

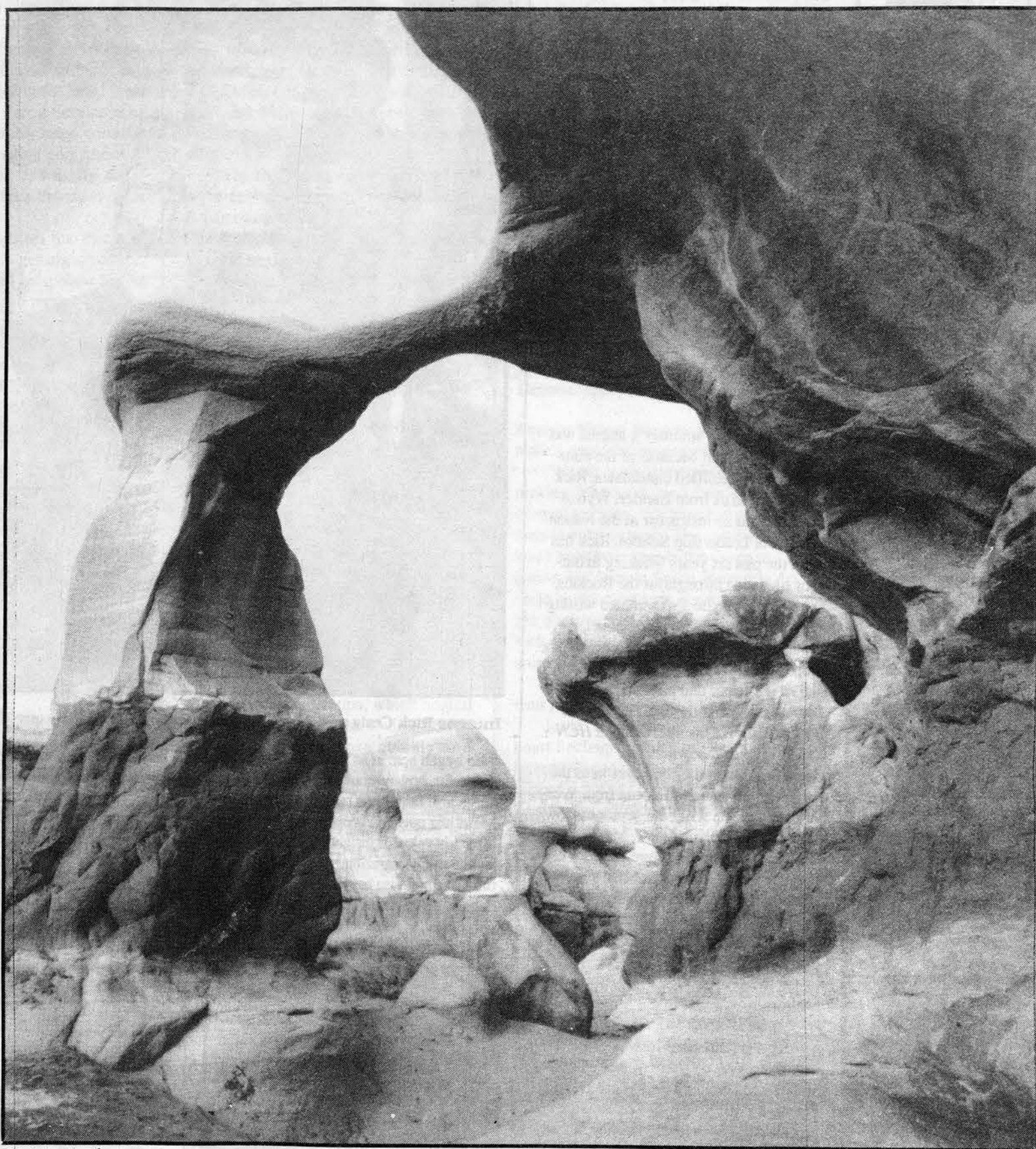
High Country News

June 17, 1991

Vol. 23 No. 11

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar



Metate Arch

J.P. George

A wilderness war

Utah's canyons cut to the bone

by Lisa Jones

ESCALANTE, Utah — Louise Liston's ranch house looks out on the Kaiparowits Plateau, a vast sandstone outcropping that stretches more than 50 miles from Lake Powell to this area of southern Utah. The remote valley where she and her husband run their cattle operation is bordered by mile after mile of red sandstone cliffs, bluffs and fins. Between these fantastic formations the creeks are running with spring melt; the cottonwoods are as green as limes.

She is talking about infinity.

"When I drive out to the desert with my husband day after day to check on the cows, I don't see a telephone line or a light line or anything," she says. "I see

nothing but this land, and there's plenty of that out there for all of us."

Liston is an outspoken opponent of creating more federal wilderness areas in Utah. But a growing number of Utahns don't agree with her view that there's still "plenty of that out there for all of us." Much of the state's canyon country already has been paved, trampled and chipped away by decades of mining, grazing and roadbuilding. Only a third still remains pristine enough to qualify as wilderness, environmentalists say. They want it protected.

The Bureau of Land Management administers almost all of this canyon country, and this October the agency will give Secretary of Interior Manuel Lujan Jr. its wilderness recommendations for the

entire West. But for Utah, the debate over how much of its canyon country will be protected as wilderness is rapidly becoming one of the state's most divisive ever.

The reason is that the wilderness issue cuts to the bone of southern Utah's attitude — and mythology — about itself and its land. The wilderness debate is forcing rural Utahns to confront their deepest hopes and fears. Should they continue to believe in the future of the traditional industries that have dominated their lives, landscape and economy for so long? Or should they embrace and protect the emerging new economy based on their region's breathtaking and nationally unique beauty?

For the first-time visitor, Utah's canyon country is a sheer, fierce sur-

prise. Its vertical redness flips a switch in the minds of people used to country that is more or less green and horizontal. This canyon country seems to liberate people, turning them into pilgrims who become aggressively protective of its unique landscape. Visitor by visitor, hiker by awestruck hiker, southern Utah is becoming a national treasure.

An increasingly muscular pro-wilderness movement is facing off against a status quo only a couple of generations removed from the Mormon pioneers, whose distaste for federal intervention was matched only by their success in wringing a living from their parched land. Wilderness proponents maintain that more protected land could

Continued on page 10



HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

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

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

Subscriptions are \$24 per year for individuals and public libraries, \$34 per year for institutions. Single copies \$1 plus postage and handling. Special Issues \$3 each.

Tom Bell
Editor Emeritus

Ed Marston and Betsy Marston
Publisher and Editor on Leave

Lawrence Mosher
Editor

Mary Jarrett
Deputy Editor

Linda Bacigalupi
Associate Publisher

Florence Williams
Staff Writer

C.L. Rawlins
Poetry Editor

Diane Sylvain
Production/Graphics/Centerspread Design

Cindy Wehling
Desktop Publishing

Ann Ulrich
Typesetting

Kay Henry Bartlett, manager
Gretchen Nicholoff
Michelle Godsey
Circulation/Business

Jacob Forman
Rick Craig
Auden Schendler
Interns

Judy Donald, Washington, D.C.
Michael Ehlers, Boulder, Colo.
Jeff Fereday, Boise, Idaho
Bert Fingerhut, Aspen, Colo.
Tom France, Missoula, Mont.
Karil Frohboese, Park City, Utah
Sally Gordon, Buffalo, Wyo.
Bill Hedden, Moab, Utah
Dan Luecke, Boulder, Colo.
Geoffrey O'Gara, Lander, Wyo.
James B. Ruch, Flagstaff, Ariz.
Emily Swanson, Bozeman, Mont.
Lynda S. Taylor, Albuquerque, N.M.
Herman Warsh, Emigrant, Mont.
Andy Wiessner, Denver, Colo.
Board of Directors

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

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

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



Printed on recycled paper:
45 percent de-inked,
9 percent post-consumer.

Dear friends,

The Wirth-Brown deal

Several members of the board of directors of High Country Foundation, which oversees the general well-being of this newspaper, have disagreed markedly with the editorial "Colorado's 'Good' Compromise," which appeared in the June 3, 1991 issue. The entire board of 15 members subsequently disassociated itself from the editorial, which endorsed the wilderness bill proposed by Sens. Tim Wirth and Hank Brown and Rep. Ben Nighthorse Campbell of the Colorado congressional delegation.

We respect the board's opinions, and invite any member or members to argue their case in subsequent issues of *High Country News*, as any other reader might. We also remind our readers that this newspaper is not an instrument of any particular environmental view or organization, and is dedicated to the full exploration of issues that affect the welfare of the West.

Summer crop

Selecting this summer's interns was especially difficult because of the number of highly qualified candidates. Rick Craig came to us from Lander, Wyo., where he was an instructor at the National Outdoor Leadership School. Rick has spent the past six years working in outdoor education throughout the Rockies. During that time he also pursued writing and is now finishing his first novel, about an environmental conflict over a proposed dam in Colorado. Rick is a native Westerner and has family roots in both ranching and timber. He says he hopes to survive his internship at HCN "without being disowned."

Auden Schendler believes he is the only intern to come to Paonia from Weehawken, N.J. He will be a senior at Bowdoin College in Brunswick, Maine, next fall. His "longstanding love of the West" comes, he says, from childhood summers spent in Montana and North Dakota. He adds that he likes "mountains, people, climbing things, writing, baseball, Montana and his Grandpa Joe."

Visitors

Joe and Katherine Colwell of Bicknell, Utah, gave up some of their vacation time to stop by and tell us about a planned timber cut—the first ever—on Boulder Mountain in Utah. "There has never been a green timber cut," Joe said, "although local loggers have cut dead trees killed by beetles." Joe, who works on the Dixie National Forest, said the U.S. Forest Service plans to cut a total of 15,000 acres of the "50,000-plus acres" that forms the top of this unusual 11,000-foot-high mountain table. The Colwells also were visiting 40 acres below nearby Redlands Mesa that they bought recently, after reading about our area in HCN.

Harry (Skip) Edwards, the Bureau of Land Management's river ranger for the Colorado's Westwater section, stopped by to celebrate his fourth season on the river. Staff kayak buffs know Skip well and appreciate his enthusiasm and management style. Skip and his mate, Doreen Dethmers, also were looking at real estate in Crawford, a few miles from Paonia. We encouraged them because we have just bought a home there, too!

Goings and comings

We bade a sad farewell to two staffers this month, Associate Editor Steve Hinchman and Staff Writer Lisa Jones, who wrote the lead story in this issue. Steve,



Diane Sylvain

Interns Rick Craig and Auden Schendler in the picturesque HCN backyard

who began here as an intern in 1986, is not going far, however, and neither is Lisa. Steve will farm his 80 acres on Lamborn Mesa just outside Paonia, and promises to offer his valuable insights concerning water, mining, grazing, you-name-it, from time to time. Lisa has joined the staff of *Buzzworm* magazine, published in Boulder, Colo., as its travel editor. But she will continue to live in Paonia, which makes

her departure almost acceptable. Lisa joined us last summer.

The good news is that Florence Williams, a staff writer here until last summer, has returned! Florence, a New Yorker, spent the last year freelancing in Boston. But she just couldn't pass up the chance to return to the West and downtown Paonia. We're glad she's back.

Correction

On page 11 of the June 3 issue, we ran a so-called "house ad" featuring a bull elk crossing a road. The caption described the elk as casting his "attention on a doe." Our observant Eli Cowell, who hustles this newspaper's pasted-up flats over McClure Pass to the printer in Glenwood Springs every two weeks, kindly asked why an elk would concern himself with a doe. We don't have an answer, except to correct doe to cow.

— Larry Mosher and Mary Jarrett
for the staff



HCN's favorite paperweight, Mollie, Larry and Mary's new dog

HOTLINE

Endangered sucker may thwart proposed dam

A single two-foot-long razorback sucker, recently discovered in a small pond next to the upper Colorado River, may scuttle plans for a hydroelectric dam. The fish, listed as endangered in Colorado, was the eighth individual found in the upper Colorado River Basin this spring. The sucker has been proposed for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act. The proposed dam would flood about a square mile of land near Rifle, Colo., and produce a maximum of 20 megawatts of electric power, enough electricity for one small town. Meanwhile, all eight razorbacks are being held at the Dexter National Fish

Hatchery in Roswell, N.M. Offspring from these suckers will be raised in captivity and released into the Colorado. Although millions of razorbacks from hatcheries have been released in the lower Colorado River Basin, no reproducing populations exist there.

BARBS

Brussels sprouts, awake and unite!

In a recent issue of *Coal Features*, Sherwood Idso advances his theory that CO₂ is the "elixir of life." He claims that increased atmospheric CO₂ would awaken plant vegetation from "the great lethargy of the depressed physiological state in which it has essentially slumbered throughout all human history."

WESTERN ROUNDUP

Forest Service 'reforms' debunked by grassroots critics

ANGEL FIRE, N.M. — To hear the congressmen tell it, the environmental movement is in high gear, forest reform is imminent and Congress is poised to pass tough legislation to save remaining stands of old-growth forest in the Pacific Northwest.

But members of grassroots environmental groups from coast to coast say very little has changed at the local level in the way the U.S. Forest Service does business. Massive timber sales continue to be awarded to logging companies at undiminished speeds, and faulty documentation that justifies the sales goes unchallenged.

The backlash against the environmental movement is getting stronger, local groups say, and outspoken Forest Service employees face reprisals if they oppose the timber sale philosophy.

Such divergent views surfaced at the fifth annual National Forest Reform Powwow May 24-27, on the forested slopes overlooking the Angel Fire ski resort in northern New Mexico.

The three-day session attracted more than 200 people from as far away as New York, North Carolina, Oregon and Washington, and included U.S. Reps. Jim Jontz, D-Ind., and Bill Richardson, D-N.M., as well as Jeff

DeBonis, of the Association of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics.

DeBonis said he was hopeful of rapid reform of current forest management practices, but sees very little evidence of it "on the ground" in the country's woodlands. The "New Perspectives" program espoused by Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson, which professes to look at the forest with a holistic view, is little more than empty words, DeBonis charged.

"The rhetoric is wonderful," DeBonis said, "but is very different from what is happening in the forests."

He continued, "We haven't seen any actual changes yet. We need to make sure they are doing something differently." DeBonis urged environmental groups everywhere to take stronger stands. His comments were cheered by an enthusiastic and sympathetic audience and filmed by a crew from the *Today Show*.

DeBonis said his group gets frequent calls from forest employees across the country who are punished for talking to environmental groups. One victim of the new backlash is Karin Heiman, a consulting biologist and ex-botanist for the North Carolina National Forests who criticized a proposed timber sale and was fired before her probationary year ended.

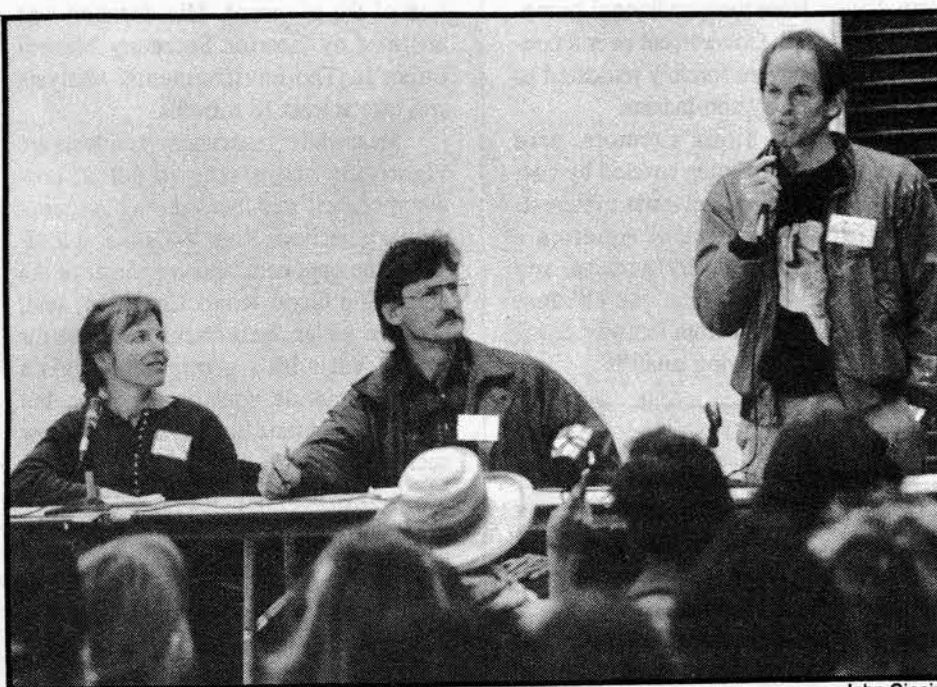
Heiman, who is appealing her job loss, told the conference, "My case is just the tip of the iceberg."

Michael Stewart, president of the LightHawk organization, which hosted the conference, said the environmental movement should move quickly and boldly to take advantage of a sympathetic public.

"People are ready for courageous changes that will genuinely protect the environment," he said. The movement's major weakness so far has been timidity, he said, and the result has been continued devastation of the national forests and the diverse wildlife it supports.

"The conservationists' mistake is that [they] are fearful that they might offend someone," Stewart said. "They are not sufficiently bold to capture anyone's imagination. It's too boring."

Jontz was optimistic that his



John Gianini

Jeff DeBonis speaks at the National Forest Reform Powwow as Karin Heiman and John St. Clair look on

Ancient Forest Protection Act would make it through Congress this year.

"We are at an historic point in policy making," he said, and "we are not a moment too soon. We have had a tremendous shift in support. The climate is the best I have ever seen in the Congress." If passed, his Ancient Forest Protection Act could be the model for legislation to protect other endangered areas of the country, such as fragile deserts, wetlands, riparian areas and beaches.

"We need an Endangered Ecosystems Act in this country," Jontz said.

Jontz was encouraged by recent court decisions based on the National Forest Management Act of 1976 that support what environmental groups have been saying all along, which is that "the Forest Service has not managed forests properly."

Bill Richardson, considered a political supporter of environmental causes, offered words of advice and criticism for the conferees. "You need to develop better ties with your members of Congress," he said. "You need to force yourselves on us."

And the national environmental movement needs to reach out and include minorities, he said. "Your move-

ment is too lily-white. There are no Hispanics and no blacks," and it is perceived as being elitist. Richardson is Hispanic.

"Hispanics are your natural allies, but feel alienated," Richardson said, adding that Hispanics, many of whom work in saw mills or mines, feel environmentalists want to take away their jobs.

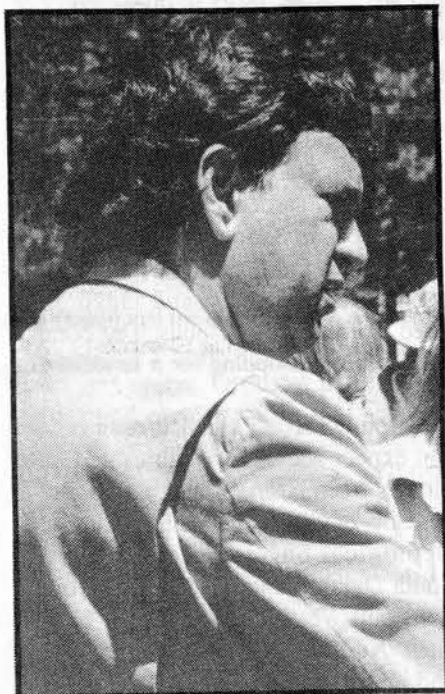
Tim Hermach of the Native Forest Council in Eugene, Ore., was pessimistic that Jontz's bill would get much beyond the House of Representatives this year, but felt it would stand a much better chance of success next year.

Hermach predicted, however, that the environmental movement is gathering sufficient strength that all timber harvesting on national forests will end by the year 2000, though such a ban on cutting would take many years of bitter battling in Congress. He said, "it doesn't make economic sense" to sell national forest timber at below-cost rates.

He agreed that environmental activists should be bolder. "Environmentalists are too nice," he said.

— Peter Eichstaedt

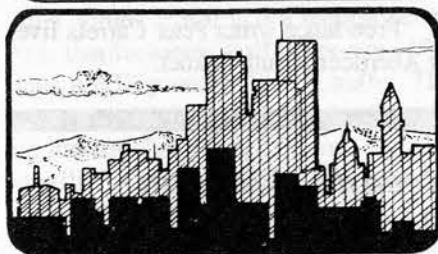
Peter Eichstaedt is a reporter for *The New Mexican* in Santa Fe.



John Gianini

Bill Richardson

HOTLINE



Tefl Shearer

Western cities flunk environmental test

Seven cities in the West received failing grades in an environmental audit conducted by the Washington, D.C.-based group Zero Population Growth. The group's report, released in April, ranked U.S. cities according to environmental health. Reno, Nev., received the worst scores possible in the categories of air quality, water quality and sewage treatment. Las Vegas, Nev., fared about the same. But Arizona had the biggest losers overall, with Phoenix, Mesa, Scottsdale, Tempe and Glendale ranked "poor" in nearly every category, from population change to toxic releases and water availability. "The studies indicate that there is a connection between large, growing populations and environ-

mental stress," says the group's Liza Baron. By such standards, however, Billings, Mont., and Denver, Colo., scored relatively well. The only "cleaner" towns were Independence, Mo., and Albany, N.Y.

Fewer Snake chinook to be caught

This fall a few hundred extra chinook salmon will brave the rapids and dams of Idaho's Snake River to reach their spawning grounds. The Pacific Fishery Management Council has ordered ocean fishermen to reduce their harvest of the endangered fish by 20 percent, which will add about 50 salmon to the estimated 400 already surviving the arduous journey upriver. "At these low numbers, even a few saved to spawn in 1991 will help," Dexter Pitman, fisheries manager for the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, told *The Associated Press*. But some members of the 13-person Pacific Fishery Management Council opposed the 20-percent reduction as too low. "Because of the critically low abundance of Snake River Basin fall chinook," they said, "returning every fish possible to the natural spawning grounds of the Snake River is important."

American Indians receive sacred items

The Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History will return more than 700 human skeletal parts and burial items to the Larsen Bay Tribal Council of Kodiak Island, Alaska. "This landmark decision should clear the way for the numerous other requests that are currently pending before the Smithsonian," said Henry Sockbeson, Native American Rights Fund staff attorney. Prompted by the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990, which states that "human interest in one's ancestors is paramount over the interests of scientific research," the Smithsonian Institution has promised to honor all legitimate claims by American Indians for ancestral skeletal remains and cultural artifacts. In New York City, Elizabeth Sackler paid Sotheby's auction house \$39,050 for three controversial Arizona Indian masks in order to return them to their homeland, reports *The Arizona Republic*. Navajo and Hopi tribe members had protested Sotheby's auctioning of the sacred items. Hopi Chairman Vernon Masayesva said he was pleasantly surprised by Sackler's gesture.

Arizona rivers

The Arizona Rivers Coalition is seeking federal wild and scenic river designation for approximately 1,700 miles of 40 Arizona waterways. "Arizona has lost [the riparian habitat of] an estimated 90 percent of its desert streams," Gail Peters, state representative for American Rivers, told *The Arizona Republic*. The proposal would guard portions of the Colorado, Salt, Gila, Agua Fria and Verde rivers. Since 1968, Congress has granted wild and scenic designation to more than 9,000 miles of U.S. rivers. In Arizona, this includes only one small portion of the Rio Verde.

BARBS

Cowboys, cars and what?

A new billboard in Deer Lodge, Mont., has sparked controversy within the chamber of commerce, according to *The Associated Press*. The sign for Deer Lodge reads: "Cowboys, Cars and Cons — Exit Now. 'I don't think they need the 'cons' part on there,'" said Mayor R.F. Labbe, who fears offending family members visiting the local state prison.

South Dakota's Sioux debate huge national garbage dump

When South Dakota's Sioux tribes were driven from their traditional homeland by the U.S. Government over a century ago, they were forcibly relocated to areas unwanted by non-Indians.

Today, the Sioux's remote, arid lands are suddenly being coveted by corporations. These businesses are interested in grabbing a piece of America's great new growth industry, garbage, and they view Sioux reservations as ideal places to bury trash from faraway cities blighted by overflowing landfills.



Last year the Pine Ridge Reservation in southwestern South Dakota rejected a proposal by AMCOR, a subsidiary of O&G Industries, to build a major landfill on the reservation. Later, another O&G subsidiary, RSW Inc., received approval from the Rosebud Reservation's tribal council to site a 5,700-acre landfill on Rosebud tribal land. According to RSW president Maurice Hoben, the dump would be "big enough to take care of all the waste in the United States."

While Hoben has since made it clear his firm has no intention of handling all the nation's garbage, he did say the site could easily serve as a garbage depository for a large portion of the country.

The tribal council's approval triggered a controversy that has thrust tribal politics, federal bureaucrats and garbage entrepreneurs into a heated atmosphere that is swirling with anger and rumors.

Grassroots opponents question the need to accommodate garbage from faraway places. They describe the traditional relationship between the Sioux and the earth. Landfill supporters say that because the tribe lacks money to address its own garbage problems, the assistance of outsiders is necessary.

The final decision on the landfill probably will come from Bureau of Indian Affairs Area Director Jerry Jaeger, who oversees all reservations in Nebraska and the Dakotas, unless the Secretary of the Interior wishes to assume final authority in the matter.

Earlier this year, Jaeger requested that an Environmental Impact Statement

be completed before further consideration of the proposal. His decision was affirmed by Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan Jr. The environmental analysis will take at least 18 months.

Meanwhile, reservation residents are vigorously organizing to defeat pro-dump council members during August's primary election. Ron Valandra, a leading dump opponent and organizer of the anti-dump Good Road Coalition, said, "A vote for an incumbent is a vote for trash." Valandra's group has sought a reservation-wide vote on the issue, but the tribal council has refused to allow such an election.

Earlier this year a petition supporting the landfill was circulated. When the petition was turned in to tribal officials, it was discovered that at least one of the signatories had died before his signature was dated. Many others said they had not signed the petition. An RSW official admitted to having helped write and distribute the petition. An investigation of the signatures is now under way.

There also has been pressure to transfer or fire the reservation's BIA supervisor, Cora Jones. Jerry Jaeger, Jones's boss, confirmed that Tribal Chairman Ralph Moran "is part of the pressure to remove Cora Jones." Moran is a staunch supporter of RSW, while Jones adamantly opposes the landfill.

One of Jones's greatest concerns is the agreement signed by the tribal council and RSW. "I think the tribe was sold a bill of goods," she said. "The council waived its tribal sovereignty, and this opens up the tribe to lawsuits from RSW."

"If this subsidiary comes in here and decimates the land," Jones warned, "there's nothing we can do to RSW. There's no way we can go back to the parent company. The tribe would have no legal recourse, nor would the BIA."

Jones also worries about environmental impacts and the financial incentives promised the tribe. "The agreement contains inadequate monitoring of the site and the fees are much too small," she said.

The agreement stipulates that RSW will have sole discretion over monitoring ground- and surface water at the site. It also says that the reservation could not enact new laws to govern the project and that no South Dakota standards would apply. RSW would decide what goes into the landfill though no nuclear, medical, hazardous or toxic waste could be sent to the site.



Cora Jones, a Santee Sioux, BIA superintendent at Rosebud Reservation, South Dakota

The Rosebud Reservation would receive at least \$1 per ton of trash or more, depending on the dump's profitability. Critics say that \$1 per ton is insufficient if the landfill causes pollution. They note that some cities pay landfill operators up to \$80 to handle a ton of trash.

Cleve Neiss currently directs landfills on the reservation and supports the RSW agreement. Neiss said the tribe is in a desperate position regarding safe disposal of its own garbage.

"We don't have the money to comply with standards soon to be enforced by EPA," he explained. "We have 14 landfills, all substandard, on the reservation. It may cost up to \$6.5 million to fix the landfills. If we don't improve them, we'll have to ship our garbage to an approved landfill. We can't afford that either."

Neiss emphasized that the tribe had approached RSW for assistance. "We have no other way to help our people," he said. "We're looking at this landfill in order to solve our own problems. I'm open to any other suggestions, but all I hear are complaints."

Despite Neiss's rationale, support for the dump among reservation resi-

dents is not widespread. Of the reservation's 20 communities, only one favors the proposal.

At one community meeting, Oleta Mednansky learned that land she owned and land she leased from the tribe were part of the proposed landfill site. Mednansky was outraged the tribal council would sign an agreement without first consulting her. This didn't surprise Cora Jones. "The whole proposal was pursued under a shroud of secrecy," she said.

Jerry Jaeger said RSW had hoped to move as quickly and quietly as possible. "They want to take shortcuts, run it by very quickly rather than do a full-blown study and thoroughly analyze the study," he said in describing RSW's attitude about the Environmental Impact Statement.

James Abourezk, a former South Dakota senator, serves as the tribe's legal council. Abourezk's prominent role in the landfill issue concerns BIA officials. According to Jerry Jaeger and Cora Jones, Abourezk's tribal fees for legal work regarding the landfill are being reimbursed by RSW. "There is concern about a conflict of interest in this matter," said Jaeger.

Jaeger also said Abourezk was "twisting the BIA's arm to move the project forward." The *Lakota Times* newspaper reported that Abourezk was advising the tribe how to oust Cora Jones. Abourezk referred questions about his involvement to his client, the tribe.

The Rosebud landfill would be the first built and managed by RSW or O&G Industries. O&G is a well-established construction and engineering firm headquartered in Connecticut. Maurice Hoben said O&G had previously managed landfill cleanup and closures at three Connecticut locations. The company has been shopping for a landfill site for several years.

South Dakota's Indian reservations can expect additional inquiries and sales pitches from business interests hoping to develop landfills. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, much of western South Dakota contains ideal shale formations and weather conditions for landfill sites. Additionally, the extreme poverty and joblessness on Sioux reservations, as well as the dilemma facing tribal officials about current, inadequate landfills, may make these proposals attractive.

—Peter Carrels

Free-lance writer Peter Carrels lives in Aberdeen, South Dakota.

HOTLINE

Members 'dun' American Express over ski area

The East Fork Ski Area near Durango, Colo., is still moving forward despite protests from environmentalist American Express cardholders. American Express controls 30 percent of the East Fork joint venture, which proposes to build a 4,600-acre ski area to accommodate 13,500 skiers each day. Environmental groups claim East Fork would degrade local air and water quality. American Express spokesman Jim Schwartz confirmed that the project has been "under review" lately. Dick Scroggins, a senior vice president, told *The Denver Post*, "Since last April, around the time of Earth Day, an increasing number of cardholders have called on us to become more sensitive to environmental concerns." In April, American Express stockholders attending their annual meeting were greeted

by members who had shredded their cards, painted the pieces blood-red and pinned them to a fur coat to protest the selling of fur through the cardholders' catalog.

Peregrines recover

The peregrine falcon, listed as an endangered species since 1969, is beginning to make a comeback throughout the West. Last March, Utah's falcon recovery team recommended that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service downgrade the status of the falcon from endangered to threatened in the northern section of the state and delist it entirely in the south. Idaho, too, has reported success in its peregrine recovery program, finding increases for 1990 in the numbers of wild falcons and their offspring. The peregrine approached extinction in the 1960s when contamination from DDT and other pesticides caused thinning of eggshells, which led to reduced birth rates. Since 1974, however, 3,000 captive-

bred peregrine falcons have been released into the wild. The Peregrine Fund, which initiated the project, hopes to have restored the populations in the West to a stable level by the year 2000.

Colorado enacts new pollution standards

Colorado in May enacted tough new auto pollution standards for the Denver metropolitan area. "Numerically, these standards are probably the most stringent in the region," said air pollution specialist Michael O'Toole of the state health department, which implemented the measures. The regulations approach the maximum legal limit, which stipulate that as many as one-third of inspected automobiles may fail. The new standards are designed to increase the percentage of cars requiring emissions-related repairs from 17 to 22 percent.

Nevada cleans up Steamboat Creek

Nevada engineers and environmental planners have begun to clean up Steamboat Creek, one of the tributaries of the Truckee River. The creek, which originates in Washoe Lake, collects high levels of phosphorous from fertilized pastures and farms as it flows north to the Truckee, where it arrives a putrid brown. The experimental cleanup process, the first step in a more comprehensive regional project, diverts water from Steamboat Creek to a treatment center where it is purified. "It's the first time anyone has attempted to clean up a creek in the state," said Jim Cooper, a water planning supervisor for the Nevada Environmental Protection Agency, in an interview with the *Reno Gazette-Journal*. The cleanup operation is a response to federal pressure to improve water quality in the Truckee River.

Artists create mural to fight Colorado water project

Trans-mountain water diversions generally inspire contention, litigation and sometimes legislation. A proposal to export 200,000 acre-feet a year from a rural valley in southern Colorado is stirring artists as well as water lawyers into action.

Residents and organizations of the San Luis Valley are virtually unanimous in their opposition to American Water Development Inc.'s plan to pump and pipe groundwater to Front Range cities (HCN, 11/6/89 and 10/22/90). Now, the whole idea of exporting the valley's resources — in particular AWDI's water-marketing plan and Battle Mountain Gold Corp.'s cyanide mining activities near San Luis (HCN, 6/14/90) — has become the muse of muralists.

In an abandoned car dealership showroom just a block from Alamosa's main street, five artists are at work on a project they say is an educational tool. Under the direction of renowned muralist Leo Tanguma, four painters who live in this high desert valley are creating a free-standing, three-dimensional mural 14 feet high and 35 feet wide. Its 12 panels come apart.

"We mean to travel with it," says Tanguma. "We mean to articulate with it as best we can the issues as this community has come to know them ... so that we can create massive opposition to the exploitation of one region by people from another area simply because they have the capital."

"This mural is really an artists' statement about a threat to our environment," says one of the painters. "The water diversion will not only devastate the farmers and ranchers who live here but it will kill the wildlife."

AWDI's water application goes to court in October. Opposers include irrigators and municipalities that want to preserve the agricultural communities of the valley. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Colorado Division of Wildlife also oppose the plan because the valley's ample wetlands are Colorado's premier duck producing area and are essential to sandhill cranes and other migratory birds. The National Park Service, another opposer, is keeping its eye on the 55-square-mile Great Sand Dunes National Monument because it is likely that the high water table holds the dunes in place.

"The unique attribute of the San Luis Valley is that it is a natural reservoir that recharges itself [from run-off]," says AWDI president Dale Schaffer. The company, originally founded by Canadian industrialist Maurice Strong, has said it will fix any damage caused to wells and surface waters by its pumping.

"Well, there's some things you just can't fix," says Carol Mondragon, co-chairperson of a broad-based community committee driving the mural project. Mondragon owns the Fireworks Gallery in Alamosa, which is how she first met Tanguma.

In the past 22 years Tanguma has orchestrated and painted nearly 30 murals. They are group collaborations focusing on community issues, from mental illness and police brutality to senior citizens and teen gangs. Hispanic and black communities from Texas to Oregon have invited Tanguma to help them express their experience and cultural identity.

"I mean to do these works so that they become focal points for community discussion," says Tanguma. "This particular mural is meant to enhance awareness all over the state of Colorado."

The San Luis Valley mural mirrors



Becky Rumsey

Artists hope this mural will help create statewide opposition to outsiders' exploitation of Colorado's San Luis Valley

the landscape itself. The San Juans and Sangre de Cristos rise up, snow-capped, on the sides, and as your eye sweeps across the mural, their lower elevations change from aquamarine to blue to deep red, just as they might during the course of a day. The sand dunes undulate on one side behind a foreground of asters, yucca and scarlet gilia. Descending into the heart of this alpine scene are two tall panels, pointed like icicles. At the top of one, a "wheeler-dealer" in wing-tipped shoes closes a deal on the phone.

"These panels represent the outside corporations that have come into the valley to exploit the community," says Tanguma, pointing to the spot where huge segments of drainage hose will come out of the valley and go over the mountains. In the center, a huge drill sucks up water, gold, fish and whooping cranes. As they spiral upwards, dollar bills emerge, symbolizing tremendous profits.

But the story doesn't end there. Two wing panels in the vibrant colors of the Southwest encircle the valley like half-moons.

"These crescent shapes contain images of the people of the San Luis Valley rising up to protect their valley," says Tanguma. On one side the dominant figure is a Chicana with long black hair. She is buoyed up by people of all colors and ages with their arms around each other. On the other side a young blond farmer springs from the community, holding up a cornucopia of fruits, grains and vegetables. The San Luis Valley is a major producer of potatoes, lettuce and barley. But mushrooms, canola, quinoa, cabbage, cauliflower, beets, carrots, spinach, apples, apricots, plums and strawberries also pour out of the mural's horn of plenty.

"We're talking about an area the size of Delaware that has now become a community," Jill Starkey says as she paints beet greens. "A community that's concerned with their neighbor losing water, because if their neighbor loses water so do they. Our wells don't get recharged off of rain — we average eight inches of rainfall a year. I don't even know anybody who owns an umbrella."

"We're a small area, but we do produce what other people eat, and a lot of that is organic," says Starkey, a former potato inspector who lives on a small

farm in La Garita with her family. "The laughing comments are, 'Well, when there are no more farms we can always go to the supermarket, but the supermarkets aren't going to be here either. And if you take one small community and eliminate it, pretty soon there's going to be another small community eliminated ... and that's kind of a scary thing to contemplate.'"

"One thing that we want to express with the mural is that we are not going to be the victims," says Mondragon. So far, with the help of a \$5,000 grant from the Colorado Council on the Arts and Humanities, and another small grant from the grassroots Citizens for San Luis Valley Water, the mural is well under way. But the committee is still trying to raise the money to take the mural on the road — especially to the state fair in Pueblo this August.

"This mural could bring to the people

of Colorado Springs, Denver, Aurora ... knowledge of ... what is going to happen to an area of their state," says Ferris Bervig, Alamosa's mayor. His hardware store is one of the many local businesses that contributed lumber, nails, lodging, studio space and gallons of paint to the project. "It's another proof in the pudding that every aspect of life in the valley is vitally interested in this water issue."

"We were not a united valley two years ago," says artist Mark Jacobi. "People were saying, 'You'll never get this valley together.' Well, you bring a wolf into the village and people start to pull together. That's about the only thing I'm going to say thank you to AWDI for."

— Becky Rumsey

Becky Rumsey, a former HCN staff member, is a radio producer for the High Plains News Service.

HOTLINE



Horse and mule loggers

Wyoming horse and mule loggers feel they're being left out in the cold because the new Bridger-Teton National Forest management plan reduces logging by more than one-half. Horse and mule loggers claim the forest managers aren't doing enough to help the small industry compete with large, mechanized companies in bidding for contracts. "Instead of encouraging alternative forms of logging like their plan says, they just shut everyone out," Neil Bailey, president of the North American Horse and Mule Loggers Association, told the *Jackson Hole Guide*. The forest plan would require some "small business only" sales if large companies started to take over the local indus-

try, said forest Superintendent Brian Stout, adding that this has not been necessary yet. Horse and mule logging makes less of an impact on undergrowth than tractor skidders do, said Bailey. But many contend that the impact on wildlife is greater because loggers working with horses and mules have to remain in a given area for a longer time.

Nevada county reconsiders Carson River dam

County officials are having second thoughts about building a dam on the Carson River in Douglas County, Nev. As county commissioners prepare a new 20-year master plan, residents aren't sure they want the growth that the dam would promote. "It's a matter of how big do we want this place to get," said Commissioner Dave Pumphrey. The commissioners will not approve the project until the master plan and population projections are completed, according to the *Reno Gazette-Journal*. Some residents fear that stalling the project will only make it more costly. Others fear that neighboring counties may usurp Douglas's water rights and build dams of their own. Sections of the Carson River in Nevada are currently being considered for federal wild and scenic designation; sections in California have already been designated.

Judge Dwyer stops new timber sales in old-growth forests

U.S. District Court Judge William Dwyer has ordered the Forest Service to halt timber sales in spotted owl habitat. The court found "a deliberate and systematic refusal by the U.S. Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service to comply with laws protecting wildlife."

"This is not the doing of the scientists, foresters, rangers and others," Sen. Dwyer wrote May 23, but "reflects decisions made by higher authorities in the executive branch of government." The pattern of high-level noncompliance has fueled speculation that the Bush administration is intentionally worsening the timber supply crisis to generate support for changes in environmental laws.

The injunction blocks new timber sales in the ancient stands of the 17 "spotted owl" national forests located west of the Cascades in Washington, Oregon and northern California. Bureau of Land Management timber sales are not affected.

The judge ordered the Forest Service "to proceed diligently" to develop a plan by March 5, 1992, "to ensure the northern spotted owl's viability, together with an environmental impact statement," as required by the National Forest Management Act. After that date, timber sales could proceed.

The act requires the Forest Service to manage its lands "to maintain viable populations of existing native and desired non-native vertebrate species," a statutory requirement separate from those required by the Endangered Species Act because of the owl's threatened status.

In the fall of 1989, Congress specifically ordered the Forest Service to develop a protection plan for the owl by Sept. 30, 1990. The agency was directed to consider the guidelines recommended by the Interagency Scientific Committee, also known as the Jack Ward Thomas Report, which was issued in April 1990. Forest Service Deputy Chief George Leonard told the court that the agency was making progress on the plan until May 1990, when Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan Jr. and then-Agriculture Secretary Clayton Yeutter ordered work halted on the plan.

As everyone expected, the Fish and Wildlife Service listed the owl in June 1990. "Rather than proceed to implement the Endangered Species Act, the White House issued a 'response' calling for weakening the act and insulating Forest Service and BLM activities from administrative and judicial review," says attorney Kevin Kirchner of the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund. Kirchner argued the case against the Forest Service.

Lujan and Yeutter then convened a task force to devise a long-term solution



Spotted owl

to ancient forest and spotted owl issues. When that task force failed to produce a plan, the Forest Service, facing its Sept. 30 deadline, announced that it would proceed with timber sales in a manner "not inconsistent with" the Thomas report. Dwyer ruled that this action violated the National Forest Management Act's "requirement for public input and an environmental impact statement because the Thomas report was not subjected to either."

In a related case, U.S. District Judge Thomas S. Zilly in Seattle ruled Feb. 26 that the Fish and Wildlife Service violated the Endangered Species Act by failing to designate critical habitat for the owl when it listed the bird in June 1990. Under court order, the agency finally identified 11.6 million acres of critical habitat in late April, adding to the "Habitat Conservation Areas" identified by the Thomas report. No specific guidelines have been issued for these areas, which include public and private lands, adding to the uncertainty over future timber supplies. According to a Federal Register notice, designated critical habitat "does not prescribe any particular management regime" and may

"include timber harvests."

While all sides acknowledge that the Thomas report is scientifically credible, even the Fish and Wildlife Service is uncertain whether it can succeed in saving the owl. In a significant footnote, Judge Zilly wrote: "Notably, the scientific committee assumes a 50 percent decline in owl population. Such species loss appears inconsistent with the species conservation and recovery mandates of the Endangered Species Act."

"The ISC [Thomas] report acknowledges that its plan is risky and will only work if it is followed for 200 years, during which new habitat will be grown," says Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund lawyer Todd True. The federal government has not even adopted the ISC recommendations for three years, much less for 200 years. In short, despite the requirements of the ESA, no plan has been in place to protect the owl while agencies continue to log owl habitat at an unsustainable rate mandated by Congress.

In response to the ruling, Rep. Peter DeFazio, D-Ore., blamed the Republican administration, saying, "You have

extraordinary incompetence and indifference ... or this is crisis by design." DeFazio said "pervasive rumors" are circulating in Washington that the Bush administration, by delaying action on an owl plan, intended to exacerbate the timber supply crisis in order to exploit it to weaken the Endangered Species Act and exempt future timber sales from environmental laws.

According to this "train wreck" theory, the administration hopes to create serious economic disruption and a strong political backlash in the Pacific Northwest, generating public sentiment for weakening environmental laws and for restraints on court challenges of timber sales. Even Judge Dwyer noted: "Had the Forest Service done what Congress directed it to do — adopt a lawful plan by last fall — this case would have ended some time ago."

"Democratic congressmen point fingers at the Republican administration, but they also share the blame for setting unsustainable timber harvest levels over the last decade," said Charlotte Levinson, president of the Oregon Natural Resources Council, which seeks to protect the region's remaining ancient forests. While not necessarily disagreeing with the theory, she says the "legacy of overcutting, not owls or environmentalists, are to blame for the loss of timber industry jobs."

When the owl was listed in 1990, White House Chief of Staff John Sununu did urge that the Endangered Species Act be amended to help ease the economic impact of saving the owl, prompting an outcry from environmentalists. A bill to weaken the act, introduced by Sen. Bob Packwood, R-Ore., was defeated in the Senate last fall by a two-to-one margin.

After Dwyer's injunction, Sen. Mark Hatfield, Oregon's powerful pro-timber Republican, told The Associated Press that Bush administration aides are again ready to push for weakening the act when it is up for reauthorization in 1992. BLM Director Cy Jamison testified before Congress in favor of suspending environmental requirements pertaining to the timber sale program. In addition, a spokesman for Interior Secretary Lujan complained that the judiciary's stretched interpretation of the act was infringing on the powers of the executive branch.

"The problem here," wrote Dwyer, "has not been any shortcoming of the laws but simply a refusal of administrative agencies to comply with them."

— Christopher Orsinger

Christopher Orsinger is a free-lance journalist based in Eugene, Ore.

Oregon hearings draw angry responses to old-growth plan

A steaming-mad crowd of 600 wood products workers gathered in Cresswell, Ore., May 22 to vent years of festering anger over the spotted owl controversy to a hearing officer from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The federal Endangered Species Act requires hearings on the potential economic impacts of critical habitat designation for the owl. The Cresswell event drew testimony from southern and central Oregon, and workers arrived by the busload from as far away as the California border.

Seated before large picture windows overlooking a golf course and a mountain covered by clearcuts, the hearing officer presided over two three-hour sessions. He urged participants to focus

their remarks on potential economic impacts of the Fish and Wildlife Service's proposal to set aside 11.6 million acres of critical habitat for the spotted owl. But testimony ranged from stories of worker suicides to threats of violence, election-day revolts and open revolution against the federal government. Many urged that private lands be exempted from owl habitat designation.

In the afternoon session, attended by almost 700 people, the president of the Oregon Natural Resources Council and an environmentalist county councilman were shouted down by the yellow-ribbon-wearing crowd. During the evening session, the single pro-environment speaker was loudly booed. Tempers rose

throughout the remainder of the evening.

"When these environmentalists were out protesting to save the whales or the trees, we did not stop them because we were busy working," said a Roseburg millworker.

A store owner from Roseburg said, "The time for rhetoric is past. It is our duty to throw off this government." Another speaker said he was frightened by "talk of violence and revolution that I've never heard before."

Though anger toward "preservationists" was a common theme in statements, many expressed dismay at the "farce" of the hearings, which no high-level officials attended. Many speakers were also angry that the hearings were far from

Douglas County, Ore., where the largest area of spotted owl critical habitat was set aside by the Fish and Wildlife Service after a federal court ordered the agency to map specific owl habitat protection areas last month. Douglas County is heavily dependent on the timber industry.

The hearings later moved on to Portland and Olympia, where large pro-logging demonstrations occurred.

— Tom Ribe

The writer lives in Eugene, Ore. He is a reporter for *What's Happening* and the former editor of AFSEE's *Inner Voice*.

Montana spurns feds to hold spring grizzly hunt

Montana wildlife officials have rebuffed federal pressure to call off a special early grizzly bear hunt. Federal wildlife officials wanted it stopped in order to prevent a possible overkill this year of the threatened species.

Under the Endangered Species Act, no grizzlies are allowed to be killed in the lower 48 states, with the exception of a special hunt in northwest Montana on the eastern front of the Continental Divide. The hunt had been held in the fall until this year.

On April 13, a 600-pound, 21-year-old male grizzly was killed by a Vermont logger using a .30-.30 lever-action carbine at close range, in heavy brush.

On April 21, a local rancher killed a 475-pound, 5-year-old male at 300 yards with a .340 Weatherby rifle.

On May 4, the last day of the hunt, an Ennis, Mont., taxidermist killed a 450-pound, three-year-old male at 40 yards. All hunters held special permits.

Since 1985, regulations set by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service limited to 14 the number of grizzlies to be killed by human means in the area. In 1990, only one bear was allowed to be killed. That was during the special fall hunting season, after 13 bears had died from other human-caused means, including four bears hit by trains and five exterminated as "nuisance bears."

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks scheduled the hunt this year from early April through May 4, and issued 50 permits to hunters to kill up to 14 bears or six females — whichever came first.

Montana's reason for the spring hunt was to target potentially troublesome male bears. According to Elliot Sutta, acting regional director of the Denver Region of the Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana wildlife managers

hoped that the spring hunt would "coordinate with the adult female grizzly's denning chronology."

"An early spring hunt would tend to concentrate hunting pressures on males," Sutta explained. "The fall hunt does not have this advantage. Also, the spring hunt would put more hunting pressure on subadult grizzly bears using lower-elevation habitat. These bears make up a disproportionate higher percentage of nuisance grizzly bears in northwestern Montana."

Sutta's agency had approved the state's spring hunt plan, but later reversed its position on the advice of Interior Department lawyers. Prompted by a news report of the first grizzly shot by a hunter, the Fund for Animals notified Fish and Wildlife Service officials that the Montana hunt violated federal regulations, and threatened legal action if the hunt continued.

The Fund for Animals contended that if 14 bears were killed during the spring hunt, and more were killed by other human causes during the spring and fall, the total could far exceed the grizzly mortality quota.

Sutta, in an April 23 letter to Fund for Animals lawyers, said his office reviewed the regulations and agreed "that we have no authority to carry excess mortality from one year forward to the next year and correct for it.... because of this, we have concluded that the spring grizzly bear hunt should be halted and have requested the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to stop the hunt immediately."

But Montana officials, still smarting from the state's recently cancelled, controversial Yellowstone bison hunt, refused to honor Sutta's request. The Fund for Animals and the Swan View Coalition, a Kalispell-based conservation

group, sought a temporary restraining order against the hunt in state court in Helena. The judge denied the groups' request on jurisdictional grounds May 1, and the state refused an out-of-court settlement offered by the groups to drop the suit if the state would end the hunt before May 5.

In a letter to K.L. Cool, director of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, John Spinks, the Fish and Wildlife Service's deputy regional director in Denver, said the spring hunt violated "existing regulation ... Our major concern is that there is no quota on the number of male bears or total bears that the 50 licensed can harvest in the spring hunt or a written contingency plan to terminate the hunt once a reasonable quota was reached."

Montana Gov. Stan Stephens, in a letter to Spinks, defended the spring bear hunt and accused the federal agency of "unproductive hand-wringing and whimpering," and of caving in to pressure from environmental groups.

"You may feel compelled, for whatever reason, to take orders from these anti-hunting activist groups, but we in Montana do not. We shall defend our hunt to the fullest possible extent," Stephens wrote.

Fund for Animals national director Wayne Pacelle said, "I have never heard such a juvenile statement from a state's highest elected official. We think that the shooting of any grizzly bear for a trophy is ethically appalling. However, fall season after other human-induced kills are tabulated is consistent with existing regulations. This policy is not consistent."

On May 3, one day before the hunt ended, the U.S. Justice Department refused a Fund for Animals request to bring civil and criminal charges against state officials for alleged violations of

the Endangered Species Act in connection with the grizzly hunt. James Kilbourne, of the Justice Department's Environment and Natural Resources Division, said neither his agency nor Interior has the authority under the Endangered Species Act to end the Montana grizzly hunt.

"One way to rectify the concerns posed by a spring hunt of grizzly bear," Kilbourne wrote Fund for Animals lawyers, "is to amend the federal regulations so that the quota is not for a calendar year, but for a seasonal year, for instance, from spring to spring."

The Great Bear Foundation opposed the spring grizzly hunt as a threat to the stability of the bear's population base. But Lance Olsen, the foundation's president, said animal-rights groups like Fund for Animals "tend to forget they can stop the hunt and still lose the entire species through deterioration of habitat. I think it's possible that the grizzly bear is getting to where we can lose him without firing a shot, and it's really hard to get some of the groups to pay attention to that."

Pacelle said the Fund for Animals would file suit against Montana under the Endangered Species Act. "Montana is obviously more committed to grizzly bear hunters than it is to grizzly bears," he said, adding that K.L. Cool and Gov. Stephens should be prosecuted by the U.S. Justice Department as "renegade poachers" for allowing bears to be hunted in the spring.

Kool said his agency plans to continue holding the spring grizzly hunt, and will probably try to expand the hunt quota to the pre-1986 level of 25 animals next year.

— Patrick Dawson

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

Navajos oppose roadside additions in San Francisco Peaks

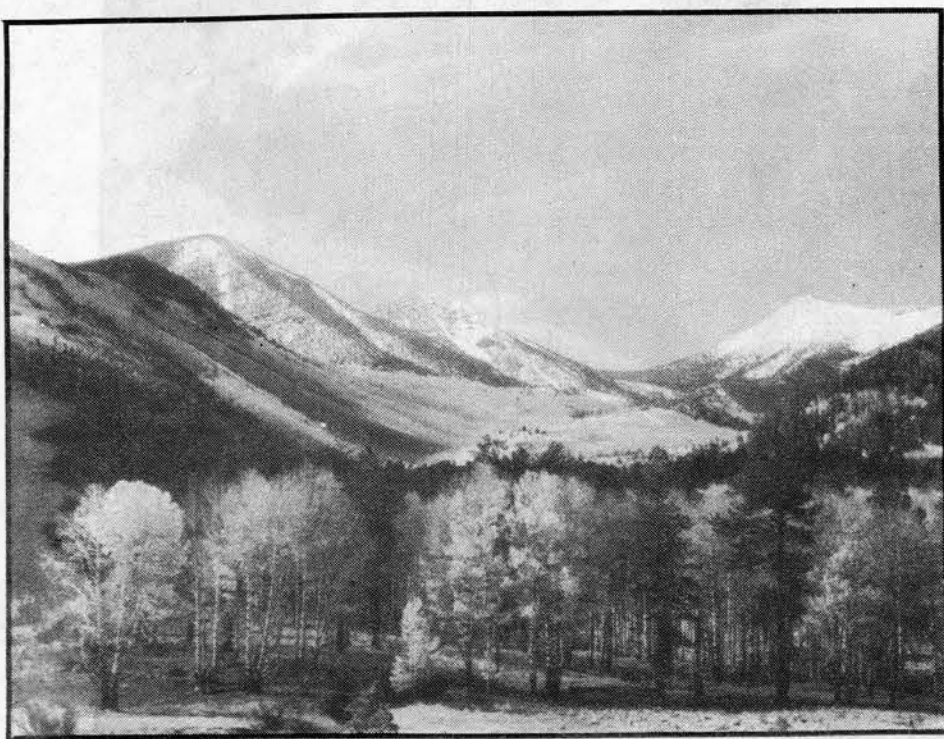
Navajos are rallying to oppose more development of the San Francisco Peaks, Arizona's highest mountains, just north of Flagstaff and south of the Navajo Reservation. The peaks are among the most sacred mountains to all of the regional Indian tribes. Navajo officials and medicine men recently told Coconino National Forest officials that they are against the development of a scenic byway along U.S. Highway 180 to the Grand Canyon from Flagstaff and up the Snow Bowl Road to the San Francisco Peaks.

"This mountain, as you have heard over and over, is one of the most sacred places on this earth for Navajos and other Indians here," said Harris Francis, cultural preservationist for the Navajo Tribe's Historic Preservation Department.

He said Navajos oppose so much as a shovelful of dirt being turned for any further development of the San Francisco Peaks. "No matter how minor these developments might be, to traditional people this is a desecration of one of our most sacred places," he said.

Increased traffic in recent years to both the Grand Canyon and the San Francisco Peaks has created a new management problem for the Forest Service. To mitigate impacts and make trips safer and more interesting, the Forest Service has proposed constructing historical and interpretive signs along U.S. 180 and Snow Bowl Road as well as building some new picnic and parking areas.

But even before the proposal could be explained at a recent meeting on the reservation, one Navajo after another stood to say the peaks are the most



Dale Schickelanz

San Francisco Peaks

sacred site to them and the neighboring Hopi Tribe, and that Native Americans are united against any further development. Speaking in Navajo with six Forest Service officials in attendance, several medicine men said white people don't respect their religion and run all over the mountains in areas they shouldn't go. They said they fear that allowing the byway plan to go forward would eventually mean more roads and trails on the peaks and the development of another ski area, although Forest Service officials assured them it would not.

The proposal is now in the public

comment phase, and final decisions are somewhere down the road, said Clyde Thompson, Coconino National Forest Peaks District ranger. He and other officials tried in vain to explain that they needed to know specifically which areas the medicine men have concerns about and what their recommendations are for improving the consultation process.

"I think folks have in their mind that we are going to do something," Thompson said. "What I understand has been talked about does not include construction and development."

The Navajos' concern over develop-

ment in the peaks dates to 1983, when the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., rejected their First Amendment religious-freedom arguments and ruled that the Forest Service had taken precautions to protect the peaks' environment. Navajos had been joined by Hopis, Zunis and Apaches in their 1979 legal battle to block development of the mountain on grounds of religious freedom.

The appeals court decision ended a long, bitter battle that the Indians saw as pitting the white man's economic interests and fun against their own religious duty to protect the mountains from being molested. In the end, the tribes resented revealing secret aspects of their religion to build their case, and the cultural clash has lingered ever since. With these memories and resentments renewed, even Navajo President Peterson Zah has joined those opposing any new development.

"Our medicine men want to stop the desecration of this sacred area, and the Navajo Nation stands behind them," he said.

One new recommendation the tribe made was to create an Indian advisory board from native communities throughout the region. This board would consider the numerous sacred areas in the peaks, review Forest Service plans and generally look out for tribal interests.

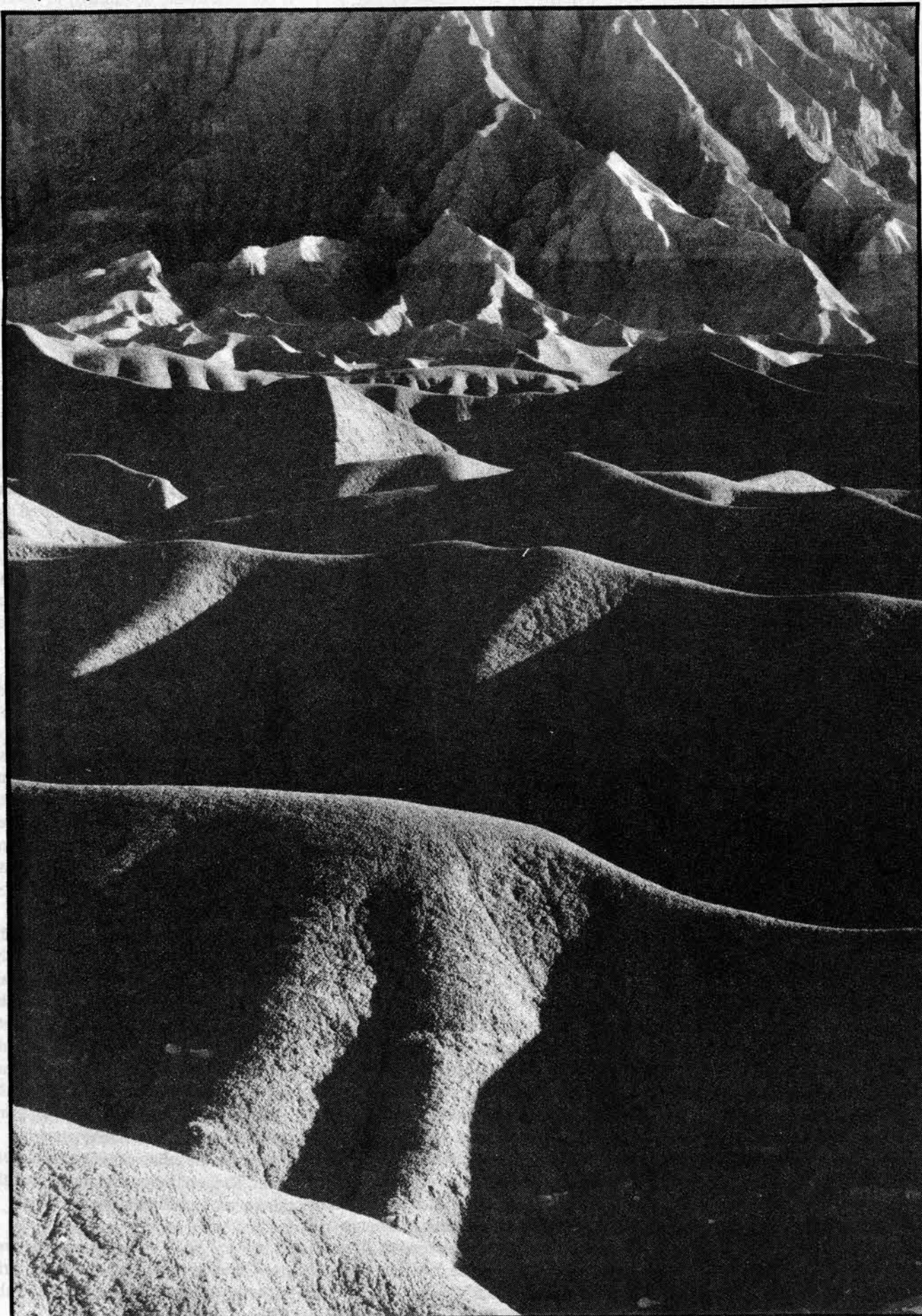
With no other options to choose from, Ranger Thompson agreed that the idea was a step in the right direction.

— George Hardeen

George Hardeen is a free-lance writer and radio producer based in Tuba City, Arizona.



Gray Canyon/Tom Miller



North Caineville Mesa/Tom Miller

Wilderness at the Edge

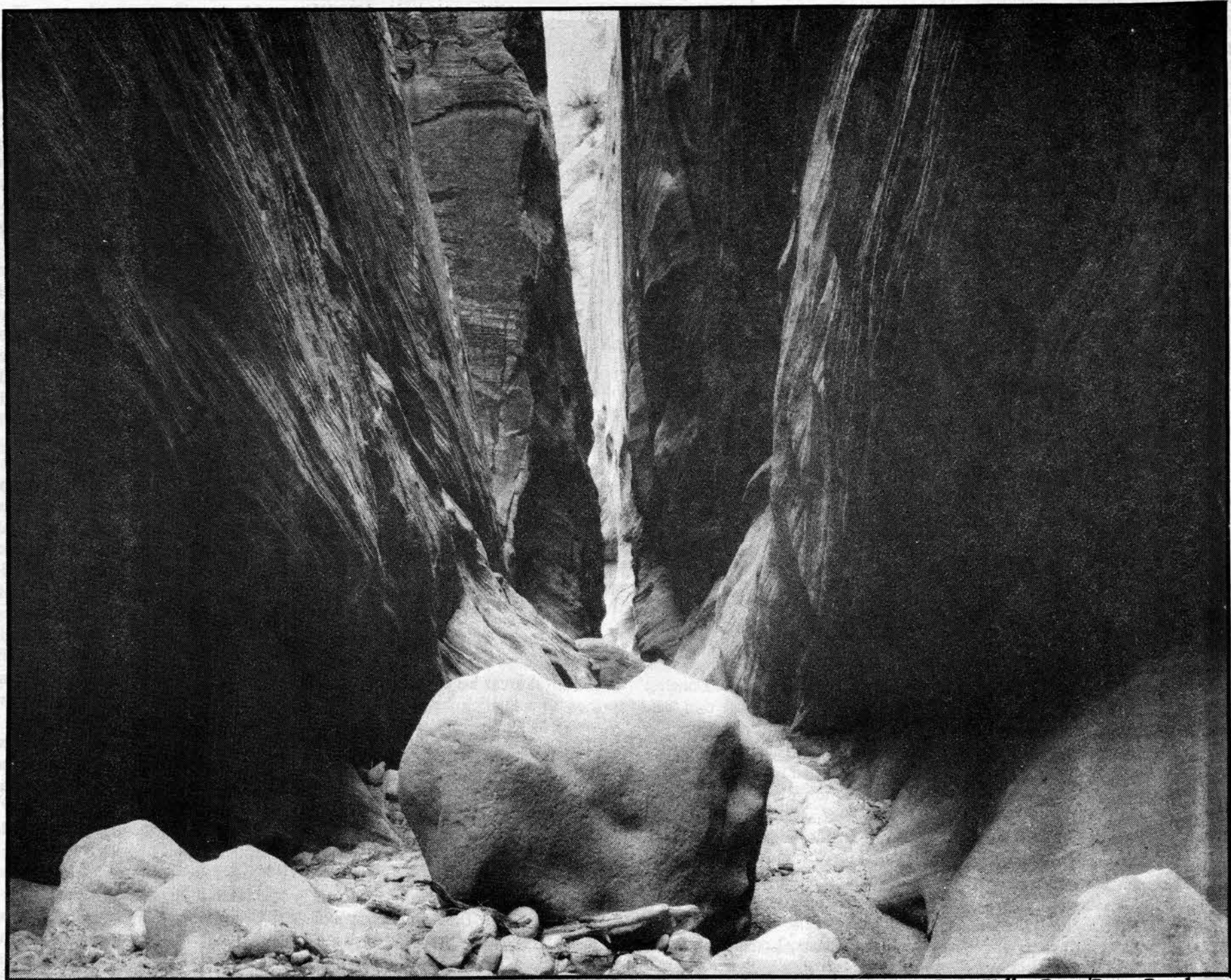
"Perpetually carved by erosion, the canyon lands of the Colorado Plateau are one of the most intricate landscapes on earth," writes Ray Wheeler in *Wilderness at the Edge*, the Utah Wilderness Coalition's arduously researched proposal for 5.7 million acres of wilderness in Utah.

"Consider a single canyon system — that of the Escalante River and its side-canyons — which comprises a network of nearly one thousand miles. Yet the Escalante is itself but a sidecanyon — one of 50 major sidecanyon systems tributary to the Colorado and Green rivers. To borrow a term recently coined by mathematicians, the landscape is 'fractal'; no matter how closely you examine or how thoroughly you explore it, its complexity remains infinite. You could spend a lifetime in the Escalante without fully exploring it; yet a single week there can exhaust the mind with its diversity, its fusion of the vast and the intimate."

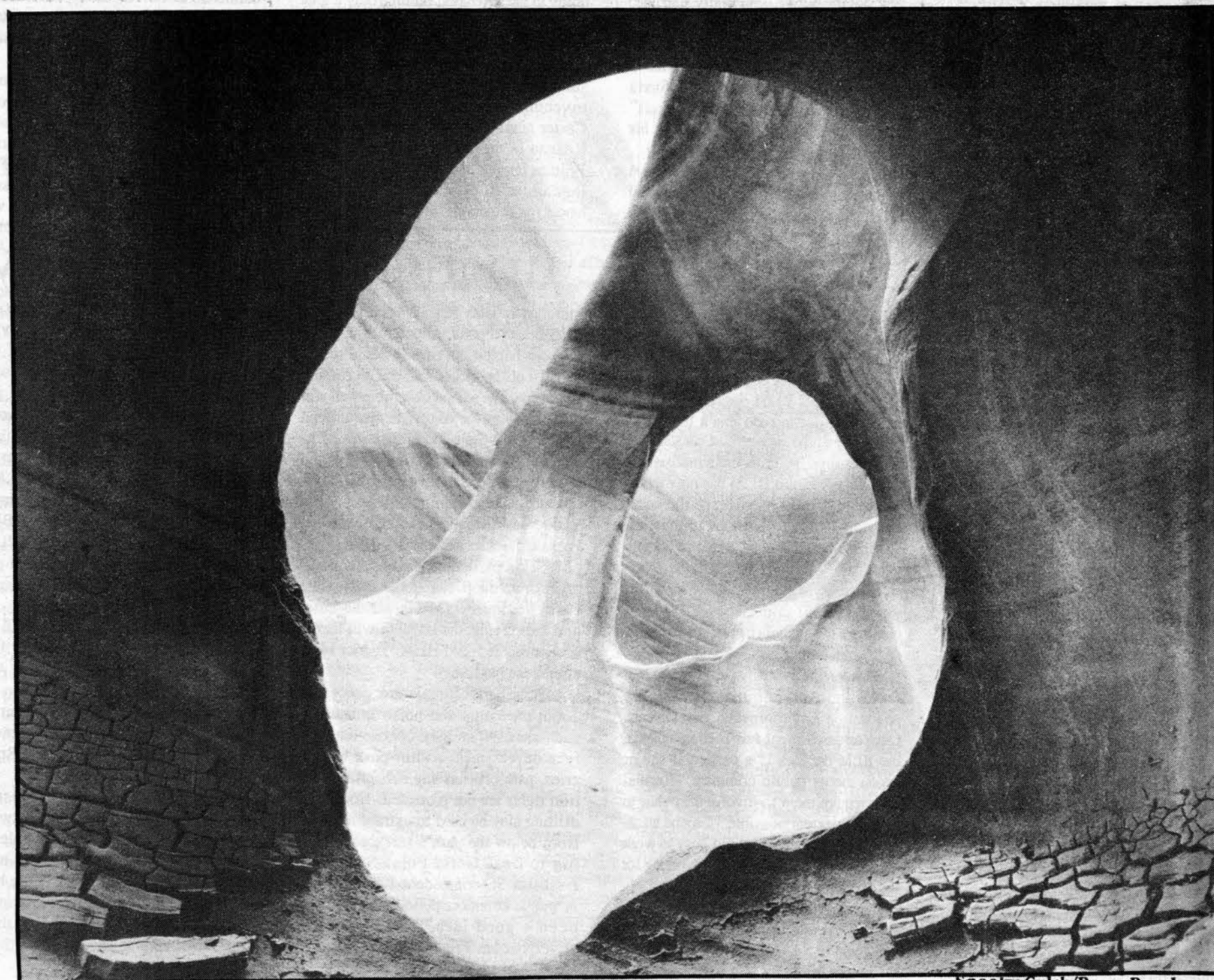
Descriptions of the canyon country are augmented by photographs, detailed maps, and sections on archaeology, botany and wildlife. Mailed to the press and politicians, *Wilderness at the Edge* is the primary tool for focusing national attention on Utah's wilderness issue. The cadre of activists and writers who put the 400-page book together commissioned economic studies, pored over reams of government documents and interviewed dozens of officials. They hiked up slickrock staircases and dug in the mud for water in desolate canyons.

What resulted is both a beautiful book and a powerful piece of advocacy, with a foreword by Congressman Wayne Owens, D-Utah, and an introduction by Wallace Stegner. The book can be ordered for \$23 from the Utah Wilderness Coalition, P.O. Box 11446, Salt Lake City, UT 84147. For a hard-back copy autographed by Owens and Stegner, send \$100 to Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Box 518, Cedar City, UT 84721.

— Lisa Jones



Long Valley Draw/Bruce Barnbaum



Spooky Gulch/Bruce Barnbaum

Utah's canyons ...

(Continued from page 1)

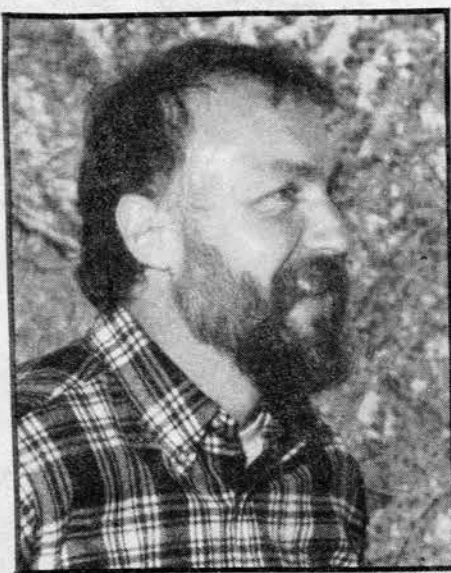
help stabilize and diversify a regional economy that has historically ridden the economic roller coaster of the mining industry. Their adversaries counter that wilderness designation will spell financial ruin for southern Utah.

A coalition of Utah environmentalists, along with Democratic Rep. Wayne Owens, wants more than 5 million acres of land administered by the BLM to be designated wilderness. The BLM, which manages nearly half of the land in the state, is proposing about 2 million. Republican Rep. Jim Hansen proposes 1.4 million acres.

In Escalante, population 816 and dropping, many people consider even Hansen's proposal exorbitant. The Escalante sawmill recently laid off 30 of its 110 workers. Grazing numbers have been cut because of drought, and 21 cattle were shot last year by unknown assailants. The development of a huge coal field and power plant on the Kaiparowits Plateau — a project attacked by environmentalists — fell through when the energy market stagnated in the 1970s. Now, although another company is eager to mine the coal, parts of the plateau are being protected as wilderness study areas, and nearly the entire plateau is included in Owens's wilderness proposal. Only a handful of this year's high school seniors are expected to find jobs at home.

Here, the subject of wilderness is cloaked in emotion and fear of almost mythic proportions. "Environmental groups have sent people here to spy," confided one waitress. And Louise Liston, who serves on the Garfield County Commission, says: "It's a scary thing. They want all the wilderness; they want control. Control of the land. And when you have federal control of the land you take away the basis of a functional democratic society."

The BLM wilderness issue in Utah has sparked controversy from the beginning. Congress mandated the BLM to review the roadless areas under its management in 1976 to determine which had wilderness qualities and



Norm Shrewsbury

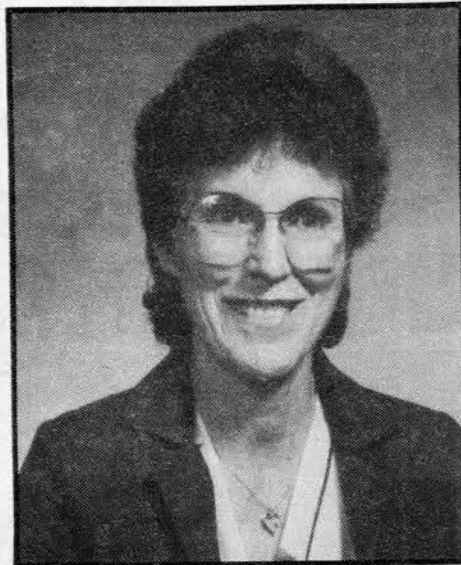
Clive Kincaid

to place those tracts under interim protection as wilderness study areas. This theoretically safeguards the land until Congress passes a wilderness bill, a process that can take years. The agency was then directed to weigh the wilderness qualities of the areas against competing uses of the land and to recommend how much should be designated wilderness.

BLM's inventory process, however, generated strong criticism from environmentalists, some members of Congress and even the upper ranks of its own agency. BLM was accused of performing inadequate surveys, changing data turned in by field staff and usurping Congress's job by failing to include land in wilderness study areas whenever there was even a potential conflict with another land use. The inventory — chronicled in *High Country News*, the Utah Wilderness Coalition's recently released book *Wilderness at the Edge* and elsewhere — galvanized Utah's environmental community, which has grown dramatically in size and stubbornness over the last decade.

"The inventory was pretty horrible. It was tawdry. It was a damn shame," says Clive Kincaid, a former BLM district wilderness coordinator in Arizona who was urged by a friend in the Sierra Club to investigate the "outrageous" BLM performance in Utah. He took his first trip to the state in September 1981.

"I can still remember the day I drove in from New Mexico up to Monticello and Moab," he recalls. "I was blown away.



Louise Liston

We're just talking about driving down the highway. I was just utterly astonished at the grandeur of the landscape." And when he looked into the BLM's inventory process, he found "a tremendously artful and subtle attempt" to eliminate conflicts with other resources.

"It's really outrageous; the American people's posterity was thieved," he says. "It was stolen right from under them. We've lost a lot of unique and beautiful areas because of it. I mean they're actually gone. I mean places where bulldozers have scarred the hillsides, roads have been built, Anasazi ruins have been destroyed."

Subsequently, Utah's conservation groups filed a series of appeals with the Interior Board of Land Appeals charging that the BLM didn't include about 1.4 million acres of pristine land in its wilderness study areas. It was "the cut that mattered," as Kincaid put it. Despite the board's ruling in 1983 that the BLM had erred in 90 percent of its decisions that were appealed, BLM reinstated less than half of those lands to the inventory, putting only a total of 3.2 million acres into wilderness study areas. Oversight hearings held by then-Rep. John Sieberling, D-Ohio, and pressure from within the agency to re-do the inventory were less fruitful. When the Carter administration yielded to Ronald Reagan in the White House and James Watt as Interior Secretary, the upper echelons of the BLM were replaced, and all hope for reforming the inventory from

within the agency died.

Utah's environmentalists then turned to the grassroots. Kincaid founded the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance in 1981, basing it not in the relatively liberal, urbanized Wasatch Front, but in Cedar City, "deep in the bowels of the devil himself" in southwestern Utah. SUWA now has over 8,000 members and a staff based in Salt Lake City, Moab and Washington, D.C.

SUWA and more than 30 other state and national environmental groups have now united as the Utah Wilderness Coalition, which has developed its own proposal and a strategy to advance it. The coalition wants more than 5 million acres of wilderness, and is currently lobbying its proposal to the nation over the heads of the mostly hostile Utah congressional delegation.

In 1989 the coalition got what many environmental groups only dream about — congressional representation. Wayne Owens, a Democrat elected to the House of Representatives in 1986, adopted the group's acreage in his wilderness bill. Owens proposes 5.4 million acres of wilderness. The coalition has since increased its proposal to 5.7 million. Owens, who had served as both a Mormon Church official and an aide to Sen. Edward Kennedy, D-Mass., is an anomaly. He spent his youth on a sheep farm in Panguitch, deep in southern Utah's canyon country, but was elected by an overwhelmingly urban district, Salt Lake City.

Owens, however, must go it alone. Both of Utah's senators, Jake Garn and Orrin Hatch, as well as Rep. Hansen, are adamantly opposed to a bill of the size Owens wants. The only other Democrat in the congressional delegation, freshman Rep. Bill Orton, said through a spokesman that Owens is "asking too much." Owens admits he doesn't expect to pass a 5.4-million acre bill. But he says he hopes to get much closer to his 5.4 than the 2 million the BLM is going to recommend.

"I think we will, but it's going to be a long process," Owens predicts. "I could get a bill through the House, but it would so embitter and divide the state it wouldn't be worth it. I couldn't get it past the Senate ... You'll never get a wilderness bill past the Senate that Jake and Orrin won't

Drilling applications pile up in canyon country

The success of Columbia Gas Development Corp.'s first horizontal drilling well near Arches and Canyonlands national parks has the Bureau of Land Management busy with new applications from various drilling companies. It also has Utah environmentalists concerned that a full production scenario may unfold without proper compliance with the National Environmental Protection Act.

As the words "oil boom" begin to circulate throughout the region, a total of five companies have proposed 12 exploratory wells in the area. These companies include the Coors Energy Co., Giant Exploration, Meridian Oil Inc. and Chevron Inc., as well as Columbia. For each successful exploratory well, a company can apply for 12 development wells.

The BLM recently approved a second horizontal drilling well for Columbia without hearing public comments on its Environmental Assessment. In the month of May alone, the Moab District Bureau of Land Management sought public response to only three of 51 proposals affecting public lands. These include oil and gas wells, seismographic lines, herbicide applications, location of power lines, mining proposals, road construction and blasting slickrock to make reservoirs for

domestic livestock, according to Scott Groene, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance staff attorney.

"We're talking about getting shut out of 94 percent of BLM decisions," Groene said. "This doesn't do much to give us confidence in the stewards of our land."

Pressured by environmentalists and the local press, the BLM has now incorporated a 15-day comment period on all other oil and gas decisions in the area. But for Groene, that's "like a half a cup of coffee." The public will be overwhelmed trying to comment on all of the proposals, said Groene. This will eliminate the possibility of securing 30-day comment periods, he said.

Under the National Environmental Protection Act, comment periods are optional on Environmental Assessments. Once an assessment has been completed, the BLM decides if a particular site or action merits public comment. "Regulations require them to involve the public to the fullest extent possible," Groene insisted. "The BLM can't be too busy to work for the public because they're working for the development companies."

Brad Palmer, area manager for the BLM, said early in May that there probably would be a 15-day comment period on the proposed Coors and Columbia sites. The Coors site is in Little Canyon, an area

included in Utah Rep. Wayne Owens's wilderness proposal. Although it is prime bighorn habitat, an earlier BLM report called it of "no special interest," according to Groene. The second Columbia well will be visible from the visitors' center of Dead Horse Point State Park. But the BLM decided it entailed no controversy, and thus needed no comment period, despite repeated requests from the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance and the National Parks and Conservation Association.

"This particular well is about 10 miles from the [Dead Horse Point State Park] headquarters. With all the buses and kids crying, the impacts will hardly be noticeable," said BLM District Manager Gene Nodine.

State park officials are concerned about the visual and noise impacts of such sites. While they oppose any surface development within park boundaries, park officials say subsurface section rights are not protected. Horizontal drilling may be used to extract minerals from below the park's surface, according to Dead Horse Point State Park Assistant Superintendent Lee Sjoblom. A public comment period "would have been a good idea," said Sjoblom. "Everyone has a right to know."

Environmentalists contend that, in granting permits, the BLM is doing case-

by-case studies instead of looking at the cumulative impacts of drilling activity. Terri Martin, regional director of the National Parks and Conservation Association, believes that the addition of just one or two more wells to the area would cause the BLM to "exceed the 'high' threshold of development assessed in the 1988 plan amendment to the BLM's Grand Resource Area Management Plan." She has requested that the BLM place a moratorium on further oil and gas activity until a revised management plan amendment and Environmental Impact Statement have been completed.

Both Palmer and Nodine of the BLM acknowledge that there may be a need to revise the Grand Resource Area management plan, but only if there is a move from the present exploratory drilling stage to actual development. Then an Environmental Impact Statement may be required.

But environmentalists refuse to believe there's a difference between issuing exploratory permits and development permits. Once a company has a successful exploratory lease, "they have a vested right to go to development," said Groene. "The BLM treats those leases like they're candy. They throw them out to the crowd."

— Jacob Forman, HCN intern

buy. That's a political reality."

Hatch recently wrote: "Turning an excess of 5 million acres, which is approximately the size of the state of New Jersey, into an economic desert with no place for people would be an imprudent commitment of our resources and could well seal the fate of many rural Utah communities."

Similarly, Garn told a southern Utah high school class, "As long as I'm in the U.S. Senate with the ability to filibuster ... there will never be 5 million acres of wilderness in this state. Don't you worry about that."

But Garn, whom one long-time environmental lobbyist described as "a big hitter" who will "kill it deadlier than hell," announced last month he won't run for office again. His term ends in 1992.

Utah's entire political structure, however, is riddled with opposition. The state Legislature passed a resolution in 1986 opposing any further designation of wilderness. It also urged Congress to exclude any state with greater than 30 percent federal ownership from the provisions of the Wilderness Act. This year it voted 23 to 2 that no more than 1.4 million acres should be designated wilderness.

Similarly, the Utah Association of Counties believes more wilderness is unnecessary. "We're letting a handful of environmentalists try to determine what the economy is in the rural part of the state," Mark Walsh, the group's associate director, says. "I find that offensive."

And although the BLM's final wilderness recommendation is some 83,000 acres larger than its draft version, state BLM Director James Parker told the *Salt Lake Tribune* that the agency's 1.97 million acre proposal may have been too much.

"It's not like the world is going to end if you don't designate wilderness," he says. "There are many lands out there that are almost equally protected under the planning process. It's not like they're going to be destroyed ... Does it destroy a national park if you put a power line through it? Some people say yes, some people say no. I guess it depends on your definition of 'destroyed.'"

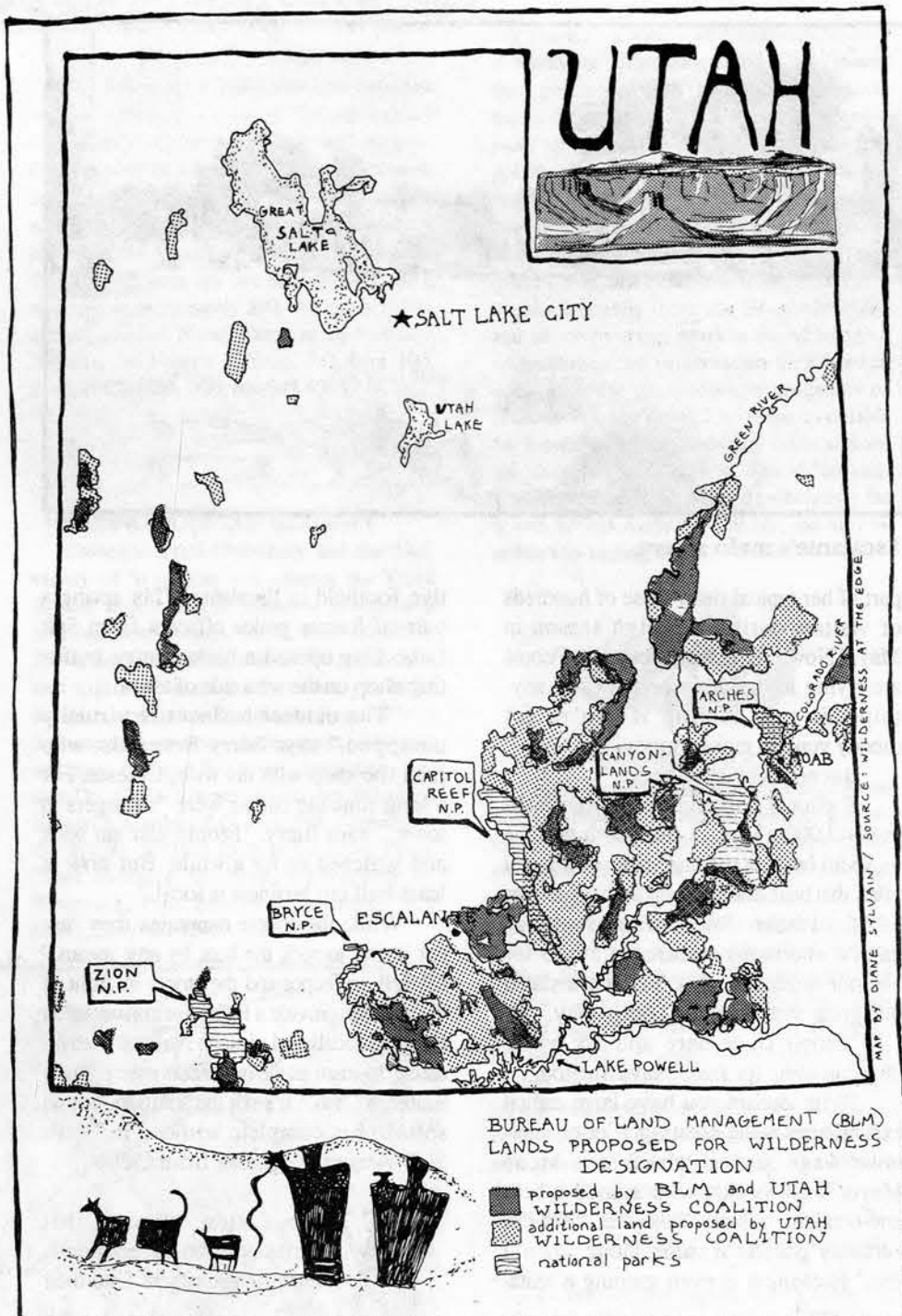
With the middle ground almost deserted, one environmental group's attempt at conciliation went nowhere. The Utah Wilderness Association — the only conservation group in the state that suggested a compromise acreage — recently abandoned its proposed 3.8 million acres in favor of Owens's proposal.

"We thought by staying where we were we'd give a place for people to agree," explains Dick Carter, a former Wilderness Society representative for Utah who founded UWA in 1979. "It didn't work. The opponents of wilderness to this day have refused to grab hold of the peace offering on seeking compromise and consensus, and that's to their tremendous disadvantage."

The Utah Wilderness Coalition's strategy of nationalizing the issue employs a recently released book, *Wilderness at the Edge* (see pages 8 and 9), a document of unarguable persuasiveness. The group's other weapon is time. With 3.2 million acres already protected in wilderness study areas, environmentalists consider settling for anything less unthinkable.

"We tend to lose when we get in a hurry," says Darrell Knuffke, director of The Wilderness Society's Rocky Mountain office in Denver. Environmentalists point to the 1984 Utah Wilderness Act, which designated about 750,000 acres of Forest Service lands as wilderness. Many environmentalists consider it a tragedy because of what it left out.

"We're so much stronger now," says



Scott Groene, a staff attorney for SUWA. "We don't have to take what we had to [take] in 1984. Easily two-thirds of it is long gone as far as wilderness; there's already been enough compromises made."

Where does this confidence come from, especially in a state whose environmental movement historically has had to dance to whatever tune the status quo played? Why are environmentalists so sure of success in the national arena?

Part of it has to do with Owens. Beyond that, much of the will to protect Utah's wilderness comes from the effect the landscape itself has on people. The country's love affair with Utah's backcountry was amply demonstrated when Owens's bill collected more than 100 co-sponsors in the House last year. None of them were from Utah.

The specter of wilderness designation threatens what rural Mormons revere — their ancestral past and their own continued stewardship of the land.

"They say they're going to save it. We've been here a century without ruining it; why would we ruin it now?" asks Gene Griffin, a genial rancher and hardware store owner from Escalante. Griffin made national headlines this spring when he said "We'd like to hang" Wayne Owens for his pro-wilderness stance. "My grandfather pioneered this when there were no hospitals, no roads," he says. "We should be more entitled to it [than outsiders]. We pioneered it, went through thick and thin for it."

But new people are arriving all the time, and they are falling in love with what they find. They are photographing, painting, talking and writing about Utah. Edward Abbey, the Pennsylvania-born curmudgeon of the canyons, called his beloved haunt near Arches National Park the "least inhabited, least inhibited, least developed, least improved, least civi-

lized, least governed, least priest-ridden, most arid, most hostile, most lonesome, most grim bleak barren desolate and savage quarter of the state of Utah — the best part by far. So far."

No one knows exactly what minerals lie underneath the backcountry, although estimates have been made. Russell Babcock, a board member for the Utah Geological Survey, told Owens last month that the survey "just can't see into the rocks."

Wilderness opponents say wilderness designation will lock up untold mineral wealth. Proponents counter that the pristine remnants of Utah's canyon country are still unspoiled, partly because mining has never been profitable there. But a host of unknowns throw any prediction of the economic impact of wilderness designation squarely into the realm of speculation: How much would minerals underlying wilderness areas be worth on the wildly fluctuating international market? How much can tourists be expected to spend in nearby communities? What is silence worth?

"Trying to put an exact dollar value on the costs and benefits of wilderness is a damn hard thing to do," says Brad Barber, the director of demographics and economic analysis at the Utah Office of Planning and Budget. "You're sticking your neck out there as far as you can possibly stick it."

Indeed, the only study yet completed on the economics of wilderness in Utah has sent the argument through the roof. Commissioned by the Utah Association of Counties and authored by Dr. George Leaming of the Arizona-based Western Economic Analysis Center, it concluded that more than 5 million acres of wilderness would do about \$13.2 billion dollars worth of damage to the state's economy per year — a number that exceeds half of the annual personal income earned in the state. If all 3.2 million acres of wilderness study areas were

designated, it would cause \$9.2 billion in damage; Hansen's proposal, \$1.4 billion, according to Leaming.

Leaming says his forecast relied heavily on estimates made in the BLM's environmental impact statement. "I tried to keep them as conservative, as cautious as possible," he said. But his findings were panned by environmentalists and economists alike.

"The claim that protecting [more than 5 million acres] of de facto wilderness will somehow cost the state the equivalent of the majority of its total annual earnings, or approximately 26 times the total earnings from all of ranching, farming, forestry, fisheries and mining for the whole state, is not only ridiculous but irresponsible," says Brigham Young University economist Arden Pope.

"This is voodoo economics at its worst," says SUWA issues coordinator Ken Rait. Barber calls the study "absolutely ridiculous."

Other studies paint a brighter picture of the economic impact of wilderness. A pair of University of Idaho geographers found that the populations of counties containing or bordering wilderness areas grew two to three times as fast as their non-wilderness counterparts from the 1970s to the mid-1980s. More than half of the newcomers credited the wilderness for their arrival.

Some 79 percent of Utah respondents to a study conducted by Pope also favored wilderness legislation.

Owens asserts that wilderness is the state's greatest economic asset. "Utah's beauty here, if we nurture it, will continue to be a magnet in bringing people into the state to live and have the economic ability to contribute," he says.

Barber calls the country's beauty "a fixed supply." "We could find more oil," he says, "but we're not going to find land with this kind of natural beauty."

By law, both grazing and mining can continue in wilderness when grazing allotments and mining claims predate the designation of the area as wilderness. New mining claims and grazing allotments, however, aren't allowed. This makes the mining industry's blood run cold, especially in an era when technology is continually opening new horizons.

Recently developed horizontal drilling techniques, for example, have opened up a potential oil boom near Moab. "Something that was worth nothing a year ago is now worth millions," says Utah state geologist Lee Allison. The area isn't protected as a wilderness study area, but part of it is in Owens's proposal (see story on page 10).

Owens is willing to negotiate on these points. "It's not my intention to close down economic exploitation," he assured the Utah Geological Survey.

Utah's fastest growing sector is its service industry, which now accounts for about a quarter of the state's employment. Tourism provides nearly 60,000 jobs, up by 16,000 from 1980. Meanwhile, resource development has succumbed to price decreases in uranium and oil. Also, fewer miners are needed by the new technologies of the coal-mining industry. About 8,500 Utahns mine coal today, down from 20,266 a decade ago. Mining generates 2 percent of the personal income earned in the state, while agriculture — which includes ranching — accounts for only 1.4 percent.

"There's a lot of people who would like to blame the environmental movement for the decline in the mining industry," says Barber of the Utah Office of Management and Budget, "but we know what with international market forces it's simply hard to lay the blame there."

Do economists expect the boom to

Continued on next page

Utah's canyons ...

(Continued from page 11)

be repeated? "No," says Barber. "Do we say it's never going to happen again? It's not very probable. But never say never."

This hope presents a psychological challenge to Utahns: "If you keep saying, 'We're a mining town and nothing else,' it becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy," says Thomas Power, a University of Montana economist and a close observer of the debate in Utah. "There are lots of healthy economies where recreation has provided an economy without distorting life and livelihoods. The key is to think in terms of areas that are not booming but alive, rather than in terminal decline."

Moab, a former uranium boom town on the Colorado River, is grappling with precisely this transition. It is the seat of Grand County, which was the most devastated part of the state when the bottom fell out of the uranium market. The county lost 20 percent of its population during the 1980s. But in the past few years Moab has become a magnet for mountain bikers, rafters, hikers and jeeps who flit by the inoperative hulk of the Atlas uranium mill — which closed in 1984 — on their way to the slickrock backcountry.

"This reminds me of back in '56 and '57 when uranium boomed," says Jackie Shelton, a third-generation Moab resident who works at the local information center. "It really hit and we had people coming and pitching tents and getting rich quick," she says during a breather from her ministrations to the assembled German tourists, Canadian filmmakers and Lycra-clad Coloradoans who are



Escalante's main street

Mary Moran

part of her typical daily dose of hundreds of visitors during the high season in May. "Now it's almost the same. People are trying to build a store, a cafe, anything. It's the feeling if you've got money you can make money."

But not as much money.

Shelton's husband went from making \$48,000 a year in the uranium mine to \$6 an hour as the caretaker of a motel after the bust hit. Shelton herself makes \$4.95 an hour. And while Moab has gained enormous stature as a hub for outdoor recreation, this hasn't translated into great wealth for the community.

"People come here and ask where they can camp for free," says Shelton.

"With tourism you have large capital expenditures while creating a lot of minimum-wage paying jobs," says Moab Mayor Tom Stocks, who started a bed-and-breakfast business last year. "But I'm certainly grateful it came along when it did." Recreation is even gaining a tenta-

tive foothold in Escalante. This spring a pair of former police officers from Salt Lake City opened a backcountry outfitting shop on the west side of town.

"The outdoor business is virtually untapped," says Barry Bernards, who runs the shop with his wife, Celeste. For a long time the couple were "strangers in town," says Barry. "People just sat back and watched us for a while. But now at least half our business is local."

While the couple maintains they "are not trying to rock the boat by any means," the full coffeepot and the stools in front of the counter provide a forum for conversation between locals and visitors. No one is advocating tourism as the only economic path for southern Utah. "It's not the solution, but no solution is complete without it," says SUWA executive director Brant Calkin.

While Liston admits that tourism can be an economic help, she and others find their

hopes drawn to the mineral-rich Kaiparowits Plateau. "If it helps our county for 10 years, it helps our county for 10 years," she says. "It's something we don't have now. We're at the point in Garfield County we'll get whatever we can to survive. We're going downhill fast."

To Thomas Power, this kind of thinking is not only coveting an economic base that ultimately leads to impoverishment, but is ignoring an opportunity that is staring southern Utah in the face.

"Quit the hand-wringing," he says, adding that the obvious future for the area is an amenity-driven economy that draws not only tourists but permanent residents who want to live in beautiful surroundings. "It's not crystal ball gazing; that's what's happening," he says. "It's already happening in southwest Utah, where the focus is the national parks and other protected landscapes."

With or without wilderness designation, tourism will continue its inexorable rise in southern Utah. With or without wilderness designation, it's questionable whether the mining boom will return. While there's no question that wilderness designation will limit traditional and extractive uses of the land, there's no doubt that it also will present new possibilities and challenges. There is no other place like southern Utah in an increasingly crowded world; simple logic dictates that it will become more valuable as time goes on.

Lisa Jones, HCN staff writer for the past year, recently left us to become the travel editor of *Buzzworm* magazine. She will continue to live in Paonia.

Come see Zion National Park: the movie

The soft red sandstone cliffs and narrow canyons of Zion National Park in southwestern Utah have attracted beauty-seeking tourists ever since the area became a national park in 1919. That beauty and the people who come to experience it have prompted a California-based company to propose building a theater complex that would house a film depicting the glories of Zion. The theater site lies in the narrow canyon of the North Fork of the Virgin River, in the town of Springdale.

Many of the 300 residents of the town, which abuts the park's southern entrance, support the proposal, calling it an integral part of their tourist-based economy. But opponents worry that the structure, in its present location, would impair scenic views and overwhelm a park campground.

World Odyssey Inc., the company mounting the project, hopes to utilize the skills of acclaimed filmmaker Keith Merrill and the natural beauty of the Zion backcountry in making its film. The show would be played daily on a large IMAX screen, which gives the viewer the impression of actually being where the camera has been.

"A national park is a place that people can enjoy at a lot of different levels. It's not only one kind of experience," says Tim Kelley, vice president of development for World Odyssey. The company hopes to implement the concept at other parks around the country.

Kelley says the film will bring the backcountry of Zion to a huge segment of the population that normally doesn't get a chance to see it. "There are certain areas of the park that are tough to get to," says Kelley, "and this gives them an opportunity to experience those places. I think the film can really enhance the overall park experience." But it's not the film's con-

cept that has drawn opposition.

"The concept has merit, but not at the entrance to the park," says Springdale resident Mark Austin. Austin, who heads the Zion Canyon Alliance, a group advocating responsible growth in Springdale, thinks another location would be more appropriate.

"My problem is the site. I think at the entrance it [the film] would serve as an alternate experience, and not as a supplement, and that's wrong because it would only further alienate man from nature," says Austin. "They'd be watching a celluloid clip of the real thing."

Opponents, both local and around the nation, have forced World Odyssey to adjust its plans. After redesigning the theater to make the structure less imposing, it recently shelved plans for a restaurant and an 80-room motel on the 12-acre site.

While opponents have made World Odyssey's path a difficult one, the Springdale government has made every opportunity to facilitate the development. On April 4 the town council unanimously voted to amend a zoning ordinance prohibiting a theater-type structure in the entry zone to the park. The new ordinance allows World Odyssey to apply for a conditional-use permit, something the company is now in the process of doing. If granted, it would preempt that zone's building regulations.

"We've got some poor people in this town who would like to make some money before they die," says Springdale mayor and project stalwart Bob Ralston, explaining why he voted to amend what he called "our town's restrictive laws."

Nearly all the town's residents support the project regardless of where it will be built. "The jobs and the money brought in by that theater will make this town a better place for my kids to live in," argues town

Councilwoman Virginia Denmet. She and other residents regard the theater as a panacea for their economic hardships.

But opponents, led by Terri Martin of the National Parks and Conservation Association, say World Odyssey should relocate to the center of town so that park visitors would not be confronted daily by commercial activity at the entrance to the park.

Martin believes there is painful irony in the fact that many tourists would travel hundreds of miles to have their primary encounter with the park in an air-conditioned theater.

"No one wants to undermine their ability to develop their town," she says, "but it shouldn't detract from those who want to enjoy the park. If they think they're enhancing the park experience, why is it so many people who know the park well have come out against the project?" Martin asks, referring to criticism World Odyssey has received from noted author Wallace Stegner, actor Robert Redford and many other concerned individuals.

Utah Rep. Wayne Owens and members of the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee, including Chairman Morris Udall, also have expressed their opposition to the theater site. In a letter to World Odyssey, they expressed their willingness to buy the site or help World Odyssey locate another.

The Park Service, which has been against the development since its inception, has offered to locate the parking lot for its planned shuttle system next to an alternate site in the center of town. By bringing park visitors to the theater's doorstep, they say, World Odyssey would be compensated for the loss of the prime site it now has.

Although both World Odyssey and Martin say they have tried to facilitate a relocation, neither has come up with a satisfactory alternate. In the meantime,

World Odyssey continues to work out its conditional-use permit with the Springdale town council. Before issuing the permit the Town Council must hold a public hearing, giving residents one final opportunity to voice their opinions. The town has recently been inundated with developers trying to capitalize on the more than 2.2 million tourists who visited Springdale in 1990. Recent proposals include a water slide and a golf course as well as more motels.

Some residents worry that reckless and thoughtless development will destroy the town's rural charm, turning it into a 'sleazy Sedona' or West Yellowstone — two other Western towns with tourist-based economies.

"This project is a pivotal one in terms of setting a trend for how we deal with future growth," says Marcel Rodriguez, who retired to Springdale.

"These people have it backwards," resident Louise Excell says of the city government. "They've done everything to accommodate World Odyssey's plans. It is World Odyssey who should be adjusting their plans to accommodate each zone's requirements."

Excell believes Springdale's conflict is not unique. "This type of thing is being played out all over the West," she says, referring to small-town growth fueled by tourist-based economies. She says the conflict is in many ways irreconcilable because it is based in two opposing philosophies.

"I hear people say, 'We're going to be able to pave our streets with gold when they build the theater,'" she says. "But I don't live here for the streets paved with gold."

— John Horning

The writer, a former HCN intern, is teaching outdoor education in Aspen.

BULLETIN BOARD

HOT SPRINGS

The Hot Springs Gazette: A Dipper's Guide to Hot Springs Throughout the West and Elsewhere is now being published four times a year. The *Gazette* is an amusing, detailed guide to the natural hot springs of the West. It includes poems and stories as well as tips on new spots, maps and information sources. Issue 17 focuses on "the other side of Yellowstone Park," where "the only restriction [at a spring] ... is one sign that says not to 'git nekkid.'" Issue 18 will feature "hot water joys of the Land of Enchantment." Copies can be obtained from *The Hot Springs Gazette*, 12 South Benton Ave., Helena, MT 59601. A single copy costs \$4.00 plus 75¢ postage; a year's subscription is \$15.00.

BLM SEEKS PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Bureau of Land Management is requesting public comments on a proposal to increase monetary assessments for violations on Indian oil and gas leases. According to the "Notice of Intent to Propose Rulemaking," published in the Federal Register May 9, the BLM plans to expand the list of violations, double the monetary assessments on such violations and eliminate the authority of BLM state directors to reduce assessment amounts. Written comments are welcome until July 8. Send them to Director (140), Bureau of Land Management, Room 5555 MIB, 1849 C St. N.W., Washington, D.C. 20240.

FRIENDS OF YOHO

The Friends of Yoho Summer Institute will be offering courses in Yoho National Park, British Columbia, in July and August. Courses will be offered in birding, mountain environment photography, Burgess Shale fossils, Canadian Rockies art and culture and the history of the Canadian Pacific Railway in the Rockies. Courses are two to three days long and cost approximately \$90. For more information, contact Nancy Curch at the Summer Institute, c/o Friends of Yoho, P.O. Box 100, Field, B.C., U0A 1G0; 604/343-6393.



INTERMOUNTAIN MEADOWS

Colorado State University and the University of Wyoming will sponsor the Third Annual Intermountain Meadow Symposium in Steamboat Springs, Colo., from July 1-3. The symposium will focus on the production and utilization of cool-season grasses, legumes and grass-like plants. Reports will be presented on range management, ranching and plant biology. For more information contact Dr. Gene Siemer, Mountain Meadow Research Center, P.O. Box 598, Gunnison, CO 81230; 303/641-2515, or Dr. Dave Koch, Plant Science Division, University of Wyoming, P.O. Box 3345, Laramie, WY 82071; 307/766-3242.

PROTECTING GROUNDWATER

The Environmental Protection Agency has released a video documentary to help communities better understand how to protect their groundwater. "The Power to Protect" traces the technical and political challenges faced by three New England communities in preventing groundwater pollution. Groups such as local and regional planning boards, conservation commissions, health officers, building inspectors, water suppliers, citizens' groups and environmental organizations could all benefit from the 30-minute video and accompanying workbook, which give communities the information they need to either initiate groundwater programs or reassess existing ones. The video is suitable for broadcast, and community cable stations are encouraged to use it. The video-and-workbook package is being distributed by the Massachusetts Audubon Society, and may be ordered by calling 800/677-9453.



THROWAWAY SOCIETY

Must the daily disposal of garbage be an accepted ritual of American life? Not according to a new report published by the Worldwatch Institute, titled *Discarding the Throwaway Society*. The report offers steps to reduce waste and caustically indicts our government for the way it subsidizes waste. Author John Young says, "Increasing the cost of raw materials is an essential first step toward improving the efficiency of materials use and reducing waste." Governments need to stop subsidizing waste and start encouraging reduction, reuse and recycling, according to the report. While Young's vision calls for new government standards, he also shows that individuals, by consuming less and recycling more, can make the greatest contribution to the solution of our mounting waste problem.

To receive the report, which costs \$4, write to the Worldwatch Institute, 1776 Massachusetts Ave. NW, Washington, D.C. 20036, or call 202/452-1999.



IDAHO RIVERS CONSIDERED FOR PROTECTION

The Owyhee Resource Area of Idaho's Bureau of Land Management is considering 28 river segments, totaling 325 river miles, for protection under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. The BLM is restructuring the Owyhee's management plan with special attention to water quality, which it rates as poor in the area. Livestock overgrazing is cited as the primary cause of fouled water. Public comments on the new management plan will be accepted until July 22 and should be addressed to John Benedict, BLM Boise District Office, 3948 Development Ave., Boise, ID 83705.

ENDANGERED SPECIES MONTHLY

The *Endangered Species Update* publishes articles, announcements, book reviews and reprints of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Endangered Species Technical Bulletin. This monthly has been produced by the School of Natural Resources at the University of Michigan since 1983, when budget cuts reduced public circulation of the Technical Bulletin. For a year's subscription send \$23 to *Endangered Species Update*, School of Natural Resources, The University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1115.



CLASSIFIEDS

HIGH COUNTRY NEWS classified ads cost 30 cents per word, \$5 minimum. Display ads 4 column inches or less are \$10/col. inch if camera-ready; \$15/col. inch if we make up. Larger display ads are \$30 or \$35/col. inch. We reserve the right to screen all ads. Send your ad with payment to: HCN, Box 1090, Paonia, CO 81428 or call 303/527-4898 for more information.

WYOMING FIELD REPRESENTATIVE.

The Nature Conservancy, a private nonprofit conservation organization, is seeking an experienced person to assist with our land protection and fundraising programs. This person will develop and implement protection strategies and help fundraise contributions to complete protection objectives. Qualifications: BA degree in business and public or governmental relations; background in land acquisition and fundraising; proven ability to work with a wide variety of people; high measure of personal and professional motivation. Send résumé and cover letter to Paula Patton, Wyoming Nature Conservancy, P.O. Box 450, Lander, WY 82520. Application deadline June 30, 1991. The Nature Conservancy is an EOE/AA employer. Minorities encouraged to apply. (1x11b)

HIKE OREGON'S ANCIENT FORESTS.

Transportation, cabin, ecologist, meals, hot springs soaks — \$525/wk! AF Hikes, Box 13585, Salem, OR 97309; 503/370-9844. (5x11p)

WILDERNESS RETREATS, CLASSES, ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE PROGRAM at remote hot-springs ranch. Powerful and serene setting. Fellowship for Ecology and The Arts, Rt. 11, Box 70, Silver City, NM 88061, 505/536-2879. (1x11p)

ORGANIC GARDENER and MAINTENANCE PERSON needed by The Fellowship for Ecology and the Arts. Beautiful remote hot-springs ranch in Gila Wilderness, New Mexico. Food and lodging provided. 505/536-2879. (1x11p)

ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROVERSIES.

Expert help to evaluate, resolve, or avoid difficult environmental conflicts. Dispute Mediation, Environmental Litigation Services, Environmental Policy and Regulatory Compliance Advisor, Environmental Planner, Project Manager. Over twenty years experience. Modest regular or reduced fees. Contact Terry Simmons, J.D., Ph.D., 1105 Terminal Way, Suite 202, Reno, NV 89502, 702/786-5531. (1x11p)

CONSIDER TAKING FIVE DAYS

next summer in the shadow of the Tetons, with the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem as your classroom! Register for the Wyoming Outdoor Council's 4th annual workshop on Conservation Biology and Endangered Species. The cost is \$150; dates are August 5-9, 1991. Graduate academic credit from the University of Wyoming is available for an additional fee. Contact: Donn Kesselheim, Wyoming Outdoor Council, 201 Main St., Lander, WY 82520 (307/332-7031). (2x10b)

SPLITS IN YOUR FINGERS? I'm a licensed professional engineer. After 40 years I've cured myself of them! Send \$3 for name and information concerning the nonprescription ointment cure which dermatologist suggested. CHM Engineering, Box 17101-H, Wichita, KS 67217. (4x9p)

NEW WATER BOOK: An Introduction to Water Rights and Conflicts with emphasis on Colorado. \$14.95 plus \$3.00 S/H. To order, please write Network Marketing, 8370 Warhawk Rd., Dept. HC, Conifer, CO 80433, or call 303/674-7105. (12x5b)

STRING BAGS — Large string bags knit in USA using seine twine. Cotton webbing handles — long enough to fit over your shoulder. Take shopping, on boat cruises, or use to separate things in your pack. Lightweight enough to be shoved in your pocket. Very strong when filled. \$12 includes shipping. Send order to: 117 E. Louisa St. #140, Seattle, WA 98102. (6x6p)

300 ACRE CANYON FARM near Gateway, CO. 1,000 foot red rock cliffs, 2.5 miles of Dolores River runs through, home, orchard, 70 acres irrigated, mountain stream, dynamic place, \$300,000. 303/243-4170. (3x10b)

OUTDOOR SINGLES NETWORK, bi-monthly newsletter, ages 19-90, no forwarding fees, \$18/1-year, \$4/trial issue-information. OSN-HCN, 1611 Cooper #7, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601. (10x10p)

SMOKEY BEAR BELT BUCKLES

Choice of PREVENT FOREST FIRES or FOREST FIRE FIGHTER versions. Rugged solid bronze for many years of regular wear, \$16; brass-plated for occasional wear, \$10 (prices include postage and handling). Check or money order or inquiries to:



Les Joslin
61505 West Ridge Avenue, Bend, Oregon 97702
(503) 385-7124



T-SHIRTS



STOP PUBLIC LANDS RANCHING

Design by Brush Wolf
100% Cotton Beefy-T
Black, Peach XL-L-M-S
\$12 Postage Paid
Make Checks Payable To:
RANCHING TASK FORCE
POB 41652
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85717

COYOTE CLAN



THE T-SHIRT

Turquoise, Magenta, Sandstone
6-Color Art by June Pace & Lynn Berryhill
Quotation on Back:

"... quietly subversive on behalf of the land." — Terry Tempest Williams

L, XL Classic Black or Salmon \$16.
L, XL Black Sweats \$25.

Add \$2 shipping per order

Make Check To: Songdog, Den of Iniquity
P.O. Box 301, Springdale, UT 84767



DESERT WRITER'S WORKSHOP

OCT. 17-20, 1991
Pack Creek Ranch

David Lavender
David Lee
Gary Nabhan

For more information contact:
Canyonlands Field Institute
P.O. Box 68 / Moab, UT 84532
(801) 259-7750

Co-sponsored by the Utah Arts Council

LETTERS

TWO KINDS OF FISHING

Dear HCN,

I have just read your April 22 edition featuring management of the Columbia River to recover dwindling salmon stocks. You have done an excellent job sorting out the complexities of the issue. As a Salmon Summit participant representing commercial fishing, I believe your commentary captured the essence of the summit's actions and inactions.

I do have to take exception to comments made by John De Yonge in one article titled "Why Hood Canal is a biological desert."

The writer accurately reports the negative impacts poor logging practices and unenlightened hatchery management and operations have had on fish populations. Unfortunately, from my perspective, he then closes with his opinions about sport vs. commercial harvest allocation, opinions that have kept the two sides of the industry from reaching their potential as stewards of Puget Sound's anadromous resources. No other article mentioned this conflict. That is because at the Salmon Summit and in many other forums throughout the region, sport and commercial fishing representatives worked side by side, in harmony, pursuing a "pro-fish" agenda.

This region's fish need all the friends they can get. No commercial fishing group in the Northwest has an anti-recreational-fishing agenda. There are, however, a small number of recreational groups that have an anti-commercial-fishing agenda that drains both groups of untold amounts of dollars, time and energy. Those who continue to foster the sport vs. commercial fishing conflict are not providing the leadership needed to pull fish, and fishermen, through the dilemma they face in the 1990s.

De Yonge derides the efforts of the commercial fishermen to protect and defend their livelihood. Each commercial fisherman is a small business person. The reader should ask him- or herself, How determined would you be if a small group of people were trying to take away your small business? Efforts by sportfishermen to eliminate the industry have forced commercial fishermen to hire profession-

al lobbyists and skilled attorneys and develop legislative agendas and strategies.

The writer references a 1984 economic study that purports to show that sportfishing is more valuable than commercial fishing. But the goal of that study was to show sportfishing to be more valuable. Its conclusion has been fully discredited by respected regional and national economists who unmasked the biases and incomplete data that had to be used for the study to reach its goal.

The final comment is one I can approach with some humor. The writer states that management by the Washington Department of Fisheries (WDF) favors commercial fishermen. But every commercial fisherman I ever talked with is convinced that WDF manages to favor the sportfisherman. Given these prevailing attitudes, we can conclude, can't we, that since neither group is happy, WDF must be doing a damn poor job — or could it be they're doing a damn good job?

Bob Eaton
Astoria, Oregon

The writer is executive director of the organization Salmon For All.

FOREST APPEALS

Dear HCN,

In the May 20, 1991, issue of *High Country News*, there was an article written by Jim Stiak which incorrectly stated that Forest Service employees on the Umpqua and Stanislaus national forests had appealed their own forest plans.

While there are Association of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics (AFSEEE) chapters on these

forests, and the chapters have analyzed and commented on their forest plans, the employees have not formally appealed the plans.

The Stanislaus chapter members commented on a draft Forest Plan. Within the draft form, plans are open to public comment under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), yet they cannot be appealed until they are final. The Umpqua chapter of AFSEEE asked the Forest Supervisor to amend an already completed Forest Plan in a letter, yet did not file a formal appeal.

For more information about the free-speech rights of government employees in regard to environmental ethics, contact AFSEEE at 503/484-2692, P.O. Box 11615, Eugene, OR 97440.

We appreciate your coverage of our activities.

Jeff DeBonis
Executive Director, AFSEEE
Eugene, Oregon

REAL COSTS OF OIL USE

Dear HCN,

Your letters on Old Growth Economics I and II provide a nice complement to the article "Facing up to the end of the petroleum era" (HCN, 5/20/91). Math games are always fun, even when they are so trivial. Unfortunately, the engineer authors who delight in these numbers actually brag about never spending a day studying economics. It certainly shows!

All three articles bring to mind some of the nonsense which began with the Club of Rome report (was it in the '70s?). Predictions about running out of resources have been around since Industrial Revolution England, and they have always been wrong. Simple (at least for the mathematically literate engineer) extrapolation of current trends in resource use against fixed reserves leads inevitably to predictions such as "all of our 25.9 billion barrels of domestic reserves will be completely exhausted before the end of 1997."

Such predictions are wrong because they ignore the realities that all economists know. Both the level and the growth rate of resource use ultimately depend on the price of the resource. Also reserves, which are in some physical sense ultimately fixed, actually change over time in response to price. The real

question is whether the prices to which buyers and sellers respond is at a level which adequately covers the real costs, both private and social, which accompany extraction and use of the resource. We have too long allowed many environmental costs to be swept under the rug.

Wise use of resources like oil should begin now, but not because we'll run out of it soon if we don't. When we look at the real costs associated with oil use we will realize that it's too expensive, which also will mean that there are cost-effective alternatives. Somebody should tell President Bush, too!

Bill Eastlake
Boise, Idaho

The writer is an economist with the Idaho Public Utility Commission and a former college economics professor.

WILDLIFE JARGON

Dear HCN,

I am troubled by the use of wildlife management jargon in the "Illegal wolf kills..." story in the May 6 issue. In the second paragraph, the author, who is completing a master's degree in wildlife biology, informs us that wolves preying on livestock were "removed by officials." It is my understanding that these wolves were *killed* by officials. The word "remove," to a non-biologist, sounds like some kind of benevolent relocation.

The wildlife management establishment has long obscured and downplayed the realities of their work with euphemisms like "harvest" and "remove." The writers and editors of *High Country News* owe their readers a good stiff dose of reality.

John Walker
Coal Dale, Colorado

We share Mr. Walker's distrust of words like "remove," and will try to avoid them. Better wording in this case might have been "relocated or killed." The various wolf packs mentioned in Ms. Matteson's story met various fates. The Ninemile wolf pups were taken to Glacier National Park and released, but other animals suffered starvation, trapping, botched capture attempts and shooting.

—Ed.



Grand Gulch, Utah

For hands-on coverage of the West, read *High Country News*

☐ One year - \$24

☐ One year, institution - \$34

☐ Two years - \$42

☐ Two years, institution - \$60

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

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

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard: acct. no. _____

Expiration date _____ Signature _____

☐ Please bill me

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

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

GET AN ARCHAEOLOGIST

Dear HCN,

Re "Forest Service spends wilderness money on logging" (HCN, 4/8/91):

Shame on you, Tracy Stone-Manning! The cultural resource program (archaeology) does not "support logging." It is in place to protect the nation's cultural heritage. Location and evaluation of cultural resources that could be affected by any project is mandated before the project is undertaken. The expense is supposed to be borne by the project proponent.

If the USFS chooses to misdirect the cultural resource program's funds, don't blame the critically underfunded, conservation-minded cultural resource program.

And shame on you, too, HCN. You need an archaeologist to read your copy.

Alice F. Bronsdon
Vale, Oregon

FOREST SERVICE
SPENDING

Tracy Stone-Manning's article (HCN, 4/8/91) was filled with ignorant, unchallenged quotations and stereotyping that would have been more appropriate in old issues of *Earth First! Journal*.

Most HCN readers would agree that wilderness stewardship always receives the leftover crust of the Forest Service budgetary pie, particularly in relation to the gluttonous roadbuilding, timber-harvest and administration slices. However, Stone-Manning neglects to mention exactly what wilderness funds fund, and what wilderness watchdogs WANT funded. She glosses over the alleged failings of agency structure while advocating strengthening it, and finally pulls a

few financial tidbits out of a magic hat.

In the space of this very brief article, four significant flaws were evident:

1. "Landscape Management and Cultural Resources are programs that support logging." This is an utter falsehood. Landscape and cultural resources management input are required in the planning process for any NEPA document, including timber sales. Historically, landscape architects and archaeologists who seriously address the issues surrounding timber harvests often end up in adversarial roles on management planning teams, a fact well documented in the controversial in-house publication *Inner Voice*. Wildlife biologists, hydrologists and soil scientists also participate in the planning process. Does that mean their programs "support logging"?

2. "Forest Service employee performance reviews look at 'hard targets' like board feet cut and numbers of animals grazed, but wilderness has no such standards." If wilderness has no such standards, where do wilderness funds go? Wilderness management does have standards: Trail maintenance and construction programs have budgeted targets, and line officers are held to these targets.

3. "Staff officers in wilderness management are generally recruited from timber programs, a practice that undercuts good wilderness management" and "No one is protecting wilderness funds" are statements that symbolize the agency's structural dilemmas. Interagency budgetary wars tend to polarize the various disciplines and their respective programs. As a result, bureaucratic inefficiency, rather than interdisciplinary cooperation, usually carries the torch. Simply setting up another fund for wilderness will not decrease this often-paralyzing effect. This separation of programs leads to the assumption that

resource managers are incapable of crossing disciplines. By this logic, wildlife biologists are incapable of managing range, and range cons are incapable of addressing forest management. What we end up with is gross speculation, rather than holistic policy and action which might bring the agency out of the dark age of pandering to commodity interests.

While working in trails and wilderness programs, I had one supervisor who had moved from a timber program into a wilderness/trails/special uses program. His ethics, judgment and dedication to wilderness stewardship have few parallels. In fact, many Forest Service personnel who develop ulcers in timber and range shops prove to be very caring, competent wilderness stewards, just as many registered nurses who burn out in intensive care wards turn out to be excellent in the maternity ward.

Too many potential public lands agency reformists assume that underfunded wildlife, recreation, soils and hydrology staffers have a land ethic superior to that of the average forester. I currently live six miles from a formerly vibrant wetland that the Forest Service, State Fish and Game, and Ducks Unlimited decided to cooperatively dynamite to create deep holes for "better" duck habitat. It is glaring proof that, given the time and money, wildlife biologists, hydrologists, conservationists and other "good guys" can screw up a valuable piece of ground every bit as well as the mean, evil timber beasts.

4. "In the Beartooth district of the Custer National Forest, for example, the district ranger must spend \$65,000 on wilderness this year, compared to the \$4,000 last year." Having worked for the Beartooth Ranger District in 1988 and 1989, I must say that I was very surprised to hear that three to four wilder-

ness rangers, a two-person trail crew and two staff officers were funded with \$4,000/year. Perhaps the responsible fiscal wizards should be immediately promoted to Washington, D.C., where the REAL monetary waste and diversion of funds occurs.

Don Moniak
Happy Jack, Arizona

Tracy Stone-Manning replies:

I took the Forest Service to task because the investigative arm of Congress — the Government Accounting Office — did. I did not find it necessary to challenge quotes, as Mr. Moniak would like me to have done, as my sources were all from wilderness backgrounds.

The facts he questions in points 2 and 4 came from Steve Morton, the wilderness specialist for Region One. I have to assume that a Forest Service officer from a regional office knows his field, or is at least honest enough to say otherwise. In fact, Morton answered Moniak's question, "Where do wilderness funds go?" by saying he was not able to account for the wilderness funds that were misdirected. Neither could his counterparts in other regions, reports the GAO. The "magic hat" that I pulled my financial tidbits out of was Morton's.

Finally, the subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands' summary of the GAO study says, "The Forest Service has admitted that funds earmarked by Congress for wilderness were spent on ... support for timber sales." If the money that allows landscape architects to design cutting units and archaeologists to study cutting sites is taken out of recreation dollars (which were diverted from wilderness funds), then yes, these programs in part support timber sales.

'RANCHERS AND
ENVIRONMENTALISTS
SHOULD BE ALLIES'

Dear HCN,

I recently read your feature story on public lands grazing (HCN, 4/8/91). I write this letter because although divisiveness is the preferred tactic of many writers — as in the sidebar by George Wuerthner — the piece by Lisa Jones was notably fair. I commend you for publishing a story that attempted balance as Jones's did. I am the wife of a cattle rancher and watch the growing controversy over public lands with alarm and sorrow. I read the work of writers like Mr. Wuerthner with dread.

I have considered myself an environmentalist for years. I cringe when I hear of damage done by livestock producers to lands of unparalleled beauty in the West. I also know that cattle associations at the national and state levels have been remiss in telling their stories. Good producers never make headlines these days — only those so terrified of losing their livelihood that they hurl rash threats into the faces of those they fear.

Recent articles on grazing public lands, until this one, have left me without hope. Their authors use highly misleading statements and dangerous generalities to splash hatred across slick pages. They draw uncompromising lines between "them" and "us". As I have one foot in both camps, these pieces are painful to read.

Many rural Westerners bear severe scars from the farm crisis of the 1980s, which forced over 700,000 farmers off the land, tore families apart and made ghost towns out of many of our communities. Government policy has brazenly handed

the food industry over to multinational food monopolies at the expense of rural America. It did this by forcing farm prices so low only corporate giants could hold out. Those families who survived this fierce struggle are now understandably skeptical of a government policy — and its advocates — that ostensibly would further jeopardize their industry.

Romantically, we think we support the family farmer, just as we delight in the Charlie Russell image of the American cowboy. But we lack the interest to help farmers and ranchers fight these corporate conglomerates. In the livestock industry, for example, three companies (ConAgra, Cargill and IBP) control 75 percent of the slaughter market, virtually strangling prices for the producer. Many will be unable to compete and will be forced off the land. But we do not support ranch families seeking anti-trust action from our government. Instead, we come in waving fists and proposing measures which, if recklessly applied, could guarantee ruin for those families who survived the farm crisis and now fight against corporate assaults.

There is another issue as well. Who are we saving the West for? When you remove the people whose first concern must be the land, what safeguards do you have against unbridled, wholesale development? Our ranch lies near Sun Valley, Idaho, and we already face a struggle between those of us who care for the land and rapid, indiscriminate growth. A large, isolated ranch near us is now for sale — "20-acre parcels permitted," the flyer boasts.

This region — this nation's — history has been one of exploiter vs. victims, as Wendell Berry eloquently explains in *The Unsettling of America*. I believe the cattle industry, along with



the sanctity of Western lands and its wild creatures, falls into the victim category. I fear the exploiters stand in the wings, ready to move in once farmers and ranchers are gone.

Ranchers and environmentalists should be allies. We share a common interest in seeing the West remain wild and free. We can retain the integrity of both the lands and the cattle industry, but we can only do so by working together and trying to help each other understand what is at stake. Meanwhile our writers have an important obligation to understand the complete picture and use their influence to promote resolution.

Diane Josephy Peavey
Carey, Idaho

RANCHERS AND WOLVES

Dear HCN,

I was pleased to see Tom Skeele's editorial in the April 8 issue. I whole-

heartedly agree with his position. Predators on public lands are not a luxury, as implied by Defenders of Wildlife and other groups offering compensation; it is the grazing of privately owned livestock on public lands which is the luxury. Compensation implies that livestock producers are entitled to a predator-free environment. This is an assumption that should be challenged, not legitimized by compensation programs.

But beyond that major philosophical position, I believe it can be argued that livestock operators should be paying for wolf recovery efforts. After all, it is largely because of the livestock industry that wolves are endangered to begin with.

This certainly would be consistent with other recent public policy decisions. Exxon is paying for the ecological damage it created with the Prince William Sound oil spill. ARCO is paying for the cleanup of the Clark Fork River in Montana, which was polluted by mining operations in Butte. And hydroelectric users in the Pacific Northwest are paying for the recovery of Pacific salmon runs. Is it not, then, fair to ask that livestock producers shoulder the burden of wolf recovery, rather than the public at large?

In a sense, this would provide an incentive for livestock producers to support wolf recovery: The sooner the wolf is restored throughout the West and no longer endangered, the sooner ranchers could stop financing recovery efforts. The specter of paying for additional recovery efforts, should wolf numbers fall, would also give ranchers a reason to find a way to co-exist with wolves.

George Wuerthner
Livingston, Montana

afield

Echoes from a fire at Beaver Creek

by Steve Gardiner

Today I sat in a stand of lodgepole pine trees that met death during the Beaver Creek fire in Grand Teton National Park. Their charred trunks bristled the hillside like quills on the back of a porcupine huddled in self-protection. Unlike people, these trees remain standing after their deaths, sentinels in their own graveyard.

The fire changed this place. It is as if the burning were a metamorphosis for the land — not just because the trees were turned to charcoal but more because the drama of the fire took place here. It's like taking a walk on the Custer Battlefield and trying to see it as only a rolling grassland, separate from all the blood and dreams that soaked into it.

When history has touched a place it is forever different.

Today, at winter's end, a gentle snowfall softens the harshness of the blackened forest. Three feet of snow surrounds the base of each tree. It is cold here. I feel the chill and try to imagine the heat this spot once felt. I remember watching each evening from my back porch across the miles of valley to where the fire rolled like a giant slow-motion basketball across the foothills and moraines, late in the summer of 1985.

One evening I drove out on the highway to get a closer view of the fire. I arrived just after the sun had gone behind the mountains, and the effect was spectacular. The mountains were backlit by the setting sun, yet no shadows were cast upon their eastern slopes. It was as if a second, smaller sun were newly rising, like a photographer's fill flash, to light the peaks from both sides, casting a supernatural glow on the jagged summits.

Even from the roadside, nearly a mile from the fire itself, I could hear the flames, almost feel the cracking when the pines exploded. The angry roar of that fire is today a wintry silence. And the furnace winds, sucking enough oxygen to suffocate elk and deer, have gone, replaced by an aching stillness.

This piece of land was the stage for a play in three



Diane Sylvain

acts. First came the lightning strike and resulting fire. Wildlife rushed out and men came in, ready to take care of nature, to control nature. And the fire, like a coy mistress, played along, merely dotting the hillsides with a mosaic pattern of burns before lying down to feign death while the men gathered their tools and left.

Following a brief intermission, the wind reversed itself and brought the lead character back into the script. The resuscitated fire marched back along its original path, burning the remaining green patches, turning the mosaic into a scorched strip. The men returned, and this time the fire bowed out for good.

The first two acts were short and I was but a spectator. Act three is much longer. It started the next spring with the fiery bloom of wildflowers on the

blackened earth and will last many years as the forest regenerates. Throughout this act, I get to wander the stage freely, to hear the return of the birds, note how their calls ring differently now than they once did here, and see the tracks of weasels, deer and elk in fresh snow. It is audience participation at its best.

The firefighters are gone and have left this bit of land to skiers and hikers. I ski through the pines that will never be lodge poles and return to my car. I'll visit the Beaver Creek burn area and watch as the drama continues.

Steve Gardiner, a teacher and free-lance writer, lives in Jackson, Wyoming. He is the author of *Why I Climb: Personal Insights of Top Climbers*.

OTHER VOICES

Losing my 'city edge' in Seattle

by Tracy Stone-Manning

On a Saturday, with bus schedules and city maps in hand, I venture into downtown Seattle. It is my first visit. I also carry a mental list: Pike Place Market, Pioneer Square, the Elliot Bay Bookstore and lots of good coffee.

The bus deposits me near the market. Inside, artisans, grocers and fish sellers pack the aisles. I shuffle with the crowd. A woman draped in purple bumps into me. "Excuse me," I say. She sails past.

Noise ricochets off the cement: "Hey lady, you want some asparagus?" "Mother, I must have that sweater..." "Married? *Cant-eloupe*? We got the best price of melon in Seattle."

I pause for a moment while the people and the noise continue to swirl around me. I lose the mood to shop; I leave. On the street, the cars crawl bumper to bumper as they look for parking.

I am short on cash, so I check the phone book and head for the closest American Express office.

A man on a corner says something lewd about my body. I walk on, disturbed.

The financial district, only five blocks from the market, is empty, ghost-like. No one conducts business here on a Saturday. A starling, the first bird I have heard today, breaks the eerie quiet. Empty towers of power loom over me. A breeze blows an empty bag — plastic tumbleweed — in front of my feet. Another man on another corner makes another lewd comment, but when I walk on, he follows. We are the only two people on the block.

Where I was growing up, just outside of Washington, D.C., no part of the city was closed to me. If I kept my eyes straight ahead and walked quickly, I could go anywhere. My stance probably said not to mess with me, because no one ever did. When I commuted to my job downtown, the buzz of the city at work excited me.

But here, in the empty Seattle financial district, I am frightened. I think, What will you do if this guy continues to follow you? Every door for three blocks is bolted. I quicken my pace and steer toward open civi-

lization. He loses interest and I lose him. I do not find the American Express office.

I find a cafe instead and sit down with a cup of coffee. I am baffled. I used to love the city; what happened? I decided to look for some redeemable qualities of city life.

I walk into the Elliot Bay Bookstore. Crowds of people browse — a lot of bodies. And books, thousands of pounds of books, an overwhelming amount of books. I start feeling dizzy. I am not sure if it relates to the stout cup of coffee I just drank or the vastness of the place.

The other patrons look happy surrounded by people and skyscraper-shelves of books. They calmly shop. They are people of their place. I crave a small, funky bookstore.

I stumble upon the nature section. There I find Terry Tempest Williams' *Coyote's Canyon*. I huddle on the floor with it, my back to the corner, my knees tucked into my chest. I draw power from her words of the land. They remind me of my strength, of its source. I realize that this downtown has beat me up, but that I am not beaten.

The next day, driving toward my home of Missoula, Montana, I wonder about a "city edge." Mine has gone away. What is a city edge? Is it physical? Is there a toggle switch in my brain for it? Who issued me one as I grew up? Maybe my mother, who told me how, as a young girl, she could casually elbow men whose hands roamed on the New York subway. Maybe my family, who instilled in me a love of live theater, foreign food and fine wine.

But why is the trade-off for these things a violation of space, of decency? I cannot understand why people choose to live with noise, or excuse roaming hands and rude comments as a product of city life.

I think the excuse they use manifests itself in the city edge. When I lived and worked in the city, I lived on the edge of a wall that keeps the city out. My head, my muscles and my body did not ache from the barrage of noise when I existed on a city edge. Yet the price of

insulation was to live a marginal existence — I lived only on the edge of myself.

Then I moved to Montana. I began to explore the open country, of the land and myself. Both were new to me. I cry more here. I laugh more here. I have gently rolled off my city edge. When I went to use it in Seattle, I found it had disappeared. For me, this joyous discovery affirmed the notion that we are people of place. Here, walls left untended erode into the landscape.

Tracy Stone-Manning is a free-lance writer in Missoula, Montana.



\$10 each

The HCN T-Shirt

Name _____
 Street address _____
 City, State, ZIP _____
 Gray: L ___ XL ___ White: L ___ XL ___

Mail to High Country News,
 P.O. Box 1090, Paonia, CO 81428