mine was a pretty gun, Smith & Wesson Model 66. I wore it in a holster on my hip and my marksmanship was superb. I thought about that gun all the time, and mostly what I thought was that no single person knows enough, or has the right, to make a decision to carry a pistol.

People considering buying a gun ought to ask themselves some questions. For instance, do you know how to keep someone else from grabbing the gun? Do you feel innocent while looking into the eyes of innocent people? Could a little child get that gun off your nightstand? Might you or your spouse grab it during a fight? Do you know what to do when violence escalates because a gun is present? Do you shoot 100 target loads every month at a human-silhouette target? (Incidentally, how do you like human-shaped targets?) Do you clean and oil the weapon after each practice, and can you reload in the dark, or under fire? Do you dry-fire several times a week, to keep your forefinger strong? Are you ready to die?

Raquel Welch

I don't remember the name of the Western, but I do remember that Raquel was raped by a band of thugs after they killed her husband. Pretty soon she met up with Robert Culp, a gunslinger who took her to Mexico, bought her a white dress, and taught her how to shoot so she could avenge herself.

Raquel tied a rock to a string, tied the string to a stick, and rolled the stick at arm's length, to strengthen her forearms. As time went on, her rocks got bigger and bigger. (I tried this technique and it really worked — neither Raquel nor I found that a big pistol threw our hands "in the air with every shot," as happened to Hasselstrom.) Finally, if I remember right, Robert Culp killed the bad guys for her, so she wouldn't have murder on her conscience.

What if you shoot someone?

Hasselstrom says she's a "peace-loving woman" who doesn't really want to shoot, so she just carries a gun to "shift the balance" of power, to make her "equal," to add an "extra edge, an attention-getter." But if you have a gun, you intend to shoot, and if you shoot, you will kill. They only wing 'em in the movies.

Did you know that about 5 percent of citizens who shoot police officers commit suicide, either right then or shortly afterwards? Officers who shoot suspects (usually to save their own lives) likewise experience extreme psychological violence, often for years afterward. Marital problems, alcohol abuse, depression, isolation from other people, anxiety ... these are just a few of the symptoms of grief which people experience after killing someone.

What are we really afraid of?

Hasselstrom seems to think those guys pissing in the ditch might rape her, and, rape being a crime of violence, not a crime of sex, that means she's afraid of violence. But what sort of violence? Perhaps it's the violence of not knowing what's going to happen next.

Well, life is hard all over. It's hard to be a writer, to face that blank screen and faulty disk-drive alone every morning.

It's hard to be a rancher, too, what with frozen pipes and mortgaged equipment and dead lambs and the price of gas and feed.

In fact, it's hard — and scary — to live in the West. The sky's big. It hasn't rained in four years. It's cold (hot). There are strange people moving in, and they don't look like us. Meanwhile, our beautiful sagebrush wilderness is disappearing before our very eyes. We're scared our lives won't last.

This is bad stuff, and a gun won't help, because this isn't the movies. A gun, like a drink, is false security, and will only make things worse.

So I submit the following: that any person who buys and carries a handgun will, by the intention or act of ending someone else's life, forever alter his or her own life.

Valerie P. Cohen lives in Cedar City, Utah. She is a freelance writer and a watercolorist.

THE MANAGED MORTALITY DEBATE

Dear HCN,

"Because my training was aimed at treating trees like a crop," writes Ronald O. Crouse in his letter to HCN (12/17/90), "I have always believed that a tree should be harvested." Although I am not a graduate in forestry, as he is, it is apparent that Crouse is very short-sighted with respect to forestry and economic development.

As an example of his shortened vision, he states, "Biologically all trees must die, with the exception of the redwoods, bristlecone pine, olive, grape and bracken ferns." Of course, this statement is false because even his "exceptions" die. He seems to be saying that these species will not die in my lifetime or in my children's lifetime and thus are not relevant. His economics are similarly flawed. He is correct in thinking Managed Mortality will work — for a few generations! But, of course, in the long run it will fail.

Crouse continues, "If we can accept the death concept, then the premise that all trees should be harvested is valid." But if all trees are harvested, regardless of age, there is no raw material for future generations of trees. The HCN special issue on old growth had more than one article which emphasized that trees do not just grow out of the ground, but need the nutrients from the dead trees which decay into the soil. Again, for a few generations it may be possible to harvest all trees under Managed Mortality, but eventually trees will no longer grow, because they have no food.

James Jay Klavetter
Silver Springs, Maryland

Dear HCN,

The letter by Ronald O. Crouse on forest management is disturbingly oriented entirely toward human needs. Even old growth is valued only for the good wood the longer rotation could offer. Recreation uses are recognized as valuable incidental benefits, but ecological needs are nowhere considered. One can but hope that this aspect of the problem is really not unknown to Mr. Crouse, but there is no evidence that it is.

Incidentally, he states that recreational use has been supported by private cutting of public forests. I wonder how he squares that idea with the fact that the public forest's timber is usually sold below cost, resulting presumably in no revenue over expenses to spend on recreation development and care.

As wildlife habitat disappears and wildlife along with it, as watersheds are eroded and the greenhouse danger becomes more plausible, it is shocking to read the statement that "we have already preserved several millions of acres beyond what is reasonable and prudent." Ecological health is essential for humanity as well as for wildlife.

Theresa Blake
Norwich, Vermont

Dear HCN,

Ronald Crouse brings to light some themes worthy of consideration. His Managed Mortality concept sounds like a partial solution to the controversy in the Northwest. But I am stunned at his conclusion that because all trees must

die they should be harvested.

Even most foresters might flinch at the idea that all trees be harvested. Clearcutting can remove up to half the potassium stored in a forested area, as well as a significant portion of nitrogen. Clearly the nutrient cycle can be upset with wide-scale harvesting. The forest decline problem in Europe is believed to be linked to removal of nutrients over three and four generations. This is to say nothing of the impacts to wildlife, watershed and recreation.

Forestry issues today are far too complex to simply say, "Trees die, so we might as well make some more two-by-fours." Some of the re-education efforts need to be aimed at forestry schools, where it seems to be a widely held belief that if a tree dies, falls over and rots, then it's a waste.

Matt Hansen
(B.S. Forestry Cum Laude)
Huntsville, Utah

Dear HCN,

I must answer Ronald Crouse of Coos Bay, Oregon. Mr. Crouse graduated from the University of California, Berkeley, in forestry. I once heard the Dean of the School of Forestry at Berkeley say in a public meeting that "man can do everything better than Nature," referring of course to woodland management. I thought at the time and still think the dean was breaking his arm patting himself on the back.

We have to be careful to not stop learning once we get out of college. Mr. Crouse estimates that 90 percent of the land available for planned forest use is

owned (operated) by the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, states, counties and major private land owners. He is way off. Non-industrial private forestland (NIPF) owners own 57 percent of the commercial timberland in the United States, according to *National Woodlands*, July 1990. This is the reason our most recent Congress doubled the amount of money available to help NIPF owners. Many states are promoting NIPF stewardship. The Oregon legislature will be discussing a plan this session to promote private forest stewardship.

I own and actively manage a small tree farm. Mr. Crouse has a few good ideas in expressing his theme of managed mortality. Unfortunately his basic belief that a tree should be harvested, period, colors much too much of his thinking. He and other large industrial foresters are the people who have led and are still leading us away from true multiple-use and long-term sustainable forestry.

W.H. Oberteuffer
Elgin, Oregon

Dear HCN,

I find it incredible that the brains of persons like Ronald O. Crouse of Coos Bay, Oregon, are actually functional. His letter in your 12/17/90 issue exhibits the same kind of single-minded cunning of the cow as it uncovers every last vestige of forage out on the overgrazed range.

Ronald states quite plainly that redwoods, bristlecone pine, olive, grape and bracken ferns are immortal. What a silly fellow.

Evan Cantor
Boulder, Colorado

ESSAY

On grizzlies, babies and a shrinking land

by Tracy Stone-Manning

I got married last fall and was immediately inundated with questions concerning when my husband and I were planning on having kids. Someone even sent me a card wishing me lots and lots of little ones. The sentiment behind that wish is really what brought 150 folks and me together in mid-January to hear a discussion — a debate, actually — on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Draft Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan.

Babies and grizzlies? There is a simple connection here, one often overlooked by an environmental community steeped in details. The players at this discussion were Chris Servheen, coordinator of the InterAgency Grizzly Bear Recovery Committee and author of the draft plan, and Keith Hammer, an active environmentalist from western Montana, who has taken it upon himself to research bears extensively.

Servheen's plan deals mostly in numbers. He is shooting for MVPs (not an NFL term; here it means minimum viable populations), which he estimates through monitoring. Once he reaches and sustains those MVPs, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will consider the bear "recovered." Servheen told me that recovery was years away. The grumblings of the environmental community, though, conclude that it is Servheen's and many agencies' desire to delist the bear as soon as possible. This would enable them to pat themselves on the back for a recovery job well done and at the same time remove the messy strings the Endangered Species Act attaches to the natural resource industries.

These grumblings have turned into assaults on Servheen's plan. Environmentalists say the recovery targets are too low. Hammer's chief gripe is that Servheen's MVP approach is too minimalistic and conservative, erring on the side of extinction. Hammer contends that if the minimum viable population is what the recovery plan attempts to achieve, then natural fluctuations in population on the downside could be disastrous. He feels the plan's goals should be a safe margin above the MVP. What Hammer really feels is that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service shouldn't use MVPs as its main tool at all. He is right, I think. Just how accurate is bear monitoring? Bears have learned to stay away from humans for the most part. They do not live in accessible spots.

We cannot count them as we do hawks in a flyway. They are not that predictable. I know — I spent a few days a couple of summers ago working to monitor bears in the Scapegoat Wilderness in Montana. We walked many hours, went to places where wilderness rangers told us the bears were supposed to be, and did not count one.

Official observers who do spot bears arrive at vastly different numbers each year. In the Northern Continental Divide ecosystem, one of the seven proposed areas of recovery, 39 female bears with cubs were spotted in 1989. (When monitoring bears, you only count females with cubs; biologists project each pair to represent 20 bears in the population.) In 1990, 13 pairs were counted. This assumes that 780 bears existed in 1989 while 260 did a year later. So then, what is a biologist to do when drafting a recovery plan? Count acres, not bodies. The most we can do for the grizzly is ensure that it has plenty of space to thrive in, not merely survive in. Instead of bickering over how we count bears and what we should be aiming to count, we should be drafting large areas that are protected for bears.

This is where we run into dilemmas. When the biologists draw lines large enough to ensure the bears' survival, they invariably have to draw them around private land. Servheen says that private landowners cause the biggest conflict in bear management. It was America's expansion westward, he says, that brought about the demise of the bear. It now occupies

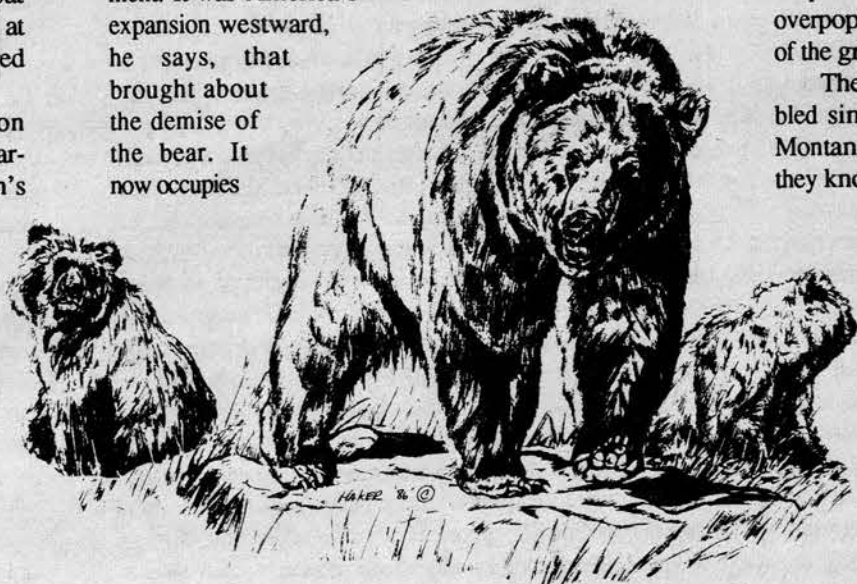
2 percent of its original range. Landowners today have the same gripes with bears that they did a century ago; the bears are a threat to them. In reality, we are the threat to the bear, not vice versa.

Charles Jonkel, a noted bear biologist, contends that humans are the fourth species of bear in North America (next to the black, grizzly and polar bears). He feels we act and react much as bears do. Only our opposable thumb and robust rate of procreation have given us the advantage, and we have used them to invade this fellow species' territory. This has not been a friendly takeover. We have decimated the grizzly by usurping its historical range. Now scientists playing diplomat have decided that the grizzly deserves to roam free in 2 percent of its former homeland. It is uncertain, though, whether this resettlement will work; some scientists say what is now considered a minimum "viable" population actually will lead to extinction in about 100 years. Even if scientists trash the minimum population approach and concentrate on maximum habitat, we still do not know what kinds of consequences the fourth species of bears — humans — will have on the grizzly in 100 years.

Our victory in the conquering of the West was Pyrrhic, at once the end of the grizzly and the beginning of our own defeat. Our greatest weapon in this battle has been our numbers. We have annexed too much space, and we aren't contemplating any withdrawal. In fact, we keep marching on. Now we are turning the weapon of overpopulation onto ourselves. What would the demise of the grizzly predict about our lives?

The population of the United States has nearly doubled since 1940. There are many folks where I live in Montana who knew a different Montana in 1940 than they know today. The local hillsides look like war zones now. The damage is evident and the demise of the griz imminent, yet we continue our war cries while breeding our weapons. We can bicker and moan at each other in our battle about what is going to help the bear now, but ultimately we need to look at maps less, crunch numbers less, and begin to wage war on overpopulation. ■

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ESSAY

The rural West: a playground for the rich?

by Michele Connelly

In the December 20-26, 1989, issue of the *Santa Fe Reporter*, Keith Easthouse broke the story of a proposed development adjacent to the village of Pecos, approximately 24 miles east of Santa Fe. Dubbed "Santa Fe East: 2001," the development was to cover 11,892 acres — more than half the land area of Santa Fe, a city of 50,000 people. The land was to come from the sale of the 5,556-acre Forked Lightning Ranch owned by the actress Greer Garson and a partial sale of the 7,600-acre Los Trigos Ranch owned by her stepson, Gayle Fogelson. Both were previously owned by E.E. "Buddy" Fogelson, Ms. Garson's late husband.

Ms. Garson and her husband had a history of being generous benefactors in the area. Besides numerous donations of money to the people and village of Pecos, they gave the College of Santa Fe the E.E. Fogelson Library, the Greer Garson Theatre and a new \$3 million film and TV production center, as well as a scholarship endowment. Fogelson helped finance the only hospital in Santa Fe. He was a founding board member of the Santa Fe Opera, and he gave 300 acres for the enlargement of the Pecos National Monument, located across the highway from Forked Lightning. He was an outspoken environmentalist, forbidding hunting and trapping on his ranches.

Therefore, it came as a shock that this huge land tract would be sold for a development that included an airstrip, a convention center and a 300-room resort hotel; residential housing, from 100-acre ranches to some 7,000 acres of "higher density" housing; a 454-acre shopping mall to be called "World's Fair Today," made up of simulated foreign capitals; an athletic center; a shooting range; a 1,776-acre hunting preserve; and two 18-hole golf courses.

It was reported that 80-year-old Greer Garson was nearing death and wanted to free up more money for her favorite charities. It was also speculated that her business manager and stepson had put the deal together without her knowledge. As her spokesman, M.S. Disimone, said, "If somebody comes along with enough money, we can't dictate what they'll do with it."

The possibilities threw Pecos into a panic. The old local economy of mining, timber and guest ranches has declined to the nonexistent stage, and with ranching being more of a sideline, most people here commute to Santa Fe for work. But there is still a feeling that this is a rural village, not a suburb. The 3,000 to 5,000 people who live here are mostly Hispanics with varying degrees of Indian blood and an ever-increasing population of Anglos, some of them newcomers from the condo-dotted hills of Santa Fe.

Meetings were held by the revived Upper Pecos Association, a local group formed in the 1970s. Because we live so close to the mushrooming resort town of Santa Fe and have seen the town mutate until it has become a Disneyland for the cultured, we are suspicious of the "beneficial" aspects of development.

At the meetings, the few people who mentioned the new jobs that would be created were soundly booed. The overwhelming majority of people spoke to the threats to their way of life, even those who spoke well of Ms. Garson and her right to do what she pleased with the land. The village council passed a resolution against "Santa Fe East: 2001," and there was talk of annexing the land and passing stringent zoning measures.

Our congressman and senators were contacted to see if the land could be bought by the federal government to expand the Pecos National Monument. Forked Lightning Ranch contains more than 100 archaeological sites, including ruins of the original dwellings of the Pecos Indians, whose people occupied the area from 7,000 years ago until 1838, when the last handful of inhabitants moved to Jemez Pueblo. Spanish explorer Francisco Coronado crossed the ranch in 1540. There are still wagon wheel ruts from the Santa Fe Trail and ruins of a Union fort from the Civil War.

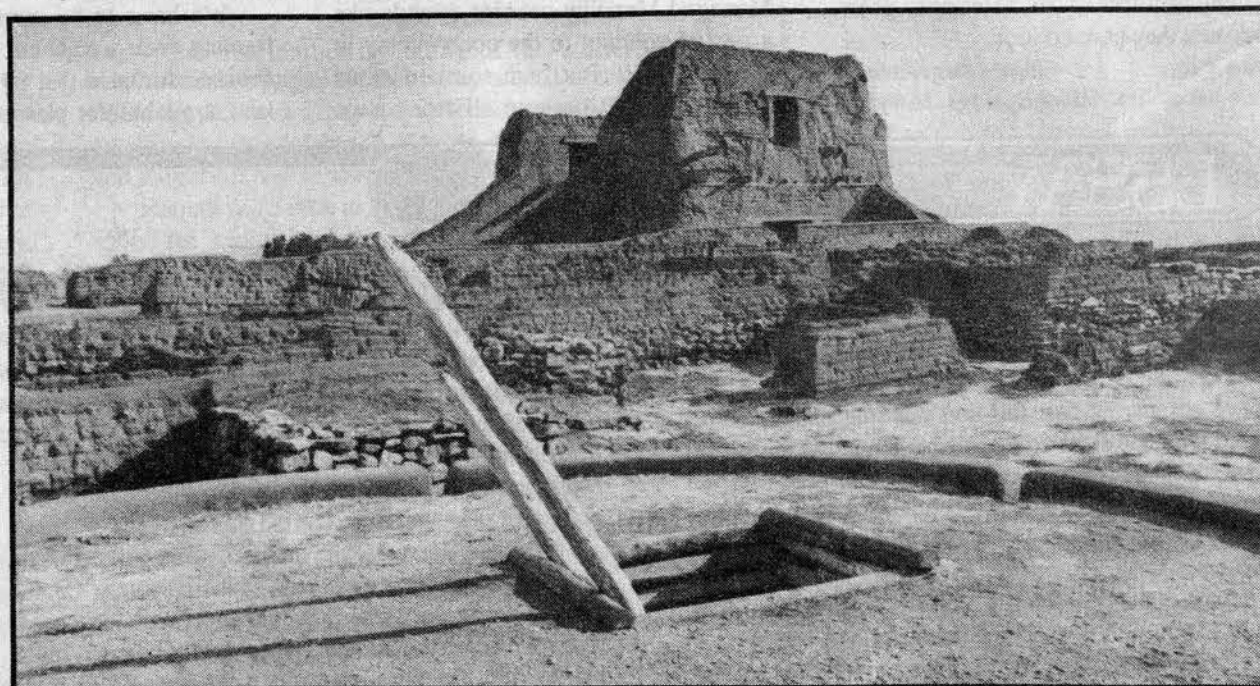
Meanwhile, the *Reporter* kept up its excellent reporting and found that developer Jerrassimos Crassas's other projects, said to be mostly in Florida, were nonexistent. Crassas, a native of Greece, was wanted there on thousands of dollars of bad-check charges and was subject to possible deportation by the U.S. Department of Immigration. The ranches were withdrawn from the sale and the deal was off.

Last spring Congress passed a bill allowing Forked

Small communities across the country are in a similar situation to the people who abandoned Pecos Pueblo. Destruction of their local way of life is the one aspect of development that is a certainty.

Lightning to become a part of the new Pecos National Historical Park, but didn't allot any funds to buy it. The words of Ms. Garson's spokesman stuck in many local people's throats. Would a "better" offer come along? Finally, in May, it was announced that the Richard King Mellon Foundation had bought Forked Lightning for \$4.5 million and would donate the land to the new national park. The victory is clouded by the future of the adjacent and larger Los Trigos Ranch, which reportedly has been sold to a developer who is planning to sell off the land in 50-acre lots.

Whatever the outcome, the real question being debated, here and in almost every community in the West, is how land is "used." The history of all American land since the demise of Indian sovereignty has been to use up the natural resources. But as more and more cities choke on their own waste, the attitude toward wild, open land has changed from "Use it or lose it" to "Save it."



Pecos National Historical Park

A kiva, foreground, and an old Spanish church at the Pecos Pueblo

As a local activist, I'm all in favor of saving land, but I can't help feeling that this new attitude is a bedfellow of the mega-resort concept. The idea behind these places seems to be to allow wealthy people a "wilderness" experience with all the conveniences of home: an airstrip to jet in from the metropolis, round-the-clock security, a mall to provide every desire. The issue takes on a class aspect. For aren't the new resorts the upper-upper-class RV, the ultimate Winnebago?

The high cost is not only in the price of the condos; local resources can be affected, and so can the local relationship with the land. In the past, when guest ranches were a major part of the local economy, local people owned and operated them and the guests fit into the local way of life.

America is developing an idealized attitude about land, nature and people's place in it. In all my summers as a backcountry lookout, the one thing I learned over and over again was the cyclic nature of nature: What dies rots into the soil to birth the next round of vegetation that feeds the next round of animals, that feed the soil with their death, etc. What resorts (like the new fire policies of national parks and the attitudes that produce them) create is an unreal nature that is never allowed a cyclic death. Natural destruction is hidden from the users of these resorts. Everything is kept alive and manicured. Yet destruction of the local community's way of life is the one aspect of the coming of a mega-resort that is a certainty.

Some of us look back to the history of the people of Pecos Pueblo. Situated on a high mesa at the foot of the mountains not far from where the plains begin, theirs was a farming and trading community. With a population of up to 2,000, it was among the largest and most powerful pueblos in New Mexico. Gradually the population was decimated by

the diseases that accompanied the Spanish missionaries and settlers and from attacks by warring Comanches. The few survivors abandoned their pueblo for the only other one that spoke their language, Jemez Pueblo, 152 years ago.

Small communities across the country are in a similar situation to the people of Pecos Pueblo. No one really knows what they thought about the changes in their world. They were on good terms with the Spanish and often informed them about Indian unrest. But the evidence remains: Their world changed and they did not. Only the slowly eroding walls of their church (a Spanish imposition itself) remain standing today.

What do we do with all this land that isn't particularly good for ranching or farming, with little or no surface water, thick rock-and-clay soils, so many piñon and juniper trees to the acre that grass barely grows? We have gone from subsistence to rape of the land to the idealistic view that land away from the cities is a playground where the rich can get away from their soiled nests.

Everyone, from loggers to developers, environmentalists to forest rangers, tourists to truck drivers, recognizes beauty in nature. In the words of developer Crassas, who had never been west of the Mississippi before, "My partner told me I had to come see this land. When I did, I fell in love with it." Crassas wanted to do "something good" for the people of New Mexico. He saw the development as his contribution! We have to stop this kind of missionary zeal to improve on nature. Beauty itself has to become an integral part of a new way for local people to maintain their ways of life and begin a new relationship with the land,

somewhere between exploitation and idealism.

Unfortunately, in the age of passivity, where entertainment most often comes from a screen, where only 4 percent of the population provides food for the entire country, most people don't want to experience the land except from the picture window of their condo. And that's not something that will change overnight. The idea of getting away from it all is the sacred cow of America.

The Seneca tribe of the Iroquois Confederation in New York state let their elders decide the future of the tribe only when they considered the impact each decision would have for the next seven generations of Seneca. When I first heard of this I was struck by the fact of today's anonymity. How many of us know of our ancestors that far back? And, while we often talk in concerned terms about the future, how many of us have looked that far ahead with the blood of our blood in mind?

We need to jettison the "get it while you can; buy now, pay later," deficit-oriented mindset that bankrupts not only our country but our spirits. This is one step past Manifest Destiny, when there was plenty for the taking. Two steps further would be to think of the generations we will leave this world to. The next step is to think of the land itself both as ancestor and progeny — not sentimental, picture-window nature, but a part of our life, essential as blood. This last step will take us into the unknown, where we can either idealize nature into a sideshow or make it into a working partner in our future.

The author is a writer and an active member of the Upper Pecos Association. She lives in Glorieta, New Mexico.