

INSIDE: Bison and cattle clash/15

High Country News

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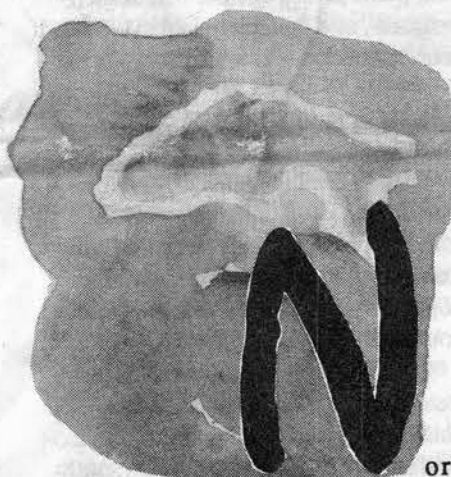
A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar

SALMON

Can a new plan save the fish?

by Steve Stuebner



North of the Sawtooth Mountains, hundreds of tiny chinook swim lazily below the ice on Marsh Creek in central Idaho. They are what's left of what were once the world's largest salmon runs.

Barely as long as your little finger, they represent the last hope for preserving the wild Snake River chinook runs of the Northwest. Once, these runs produced half of all Columbia River salmon.

Since the last ice age, some 12,000 years ago, salmon have performed feats nothing short of miraculous. They migrate by the millions some 900 miles to the sea, changing from freshwater to saltwater creatures along the way; in the ocean some grow from less than six inches to more than four feet in length; then, upon their return to the Columbia River, they become freshwater fish again and return to their birthplace to spawn.

Salmon have sustained generations of Native American tribes in the Northwest with an unending source of protein and spiritual inspiration. Now the fish are headed on a steady dive toward doom (HCN, 4/22/91).

When temperatures warm and streams rise this spring, floodwaters will whip the chinook smolts down the Salmon River — the longest free-flowing stream in the lower 48 states — toward the sea. At the Idaho-Washington border, 500 miles downstream from Marsh Creek, some 8 million smolts, most of them hatchery stock, will reach

Lower Granite Reservoir.

There, most will die.

They'll die from disorientation in the 40-mile-long deadwater pool; they'll get gobbled up by warm-water predators; they'll succumb to bacterial kidney disease; they'll get shredded in turbines; or they'll get flushed into a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' barge for an escort to the sea. The barged fish don't do well either. Most die during transport, in the Columbia River estuary, or at sea.

This is business as usual on the lower Snake and Columbia rivers.

The key question in 1992 is whether pro-fish political forces, with the aid of the Endangered Species Act, can change dam operations fast enough, and significantly enough, to save the salmon. Some 95 percent of the juvenile salmon are killed by the dams and reservoirs, but so far, the agencies charged with operating the world's largest hydroelectric system have failed to reverse the decline.

All of that may change in 1992, potentially the pivotal year for the imperiled Snake River salmon.

In December, the National Marine Fisheries Service designated Snake River sockeye an endangered species. Last summer, just four wild sockeye returned to their Idaho birthplace at Redfish Lake, named for the sockeye's brilliant crimson color. That run, for all intents and purposes, is nearly extinct. Now a captive-breeding program is under way to propagate the species.

This March, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is expected to declare the Snake River spring and summer chinook as threatened and Snake River fall chinook as endangered.

For the first time, that means pro-fish forces will have the biggest legal hook yet — Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act — to force federal agencies to stop killing the fish. Section 7 outlaws the "taking" of an endangered species.

Thus far, sport anglers and environmentalists have been outnumbered, outfunded and out-manuevered by downriver interests. Those interests include lobbies for hydropower, navigation, irrigation and aluminum.

But in recent months, about 40 environmental and sport and commercial fishing groups have banded together in a coalition dedicated to "Save Our Wild Salmon."

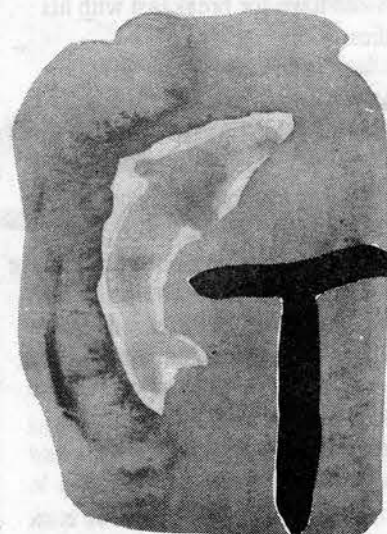
The groups are rallying behind the "drawdown" plan advanced and strongly supported by Idaho Gov. Cecil Andrus.

The plan, to take effect in 1995, would require the Army Corps to drain four Snake River reservoirs as much as 40 feet. That would come close to converting the sluggish reservoirs back into fast moving rivers. It would allow water and the migrating fish to pour through spillways instead of being collected and shipped by barges (see story page 9).

Pro-fish forces say turning the reservoirs back into rivers for the spring migration is the single best hope for saving the salmon.

The goal is to boost fish travel time to approximate the speed at which fish migrated through the Snake under free-flowing conditions that go back some 10,000 years.

Experts say high river flows are critical because the migrating fish drift to the ocean tail-first, with a specific biological window of time to reach salt water.



he fish moved 300 miles through the Snake and Columbia rivers in less than five days under pre-dam conditions, and experts reason that travel times three to 12 times longer than that may be killing the fish while they transform into saltwater creatures.

Research shows, for example, that prior to construction of the Lower Snake dams, spring floodwaters swept the fish through the 140-mile expanse in less than two days. With the dams in place and the reservoirs full, a flow of 85,000 cfs computes to a travel time of 12.5 days. To restore the fish runs with full reservoirs, fish experts say flows of at least 140,000 cfs are required. That computes to a six-day trip.

During drought years, flows of 50,000 to 72,000 cfs have resulted in travel times of 17 to 30 days.

So the drawdown makes a great deal of sense, especially to the Idaho coalition that supports the Andrus Plan. Without the drawdown, Idaho may be called upon to contribute large amounts of water in the spring to flush the fish through nearly full reservoirs. That would hurt Idaho's irrigated agriculture and its hydroelectric power production.

But the drawdown plan has powerful opposition. Downriver interests and the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), power broker for the world's largest hydroelectric grid, are trying to protect the status quo.

Glenn Vanselow, executive director of the Pacific Waterways Association, predicts that the drawdown will cause "a social and economic tidal wave."

Don Chapman, a consultant for downriver utilities, calls the drawdown plan "mainstem Valium." He contends that the series of eight dams on the Snake and Columbia will always be dangerous for fish. He advocates barging the fish to the sea and improving fish habitat in spawning grounds.

Save Our Wild Salmon's leader is Ed Chaney of Eagle, Idaho. He says it's time to get tough with the agencies and downriver interests to give the fish a fighting chance.

"Unless we act, they're going to kill the fish," says Chaney, a consultant who has tried to save the salmon for more than 20 years. "We have no lack of legal authority or mandate, we have a lack of spine or lack of will from the people who are supposed to save the fish."

Continued on page 10

Dear friends,



HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

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Great Old Broads get together

A celebration took place recently right in the neighborhood, so to speak. In Redstone, Colo., just 50 miles over McClure Pass from Paonia, 50 members of the group Great Old Broads for Wilderness honored five of their own for persistence and dedication.

The five won what president Susan Tixier called "Canyon Crone" awards. They went to Paula Mechau of Redstone, an active member of the Crystal Valley Protection Association; Aspenites Connie Harvey, Joy Caudill and Dottie Fox, advocates of wilderness in an area besieged by developers; and Dee Dunagan of Boulder, Colo., volunteer for Great Old Broads.

The next day the group's board met to talk about strategy, to marvel over its growth from 600 to 1,000 members in just a few months, and to nail down the mission of Great Old Broads.

Susan Tixier put it succinctly: The goal is not to create "an absolutely beautiful organization; we want to pass wilderness bills." Members also intend to retain a sense of humor while they hike in, and work for, wilderness.

Rob Roy, 1929-1992

A curmudgeonly architect named Rob Roy died recently on Lamborn Mesa, just outside Paonia. Rob and his wife, Kay, had become well known to many classes of *HCN* interns who rented houses from the couple. For 50 years or so those houses sheltered miners in the coal town of Bowie. But in the 1970s, with the mine closed and the town abandoned, the Roys moved several of the houses into the midst of their Double R Orchard, as worker housing.

As it turned out, the "workers" were *HCN* interns, who loved the country setting and communal living of the small homes. Eventually, the place became known as "intern acres" — inexpensive, sublime in the summer and somewhat chilly in the winter.

Rob was spirited to the end. Partly as a result of his spirit, and partly as a result of medicine he was taking to suppress pain caused by cancer, he went joy riding one day several weeks before his death on his orchard's four-wheeler. The ride took him through the local cemetery, and brought out the police.

His family grounded him. But they forgot about the riding lawnmower. A day or so later, he drove it the two miles or so into town for breakfast with his buddies.

It's in Montana

Phyllis Atchison, a rancher in Laramie County, Wyo., and an "avid" *HCN* reader, called to say our front page story on "Sagebrush Rebellion II" Feb. 24 placed a county in the wrong state. Granite County is in Montana, she says.

People for the West

Although *High Country News* is an environmental newspaper that wears its heart on its sleeve, it also strives for journalistic objectivity. We received proof Feb. 28 that sometimes we succeed.

The proof came as a telephone call from Guy Shefstead of Craig, Colo., who wanted 100 copies of the Feb. 24 issue

of *HCN*. He also wanted to subscribe. "How come I never heard of your paper?"

He had never heard of the paper because he is in the minerals and cattle business, and is more likely to be solicited by *Western Livestock Journal* than by *HCN*. We explained *HCN*'s bias, but he said he still wanted the 100 copies to hand out at a meeting called to organize a chapter of People for the West in north-west Colorado. Guy said the article titled Sagebrush Rebellion II, by staff writer Florence Williams, would be a good way to introduce his audience to the effort to "preserve our livelihood and our way of life out here."

No comparison, please

The January/February issue of *Coal Voice*, a magazine published by the National Coal Association in Washington, D.C., had a cover story about national environmental groups. Under a headline saying "A Feisty Five: Who says it's not easy being Green?" the magazine listed the salaries earned by the leaders of five national environmental groups.

We thought it would be interesting to compare the environmentalists' salaries with those of the natural resource trade groups. We assume that the trade group leaders earn more than the environmentalists, since they seem to be much better at clearcutting forests and the like than we are at stopping them. Nevertheless, we thought it would be informative.

Unfortunately, intern Heather Woodcock's attempts to gather salary information were met by a stone wall. Industry groups are not traded on the stock exchange, and therefore need not list how much money their presidents make. Moreover, spokesmen for the trade groups wouldn't voluntarily give out the information, as the environmental groups did.

We were most disappointed by the National Coal Association, since it was its magazine that trumpeted the fact that the head of the Sierra Club, for example, is paid \$86,000 for directing a 325-person staff.

But an NCA staffer explained to us that a trade group was different than an environmental organization. "We're not out there going door-to-door soliciting contributions from the grassroots."



Connie Harvey, a Great Old Broad



"Canyon Crone" Dottie Fox

Frandee Johnson

It's absorbent, too

Tom Wooten of Las Cruces, N.M., wrote the following for the Native Plant Society of New Mexico newsletter: "The pages of *High Country News*, a newspaper to which I subscribe and recommend, has pages that measure 11 1/4 by 17 3/8 inches. This is remarkably close to the 12 by 18 inches recommended for botanical mountings. Recommendation: absorb the news, recycle the paper in your plant press, where it will absorb moisture, and then place in recycle bin if your collection is mounted."

Visitors

Peggy Bell of Durango, Colo., toured the new *HCN* office recently, noticing the positive changes in light and space, and Aspenite David Kashinski stopped by for a look on his way back from skiing at Crested Butte.

Also noticing the move out of congested quarters were Stan and June Boicourt, who live in Brian Head, an isolated area in the mountains on the southern edge of Utah. The couple said their home is headquarters for a small but active environmental group called Friends of Dixie, which bird-dogs the surrounding national forest of the same name.

Bib Child, who served for many years as a Pitkin County, Colorado, commissioner passed through Paonia on his way back to his ranch in Old Snowmass.

We also get visits by mail. Harvard Ayers of Boone, N.C., writes to say he has organized a 2,150-mile hike along the Appalachian Trail in the spirit of John Muir to celebrate the Sierra Club's centennial. Ayers was recently honored by the club as an "Environmental Hero" for his work to preserve Native American sites.

Cats du jour

Staffer Diane Sylvain used to work for the local *High Country Shopper*, and she has posted on our bulletin board two classified ads with appropriate commentary: "Under the serene pastoral surface of the North Fork Valley, strange and gruesome passions work," as these two ads show:

"Four kittens, big enough to eat, use box. Free to good home," and

"Need someone to cut butterfly wings on their own premises. Will furnish the saw. You must have a drill press."

— Ed Marston and Betsy Marston
for the staff

WESTERN ROUNDUP

Energy industry gets belated Christmas gift

WASHINGTON, D.C. — National energy legislation, which was left for dead on the Senate floor last November, was revived and passed, 94-4, by the Senate Feb. 19, to the chagrin of environmental groups and conservationists.

The legislation closely resembles the National Energy Security Act of 1991, a bill described last year by the National Wildlife Federation as "the energy equivalent of savings and loan deregulation." (HCN, 11/18/91.)

The two chief sponsors of both bills were Sen. Bennett Johnston, D-La., the chairman of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, and Sen. Malcolm Wallop, R-Wyo., the committee's ranking Republican.

The first energy bill was flattened by a filibuster last Nov. 1. Johnston salvaged most of it, however, primarily by agreeing to dump two particularly unpopular sections.

One section would have permitted oil and gas exploration within the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The other would have imposed auto fuel mileage standards which were considered far too lenient by conservationists' standards.

Like its predecessor, the new bill would ease regulations governing construction of nuclear power plants and natural gas pipelines, subsidize nuclear reactor design and coal-based synthetic fuels, and rewrite electric utility regulations.

Stronger conservation and efficiency measures were added to the new bill and, unlike its predecessor, it would not give states authority to license and relicense hydropower projects that produce less than five megawatts of electricity.

Said Dave Hamilton, a spokesman for the U.S. Public Interest Research Group, "In general, from an environmental/consumer standpoint (the old bill) needed a triple bypass operation and got a facelift."

Among the elements of the first energy bill that were transplanted into the new bill is a provision that would streamline federal licensing of natural gas pipelines. Pipeline builders could automatically qualify for "certificates of public necessity and convenience," which would convey the right to eminent domain and allow construction and operation of pipelines without public hearings.

Unlike the first bill, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission would not assume exclusive authority to ensure compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). But the relevance of NEPA is questionable under the new certificate, said National Wildlife Federation spokesman Dave Alberswerth.

Another transplant from the first

energy bill would allow "one-stop shopping" for a new unified federal license to build and operate nuclear power plants.

Opponents, including Sen. Richard Bryan, D-Nev., said the provision would make it dangerously difficult for the public to intervene in cases where nuclear plants are considered suspect or faulty.

The bill also forgives an estimated \$11 billion debt owed by the commercial nuclear industry to the Department of Energy's uranium enrichment plant in Kentucky. The nuclear industry would benefit as well from the expenditure of an unspecified sum of public funds to develop new reactors.

"The way this bill tilts toward the nuclear industry is an insult to principles of economics and democracy," said Bill Magavern, an advocate for the U.S. Public Interest Research Group.

One thing the bill does not do for the nuclear industry is eliminate the state

Like the phoenix, synthetic fuels rise again.

of Nevada's authority to oversee the proposed Yucca Mountain Nuclear Waste Dump. Neither does it overrule state laws that could be used to stop the dump, as the original bill did.

Such an amendment had been expected but was not offered, according to a spokesman for Bryan who said, however, that Johnston and Wallop have co-sponsored a bill to that end.

Alberswerth said the energy bill moves from the unprincipled to the absurd by authorizing the expenditure of millions of dollars for the development of coal-based synthetic fuels, an idea Congress abandoned seven years ago.

Another, more complex section of the bill would alter the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 to allow formation of independent wholesale power companies and permit utilities to build power generators under corporate structures that are currently banned.

The provision was passed in the name of competition in the electricity market. But Leon Lowery, a lobbyist for Environmental Action, said it could, instead, tantalyze utilities with huge profits from new generators at the expense of conservation and efficiency.

"Utilities will go where the money leads them..." he said. "And they will fight like bandits to avoid conservation and efficiency measures (if) they can

make more money off generation."

Environmental groups did claim at least one outright victory by eliminating a part of the bill that would have given states authority to license and relicense hydropower plants of less than five megawatts. Since most hydropower plants produce less than five megawatts, many federal environmental laws would have no longer applied.

Matthew Huntington, a hydropower expert for American Rivers, said the final bill preserves existing federal authority and his group was satisfied with that part of the legislation.

How Sen. Johnston managed to resurrect his energy bill, and why the eight key senators who blocked it last year seemed to surrender this year, are political questions not easily answered.

Lobbyists for both sides have said Sen. Timothy Wirth, D-Colo., and his allies, the key figures in the filibuster that defeated the 1991 bill, did not wish to humiliate Johnston — a political lion by virtue of his chairmanship.

Wirth, they said, a member of Johnston's committee who faces re-election this year, wanted to maintain a good working relationship with Johnston on the committee. Meanwhile, Johnston worked hard to generate support through a series of horse trades with other senators.

"Johnston is a consummate deal maker," Alberswerth said. "He did everything he had to do to pass this bill and it will probably be a long time before we know all the deals that he made on this one." At least one environmental lobbyist, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said key Democrats sold out cheap for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge and fuel economy standards, abandoning principles of resource conservation and renewables.

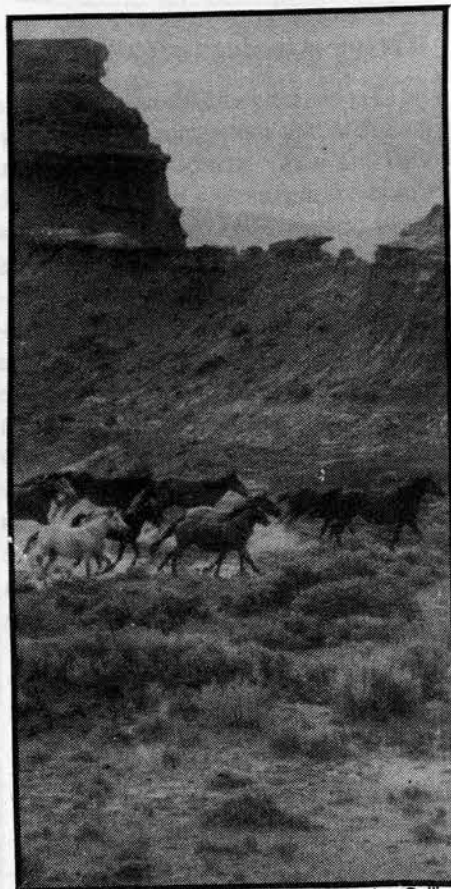
But Wirth hailed the bill as a turning point and said "the energy efficiency provisions in the bill have put us closer to an energy policy which is based first and foremost on using energy conservatively." He also said that provisions encouraging the use of natural gas in automobiles and elsewhere as a substitute for oil would give a boost to one of Colorado's larger industries.

The House of Representatives is expected to take up its own energy legislation this spring. Many Capitol Hill observers now believe the 102nd Congress will pass a final energy bill before it adjourns in the fall.

— David Hackett

David Hackett covers Washington, D.C., for the Casper *Star-Tribune*. This article was paid for by the High Country News Research Fund.

HOTLINE



Katharine Collins

Wild horses near Adobe Town, Wyo.

BLM will put horses on the Pill

The Bureau of Land Management says it will try birth control shots to reduce the population of the West's wild horses. Under a \$400,000 pilot project, the agency will catch horses and inject them with a long-lasting birth-control drug. Others will get fertility control implants. The BLM will inaugurate this latest attempt at population control in Nevada, where the West's largest herds of mustangs roam. If it works there, the program will be expanded to other Western states, reports AP. The goal of the program is not to stop the horses from reproducing but to cut the herd's birth rate from 14 percent to 6 percent. Controlling the herd's size has been pushed by ranchers whose cattle share the rangeland with the mustangs. Roundups and horse adoptions have failed to stop the wild horse population from burgeoning to its present 50,000 (HCN, 6/3/91).

No more weapons

Bomb production at Rocky Flats in Colorado ended once and for all when the Department of Energy recently cancelled a contract for building W-88 submarine warheads. The W-88 system was designed to counterattack a nuclear strike that never came from the now-defunct Soviet Union. Rocky Flats, located 16 miles northwest of Denver, had been producing plutonium triggers for nuclear bombs since 1953. For the last two years, however, safety violations halted weapons production. According to Energy Secretary James Watkins, a leaner staff at Rocky Flats will now concentrate on environmental cleanup. Eugene DeMayo of the Rocky Mountain Chapter of the Sierra Club said group members were "ecstatic" about bomb production ending, but still concerned. Citizens need to monitor all stages of the cleanup, he said, and since information on high-level wastes is classified, public oversight won't be easy. Ken Korkia of the Rocky Flats Cleanup Commission, a citizens' group that tracks environmental safety at the plant, said his group also remains wary. Nuclear waste generated at Rocky Flats, and slated for burial in New Mexico, is still on site since the opening of a waste plant near Carlsbad has been delayed (HCN, 2/24/92).

HOTLINE

Who's really a Friend of the Bow?

The original "Friends of the Bow" was a group of 22 dedicated environmentalists who first got together three years ago to protect roadless areas in southeastern Wyoming's Medicine Bow National Forest. A new "Friends of the Bow" group is four people who work for the Wyoming Farm Bureau, Wyoming Woolgrowers Association, Wyoming Trucking Association and Associated

General Contractors. The new group filed to incorporate as a non-profit with the name "Friends of the Bow" with the secretary of state Feb. 14. "We felt we liked that name," said Larry Bourret, executive vice president of the Wyoming Farm Bureau. "They (the environmental group) didn't 'trade-name' it and didn't incorporate under it." Jeff Kessler, a member of the original group, says he's not concerned. "It's hilarious, in a way," he says. "These people didn't have better things to do. It's just a pretty childish thing to do on the part of Larry Bourret." The original "Friends of the Bow,"

which has never incorporated and does not have any formal structure, has written a letter to the secretary of state asking her to refuse to register the new group. "Our decision not to incorporate was a conscious one, owing to the desire of its members to focus on issues rather than structure," wrote Mark Squillace, attorney for the original group. "We don't care what people call us," Kessler added. "We want the people to be informed and we can do that under any name. Maybe we could be Friends of the Bow Classic and they could Friends of the Bow Light."

HOTLINE

Water project challenged

Six environmental groups have filed a lawsuit to halt construction of the Animas-La Plata water project in southwestern Colorado. Represented by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, the groups argue that the Bureau of Reclamation must prepare an updated environmental impact statement before building the \$641 million irrigation, storage and pipeline project. The scope and design of the project have changed since the Bureau's earlier EIS in 1980, according to environmental attorney Lori Potter. New concerns about water quality, endangered fish and the project's escalating cost must be considered, she says. After a decade of delays, the Bureau broke ground last year for Animas-La Plata, now the most expensive water project ever proposed in Colorado. Responding to the suit, the Bureau announced it is beginning studies to determine whether the project will violate the Clean Water Act or if it needs to write a new EIS. Leonard Burch, the chairman of the Southern Ute Indian Tribe, one of three tribes slated to receive some of the project's water, criticized the lawsuit, saying it would delay construction unnecessarily. Filing last month in federal district court were the Sierra Club, Four Corners Action Coalition, Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Colorado Wildlife Federation and Taxpayers for the Animas River.

A new strategy for protecting Hells Canyon

Regional conservation groups think they've found a way to better protect Hells Canyon in Oregon, Idaho and Washington. A recent proposal asks Congress to consider converting the 16-year-old Hells Canyon National Recreation Area into a 1.5-million-acre preserve and two national parks. "When they designated the national recreation area it was like setting aside the Notre Dame cathedral as the Notre Dame recreation hall," says Mary O'Brien, board president of the Hells Canyon Preservation Council. The National Parks and Conservation Association and Hells Canyon Preservation Council, with support from the Audubon Society, want Congress to fund an \$800,000 study. It would determine the feasibility of creating a preserve and parks at the world's deepest erosion-carved canyon. The Snake River and its 8,000-foot-high canyon rim are home to black bear, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, one of the largest elk herds in the continental United States, deer, peregrine falcon and chukars (HCN, 10/23/89). In addition, more than 1,000 prehistoric Indian sites have been uncovered on Snake River sandbars. Since 1975, the Forest Service has allowed the sale of more than 100 million board-feet of lumber from the area, but logging would stop if the area became a preserve and parks. "The American people expected this area to be preserved," says Paul Pritchard, president of the National Parks and Conservation Association. "Instead we have a 15-year record of degradation and neglect," he told AP.

BARBS

Make up your mind: Is it nails, or stakes?

Ralph Saperstein of the Northwest Forestry Association said of a spotted owl legal decision: "This decision is a nail in the economics of western Oregon. Ten thousand jobs are at stake as a result of this action."

Toxic site may become a wildlife refuge

Under a new proposal introduced by Colorado Rep. Pat Schroeder, the beleaguered Rocky Mountain Arsenal would turn into a national wildlife refuge. The 16,500-acre area would be managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service rather than the Army.

In 1942, shortly after America's entry into World War II, Congress authorized construction of the Rocky Mountain Arsenal, a major chemical weapons plant a stone's throw from downtown Denver. For many years the Army produced a vast array of lethal chemicals there, ranging from nerve gas to napalm. Arsenal space was later leased to Shell Oil Co., which began manufacturing highly toxic herbicides and pesticides.

Working side-by-side, this military-industrial partnership dumped a nightmarish toxic soup on the ground, assuming that the chemicals would evaporate. In the process, they created what has been called the most polluted square mile in the United States.

Today it is one of the foremost targets on the federal Superfund cleanup list. The deadly waste eventually threatened domestic water supplies of Adams County residents and nearby farms.

The Army and Shell were less than anxious to see their activity publicized, but it was impossible to cover up a story of such magnitude. For years, Shell also balked at paying for a cleanup that could cost \$2 billion and take 30 years. The courts, however, held Shell liable.

Then last year, the National Wildlife Federation drafted legislation to convert this 17,000-acre Superfund site into a unique urban wildlife refuge.

In recent years, more than 130 species of animals have been catalogued at the arsenal. Birds of prey and waterfowl, deer and coyotes, badgers and rabbits, a rattlesnake or two, and prairie dogs now call this home.

The refuge proposal was introduced in the House by Schroeder, a Democrat, who has likened the concept to Colorado having "its very own Serengeti." It reflects a compromise between an earlier Schroeder proposal and one by Rep. Wayne Allard, R-Colo.

Allard suggested creating an 815-acre commercial strip along the arsenal's western border with Commerce City. Officials there have long complained that the community suffered both health

and economic hardships because of the arsenal's proximity.

The military installations subcommittee that Schroeder chairs recently adopted the bill, including Allard's 815-acre commercial strip. Last week, the House Armed Services Committee also passed the bill. The measure will now go before the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, and then on to the House floor and Senate.

Little opposition is expected from Congress and the White House, and if passed, it could make the Rocky Mountain Arsenal National Wildlife Refuge a reality by Christmas.

But the refuge idea has its critics.

eral for natural resources for the state of Colorado, likewise said her office, which had reviewed the current language, was reasonably satisfied with the bill. "The EPA and the state have the same concern and that is that designation as a refuge does not affect the cleanup," Bangert said.

Last fall, Richard White, an environmental historian who said he "studies messes," told a two-day arsenal conference in Denver: "I'm a specialist in the mess itself and you have one of the most interesting messes in the United States right outside of your door."

A professor at the University of Washington in Seattle and author of *It's*



Bob Rosinski/Wendy Shettill

Rep. Pat Schroeder holds a bald eagle at Rocky Mountain Arsenal

Jeff Edson, head of the Colorado Health Department's Rocky Mountain Arsenal project, questions the intense lobbying efforts of the Army and Shell.

"I don't think anybody within the state of Colorado objects to one day converting the arsenal into a wildlife refuge," Edson said. But "the cleanup is going to involve the destruction of a great deal of habitat out there ... This is a Superfund site; people have to understand that over three-quarters of the arsenal may have to be dug up or tilled due to elevated levels of pesticides in the soils."

In Denver, Conally Mears, EPA coordinator for the arsenal cleanup program, said he, too, had been wary of the refuge plan but was now satisfied with the bill.

Trish Bangert, deputy attorney gen-

Your Misfortune and None of My Own: A New History of the American West, White told a story of how his stepson had caught two fish, eaten one and put the other in the bathtub. The boy grew attached to the second fish, he said, and could not kill it.

"The arsenal is Denver's fish in the bathtub," he said. Its toxic history should not be forgotten, he added, for "the site reveals much — and it is unpleasant — about this society in the 20th century. It should be remembered; it should be commemorated."

— Stephen Gascoyne

The writer lives in Denver, Colorado.

Do petroglyphs mesh with golf?

The recently established Petroglyph National Monument in western Albuquerque may shrink by 70 acres if a Florida developer gets approval from the National Park Service to build a golf course complex at its southern tip.

In 1990, Congress created the monument to preserve what has been called the nation's most spectacular concentration of petroglyphs (HCN, 10/7/91).

The monument, the first devoted solely to the preservation of rock art, includes over 1,800 petroglyphs from 3,000 to 5,000 years old. However, the monument is precariously located on the western edge of Albuquerque's rapidly growing suburbs.

The developer says he needs extra acreage to run power lines to the proposed resort which will include a 72-hole golf course, tennis club and 500 new homes.



"With power lines running through the property, it's a very difficult thing — we don't have enough room to do it if we don't have that land," said developer William Fry of Seven Plus Development Inc.

U.S. Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan Jr. told the *Albuquerque Journal* that he is discussing the 70-acre request with the Park Service, and that things look "good." Lujan said he likes the idea of having a golf course adjacent to the monument as a buffer.

Some conservationists, however, disagree. "The project would be like building a golf course in a cathedral," said Brian Culhane of The Wilderness Society in Washington. The Audubon Society, the Sierra Club and the National Indian Youth Council also oppose the loss of 70 acres. Ike Eastvold, president of the Friends of the Albuquerque Petroglyphs, said he opposes shrinking the monument, but that his group does not oppose the resort.

Lujan has ordered an environmental assessment of the 70-acre withdrawal.

— Heather Woodcock, HCN intern

Air Force in a dogfight over Utah

Plans by the U.S. Air Force to train pilots over 2,342 square miles of north-eastern Utah have brought together diverse opponents, including ranchers, environmentalists and the governor.

If the Federal Aviation Administration approves the present route, B-1B and B-52 bombers will fly at 400 to 600 feet altitudes four times a day near Desolation Canyon, Green River, parts of Interstate 70 and the small town of Fremont. Opposition already has forced the Strategic Air Command to reroute its proposed flyovers three times. Strong objections have come from the Utah Cattlemen's Association, Republican Gov. Norm Bangerter, the Utah Wilderness Association, the National Parks and Conservation Association and the Sierra Club.

The Air Force's initial environmental assessment, released in October 1991, proposed a route directly over Desolation Canyon, parts of Capitol Reef National Park, 10 wilderness study areas and the Green River, which has been proposed for wild and scenic river status. The second route, though improved according to George Nickas, staffer with the Utah Wilderness Association, still included a path through the side canyons of Desolation Canyon, but moved the flight corridor three miles west of Green River.

The third and final route eliminated paths through any part of Desolation Canyon and moved the corridor 10 miles west.

The Air Force's environmental assessment for its third route is now in final draft and under review by the Strategic Air Command. Though



bombers will still pass over sensitive wildlife habitat, including the range of bald eagles and peregrine falcons, "there is no doubt that the latest route is better for Desolation Canyon than what was initially proposed," said Nickas. However, the proposed flyover will cover "the Swasey Mountain and Howell Peak wilderness study areas in the west desert." Strategic Air Command staffer John Mastrianni said the Air Force designed the new flight path to gain eastern access to Utah. In the past, he said, bombers had to enter from the West, wasting fuel and time.

But critics say conservation of time and fuel is not reason enough for the western flight pattern. "The Air Force didn't really analyze much at all in its environmental assessment," said Nickas. "They claimed that even if their low-flying planes killed some of the bighorn sheep grazing below, the deaths would have a positive impact on other bighorns that need the extra food anyway."

Gov. Bangerter has told the Air Force that he cannot consider supporting restrictions on land or air of the state by any federal agency until he is convinced "that every effort has been made to justify the need for the restriction." Bangerter has called for public hearings on the proposed overflights.

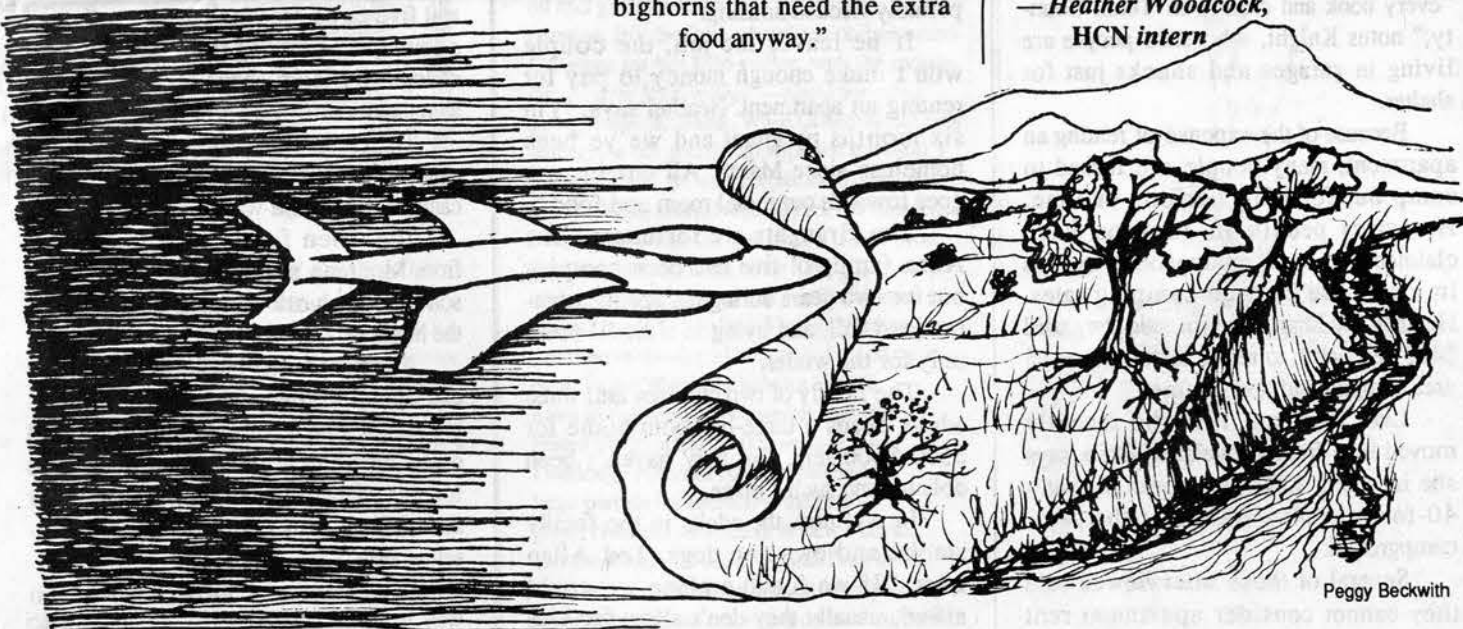
The Utah Cattlemen's Association has also demanded public hearings. In a letter to the Air Force, the group said, "The thousands of miles of low-level military training routes already established are adequate for current needs. Furthermore, the people of Utah are not being fairly treated by not allowing public hearings."

Under laws governing the military, the Air Force needs approval for its route only from the Federal Aviation Administration and the vice-chief of the Strategic Air Command. Since the Strategic Air Command is still accepting written comments from the public, opponents are taking the opportunity to demand a full environmental impact statement.

"Whether the route is approved is now a political decision," said Terri Martin, Rocky Mountain staffer for the National Parks and Conservation Association. "It depends on how aggressive Gov. Bangerter is."

For more information or to comment on the proposed route, contact the Environmental Planning Division, Strategic Air Force Command, SAC Blvd., Bldg. 500, Offutt Air Force Base, NE 68113-5001; the Utah Wilderness Association, 801/359-1337; or Gov. Norman Bangerter, State Capitol Bldg., Salt Lake City, UT 84114, 801/538-1000.

— Heather Woodcock,
HCN intern



HOTLINE

Dumping doesn't pay

Polluters who choose public land to dump chemicals illegally were sent a strong message recently in Wyoming. The message — a \$1.6 million fine — came after an 18-month investigation by the Bureau of Land Management. It found that Pacific Enterprises Oil Co., a subsidiary of a Los Angeles-based company, buried 139 barrels of hazardous waste in 1990, and 73 drums in 1986 on federal land near the town of Powder River, Wyo. The company pleaded guilty to burying scrap metal, asbestos and pipes in the same area, spreading chemicals from 53 drums along dirt roads at the oil field, and pumping chemicals from 12 additional drums into abandoned oil wells. As part of the plea agreement, Pacific Enterprises agreed to deed 1,000 acres of land along the Green River in Desolation Canyon, Utah, to the United

States, reports the *Casper Star-Tribune*. Joe Vallely, spokesman for Pacific Enterprises Oil Co., said, "Out of all this, we are much more environmentally aware ... we took a look at ourselves and realized that we probably didn't do as much as we should have in educating and training our employees." A federal attorney said the prosecution was the first major criminal case involving the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.

Lawsuit is in the works

Five environmental groups will sue the federal government for doing one job zealously while neglecting another. The suit charges that the government successfully kills animals that prey on livestock, while at the time it carelessly harms endangered species. The groups, the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance, Humane Society, Fund for Animals, Native Ecosystems and Wildlife Damage Review, announced their intent to sue Animal Damage Con-

trol, the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and the secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture Departments. The groups say that Animal Damage Control's failure to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for 13 years — during which time the endangered species list grew by 150 additional species — was illegal and led to the deaths of threatened and endangered animals. As an example, the groups cite the recent case of a bald eagle in Cedar City, Utah, which had to be killed after getting caught in a leghold trap. "Having Animal Damage Control operate in endangered species habitat is like putting Dracula in control of the blood bank," said Brant Calkin, executive director for the Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance. Before filing suit in federal court, the Endangered Species Act requires groups to send a 60-day notice of intent. The Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund is representing the five environmental groups.

HOTLINE

Plans change for a sacred site

The U.S. Forest Service has dropped a controversial management proposal for the Medicine Wheel in the Bighorn National Forest of northern Wyoming. It has also given American Indians a much larger role in deciding how to manage the grassy, windswept site where rocks form the shape of a wheel. The site has long been sacred to many Native Americans who said the draft environmental impact statement, completed last year by the Forest Service, gave them little control over land that is rightfully theirs. The original Forest Service plan called for improving an access road and upgrading restrooms for visitors, who now number 30,000 a summer. Now, the agency says, it is rethinking its proposal. In the meantime, the Forest Service has given the Medicine Wheel Coalition, a group of tribal representatives, a more powerful role in assessing the impacts of future plans for the area. The coalition wants to restrict access for tourists and prohibit all motor vehicles from coming within 2½ miles of the Medicine Wheel. Bighorn National Forest officials have already banned snowmobiling and camping within a quarter-mile of the site and say they will hire two American Indian interpreters to educate visitors. "There are a lot of Indian sites that have been desecrated and destroyed," says Jerry Flute, lawyer and a tribal representative. "It's a growing concern not just to tribes but to the general public," he told the *Casper Star-Tribune*.

Montana mining law challenged

Two Montana groups recently sued the state in an attempt to overturn a law that prohibits the public from viewing records on hardrock mine exploration. The law, originally designed to protect the confidentiality of miners staking claims, prevents individuals and even regulatory agencies from learning the environmental effects of mine exploration. Montana's Department of State Lands has refused to release information on a water-quality violation at the Noranda Montanore mine south of Libby, says Jim Jensen, executive director of the Montana Environmental Information Center. He says state officials also refused to let him see environmental records for three other mining projects. Along with a group called Freedom of Information Hotline, Jensen argues that the law violates the Montana constitution's "right to know" provision. "The law locks the public out in an absolute manner," says Jensen. Earlier this year, State District Judge Thomas Honzel agreed with the groups and issued a writ to the Department of State Lands requiring it to justify Jensen's request for information. Attorneys for both sides are now preparing to brief the court.

BARBS

Take back the dynamite, Clem.

A coyote-killing contest set for Farr West, Utah, was cancelled recently after only two teams paid their \$25 entry fees. The contest advertised that coyotes could be "taken by any method."

The complainers were people who resented having to buy a tag.

After receiving a flood of complaints, AP reports, Tillamook County Commissioner Ken Burdick in Oregon apologized for saying that hunting tags should be issued to shoot environmentalists.

Jackson's rents now match its mountain peaks

JACKSON, Wyo. — In the shadow of million-dollar vacation homes, Jackson's homeless families eke out their lives in plastic-covered camping trailers, grateful for the shelter that they have.

Jackson's homeless population includes a cross section of society: former upper-middle class people, single-parent families, two-wage-earner families, single adults and childless couples.

Marginal wage-earners in any of those groups end up camped out because of the lack of affordable housing in this small town. Some find themselves paying \$400 a month just to have a spot to pitch a tent.

Jackson's homeless include long-term residents as well as the newly arrived.

Clayton Reed, a lifelong Jackson resident, watched his monthly rent for a one-bedroom apartment triple from \$350 to \$1,100 — leaving him homeless for a time.

Reed told a panel of local officials recently, "I've been here for 48 years, raised 14 children, and I'm not able to afford a house. I resent the rich people coming here and buying up my home."

The town and county are seeking ways to provide affordable housing in a new comprehensive plan for the growth of Teton County and Jackson.

But the plan is still seven months away from completion and other affordable housing options are not immediately available. Officials acknowledge that permanent solutions may be years away.

Huge tracts of public land surrounding the town, seclusion from other towns, and its famous scenery have driven Jackson's land values skyward in recent years.

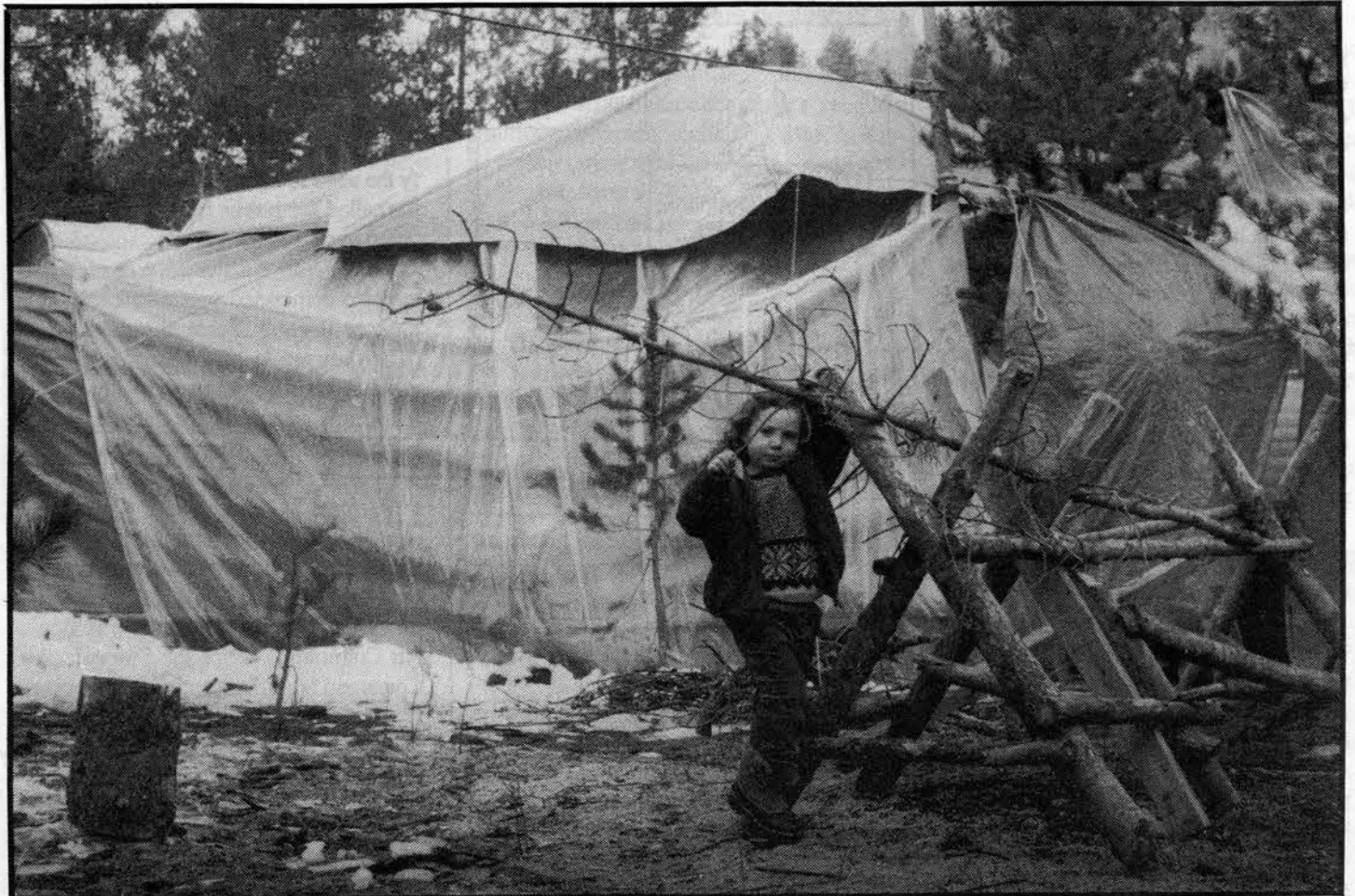
And over the past four or five years Teton County has become an attractive location for second homes for the wealthy, further raising land values.

As a result, affordable housing has become less attractive as a development alternative than the million-dollar homes being built for a much larger profit, local officials say.

That "market failure," as Teton County Planner William Knight calls it, creates real-estate values so high that locals can't consider purchasing land and have a difficult time finding affordable rent.

Wealthy people from outside the area have been purchasing expensive vacation homes in the \$500,000-plus range, Knight says. That in turn has increased real estate values to the point where a first-time buyer can expect to pay \$125,000-\$130,000 for a first home, which would require an income of \$38,376.

The median rent in Teton County for a two-bedroom apartment is \$500-\$600,



Lauren McKeever

A family of five lives at this campsite in the Bridger-Teton National Forest

Knight says. But advertisements for rental properties indicate Teton County residents can often expect to pay closer to \$800 or even above \$1,000 for a two-bedroom apartment in the Jackson area.

Knight adds that the median income for Teton County is \$31,200. An average hourly wage can range from \$5 to \$12.

Aside from making home ownership impossible for many here, the rent prices of Jackson have driven people into "every nook and cranny in Teton County," notes Knight, who said people are living in garages and shacks just for shelter.

Because of the expense of renting an apartment, many people are forced to camp out for long periods of time. Homeless people in Jackson have claimed that some campground owners in town have boosted camping rates. Heather and Shan Braught said they paid \$400 per month to rent a tent space at an area campground last summer.

Liza Homans, 19, who recently moved here from Cleveland, Ohio, says she is paying \$500 per month to rent a 40-foot camping trailer at the same campground.

Several of those interviewed said they cannot consider apartment rent because they cannot afford the first and last months' rent plus a security deposit, which can easily total several thousand dollars.

There are those who can neither afford to stay or leave Jackson and appear to be stuck in a Catch-22 situation.

The Braughts are expecting their first child and are making \$5 an hour each cleaning rooms at a motel, where they also get a room to live in. Shan, who says he could find a job making twice the pay, must stay at the current job because it provides them with desperately needed housing.

If he leaves the job, the couple won't make enough money to pay for renting an apartment. Heather says, "I'm six months pregnant and we've been homeless since March. All our income goes towards our motel room and food."

The Braughts are fortunate. The Allen family of five had been camping out for two years during the spring, summer and fall, and living in a motel room only for the winter.

The family of two children and three adults needs a three-bedroom home for \$500-\$600 rent. But they haven't been able to find such a place.

In addition, the adults in the family smoke and own two dogs. Ted Allen says, "If we found a place we could afford, usually they don't allow for kids and smoking, and if that's okay, they don't allow for dogs." He continues, "I'm not gonna drown my kids and eat my dogs to rent a place to live."

Allen and relative Al Hager are the family's breadwinners, earning between \$9 and \$11 per hour. But after paying for their truck insurance, \$60 per month storage space unit, food, camping trailer and car payments, the family lives from paycheck to paycheck.

They live in the Bridger-Teton National Forest, nearly 20 miles out of town. Their homesite consists of two 20-year-old camping trailers, a 15-foot tent and five tarps creating outside walls and a ceiling. The "living room" is composed of logs and lawn chairs centered around a constant campfire.

The camp this year is fairly sophisticated. Last year, Hager said, the family camped out in non-waterproof dome tents.

The Allen family came to Jackson from Montana searching for work. Jackson has the work the men need but not the housing.

Allen says that landlords know they can charge higher rent than many working people can afford because "they find others who can afford it. They don't care for the working man," he says. Hager adds, "They keep us broke to keep themselves rich."

Others commute up to 50 miles each way in order to work in Jackson and to find affordable housing elsewhere. Allen says he considered commuting, but with the additional expense the family would be spending the same amount of money as if they paid the high rent.

Mae Moran, who also came from Montana, has been homeless for three years. She and her daughter and son lived summers in a tent paying \$200 in monthly rent for a tent space. The family eventually upgraded to larger tents and is currently living in a camping trailer.

During the winters the family rented a room at a motel, which, according to Moran, had a roof that leaked so badly that they had to keep rearranging their things to prevent water damage. There they paid \$450 a month for a bedroom and a kitchen. The family had to leave the motel in the summer because the rates increased to \$78 per day.

— Lauren McKeever

The writer works for the Casper Star-Tribune, where this story originally appeared.

HOTLINE



Agency battles ORVs

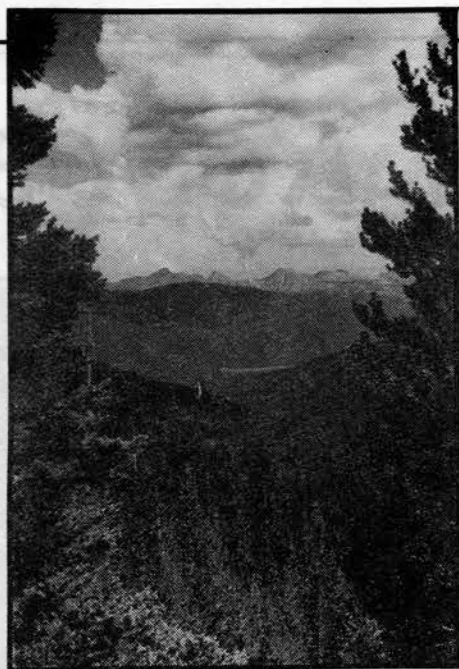
In Nevada, a battle between off-road vehicle users and the Forest Service has erupted over access to Peavine Peak, near Reno. ORVs such as dirt bikes and Jeeps have scarred hillsides, digging deep ruts that become "virtual trenches" with rainfall, an agency spokesperson told the *Reno Gazette-Journal*. To prevent more erosion and to protect Reno's water supply, the

Forest Service recently closed many roads and banned motorized vehicles from Peavine Peak. The effort failed, as agency signs were ripped down and ORVs were again driven on closed roads, reported Neil Botts, recreation supervisor for the Forest Service's Carson Range region. Botts said he can't understand the vandalism since more than 100 miles of road are still open to ORV use. This behavior is part of a long history of abuse, however. The hillsides, which were once blanketed with Jeffrey pines, are now bare, and the mountain has long been an unofficial dumping ground. Botts cautions that if motorists are not more considerate of the land, the entire mountain could be closed, a proposal considered by the Bureau of Land Management in 1983.

No more stereotypes

The Portland *Oregonian*, the state's largest newspaper, recently announced that it will stop publishing Indian-related names of sports teams. Teams such as the Braves, Redskins, Indians and Redmen are now referred to by their home cities or schools. According to editor William A. Hilliard, the paper adopted the new policy because such names "perpetuate stereotypes that damage the dignity and self-respect of many people in our society." Hilliard added that the social harm resulting from the names far outweighed their promotional value. Clyde Bellecourt, founder of the American Indian Movement, praised the *Oregonian's* move, reports AP.

BULLETIN BOARD



Never Summer Roadless Area, Arapaho National Forest, Colorado

BILLIONS UNSPENT FOR CONSERVATION

An \$8.4 billion backlog has developed in the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the federal government's source for purchasing land nationwide for recreation and conservation. The billions have accumulated since 1980, when the Reagan administration's priorities and those of Congress made the fund's annual authorization an attractive source for other uses. The money was diverted to pay for ongoing government programs or, theoretically, to reduce the federal deficit. "That money is there," insists Keith Argow of the Conservation Alternative. "It's a trust for the people." The Conservation Alternative is a coalition of 27 environmental groups that tracks the conservation fund and lobbies for land purchases. Among the groups in the coalition are the National Audubon Society, the Sierra Club, Defenders of Wildlife and The Wilderness Society. Each year, the coalition compiles a list of properties nationwide that it believes should be purchased. That list has become long because of the backlog, says Don Helman, coordinator of the Conservation Alternative. In fiscal year 1993, for example, \$900 million is projected in conservation fund royalties from off-shore oil and gas leases, the fund's principal source of revenue. But the Bush administration has asked Congress for just \$366 million, with the remainder — over \$500 million — slated for other government programs. When Congress not only authorizes but actually appropriates the fund's money, it will go to four agencies: the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Forest Service. Some portion of the LWCF's money also goes annually to states, which can match federal funds to buy land. The agencies and states have developed long wish-lists of their own. In the West, that includes 19,000 acres in the Arapaho-Roosevelt National Forest in Colorado; 33,000 acres in the Deerlodge National Forest in Montana; large parcels for addition to the Petroglyph National Monument in New Mexico and the Petrified Forest National Park in Arizona; as well as hundreds of other pieces of land throughout the region that are vulnerable to development. To catch up, the Conservation Alternative favors a much higher appropriation for the LWCF, recommending more than \$1.2 billion in appropriations this fiscal year, according to Helman. For more information, call Don Helman at The Wilderness Society at 202/429-2664.

— Ashley Wills

COMMUNITY INITIATIVES

The Grand Canyon Trust assumes that sound conservation decisions in the West must be integrated into local economic decisions. The approach was explored in a symposium titled "Coping with Change, Economy and Environment," held last fall in Cedar City, Utah, for approximately 150 community leaders and citizens of the Plateau. The symposium's results will guide projects the Grand Canyon Trust will undertake in cooperation with towns, counties and Native American communities. The proceedings of the symposium have been printed in a report which includes keynote presentations from Stewart Udall, Bruce Babbitt, Daniel Kemmis, Vernon Masayeva and Ed Marston. Copies are available for \$10 from the Grand Canyon Trust, Rt. 4, Box 718, Flagstaff, AZ, 86001. (602/774-7488.)

THINK OF THE FISH

Creating salmon and trout habitat in streambeds is the topic of a short course March 24-26 at the College of Forest Resources conference center near Eatonville, Wash. Instructors include Tom Bumstead, a fisheries biologist; John Orsborn, a civil engineering professor; and Pat Trotter, a trout biologist and author of *Cutthroat: Native Trout of the West*. The course, which costs \$450, is called "Designing and Implementing Habitat Modifications for Salmon and Trout." Sponsored by the University of Washington, it is for land managers, environmental consultants, resource scientists, engineers and others interested in streambed habitat projects. To register, contact the Continuing Education Office, College of Forest Resources, University of Washington AR-10, Seattle, WA 98195 (206/543-0867).

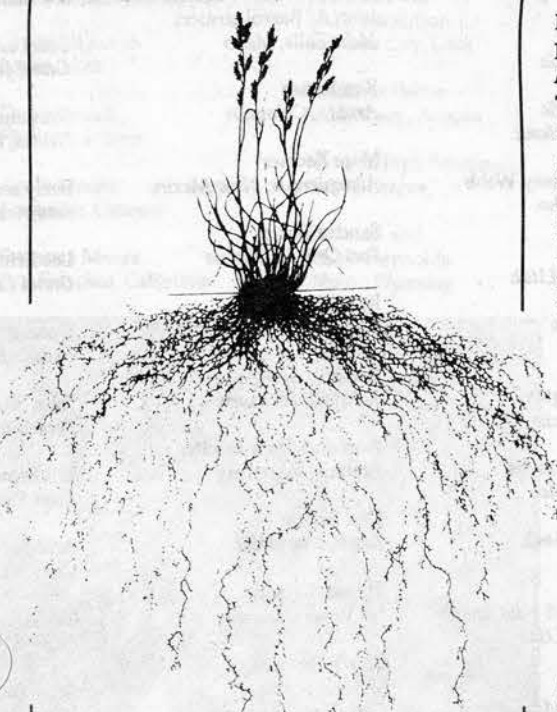


ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

Yellowstone bison management, mining law reform and public lands grazing are workshop topics at the first annual Montana Environmental Education Association conference. Author and educator Joseph Cornell will be the keynote speaker at the March 27-28 conference in Bozeman, Mont. Cornell wrote *Sharing the Joy of Nature* and *Sharing Nature with Children*. Speakers include representatives of the Montana Stockgrowers Association, Earth First!, the National Park Service, Montana Mining Association, Northern Plains Resource Council and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, among others. Jack de Golia, president of the MEEA, encourages people to pay the \$20 membership fee and save money on the conference. For more information, write Montana Environmental Education Association, P.O. Box 928, Dillon, MT 59725 (406/683-3984).

EXPLORING ETHICS IN GOVERNMENT

A conference for government employees in natural resource, environmental and wildlife agencies will explore how people can retain their integrity when faced with funding cutbacks, "mismanagement and political manipulation." The March 27-28 conference, called "Protecting Integrity and Ethics," is sponsored by the Millstream Fund and the Rockefeller Family Fund. Set for the Georgetown Conference Center in Washington, D.C., topics include safeguarding employee rights as a strategy for environmental protection and living up to a stewardship mandate. Speakers include Jeff DeBonis, founder of the Association of Forest Service Employees for Environmental Ethics, in Eugene, Ore., as well as representatives from several governmental agencies. General admission is \$40 or \$25 for government and non-profit employees. For more information, contact Sarah Levitt, Protecting Integrity and Ethics Conference, P.O. Box 1786, Washington, D.C. 20013 (202/789-2578).



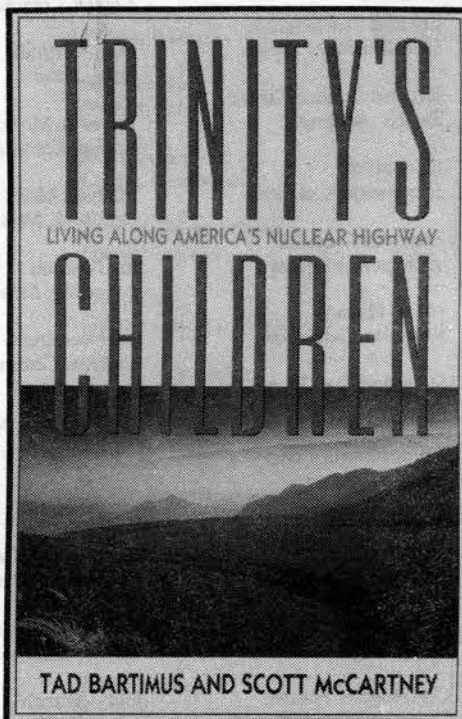
L.E. Spence

WEEDS ON THE MARCH

Stopping the spread of weeds, which drive out native species, is the topic of a symposium May 18-21 at Boise State University in Idaho. Called "Ecology, Management and Restoration of Intermountain Annual Rangelands," the symposium is sponsored by the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management and University of Idaho, among others. The gettogether includes tours of the Boise foothills and Snake River plain, demonstrations, poster displays and talks. Cost is \$45 before April 20; \$60 after. Student fees are \$25 before April 20 and \$35 after. For more information, contact Nancy Ness, Boise State University, Division of Continuing Education, University Library L-247, 1910 University Dr., Boise, ID 83725 (800/824-7017, ext. 1689 outside Idaho and 208/385-1689 in state).

SURPRISING POLL RESULTS

A recent national poll found that 66 percent of voters in every region of the country support the Endangered Species Act — even if it means job losses. Commissioned by The Nature Conservancy and the National Audubon Society, the poll, completed at the height of the recession in December, also found that voters equated environmental health with economic health. Forty-eight percent of those asked said their sympathies lie with protecting wildlife. Only 29 percent ranked job security first. In addition, 73 percent said a candidate's stand for protecting endangered species is cause to support him or her. "The rhetoric of the Endangered Species Act leading to economic doom is not supported by evidence and voters know it," said John C. Sawhill, president of The Nature Conservancy. To get a complete copy of poll results, call Ron Geatz at 703/841-4897.



TRINITY'S CHILDREN

Nuclear weapons work has brought both prosperity and destruction to the West. This paradox is the focus of *Trinity's Children: Living Along America's Nuclear Highway*, by Tad Bartimus and Scott McCartney. The authors, both veteran AP reporters, take a grass-roots approach to the weapons industry, visiting the ranchers, scientists and activists living along the West's main nuclear artery, Interstate 25. Readers meet the McDonalds, a ranching family whose land and houses near the Alamogordo Bombing Range were confiscated and used as an assembly site for the first nuclear bomb. The government never fully compensated them. Next are the Churches, whose home in Los Alamos became the headquarters of the Manhattan Project. Dispossessed, Peggy Pond Church became a poet and vocal opponent of nuclear weapons. Her three sons, however, work in the weapons labs. Bartimus and McCartney travel up the spine of I-25, stopping to talk to high-tech game masters at Colorado Springs bases, cancer widows near Rocky Flats and peace activists living among the nuke silos high on the plains of Wyoming. Balanced without being dispassionate, *Trinity's Children* provides a fascinating and human-scale examination of this "restless and seldom noticed slice of America."

Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 111 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10003. Cloth: \$21.95, 326 pp., illustrated with photos.

— Florence Williams

MINING IMPACTS CONFERENCE

The Mineral Policy Center will host a conference April 4-5 in Durango, Colo., on the impacts of present-day mining in the West. The gathering will focus on environmental impacts, mining laws and regulations, and developing a strategy to work with the industry. Speakers include John Leshy of Arizona State University, Phil Hocker of the Washington, D.C.-based Mineral Policy Center, and Kate Zimmerman, a lawyer with the LAWFund in Boulder, Colo. For more information, contact the Mineral Policy Center, P.O. Box 2998, Durango, CO 81302 (303/385-6751).

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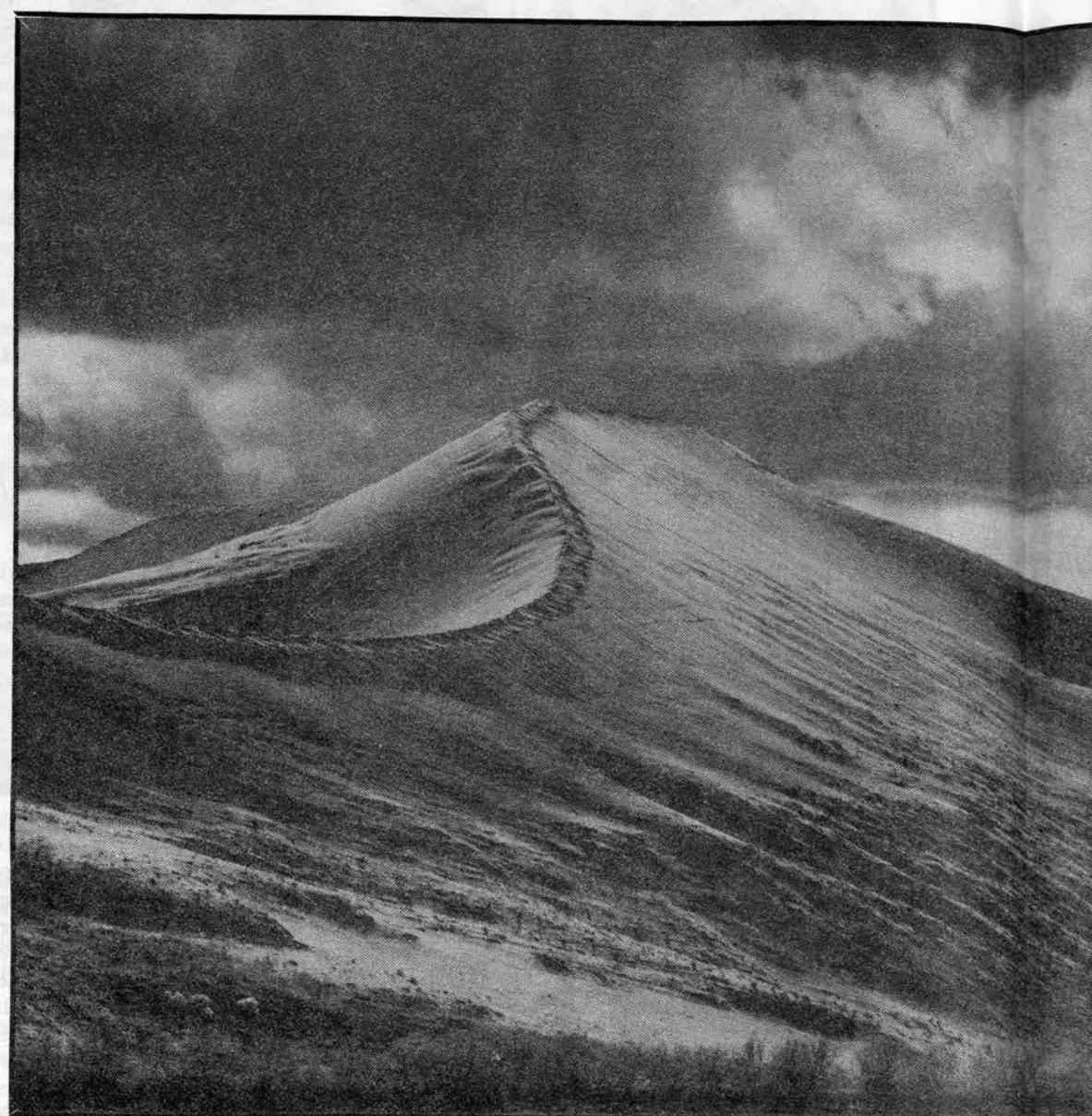
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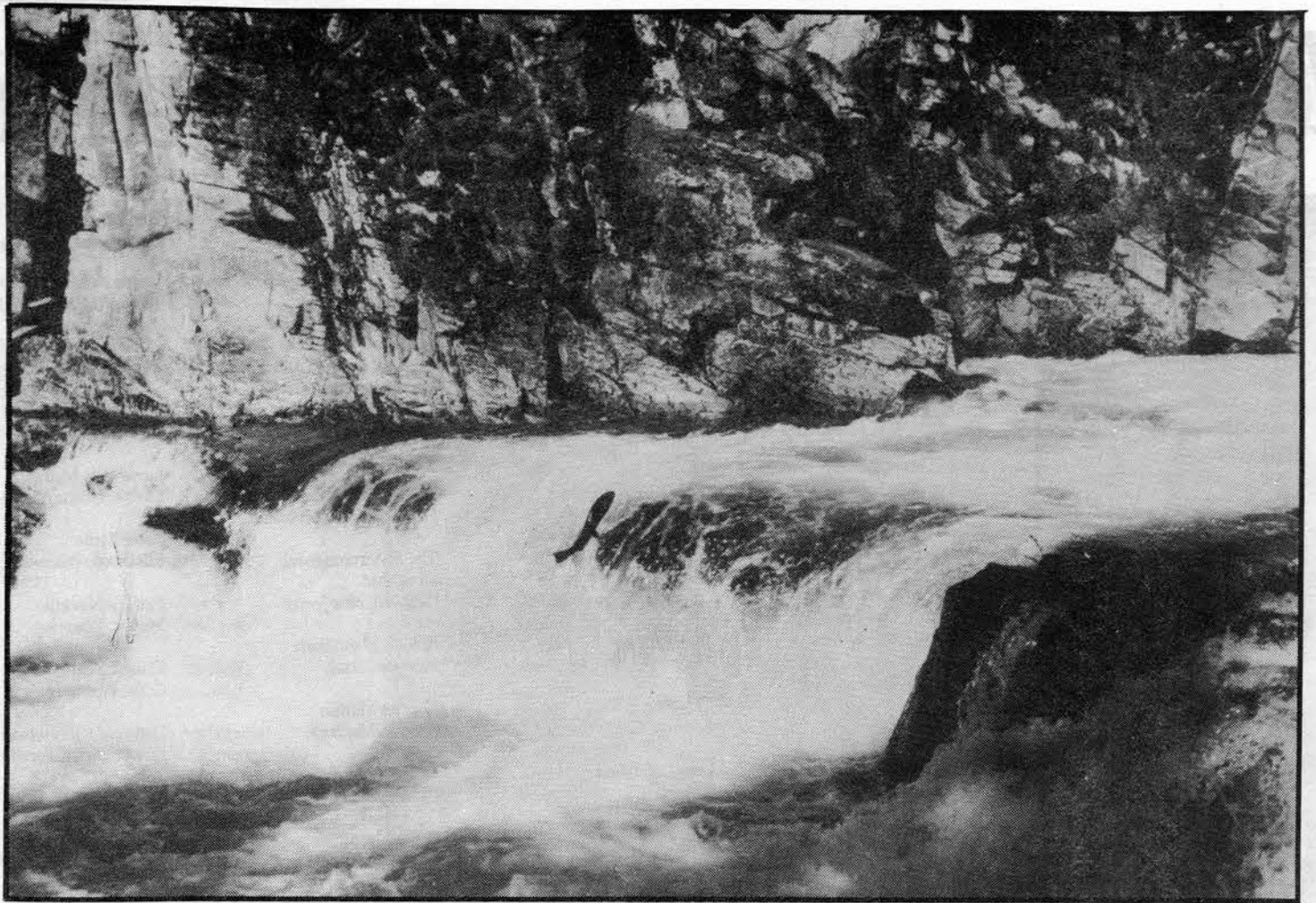
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An adult chinook salmon leaps up Dagger Falls, Middle Fork Salmon River, Idaho (1966 photo)

Marshal Edson, Idaho Department of Fish & Game

Can the salmon be saved? ...

Continued from page 1

Three fish species are in sharp decline

Of the three species of Snake River chinook proposed for protection under the Endangered Species Act, the fall chinook are the worst off. Just 633 fish returned to Hells Canyon last year. The all-time low occurred in 1981, when only 340 adults survived.

Spring chinook are declining fast: 6,623 adults returned to the Salmon River in 1991, compared to the 10-year average of 18,040 fish. The all-time low occurred in 1980, when 5,500 adults migrated to Idaho.

Last year, 3,809 summer chinook returned to the Salmon River, compared to a 10-year average of 4,873 fish. The all-time low of 2,700 adults occurred in 1979 and 1980.

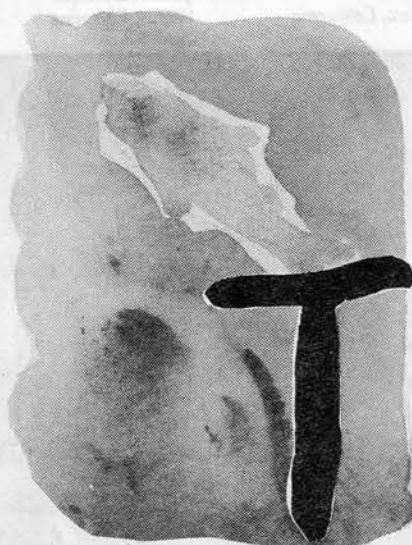
These numbers compare to populations in the mid-1960s of some 55,000 spring chinook, 30,000 summer chinook, and 20,000 fall chinook just as construction began on the Lower Snake River dams.

To fully restore the fish runs, Idaho Fish and Game officials have set population goals of 92,600 spring chinook, 30,800 summer chinook and 7,200 fall chinook.

— S.S.

"We're at the point where we can't wait any longer," adds Adam Berger, associate attorney for the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund in Seattle. He predicts a year of "active" litigation under not just the Endangered Species Act, but also under the Northwest Power Act, National Environmental Policy Act and National Forest Management Act, among others.

As the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Northwest Power Planning Council prepare salmon recovery plans, the drawdown has become the pivotal point of the debate.



The council, created in 1980 to give fish equal clout with hydropower, ruled in December that the Bonneville Power Association and Army Corps should begin preparing for a drawdown in 1995. In January, Army Corps officials released a six-inch-thick environmental impact statement that evaluates a pre-migration drawdown test this March.

Despite protests from industry groups, corps officials plan to conduct the month-long test.

The test would end before the spring migration begins. Were the test conducted during migration, the low levels would block the chinook smolts flowing downstream as well as the adults moving upstream to spawn. That is because the fish ladders and other fish structures were built assuming full or nearly full reservoirs. The test will determine what fish and irrigation structures need to be

altered to make the drawdown work starting in 1995.

But 1995 is a long way off, and meanwhile it's business as usual. "Everything they've done doesn't do a damn thing for the fish," Chaney says. "Things in 1992 will be worse, and in no case will they be significantly better for fish than they were in 1991."

"Fish-saving" measures planned for this year's migration season include:

- Dropping all four Lower Snake River reservoirs five feet below full pool and releasing water from upstream dams to provide 85,000 cubic feet per second of river flow at Lower Granite Dam, April 15 through June 15. The reduction will provide a slight increase in water speed through the reservoirs.

- Barging fish. Once the smolts reach Lower Granite Dam, nearly 90 percent will be collected and barged past the remaining seven dams to the Columbia River estuary. Most of them will die during or as a result of the barging and Save Our Wild Salmon staffer Pat Ford suggests that the survival rate of wild salmon — now swamped in the barges by hatchery salmon — might increase if they were allowed to swim for it.

- Shifting flood control responsibilities to other dams to store the maximum amount of water possible in the Snake River Basin for fish.

- Financial incentives (\$3 per fish) for anglers to catch squawfish in reservoirs. Squawfish eat an estimated 15 smolts per day. The program is expected to reduce squawfish populations by 20 percent annually.

- Continued installation of fish-bypass screens and pathways in the dams to reduce turbine mortality. Turbines in three out of the eight main-stem dams are still unscreened.

- Trading electricity with the Southwest to save as much water as possible for the fish.

- Reducing the fish harvest for all fish stocks. However, the planned harvest for fall chinook — the whoppers of the chinook clan — will remain high at 55 percent of the total run. Some argue that all harvest of Snake River stocks should cease. Jim Yost of the Idaho Farm Bureau says, "Salmon are the only

endangered species you can buy in a can."

The above are the short-term measures that Chaney and other critics argue are inadequate.

Long-term measures ordered by the council include requiring Upper Snake River farmers in eastern Idaho to conserve 1 million acre-feet of water by the mid-1990s; studying the economic feasibility of building a fish-migration canal alongside the Lower Snake and Columbia rivers, and improving hatchery fish survival.

The U.S. Forest Service also recently adopted a more aggressive strategy for protecting fish habitat in the Northwest. That could mean more grazing cutbacks to protect riparian areas along critical spawning streams.

The Army Corps of Engineers and BPA need to show that their reform efforts can save the salmon if they are to stave off structural changes to dams and the drastic flow changes represented by the proposed drawdown.

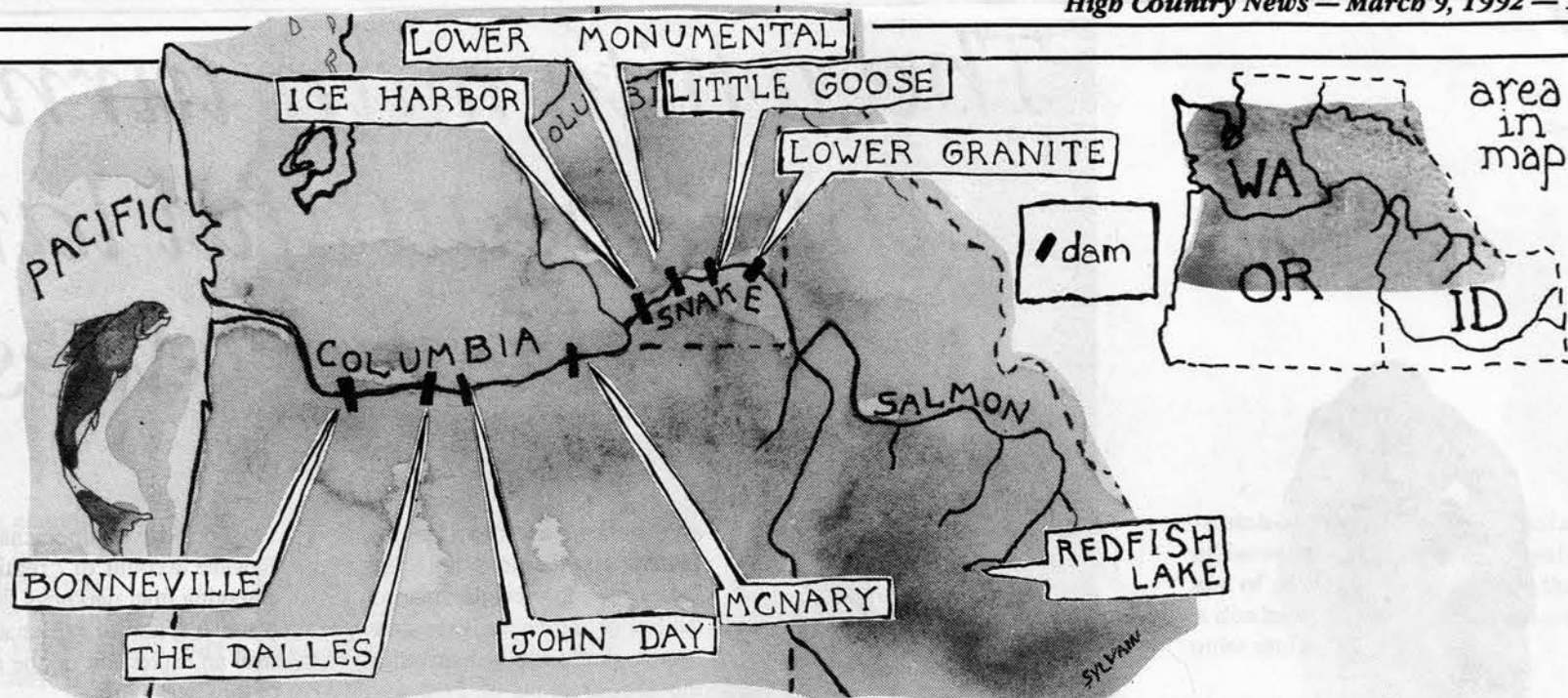
But in an independent analysis of fish-saving measures for 1992, Michelle DeHart, manager of the Fish Passage Center, cast doubt on the reform efforts. Although the BPA predicted a 3 percent increase in juvenile fish survival from higher river flows, an increase in predator control and boosts in fish transportation, DeHart's analysis refutes any major increases in survival.

For instance, BPA's prediction of higher river flows on the Snake do not square with meager mountain snowpack levels in the watershed. BPA officials predicted this year's runoff would approximate the 50-year average of 122,000 cfs at Lower Granite Dam in May.

But the snowpack in the Upper Snake is now 63 percent of normal, meaning this year's runoff will likely be similar to the last four drought years, 50,000 to 72,000 cfs.

Fish experts say a Snake River flow of at least 85,000 cfs is needed for minimum fish survival through the 140-mile expanse of the four Lower Snake reservoirs.

Steve Stuebner is a free-lance writer in Idaho.



Drawdown of reservoirs will flush fish to the sea

Two remedies exist to increase current in the Snake River: leaving reservoirs full but increasing the flow of water through them, or drawing down reservoirs 25 to 40 feet to the spillway level, and allowing the reservoirs to again resemble rivers.

Only the first method has been tried, and it has not worked well. Past history shows that the Snake River, particularly in drought years, does not yield enough water to flush the fish rapidly downstream.

Studies show that in water-short years, it would take more than 9 million acre-feet of additional water — more than 11 dams store upstream — to reach a target flow of 140,000 cubic feet per second. The water simply doesn't exist.

The drawdown of four lower Snake River dams is the only way to achieve rapid travel rates for fish, according to computer models and other studies.

But this proposal has met with stiff resistance from utilities, barge companies, farmers, the Bonneville Power Administration and Army Corps.

Glenn Vanselow, executive director of the Pacific Waterways Association, says a drawdown will create "great economic distress" in the Northwest. Commercial navigation will be brought to a halt, thousands of acres of crops will wither as irrigation stops, recreation facilities and marinas will no longer function, and power generation will be curtailed, he has said.

The Bonneville Power Administration has resisted altering its hydropower operations in order to protect the lowest electrical rates in the land — two to four cents per kilowatt hour. BPA officials say the drawdown would cause a power loss of an average of 240 megawatts and cost them \$43.5 million in firm and surplus sales.

Salmon advocates say power loss would be insignificant during the springtime, when power demand in the Northwest is small and can be easily met by BPA's 26 other dams. But the BPA also has an \$8.4 billion debt, incurred in part by the largest bond default in U.S. history in the early 1980s.

Ed Chaney, of Save Our Wild

Salmon, charges that the BPA has been operating the hydro system for maximum power sales to pay off its debt at the expense of the fish.

For farmers, a drawdown means that shipping grain on the Lower Snake could cost \$3-to-\$10 more per ton to move goods by truck or train. Lewiston port officials say the drawdown will wreak economic havoc on the city. Fish advocates say the BPA should cover increased shipping costs.

For irrigators, the cost of extending pumps to reach drawn-down reservoir levels would be \$19.7 million, and increased pumping costs would run \$825,000, according to Army Corps estimates. Fish advocates support compensating the farmers with BPA funds.

Chaney says many drawdown impacts have been overstated and gains overlooked. New jobs will be created, he says, to build grain storage at ports and extend fish ladders. If fish runs recover to harvestable levels in Idaho, tourism could increase substantially, he adds.

Idaho Fish and Game economic studies show that each adult chinook

caught is worth \$295 to the tourism economy. If the chinook runs reached 50,000 fish, and 20 percent were harvested, that would boost the Idaho tourism economy by more than \$2.9 million.

Such a boost awaits the drawdown, and all sides will be watching closely to see how a March test affects river velocity, hydropower operations, bank sloughing, water quality, and other factors.

At the "Salmon Summit" meeting last year, Chaney asked all Columbia River interests "to share the pain to save the fish." Failure of conflicting interests to reach consensus on a fish-saving plan seemed to indicate that most interests were trying to escape any pain.

In 1992, Idaho appears to be bearing the heaviest burden. Farmers are being asked to conserve and sell their water, and ranchers face grazing cutbacks along salmon-spawning streams. Dworshak Reservoir, a popular spot for anglers and boaters in northern Idaho, will be drained to rock-bottom levels to

boost Snake River flows in the spring and fall.

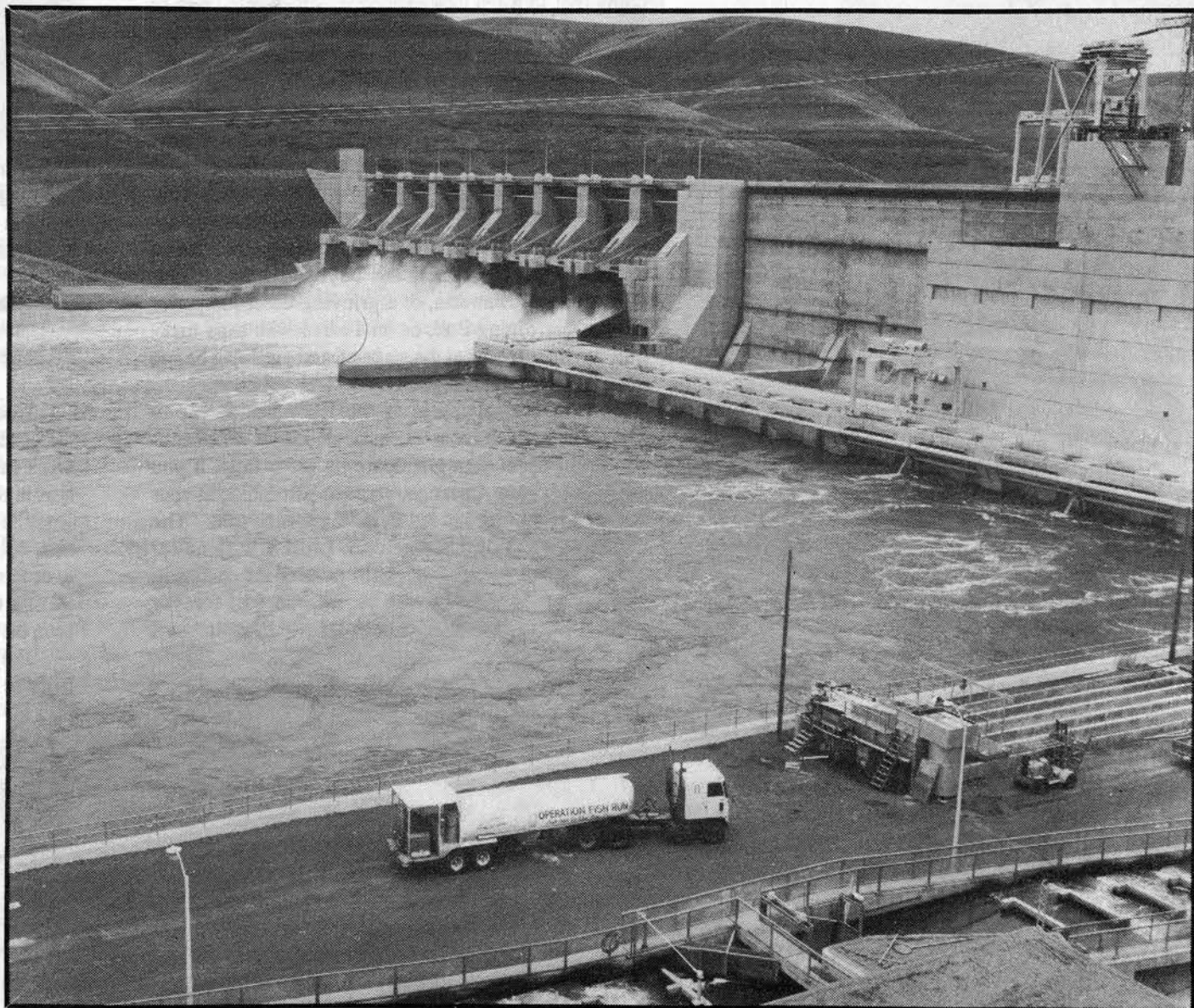
All of this has dented the Idaho coalition for the drawdown. "We seem to be the bad guys, but we're the ones who provide most of the water and the salmon," says the Farm Bureau's Jim Yost. "The downriver interests are trying to splinter the Idaho caucus, and it's weakening." Days after saying this, the Farm Bureau pulled out of the coalition, but the irrigators' group has stayed with it.

Until the drawdown occurs, if ever, downriver interests won't feel a pin prick.

However, Chaney said the Save Our Wild Salmon coalition is preparing to level the playing field. "This is the Andy Warhol moment for the fish," he says. "The fish have never had more friends than they do now."

If political pressure doesn't work, he hopes legal action will. "If we can't whip the BPA and the corps on their home court, we'll have to change the venue to the courts and Congress."

— S.S.



Little Goose lock and dam

Bonneville Power Administration

The white man turned a tame, beautiful land into the wild West

by Larry Echohawk

Last summer I attended a twilight gathering on the banks of Redfish Lake Creek to await the return of the last of the Snake River sock-eye. A single fish had arrived at the Department of Fish and Game's trap, and we all shared a disquieting fear that perhaps no more fish would make it to the lake; that perhaps we would be witnesses to the end of the sock-eye runs that had flourished for thousands of years.

It is hard to describe the very personal sense of loss that we experienced.

I was haunted that night by the thought that in 10 years a similar group might be standing

on a river bank awaiting the return of the last spring chinook to the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

I knew then that we must do everything in our power to keep that from happening. We can't let these fish just disappear.

I begin with the image of that night by Redfish Lake Creek because the bond that humans feel with this animal lies at the heart of the struggle to save the Snake River salmon.

Too often the salmon debate is dominated by "bean counters" with their constant tallying of megawatts, acre-feet, and the other cold, little units by which we measure the worth of nature. But, salmon inspire a deeper loyalty and respect in us. You see that in people like Ed Chaney, Pat Ford, and other Idahoans who have worked tirelessly for this animal.

The salmon will never add up to much in the confined vision of the accountant or the power sales manager.

Only our sense of a deeper connectedness with these fish will save them from the titanic hydropower dams that threaten their existence. An essential part of our work on this issue is to communicate our respect and caring for the salmon to our political leaders, the media and the public.

As I travel the length and breadth of Idaho and this country, I find today an interest in — and a fascination with — Native Americans and their culture. *Dances With Wolves* was more than just a rejection of the Saturday afternoon John Wayne good-guy/bad-guy, Cavalry-versus-the-Indians movie. It was an awakening experience, taking Americans beyond the stereotypes of a mythical Hiawatha, or a grieving Chief Joseph, or a scowling Sitting Bull, or an Indian with tears trickling down his cheek at the sight of garbage lying beside the exhaust-polluted highway.

It was an appeal to the American people to know their roots. Because no matter which continent your grandparents came from, if you are American, you are part Indian in your roots. As D.H. Lawrence said: "The American Indian will never again control the continent; but he will forever haunt it."

For Native Americans, the Earth is sacred. The Pawnee account of creation is of an ancient people emerging from darkness into a lighted world — a holy place. It is less an explanation of the Earth's beginning than an expression of the constant creative outpouring of the Great Spirit.

Creation is not what happened thousands or millions of years ago; it's what's happening right here and now in this holy place.

The center of each tribe's communal existence is a sacred mountain, river, plateau or valley. Diversity springs from each tribe's relation to its land and the animals that inhabit it. The Hopi identity revolves around the "rain dance" of the arid Arizona deserts. The Plains Indians find the Great Spirit in the "seed of their corn" and in the buffalo, while the coastal Indians of the Northwest find it in the salmon.

The tribal community is not just the members themselves but all these interdependent "species," or "peoples." You cannot become a tribal member by subscribing to a creed.

As in *Dances With Wolves*, you become a tribal member only by living with the tribe and adopting its particular harmony with nature.

This interdependence of the species on one another and on the Earth culminates in the tribal member's experience of death. Death, to the Indian, was not to be feared or fought. Each composed a death song, unique to that person; death was met, singing the song, as a final affirmation of the individual's existence and personal integrity.

At death, the Indian rejoined the Earth, with no casket as protection against nature, and no headstone to mark the spot. The body simply returned to Earth, contributing to the rebirth of the land and the continuation of life.

That is why, in Nevada today, Indian tribes refuse to accept millions of dollars awaiting them in the federal treasury if they will cede the land of their ancestors.

As a Crow chief said in 1912:

The land as it is, is my blood and my dead. It is consecrated. And I do not want to give up my portion of it.

When it became important to destroy the tribes, the government knew, instinctively, that the key was to break each tribe's tie to the Earth, to destroy its rootedness in the land and the animals.

The process began with confinement to a reservation. Between 1833 and 1856, the Pawnees were forced to cede some 23 million acres of their aboriginal lands, leaving them with just one one-hundredth of what had been theirs.

They were kept from journeying at will over those lands to hunt; from visiting their ancestral gravesites; from seeking visions on the high



grassy hills; from pursuing enemies in response to attack; from taking the Sacred Pipe to visit and "adopt" members of other tribes.

When the Pawnee Tribe was finally uprooted in the winter of 1874 and relocated from Nebraska to "Indian Territory" in present-day Oklahoma, the tribe, like so many others before it, had its own "Trail of Tears."

Those tears came not from the freezing wind and bitter cold: Winter buffalo hunts had accustomed them to that. Nor did they come from the lives lost to Sioux attacks: The more settled Pawnee had already known death at the hands of the nomadic Sioux.

No. The tears shed on that trail from the Platte to the Cimarron were shed for loss of a homeland, loss of the Great Herd (slaughtered for their tongues and hides), loss of a way of life lived in harmony with the land.

Sadly, the white American's relation to the land has most often been summed up in two words: Manifest Destiny — to tame the wildlands, from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

To the Indians, those lands weren't "wild" but bountiful: The seed corn, the Great Herd, all the plants and animals — an outpouring of the creativity and generosity of the Great Spirit.

Chief Luther Standing Bear of the Sioux said it best:

We did not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills and winding streams with tangled growth as "wild." Only to the white man was nature a "wilderness" and only to him was the land "infested" with "wild" animals and "savage" people.

To us, it was tame. Earth was bountiful and we were surrounded with the blessings of the Great Mystery ... When the very animals of the forest and fields began fleeing from the approach of the settlers, then it was that for us the "Wild West" began.

Today, the "Wild" West is in danger of becoming an amusement park replica of its former self. Like the salmon, anything truly wild is today approaching extinction.

The American Indian was the continent's first endangered species. From 1833 to 1876 the Pawnee nation dwindled from 11,000 members to less than 2,500. Then, as today, the losses most frequently came not from direct slaughter, but from destruction of life-sustaining habitat.

The exception, of course, was the buffalo, brought to the verge of extinction by direct slaughter: From 1872 to 1874 more than 7 million buffalo were killed by white hunters for their hides, the carcasses left to rot. With the Great Herd gone the tribes could not survive, and by the turn of the century, after relocation to "Indian Territory," the Pawnees numbered less than 700.

We live today in a throwaway society. We talk about recycling and run pilot programs to reuse a few percent of our enormous waste. The American Indian knew there was no "away" to which things could be thrown. The buffalo hunters who left those carcasses to

rot were incomprehensible — and sacrilegious — to the Indian, who wasted nothing.



rot were incomprehensible — and sacrilegious — to the Indian, who wasted nothing.

In 1965, Steward Udall asked: "Is a society a success if it creates conditions that impair its finest minds and make a wasteland of its finest landscapes? What does material abundance avail if we create an environment in which our highest and most specifically human attributes cannot be fulfilled?"

He summed up the challenge of our times:

History tells us that earlier civilizations have declined because they did not learn to live in harmony with the land. Our successes in space and our triumphs of technology hold a hidden danger: as modern man increasingly abrogates to himself dominion over the physical environment, there is risk that his false pride will cause him to take the resources of the earth for granted — and to lose all reverence for the land.

America today stands poised on a pinnacle of wealth and power, yet we live in a land of

vanishing beauty, of increasing ugliness, of shrinking open space, and of an over-all environment that is diminished daily by pollution and noise and blight.

This, in brief, is the quiet conservation crisis ...

I have spoken to you today of the Native American culture with which I grew up. But I am also an American, an Idahoan and a realist, and I understand full well that the hands of time do not turn in reverse. Nor would I want them to. But I believe that in the Native American's oneness with nature are lessons for all of us.

Recently, I had occasion again to ponder one of those lessons. When the state of Idaho won its suit against a company that dumped tons of toxic chemicals into the Little Salmon River, the judge in the case did something new: He recognized not only the commercial and recreational value of the lost fish, but their "existence value" as well. Those fish have value, he said, simply because they're there.

We've all had that feeling, that deep sense of oneness that, once experienced, stays with us forever. And we know that whether we ever fish, or even watch salmon spawn, our lives are richer simply because they're there, making their way a thousand miles to the ocean and back in a journey as ancient as the land itself.

Likewise, we may never backpack into the wilderness, but it enriches our spirit and makes us more fully human just to have it there — to know that mountains that existed thousands of years before we did will exist thousands of years after we're gone.

Indeed, all the most powerful images of Idaho — a hawk riding thermals above the Snake River canyon, jagged peaks reaching for the sky, a river rushing to the sea — are tributes to the power and beauty of nature, and the blessings its creatures enjoy.

We in Idaho live close to nature — so close we're in danger of taking it for granted. But history has taught us that species can be destroyed, mountains can be leveled, forests can be clear-cut.

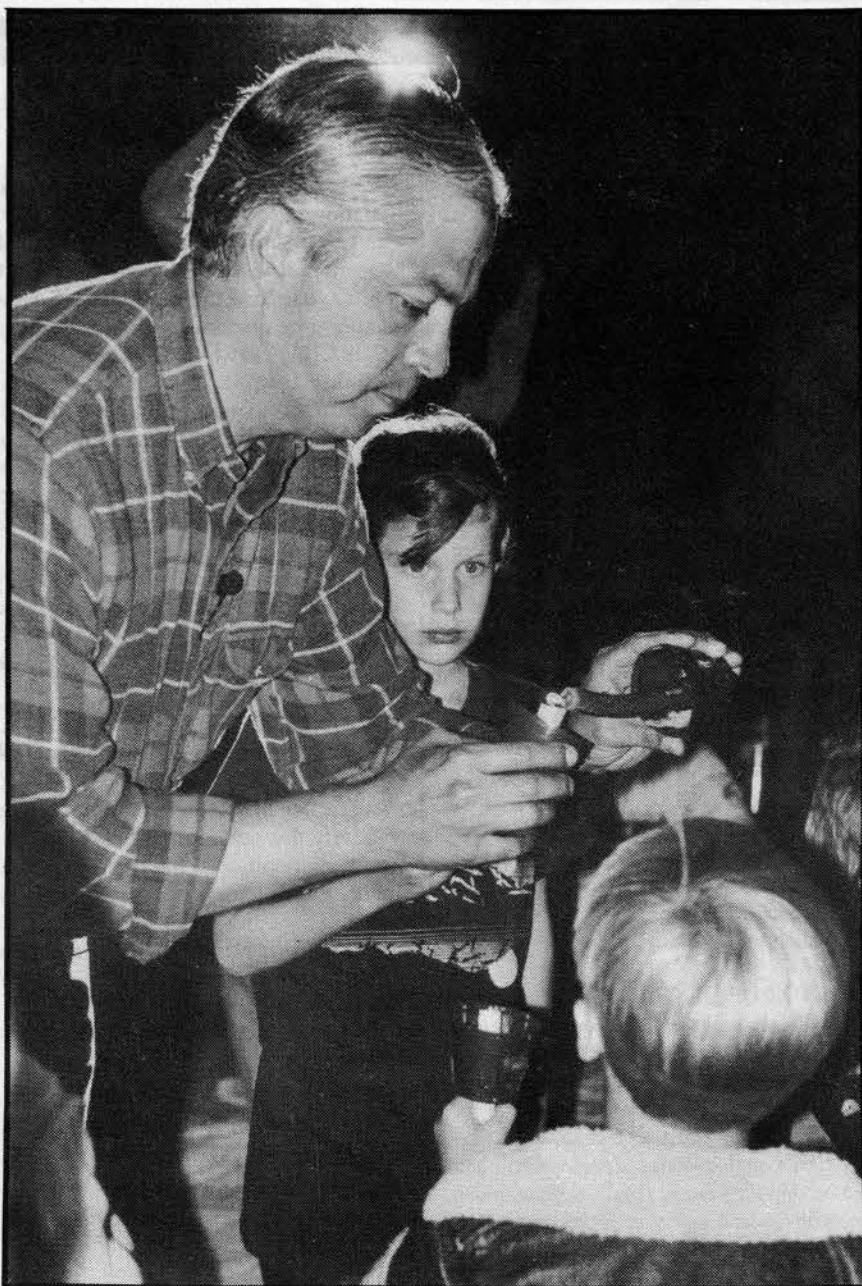
We humans have the power to destroy nature, and it is our fundamental responsibility — to ourselves, to our children and to Earth itself — to see that we exercise that power with extreme care.

No matter what some would have us believe, we don't need to trade one value off against another. We don't need to pollute our rivers, clear-cut our forests, destroy our heritage to have jobs. As Cecil Andrus once put it so beautifully, "We must be able to make a living, but it must be a living worth making."

Now, as we confront the complex issues of the 1990s, let's stop and remember that circling hawk, that towering mountain, that incredible salmon. And as we seek to find the elusive balance between our pocketbooks and our spirits, let's remember the words of the that Crow chief: "The land as it is, is my blood and my dead. It is consecrated."

Let's be wise stewards of this consecrated land. ■

Larry EchoHawk, Idaho attorney general, gave this talk to the Idaho River Symposium in Boise Jan. 24, 1992.



Diane Ronayne, Idaho Department of Fish & Game

Larry Echohawk helps youngsters light candles during a salmon vigil



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LETTERS



LET'S TRY FOR AN OPEN MIND

Dear HCN,

I just finished reading my Nov. 18 issue of *High Country News* and felt compelled to drop you a note to comment on the "deal" offered by rancher Vess Quinlan in Dear Friends.

I consider myself to be a conservative environmentalist — I belong to a large number of environmental organizations and spend a fair amount of time writing to my congressmen on issues about which I have strong feelings, generally environmental in nature. However, my husband and I raise Arabian horses, spend a great deal of time riding on public lands and we have many friends who are cattle ranchers. As a result, my viewpoints on many of these subjects are understandably broad and diverse.

One of my greatest frustrations is that the "environmental" publications I receive generally present an extremely biased view of an issue, while other publications such as the newsletter of the Colorado Farm Bureau, whose sole mission is to protect the rights and well-being of farmers and ranchers, present an equally biased but opposed view of the same issue.

I would like to applaud Mr. Quinlan for being a rational thinking person who is willing to look at both sides of the complex issue of grazing on public lands. I wholeheartedly agree with him about the need for "everyone to stop yelling and start listening to the other side..." Our only hope of making any real progress on this, or any other issue, is to work together to reach resolutions that are of mutual benefit, that allow for individual freedom and rights while at the same time protecting our environment.

Cheryl Matthews
Larkspur, Colorado



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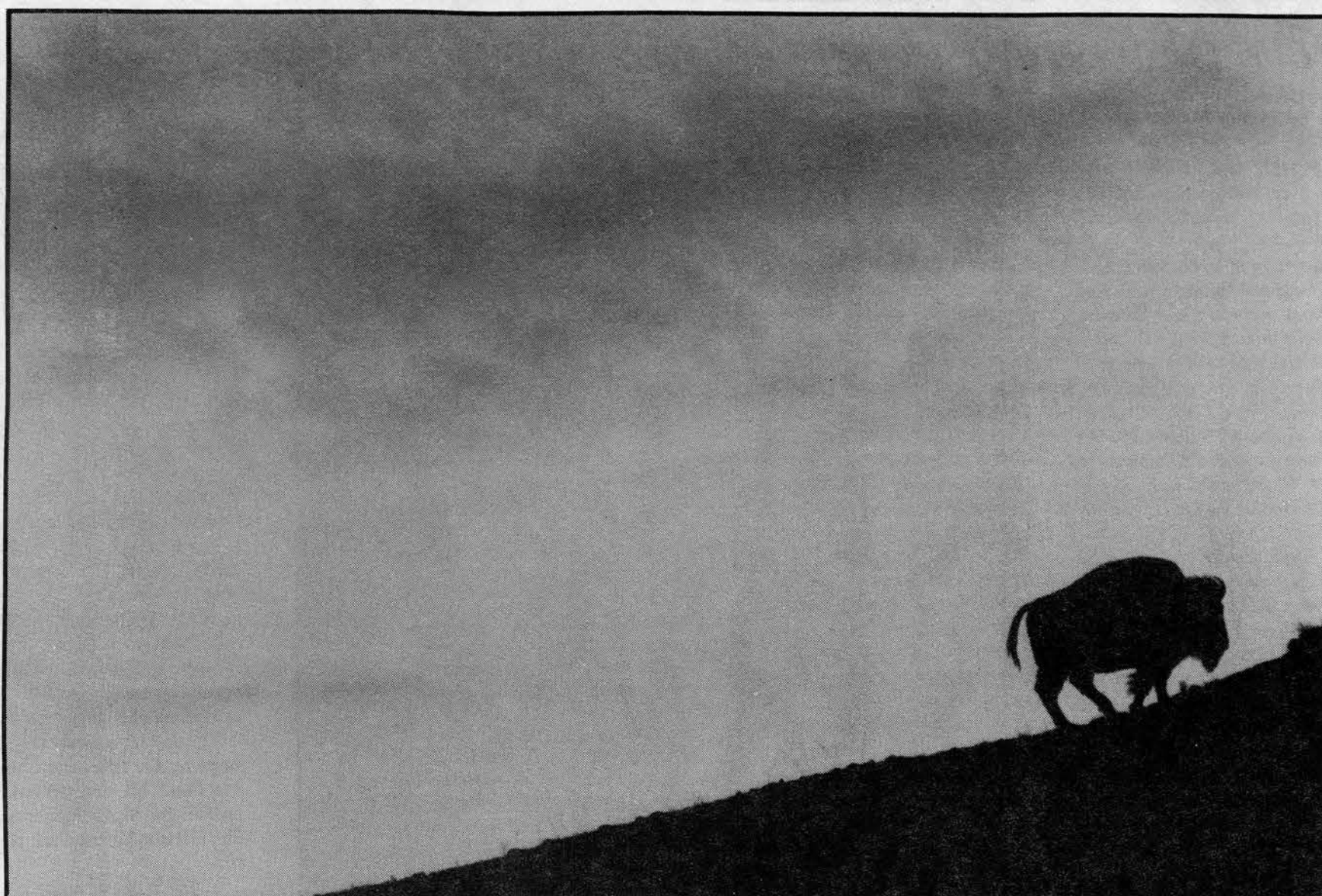
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Dean Krakel

Are bison getting killed in Montana for no reason?

—by Michael Milstein

In 1988, ranch hands with the Parker Land and Cattle Company near Dubois, Wyo., slaughtered 620 cattle they said had contracted brucellosis from wildlife. Now the company is trying to hold the federal government responsible, through a \$1.1 million lawsuit currently awaiting a decision in federal district court in Cheyenne.

Either way Judge Clarence Brimmer rules in the case, the outcome could impose dramatic changes in the use of public land in the West. It may also cast doubt on Montana livestock officials' policy of shooting hundreds of bison that have left Yellowstone National Park for their historic winter ranges to the north.

If the government is held liable for diseases contracted by livestock grazing on public land, it could lead to an end to public land grazing entirely, to protect the government from future liability. Or it could warrant charging much higher federal grazing fees to cover such risks. If Brimmer decides the government is not at fault, that would put more personal responsibility on the shoulders of ranchers using federal lands.

In closing arguments, a U.S. attorney asked the judge to demand that ranchers recognize risks inherent in using public lands, but to also provide direction if he sides with the cattle company. To avoid such judgments in the future, lawyer Carol Statkus asked, should federal land managers keep livestock off public lands or kill all diseased wildlife?

If the judge does not find enough evidence to show wildlife can pass brucellosis to cattle, it would knock a hole in Montana officials' reasoning that they must kill bison leaving Yellowstone to protect livestock. A team from the General Accounting Office, the investigative arm of Congress, is holding back on a

report about the brucellosis threat until a decision in the lawsuit is issued.

Judge Brimmer told the *Chicago Tribune* that while the case is not focused on the Montana buffalo issue, "What I heard makes me think that a lot of bison are getting killed in Montana for no reason at all."

Testimony in the three-week, non-jury trial that wrapped up in late January focused on rancher John Story's allegations that his cattle herd was infected by elk and bison that had moved from Yellowstone and Grand Teton national parks onto his grazing allotments. He uses those allotments under permit from the Shoshone National Forest.

Represented by former Wyoming Gov. Stan Hathaway, Story wants the government to pay for his dead cattle because they were infected by disease. He previously filed claims with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, which denied them. Now, he contends, the U.S. government should take the blame, since the diseased wildlife came off federal reservations in the greater Yellowstone region of northwest Wyoming.

Managers did not try to stop them or warn ranchers of the threat they pose, he claims.

"Here we sit with the biggest reservoir — I call it a cesspool — of brucellosis in North America," Hathaway told the judge in his closing arguments. "And what is the federal government doing about it, your honor? Almost nothing."

Brucellosis, which is also known as Bang's Disease and causes undulant fever in humans, can cause domestic cattle to abort their calves. It's carried by Yellowstone-area wildlife that probably first got it from cattle.

But most states in the West have spent millions to wipe livestock herds free of the illness, so many cattle are now not vaccinated against it. Montana state veterinarian Donald Ferlicka, a

leading proponent of killing bison that leave Yellowstone, testified that brucellosis spread by infected bison and elk could devastate livestock interests.

Many other biologists and wildlife experts countered it is unlikely that would happen, and doubted the Parker Land and Cattle Company's cattle were infected by wild animals. There has never been a documented case of bison or elk passing brucellosis to cattle in the wild, they said. And because the disease is transmitted through contact with aborted tissues, bison or elk would have to abort near cattle before they could pose a disease threat.

Veterinary professor Margaret Meyer of the University of California at Davis said that while some bison may carry brucellosis, they are apparently immune to the abortions it can cause. "It is not being transmitted from animal to animal by abortion," Meyer testified. Bison "are not a risk to cattle." She said the disease was more likely passed to Story's herd by cows added to the herd, neighboring livestock, horses, dogs or poor sanitation.

If all of the 3,000 Yellowstone bison left the park, Meyer predicted: "There'd be a stampede and a lot of broken fences and maybe some heart attacks, but there wouldn't be any (disease) transmission to cattle."

Wyoming Game and Fish veterinarian Tom Thorne said he has proven that elk could pass brucellosis to cattle when the two are corralled together, but doubted it could happen on the open range. Bruce Smith, a wildlife biologist at the National Elk Refuge near Jackson, Wyo., said the probability that elk infected Story's cattle to the southeast of Yellowstone National Park, even if in the same area, "is very remote."

And government attorneys complained the plaintiffs offered no evidence to counter studies that suggest elk or bison were probably never near Story's cattle.

On the stand, Story admitted that his ranch had exchanged cattle with other owners for many years and did not know whether those animals had been vaccinated for brucellosis. Government attorneys said the ranch could have inadvertently introduced the disease to its herd.

"It's not good policy to reward bad management practices," lawyer Statkus told the judge.

While the Wyoming Stock Growers Association entered the case supporting Story, a group of Jackson ranchers, including former Wyoming Gov. Cliff Hansen, took the other side. The 14 members of the Jackson Hole Cattle and Horse Association said they do not fear brucellosis because they routinely vaccinate their cattle herds. They said they do fear the fallout if Story wins his case.

"The concern we have is that if, indeed, the federal government were to lose this suit, it would certainly give the federal government ample opportunity, a real reason, to come in and say, 'Why should we continue to permit grazing if ranchers are going to turn around and sue us?'" said Hansen, also a former U.S. senator.

"Nobody warrants that the public lands are safe for cattle. There are a panoply of environmental hazards on the public lands, including the possibility of diseased wildlife," the group of ranchers said in its brief. "Those of us who have actively protected ourselves by vaccinating object to Parker Land and Cattle Company seeking compensation and affecting the rest of us by this suit when that company has not affirmatively protected itself." ■

Michael Milstein covers Wyoming for the *Billings Gazette*.

OTHER VOICES

Fear of losing control makes wolf foes lose it

—by Tracy Stone-Manning

She is with me, a 120-pound wolf. She was a captive and now she is a dead ambassador, mounted. She draws attention.

I am sitting at a Montana county fair in a National Wildlife Federation booth about wolves. Along with the wolf, I have brochures on wolf biology, a pelt and a petition in support of the Northern Rockies Wolf Recovery Plan.

A man about 70 storms up. His plaid western shirt is tight around the belly, his Wranglers new, his plate-sized belt buckle polished, and his boots scuffed. The brim on his cowboy hat nearly touches my forehead as he wags his finger in my face. "You don't really believe all that crap you put out here, do ya?"

I try to discuss wolves with him, assuage his fears that they will put everyone in Montana out of business. He will not listen. He calls me a liar. I hear only fear from him and he hears only lies from me. He continues to wag his finger in my face, saying he has a right to do so. We are at an impasse.

Episodes later, another man approaches. He wants to talk. He does not yell. He runs hounds for a living, hunting lions, he says. Yes, we need predators, with control. But certainly not wolves.

"Do you know what vicious killers they are?" he asks.

"How they kill doesn't bother me," I say, "it's natural."

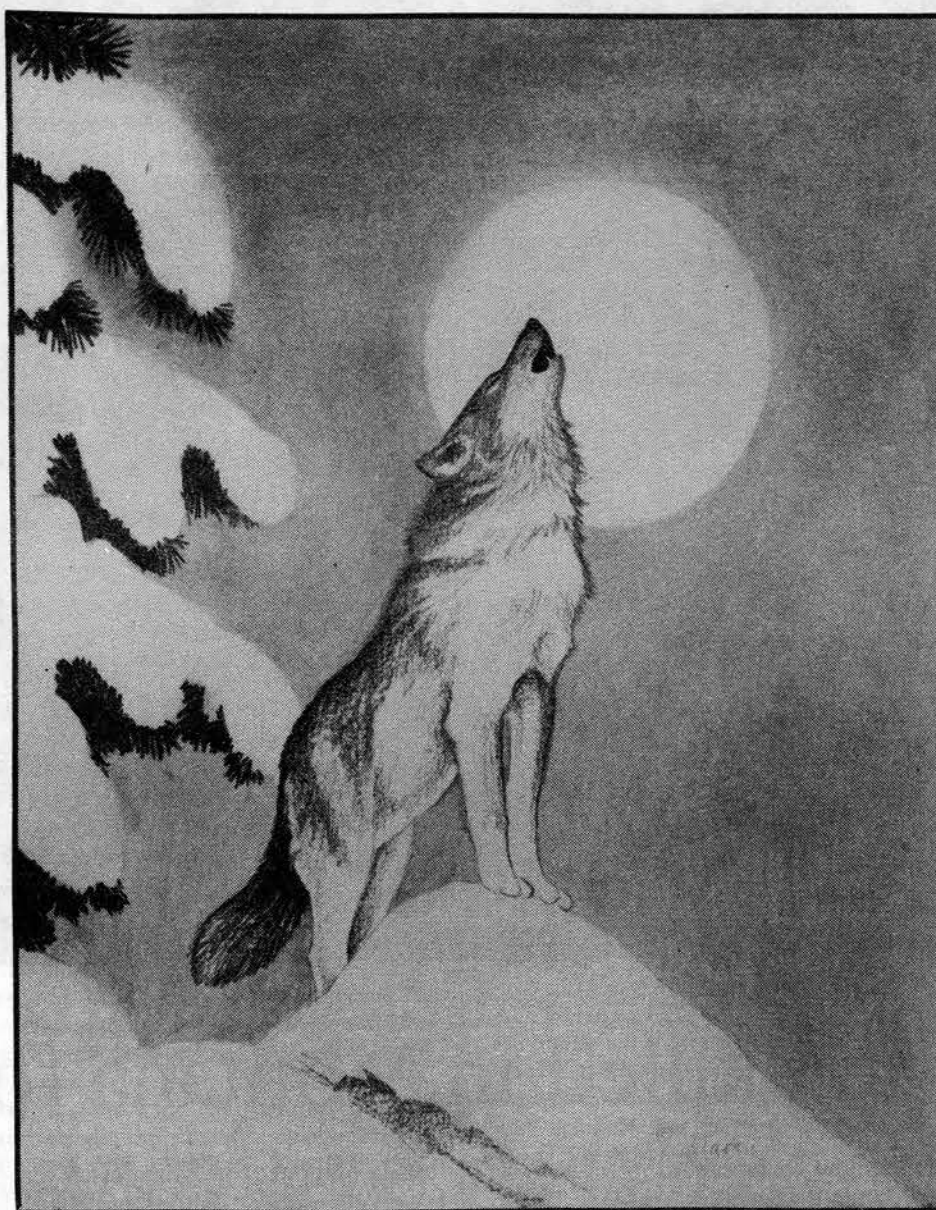
"Well, men raping women is natural, too," he says, "but I'm not exactly sure that it's right."

I am a woman; he is a man. I suppose he wants me to feel threatened by his statement. Control, after all, is his line of work. I pause.

"I'm not going to discuss whether rape is natural," I say, "but it is true that men don't have to rape women to exist. Wolves have to kill to exist."

Point taken. He actually laughs, wishes me a good-night and wanders off, saying he still doesn't think wolves belong.

He offended me, but he taught me. The analogy that rolled off his tongue was steeped in control. That is the issue here — our lack of control, our desire to call back an animal that represents the essence of wildness, chaos. Actually the recovery plan calls for heavy-handed management, including collars with radio transmitters.



Michelle Mara

Another man dressed in Wranglers, boots and a cowboy shirt calls me crazy. He tells me I am "dead-assed wrong."

So I must seem. I am advocating a step "backwards," to before the early 1900s, before the government paid to eradicate more than 80,000 wolves in Montana alone. This is not progress, my desire to see the wolves return. Progress has always been human control over nature, not acceptance of nature. So in this man's mad eyes, I am dead-assed wrong.

Women know control. They recognize its flaws. On the whole, they seem to accept the idea of wolf recovery better than men. A couple in their thirties walks by the table. The wife slows down, and meets the wolf's glass eyes. The husband stands back.

"What have you got here?" the wife asks, pointing to the petition in support of the wolf recovery plan.

I explain. She reads it in full. The husband, a well-built, handsome man, steps in closer. She picks up the pen to sign.

"If you sign that, Wend, we're going to have a fight."

"You haven't even read it," she says, as she rolls her shoulders back and lifts her chin a touch. "They belong here. Besides, we'll get paid if we lose a cow."

She is not a conqueror, but a survivor. She understands her place. Her husband stands over her as she bends over the table to sign. He is taller, but she is stronger. He allows only a hair's width between them. She grips the pen tightly and purses her lips. When she is done, he turns in disgust.

As she looks up from the petition, her eyes meet the wolf's. Then they meet mine and smile. I return it.

A day later, a woman in her fifties stops by the table. Her face is tanned and lined, her shirt tailored, her jeans broken in. She is Montana graceful. She reads the petition and picks up the pen.

"My husband would kill me if he knew I signed this," she says, "but I know I'm right."

A woman in her late twenties walks by with her children. She does not approach the table, nor does she allow her small children. She wears snug jeans and a pink sweatshirt.

"Look," she harshly tells them, "that's a wolf. And if you ever see one, run to Daddy, so he can get his gun and shoot it."

Her children carry Right-to-Life balloons. I am reminded of the night before, when a man spent 15 minutes yelling at me, calling me un-Christian, then blurting out, "You're just like them Democrats, that do nothin' but kill babies. Yep, you're probably an abortionist."

At the next fair, another yelling man insists on knowing my stance on abortion, too. I refuse to bring it into the discussion. For me it is a separate issue. For these angry people, it is one and the same. Wolves, babies, each other: they measure their lives by their ability to control. Through this wolf booth, they watch their progress slip, and it frightens them. ■

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

Can there be peace on the public range, or must we go to war?

The next issue of *High Country News* explores a cooperative approach to cattle grazing, and non-grazing, in central and eastern Oregon.

