

High Country News

November 16, 1992

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A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar and fifty cents

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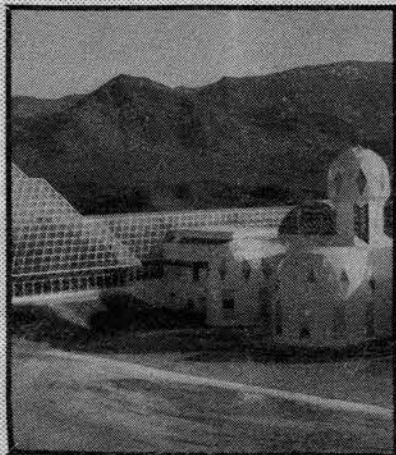


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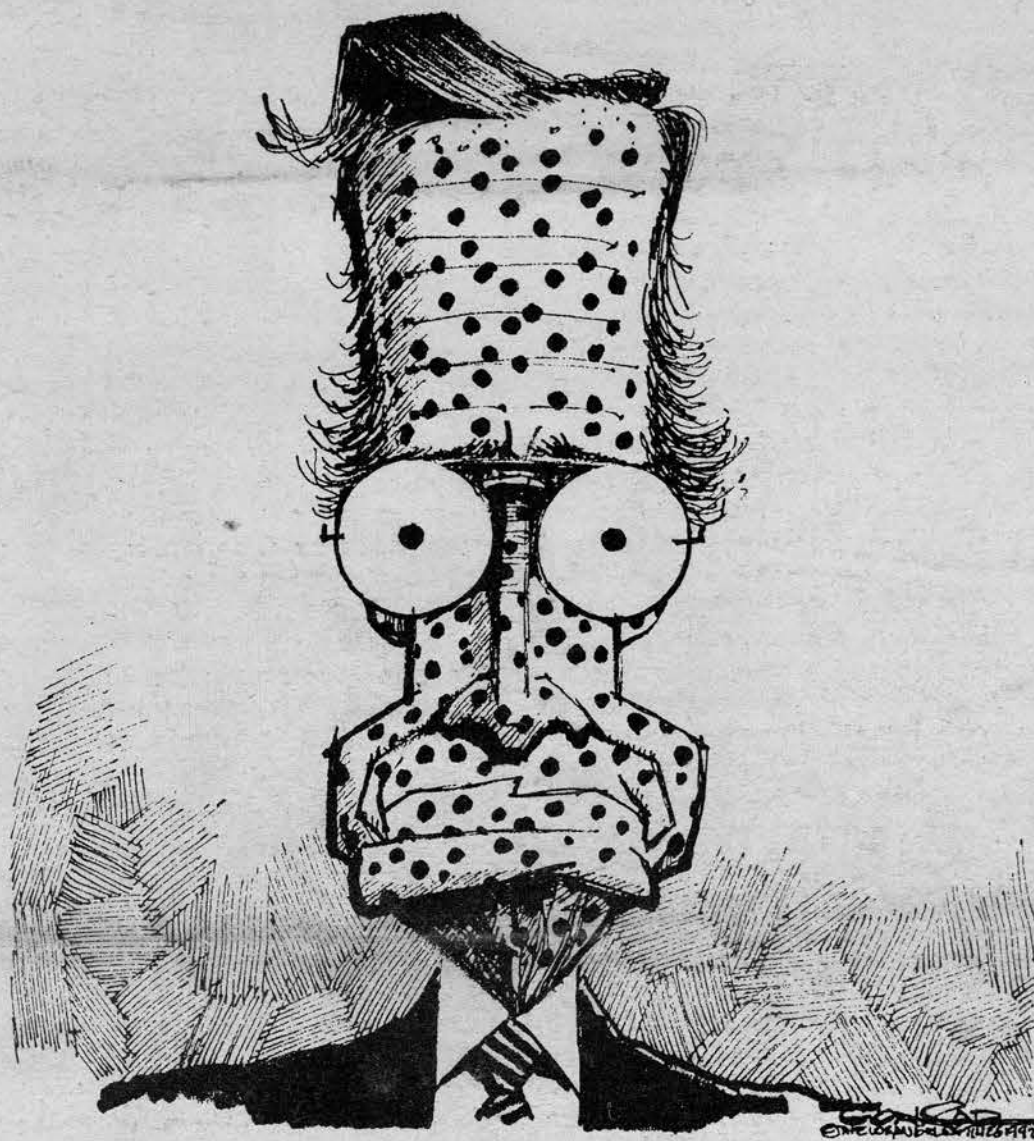
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The 1992 Election



THE SPOTTED OWL WASN'T THE ONLY ENDANGERED SPECIES

Nationally: a revolution In the West: an evolution

by Ed Marston

The West has come late and gradually to the experience of cultural diversity and aggressive minorities. But the 1992 election tells us that the region is finally experiencing what it means to be part of America in the late 20th century.

The region's once-placid waters are being roiled by urban environmentalism, Native Americans, women and gays, all making demands that the dominant culture finds objectionable.

The reaction was on display Nov. 3. The environmentalist-extractive struggle, for example, played itself out in the Williams-Marlenee race in Montana, Owens vs. Bennett in Utah, and in several statewide races in Washington.

The struggle over environmentalism still has center stage. But the other conflicts also made it on to the ballot. In the old days — which in the West means until very recently — young gay people fled their hometowns and cities as soon as they could in search of freedom and opportunity in San Francisco, L.A., New York and Chicago.

But today's West is more diverse, even in small towns. The reaction to this diversity could be seen in Oregon and Colorado, where initiatives expressing distaste or hatred of gays were put on the ballot by "family-value" groups.

The confusing and subtly worded Colorado amendment passed. The Oregon initiative, which went out of its way to shock, failed, thanks to a tremendous effort by the state's leaders — an effort Colorado's leaders did not make. Despite the Oregon counterattack, 43 percent of the voters, 564,000 Oregonians, voted for it, indicating the initiative had struck a nerve. Supporters say they will be back in 1994.

Over the last decade, Native Americans have become more vigorous and successful in asserting their sovereignty and right to economic development. Reaction came in Montana, where a large majority of the electorate slapped down the Indians' attempt to gain a seat on the university board of regents. And Idaho residents voted to ban gambling, in a move directed at the tribes.

On the other hand, a Native American was elected to the U.S. Senate from

Colorado, and an attempt by a gubernatorial candidate to reignite the 1970s fish wars failed.

Going into this election, HCN's 10-state West, which excludes California, had three women in the U.S. Congress and one in a governor's mansion. Now it has a U.S. senator from Washington and seven women in the U.S. House. And, if a few thousand people had switched votes, Montana as well as Oregon would have a woman governor.

But the West's main battle is between the traditional, extraction-based, federally subsidized West and environmentalism. Although the fight is ecological and economic, it is also cultural: Environmentalism is an alien belief system, carried into the West over the past 20 years by urbanites.

Judging by Nov. 3, the struggle's fury may be subsiding. In the race for Montana's sole congressional seat, that highly polarized state chose the candidate who positioned himself closest to the center, and who appeared to hold the most potential for ending the decade-

continued on page 8

Dear friends,



HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

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Printed on recycled paper:
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Now, 75% recycled

This is a new, improved *High Country News*, both materially and temporally. Materially, this is the second issue to be printed on the 75 percent recycled newsprint called Rebrite.

Readers who called or wrote to comment on our earlier test run with Rebrite seemed to agree with Mark Mumper of Santa Cruz, Calif., whose letter said: The new newsprint "seems a good thing — environmentally and economically. The photos and art graphics look plenty clear, and the paper feels fine and tears okay for clipping articles."

Rebrite is manufactured by Smurfit Newsprint Corp. in Oregon City, Ore. It is 75 percent old newspapers and magazines recycled by consumers and 25 percent wood chips. The chemicals used in its manufacturing seem relatively benign. Plus, it's cheap compared to the very white, heavier recycled stock we formerly used. We hope readers like it since we just bought a truckload, or 40,000 pounds, which will last a year.

Faster delivery — we hope

The temporal improvement may be noticeable to readers who live outside of the West. Thanks to staffer Meg O'Shaughnessy, who spent hours deciphering Postal Service procedures, we now sort HCN's 12,500 copies into 116 bags instead of the former 39 bags.

The finer sort should mean that subscribers in Midwestern, Eastern and Northwestern states will get their papers more quickly. For example, papers headed for Maine, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Vermont and Massachusetts will not get stopped in Denver for resorting and rebagging. And Boston, Mass., Arlington, Va., and Madison, Wis., now have enough readers to justify individual bags, which will head right for each city's closest distribution center.

HCN sends some papers to non-existent subscribers in order to track distribution and possible misuse of our mailing list. So we'll have some idea of how the new system works. But we would also appreciate hearing from readers who notice, or don't notice, a change in delivery day. Ideally, every subscriber should get the paper on the Monday printed on the issue, but that would probably take regional printing plants.

New interns

Intern Glenn Levy comes to us after a four-month extended tour of the West, which culminated in a short stint building a hogan on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona.

A native of Washington, D.C., Glenn moved to Phoenix, Ariz., at age 7. There he stayed until moving to Flagstaff to complete his bachelor's degree in English literature at Northern Arizona University. He also started an alternative publication called *Fact and Fiction* and had fun documenting first-hand the "Flagstaff vortex phenomenon": "It draws people to the mountain hamlet and doesn't let them leave."

Glenn plans to hone his writing skills and has already developed an eagle eye for housing. When rentals seemed non-existent in Paonia, Glenn dejectedly left the office for one last look. Walking past a nearby yellow house, he noticed someone sitting on the porch. Glenn said hello, David Lorig said hello back, and not much later Glenn and his dog Fiction were moving in.

The fourth fall addition to the intern staff is Shahn Towers, who joins us from Portland, Ore., where he graduated a year



Betsy Marston

Interns Shahn Towers (left) and Glenn Levy in a Paonia apple-packing shed

ago from Lewis and Clark College. There, Shahn became involved in politics and worked as a research assistant in 1990 for Democrat Harry Lonsdale's Senate campaign.

Shahn tells us his interest in the outdoors started with family backpacking trips into Oregon's Willowa mountains. Now in Paonia, pop. 1,400, Shahn says

he's surprised to find how similar it is to the town of Enterprise, in the Willowa Valley, where he has family ties. One notable exception, he says, is how lively Paonia seems, especially during hunting season when it's hard to miss the carcasses at the meat-packing plant next door.

— Ed Marston, for the staff

HOTLINE

Murrelet gets listing

The marbled murrelet is now federally protected, but state protection might be slower in coming. A small seabird found in the old-growth forests of the Pacific coast, the murrelet was officially listed as threatened by Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan last month. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommended protection for the bird after agency biologists could not find proof that murrelets on the coasts of Washington, Oregon and North Carolina were linked with a larger Alaskan population. A timber industry group is suing the federal

agency over the decision, which they say "fails the test of rationality." The Northwest Forest Resource Council, based in Albany, Ore., says pressure from several environmental groups led the agency into an early listing decision. On state forests, however, murrelets remain unprotected pending a "listing package" under development by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. So far, four areas containing murrelet habitat are scheduled for sale, and two have already been logged. A state staffer said the agency will decide remaining sales on a case-by-case basis until Oregon makes a listing decision.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES ...

... including biologists, computer techs, doctors, engineers, secretaries, hydrologists, range cons, archaeologists, recreation specialists, fire managers, mappers, planners, maintenance personnel, inspectors, agronomists, nurses, teachers, economists, pilots, foresters, entomologists, administrators ...

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WESTERN ROUNDUP

Project directed into legal channels

The proposed multimillion dollar Animas-La Plata water project in southwestern Colorado continues to be beset by lawsuits.

A lawsuit two months ago against the Bureau of Reclamation stopped excavation of Anasazi graves that the Animas-La Plata dam and diversion canals would bury. Lawyers charged that BuRec was attempting to start the project before it had complied with environmental laws.

A suit by the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund last April forced the Bureau to begin a supplement to its 1980 environmental impact statement. A draft of the supplement is now complete and public hearings are scheduled (see below).

Defense Fund lawyers charge that the draft supplement lacks updated financial information that BuRec has but refuses to make public. Lawyers filed suit in federal district court in late October to obtain more information about the project's cost and benefits, its projected completion date and its compliance with federal law. That suit has not been settled.

"The hard facts about Animas-La Plata are that it's a money-loser that would hurt the environment. The government knows that if these facts see the light of day, then Animas-La Plata is doomed," says Defense Fund lawyer Drew Caputo.

In addition to financial challenges, the project faces biological hurdles. In May 1990, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service stopped dam construction to protect the endangered Colorado squawfish. The agency then ordered BuRec to compile a plan to protect the fish (HCN, 12/17/90), which was completed in late October 1992. It allows BuRec to begin construction while continuing a seven-year study of the project's effects on squawfish habitat that began last year. A second phase of the project hinges on the results of the study.

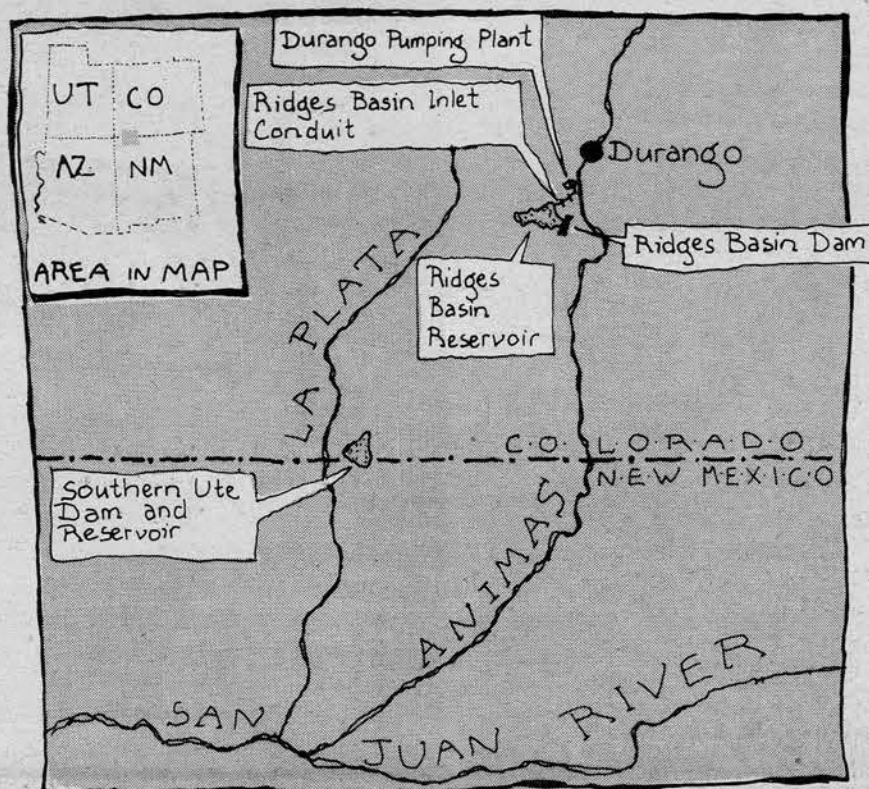
But in October 1991, under pressure from environmentalists, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service listed the razorback sucker as an endangered species. It is a native of the Colorado River basin, which includes the San Juan River. Its recovery

plan had been stalled by the agency's failure to designate critical habitat for protection.

In late October 1992, when the Defense Fund won its case against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. District Judge Sherman Finesilver in Denver ordered the agency to issue a draft study of critical habitat for the razorback by January 1993. If the San Juan River is included as essential habitat for the razorback's recovery, then Animas-La Plata could be stalled until BuRec devises a plan in accord with new habitat require-

would flood habitat along the two rivers and lower the temperature and flow of their waters into the San Juan, preventing or reducing breeding.

Animas-La Plata would be built in two phases. The first would deliver water to the city of Durango and Durango-area farmers; phase II would deliver water guaranteed by a 1986 treaty to Indian tribes. Under that treaty, the Ute Mountain Utes and the Southern Utes gave up their water rights in exchange for water from two BuRec projects: the Dolores, now complete, and the Animas-La Plata.



ments. The result: The project is threatened by two endangered species.

As designed, the project would dam the Animas River near Durango, Colo., and pump water nearly 500 feet uphill to the Ridges Basin Reservoir, where a series of canals would deliver it to farmers. A second dam would divert water from the La Plata River into irrigation canals. Both rivers feed the San Juan River and contribute to the warm backwaters the fish need to breed. The project

Three public hearings will be held on the draft supplement: Nov. 30, 7 p.m., Red Lion Inn, Durango, Colo.; Dec. 1, 7 p.m., Farmington Civic Center, Farmington, N.M.; Dec. 2, 7 p.m., Colorado Convention Center, Denver, Colo.

For more information, contact the Bureau of Reclamation, Durango Projects Office, (303/385-6567).

—Kristy Rattliff

HOTLINE

Tense time in Oregon

Logging protesters in southern Oregon were threatened by gunfire Oct. 3. A group of activists — many of them staying on after a day of civil disobedience training — were camped out and asleep on the Siskiyou National Forest near Grants Pass when someone drove up and fired about 25 shots. "I saw the flash of the gun through my tent — that's how close it was," says Earth First! spokeswoman Karen Wood. Tension had increased in the area since Forest Service staffers found spiked trees. A group calling itself the "Society Protecting Intact Kinetic Ecosystems" claimed responsibility. Vandalized trees were in the Sugarloaf timber sale, where timber cutting has been temporarily halted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's discovery of two pairs of spotted owls. In November, the Forest Service also closed a 6-square-mile area around the timber sale to prevent further conflict.

The numbers get hotter

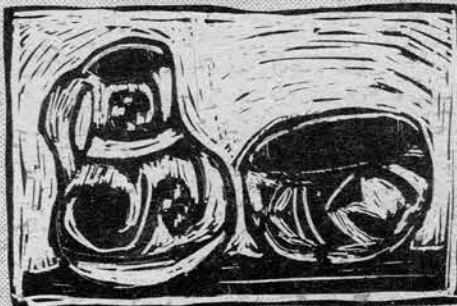
Seventy percent more radiation was released at the Hanford nuclear reservation from 1944 to 1947 than was previously thought, a new study reports. About 685,000 curies of radioactive iodine-131 were released during the early days of plutonium production at Hanford, compared with the previous estimate of 406,000 curies, the Hanford Environmental Dose Reconstruction Project reported. "Frankly, we're not surprised the numbers are changing," said John Till, who heads a panel of scientists directing the study by Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratory. "The new results are based on much more detailed information," he told AP. Iodine-131 accumulates in the thyroid and can cause cancer and other diseases. The study, supported by the federal Centers for Disease Control, has been trying to estimate how much radiation may have reached the public. The dose project estimates that as many as 50,000 people living around the Hanford site may have been exposed to some radiation.

HOTLINE

Hopis will appeal

Lawyers for the Hopi Tribe plan to appeal a federal judge's decision to award the tribe 60,518 acres, including the village of Moenkopi, Ariz., as settlement of an historic Hopi-Navajo land dispute. The settlement does not require Navajo or Hopi relocation and lifts a 26-year construction freeze. The freeze had affected approximately 1.5 million acres of disputed, joint-use land due west of the 1882 Hopi Reservation. The land award is a fraction of the 3.5 million acres sought by the Hopi Tribe in a dispute over a 1934 law that expanded the Navajo Reservation by 7 million acres. The law divided property rights between the Navajos and other Indians settled in the area in order to avoid their relocation, but it did not specify how much and which land belonged to each tribe. That was left for the courts to decide based on "fairness and equity." Hopi lawyers argued for equal division of the land, but Judge Earl Carroll disagreed,

basing his division on current and historical use of the land. After visiting the disputed areas with Hopi and Navajo lawyers, Carroll decided to give 25 percent of the joint-use area to the Hopis, a division that would not require Hopi or Navajo relocation. But Hopi Chairman Vernon Masayesa blasted the decision, saying it ignored Hopi religious ties to areas that will remain part of the Navajo Reservation.



Looter makes amends

A western Colorado man who pleaded guilty in September to digging

up Native American artifacts is taking a message of contrition to the people. A federal judge sentenced Dennis Mitchell to 40 hours of community service for the Bureau of Land Management, including a letter-to-the-editor campaign. In one letter, Mitchell says, "After talking with other people, I found that most people did not know it was illegal to pick up arrowheads or dig in rock shelters." He urges people to leave archaeological sites on public land alone "for the value of the site and for your own good." Two BLM staffers discovered Mitchell's digging site in Montrose County last January. He had run some 20 shovelfuls of soil through a screen at the Honeycomb Rockshelter, which houses artifacts thousands of years old. "Vandals, looters and collectors destroy a part of America's heritage," says BLM ranger Jon Sering. "They not only destroy the historical authenticity of a site, but also remove the surface clues necessary for archaeologists to locate buried encampments."

Tight houses, sick kids?

The recent trend towards energy-efficient homes may result in more than lowered heating bills. A new Centers for Disease Control study shows a significant increase in childhood asthma rates, and scientists speculate that the airtight seals of today's more efficient homes may be responsible. The study found that asthma in Rochester, Minn., children up to age 14 doubled or even tripled over the 20-year study period, AP reports. No direct causes were cited, but one possible explanation is increased airborne particles such as dust and pet hair that may be trapped inside newer houses where air leakage is minimized. Other explanations include a rise in cigarette smoking by mothers and greater use of day-care centers where children are more likely to contract viral infections. For more information, call the Mayo Clinic in Rochester at 507/284-2511.

A new town is proposed close to Grand Canyon rim

Developers of a proposed community seven miles from the rim of the Grand Canyon say their project's attractions will help reduce park overcrowding. But some environmentalists fear the impacts of the theme park-style plan.

Whatever the merits and demerits of the proposed development, it has dramatized the plight of Grand Canyon National Park, which already attracts millions of visitors a year, and which lacks a plan to cope with expected growth.

The situation is complicated by the fact that the developer's attorney is Bruce Babbitt, a former governor of Arizona and a leader in the fight to protect the Grand Canyon.

Canyon Forest Village, proposed for a site 2 1/2 miles from the park's South Rim entrance, would include private housing, rental units, mobile homes, hiking and biking trails, an "experiential education center," stores, schools and churches.

Canyon Forest Village Corp., based in Scottsdale, Ariz., and Babbitt say the subdivision and adjacent facilities could set an example for other national parks, reversing the trend of overcrowding and commercialism, and returning to the public the more natural park system of a half century ago.

According to the National Park Service, as many as 8 million people a year may be visiting the canyon by the end of the century, up from last year's 4 million.

"The South Rim has been the victim of zero planning," said Babbitt, a 1988 Democratic U.S. presidential candidate and now president of the League of Conservation Voters.

"It's the strangest place in the West. You've got thousands of miles of open space and your first view of the Grand Canyon is from 10 acres of asphalt. And then you have Grand Canyon Village, which on a summer day is gridlocked from dawn to dusk. It's a mess."

One environmentalist voiced skepticism that the proposed project would eliminate the mess.

"The experiential center — right — formerly known as Disneyland," fumed Rob Smith, Southwest representative of the Sierra Club. "They're trying to sell you that it's not a convention center, it's a nature center. It's not another IMAX theater, it's an educational experience."

"The Grand Canyon doesn't need more visitors. I think a far more positive approach would be to outlaw billboards advertising the Grand Canyon," Smith said.

Before the development can occur, the U.S. Forest Service must agree to a land exchange. In the proposal under discussion, the Kaibab National Forest, which borders the park, would obtain approximately 1,500 acres of current private inholdings and the developers would acquire about 725 acres of what is now public land south of Tusayan.

In a recent letter to the Kaibab National Forest supervisor and the Grand Canyon National Park superintendent, five environmental groups asked that the land exchange be approached cautiously.

"Our groups would oppose a Tusayan land exchange that proposes major developments that could become attractions in and of themselves," reads the Sept. 1 letter from representatives of Grand Canyon Trust, The Wilderness Society, Sierra Club, National Parks and Conservation Association and Northern Arizona Audubon Society.

But the coalition said it would support an exchange to improve "the efficiency and

effectiveness of public transportation into Grand Canyon National Park and that helps remedy existing needs" of the park.

The letter asks that the agencies take a big-picture look at the park, rather than allow development and plans to occur piecemeal.

The letter also lists a handful of changes already occurring in and near the park, including the current updating of the Grand Canyon Management Plan, which notes the need for both public transportation and improved park employee housing, and a proposed railroad spur from Tusayan to the Grand Canyon.

"We do need to look beyond our park boundaries," said John Reed, assistant park superintendent. "But what people have to realize is that our ability to make things happen stops at the South Entrance or Desert View entrance as far as actually taking action and incurring federal costs."

Babbitt has said he agrees with environmentalists that an overall plan for the park and general vicinity would be beneficial. But he argues that the land swap could be the catalyst for such orchestration.

"This land exchange can be the magnet that draws it all together," he said. "I think what this will be is a stimulus to do them (the other plans) rather than simply talk about them."

Babbitt, who sits on the board of Grand Canyon Trust, said he has removed himself from any action by the board on the proposed development.

The developer of the project, Tom DePaolo, said his dream has shifted from plans for a factory-outlet store to a proposed educational center for interpreting the Grand Canyon and its surroundings. He wants to change the way visitors experience the canyon.

"The average stay at the canyon is two hours and 40 minutes, with only 16 minutes of that actually viewing the canyon," said DePaolo.

"There are so many environmental issues here. What better way to get the issues across than have an educational, interpretive center?"

Unlike most land trades involving Forest Service land, the completion of the Tusayan land swap hinges on county approval.

Paul Babbitt, chairman of the Coconino County Board of Supervisors, said the county is approaching the proposed development with care.

"We need to look at what this would do to the canyon," he said. "And what



Heather M. Green

Grand Canyon

about the impacts on police, fire and other emergency services (of the area)? There isn't an adequate system now for that many more people."

The projected 1,500 to 4,000 people expected to be living in the subdivision within the next 50 years might be better off there than some place else, added Paul Babbitt, a former mayor of Flagstaff and brother of Bruce Babbitt.

Officials at Grand Canyon National Park have yet to formally comment on the Tusayan land exchange and Canyon Forest Village. But Assistant Superintendent Reed said that water is the limiting factor. "They'd have to buy into a major water source."

Developer DePaolo said an experienced hydrologist has undertaken water resource surveys and convinced him that there is enough water.

"We'd want the development to be

compatible with what the parks are here for, and not some Gatlinburg experience with a host of factory outlet stores," Reed also said. Gatlinburg, Tenn., is a highly commercialized gateway community to the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

"The canyon itself makes up for all our inadequacies," he said. "But there are a lot of folks here that deserve a quality experience."

For more information, contact Bob Chandler, Superintendent, Grand Canyon National Park, P.O. Box 129, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023, or Grand Canyon Trust, Route 4, Box 718, Flagstaff, AZ 86001.

— Mary Tolan

Mary Tolan is a free-lance writer in Flagstaff, Arizona. Her work appears frequently in the *Arizona Republic* and *Southwest Sage*.

Planes still dominate the canyon, group says

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. — The Federal Aviation Administration is violating the 1987 federal law established to protect Grand Canyon National Park, according to a regional conservation group.

In a letter sent to the FAA Oct. 27, the Grand Canyon Trust accused the agency of violating the Parks Overflights Act of 1987. The law restricts flights to certain areas to preserve the "natural quiet" of the canyon. It also says that the FAA can make changes to the aircraft management plan only with safety in mind.

But since then, flights have nearly doubled. More than 160,000 aircraft take off and land each year at the Grand Canyon Airport, making it the busiest commuter airport in Arizona.

According to Grand Canyon Park Superintendent Robert Chandler, the FAA has granted two new helicopter routes for rim-to-rim helicopter service — one that would fly only 500 feet above the Saddle Mountain Wilderness. The FAA has also let aircraft use flight-free zones in order to allow more planes to fly safely. Chandler says his main concern is a potential air disaster.

FAA representatives say all the commotion about the new flights and abuse of the flight-free zones smacks of politics.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., has been a strong advocate of the Grand Canyon, including sponsoring the Overflights Act and holding regional hearings on the issue twice a year.

"McCain's going for re-election so we're getting this constant examination," said Robert Trout, geographic unit supervisor of the Las Vegas FAA base. McCain was re-elected Nov. 3.

"But we're not in violation, not one bit," Trout said. "We don't want airplanes running into each other in these air traffic patterns."

"There are one million people who want to fly over the canyon, while the couple (of people) who go out there and actively hike these flight-free-zone areas are a drop in the bucket," Trout said.

In the past 12 years, 55 people have died in a total of four plane or helicopter crashes over or near the canyon.

— M.T.

BOOK NOTES

Could the grizzly have been there all along?

by David Petersen

By 1952, the official stance was that no grizzly bears remained in Colorado. The big bears had been hunted relentlessly by government trappers of the agency now known as Animal Damage Control in an attempt to make the San Juan Mountains in southern Colorado safe for livestock grazing.

By 1952, trappers could find only one grizzly still in need of killing; it was hiding out along the headwaters of the Los Piños River. Two others had been eliminated the previous year in the same general area — one by a trapper, the other by a shepherd.

And that was that for the grizzly in Colorado.

Until September 1979, when an adult sow grizzly was roused from her day bed near the headwaters of the Navajo River by a couple of hunters. In the ensuing tussle, one man was mauled and the grizzly killed. Necropsy evidence suggested the bear had been shot in the heart with an arrow before counter-attacking, but only the two hunters will ever know for sure.

But the question had to be asked again: Was this the last grizzly bear in Colorado?

An examination of the slain grizzly's mammarys indicated she had given birth at least once during her 16-plus years of living, perhaps more, suggesting that her cubs and a mature male might still haunt the San Juans.

In 1980, the Colorado Division of Wildlife launched an effort to affirm or refute that possibility. Leading the search was Tom Beck, one of the country's most respected authorities on black bears.

Beck didn't trap a live grizzly, but he did turn up dens, meadow digs, day beds and other spoor indicative of recent grizzly activity.

These historic facts and more are recorded in compelling detail in John Murray's first book, *Wildlife in Peril: The Endangered Mammals of Colorado*, published by Roberts Rinehart in 1987. Murray has since moved from Colorado to Alaska, where he has put together a new book, *The Great Bear*. It is an eclectic anthology of essays from Edward Abbey, Rick Bass, Frank Craighead, A.B. Guthrie Jr., John Haines, William Kittredge, Aldo Leopold, John McPhee, Adolph Murie, Doug Peacock, John Murray and several others, 17 in all. Murray's epilogue puts a thumb on this uncommon collection's common premise:

"Those who have packed far up into grizzly country, as have these writers, know that the presence of even one grizzly on the land elevates the mountains, deepens the canyons, chills the winds,

brightens the stars, darkens the forests, and quickens the pulse of all who enter it. They know that when a bear dies, something sacred in every living thing interconnected with that realm ... also dies."

The mother of all recent grizzly sightings was made by Pagosa Springs ranch foreman Dennis Schutz in the San Juan Mountains. In October 1990, Schutz watched three gigantic bears playing at the edge of a remote mountain park. There were the humps of shoulder, there were the dished faces — both definitive characteristics of the grizzly. But the clincher came when, after about 20 minutes, a fourth bear appeared that dwarfed the first three. Now, Schutz says, he understood why the first three bears were so playful: They were only half-grown cubs and the much larger bear their mother.

Schutz returned the following week with a Colorado Division of Wildlife official. Even though a herd of elk had since passed through, trampling snow and soil, the men documented meadow digs and several bear tracks. One hind footprint was clear enough to measure: 9 inches long by 5 inches wide. An average adult grizzly rear track is about 9 by 5 1/2 inches.

Looking for the great bear

In June 1991, several friends of Colorado wilderness met in a meadow near Pagosa Springs at the behest of writer/filmmaker/grizzly advocate Doug Peacock. Plans were laid then for a two-

year search to substantiate the many recent and often reliable reports of grizzly sightings in the South San Juan Wilderness along the Colorado-New Mexico border. The group dubbed itself Citizens for the Colorado Grizzly.

Under the field leadership of Dennis Sizemore, a biologist and authority on what grizzlies eat, the group's volunteers spent most of last summer scouring likely habitat in the South San Juans near where the most recent "last" grizzly had lived and died. Two of several bear-hair samples collected and sent to the Wyoming Game and Fish Laboratory in Cheyenne for analysis were determined to have come from grizzlies. The search will continue this summer.

While the state's Division of Wildlife supports the Citizens' efforts, at least on the local level, their political boss, the Colorado Wildlife Commission, is under relentless, anti-predator pressure from stockmen. The commission seems less than enthusiastic. San Juan National Forest officials are watching with detached interest; and while the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service hasn't accepted the hair samples as conclusive proof that grizzlies still live in Colorado — they want clear prints or photos — the agency supports the investigation. That seems only fitting, since the Citizens are doing survey work the Fish and Wildlife Service should be doing.

Citizens for the Colorado Grizzly is

not an animal-rights outfit. In fact, interference by one extremist animal-rights group threatens to undermine the CCG's efforts to win public support.

Citizens for the Colorado Grizzly is also not against grazing, except as it would directly affect any surviving grizzlies; and it is not against hunting, except for the desire to eliminate a handful of spring black bear bait stations that border probably grizzly habitat. The group says it has no hidden agenda.

On the other hand, there are some valid questions to be asked should it turn out there are a few grizzlies left in Colorado — namely, will the big bear threaten livestock, big-game hunting or back-country recreation?

One answer is that no new threat will exist because the bears will have been there all along ... timid, lying low. The only difference will be that suddenly, we will be aware of this formidable presence in our midst.

Finding evidence to create that awareness is the task of Citizens for the Colorado Grizzly. They seek that "quickening of the pulse" writer John Murray reminds us of.

David Petersen of Durango, Colorado, is the author of *Among the Aspen* (Northland, 1991) and other books. *The Great Bear* is published by Alaska Northwest Books, 22026 20th Ave. SE, Bothell, WA 98201.



Grizzly bear

Charles Smith

LETTERS

OUR EYES MAY DECEIVE US

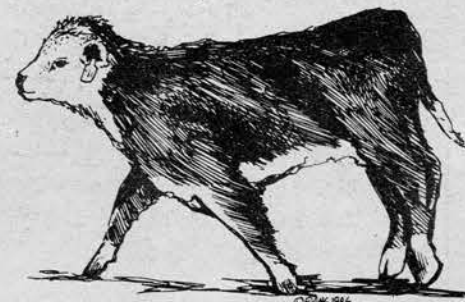
Dear HCN,

This is in response to a ludicrous scene described by Dan Dagget in "A Diverse Group Attacks a Polarized Issue" (HCN, 9/21/92), which may well be indicative of the entire 6-6 process. He relates a field trip by 6-6ers during which the "thin green carpet" of heavily grazed Babocomari Ranch was deemed superior to the "dead and dying" "tall golden grass" of neighboring ungrazed National Audubon Society ranch.

Look, folks, ecosystem health does not

revolve around the human aesthetic (and myopic) eye. The complexity of biotic systems extends beyond this. Let's evaluate real indicators of health such as species (flora and fauna) diversity, composition, distribution, density, size, vertical stratification, soil quality, etc. (And it could be that these were annual grasses which, by definition, die annually.) We must also come to grips with the long-term nature of habitat alteration (alien takeover, shift to more woody plant species) and the extent of time required to restore an area to even a pseudo-pre-grazing state.

6-6 is a valid and admirable pastime in the restoration of human relationships, but deciphering biotic quality requires more than cursory vehicular investigation.



Conclusive studies demand that we "get out of the goddamned contraption and walk, better yet crawl, on hands and knees, over the sandstone and through the thornbrush and cactus ..." Failure to do so results in blatant misinterpretation.

The grass may well be greener on the other side, but let's use the ecological principles and scientific methods available to us to assess health.

Faith Walker
Moscow, Idaho

The writer is a biologist.

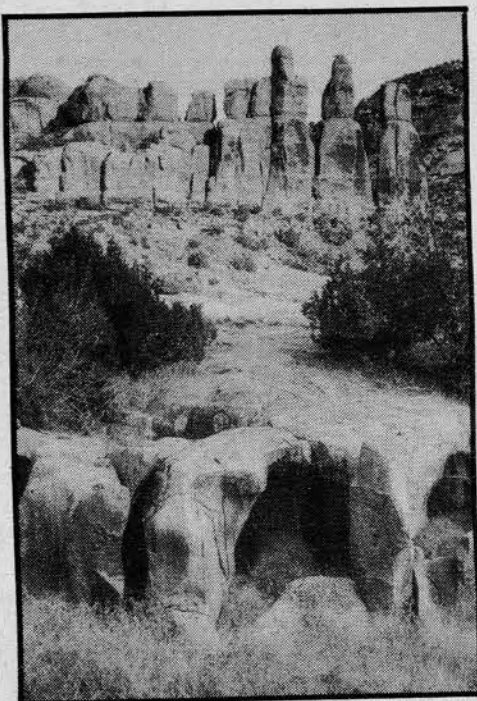
BULLETIN BOARD

POEM ON THE RANGE

Poetry, music and the environment are the focus of the 1993 Cowboy Poetry Gathering in Elko, Nev., Jan. 26-31. Highlights include a Mexican Rodeo, called a *charreada*, and modern-day American cowboys who will tell some tales and demonstrate crafts from the American Southwest and northern Mexico. The gathering also features lectures and performances, including day-long workshops called "Ranch and the Community: Holistic Approaches," hosted by Alan Savory, and "Ranching: Writing the Woman's Story," with Teresa Jordan. Now in its ninth year, the gathering is organized by the Western Folklife Center; for a schedule and registration form, contact Cowboy Poetry Gathering, P.O. Box 888, Elko, NV 89803. Anyone interested in participation can send examples of their work to the same address.

STUDYING THE SAN MIGUEL

The Citizens Water Guide to the Upper San Miguel River, a new 20-page report from the Telluride Institute, presents an overview of the San Miguel basin in western Colorado. Winding through Colorado's San Juan Mountains, the river supports a variety of activities, though some, such as snowmaking and mining, may threaten the stability of the river. In examining these and other threats, the newspaper-format publication hopes to provide a basis for improving the river's long-term health and establishing a study model for other river systems. For more information or to obtain a copy of the guide, contact Leigh Sullivan at the Telluride Institute, P.O. Box 1770, 283 S. Fir St., Telluride, CO 81435 (303/728-4402).



John Fielder

BLM ISN'T JUST FOR COWS ANYMORE

If you're tired of elbow-to-elbow trail traffic in Colorado's national parks and wilderness areas, take a look at *Colorado BLM Wildlands: A Guide to Hiking & Floating Colorado's Canyon Country* by Mark Pearson and John Fielder. Most of the book's 46 hikes traverse canyons, peaks, badlands and mesas recommended by the BLM for wilderness designation. Author Pearson and photographer Fielder, both active conservationists, include useful tips in their introduction to help inexperienced hikers tread softly and safely in remote desert ecosystems. Each listing includes a detailed map along with facts about location, elevation, ecosystem type and wilderness status, plus a one-page description of the hike's character.

Westcliffe Publishers, Inc., 2650 S. Zuni St., Englewood, CO 80110. Paper: \$17.95. 208 pages. Illustrated with maps and photos.

—Mike Foster

DIAL-A-WOLF

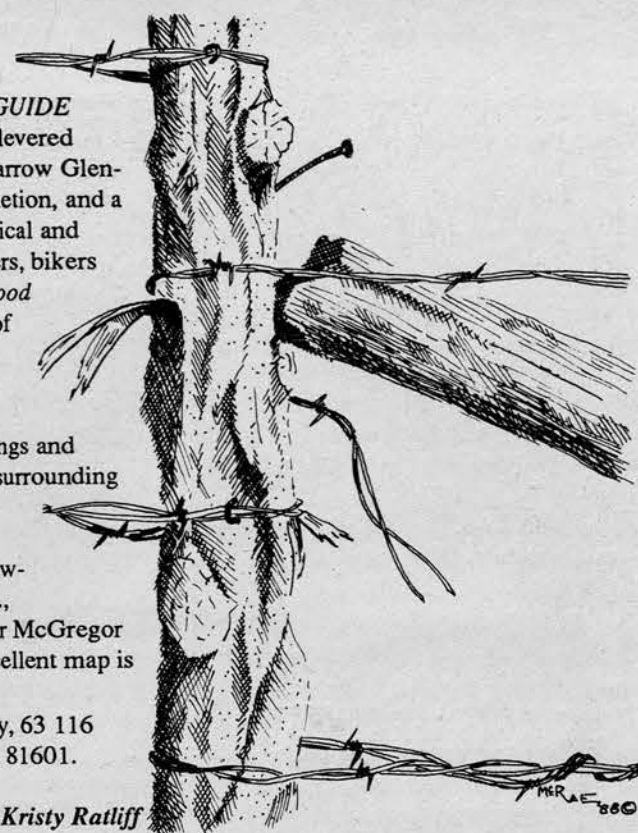
The endangered gray wolf may be returning to Washington's Cascade Mountains, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wants to hear about any sightings. No wolves or dens have been found yet, but biologists say at least two or three adult wolves with pups have entered Washington from Canada. So far, sightings have been reported as far south as Mt. St. Helens. If you spot a wolf in Washington, call 1-800-722-4095.

GLENWOOD CANYON GUIDE

The recontoured and cantilevered highway through Colorado's narrow Glenwood Canyon is nearing completion, and a new guidebook provides historical and ecological information for hikers, bikers and drivers. *A Guide to Glenwood Canyon* offers a detailed map of Interstate 70 through the 12-mile canyon, highlighting scenic areas, trails and campgrounds. It also features drawings and descriptions of wildlife in the surrounding White River National Forest, and briefly recounts the canyon's rail line and hydropower plant. Grand Junction, Colo., *Daily Sentinel* reporter Heather McGregor wrote this handy guide; its excellent map is by Francis Stanton.

Pika Publishing Company, 63 116 Road, Glenwood Springs, CO 81601. Paper: \$8. 32 pages.

—Kristy Ratliff



Clinton McRae

WORKING FOR DIVERSITY

The elements of biodiversity are falling through the cracks, says Jasper Carlton. Carlton is director of the Biodiversity Legal Foundation, an aggressive new Boulder-based group incorporating attorneys, biologists and activists in an effort to preserve natural diversity. Based on what Carlton calls the "multiple species approach," the group deluges federal agencies with petitions to halt actions that would harm biodiversity. A current focus is the endangered Selkirk Mountains woodland caribou in northern Idaho and northeast Washington, a remnant population of about 50 animals. The Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have filed a draft recovery plan for the caribou, but Carlton's group charges that the plan overemphasizes timber removal and "fails to prevent the continuing fragmentation and destruction of caribou habitat." For more information, contact the Biodiversity Legal Foundation, P.O. Box 18327, Boulder, CO 80308-8327 (303/442-3037).

RIVER RATS WANTED

Boaters can run the rapids and help save a river at the same time by joining RAT, which stands for Idaho Rivers United's new "River Advocacy Team." RAT's mission is to work with federal management agencies to protect over 100 Idaho rivers nominated for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers system. As a way of helping to monitor an adopted river, RAT members gather information for the agency, using workbooks provided by Idaho Rivers United, a statewide, non-profit group with over 700 members. Idaho River staffer Liz Paul says joining RAT "is a simple way to get involved in protecting a river that is near and dear to you. If you live near a river or visit a river regularly, you're the expert on that river." For more information about the team, write or call Idaho Rivers United at P.O. Box 633, Boise, ID 83701 (208/343-7481).

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—Wally McRae

TRUE BLUE COWBOY

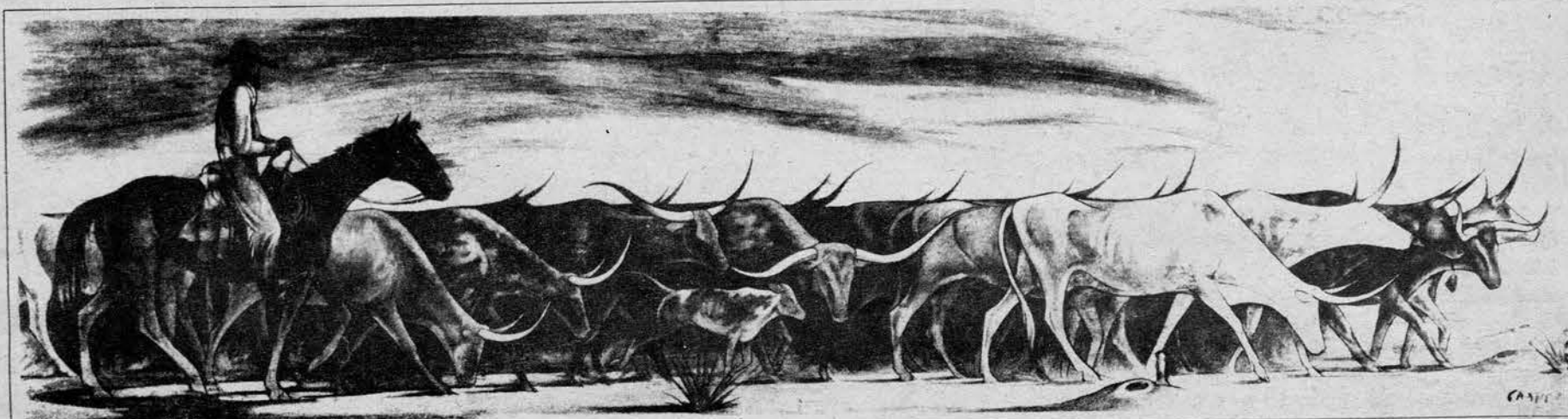
Montana rancher Wally McRae has published a new collection of poetry written over a quarter-century called *Cowboy Curmudgeon*. It features humorous favorites such as *Reincarnation*, which describes aptly how we all end up as manure, *Hat Etiquette*, which finally explains why cowboys hate to bare their heads, and *A Woman's Place*, a paean of praise for a bronc-busting female. Perhaps this genre is an acquired taste, the kind that develops over campfires during river trips or backpack hikes, and it's no secret that the meter is as predictable as a tourist-horse's gait. But McRae's feeling for wild places, coyotes and "good hands" who do the hard work of ranching lends his verses staying power.

Gibbs Smith, Peregrine Smith Books, Box 667, Layton, UT 84041. Paper: \$10.95. 136 pages. Illustrated by Clinton McRae.

—Betsy Marston

FOOTPRINTS IN THE SNOW

Could you recognize a wolf track in fresh snow? Finding and interpreting wildlife signs during the winter is the subject of a two-day seminar next month in Logan, Utah. Participants will spend Dec. 4 attending lectures and lab sessions at Utah State; field studies take place Dec. 5 in nearby Logan Canyon. Dr. James Halfpenny, author of *A Field Guide to Mammal Tracking in North America*, will conduct both sessions. Co-sponsors are the Utah State Department of Fisheries and Wildlife and the Logan-based environmental research and consulting firm BIO/WEST Inc. Call Glen Gantz at 801/752-4202 or write BIO/WEST Inc., 1063 W. 1400 N., Logan, UT 84321.



Eduardo Chavez/Western Folklife Center brochure

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LETTERS

A SHORTSIGHTED DIVISION

Dear HCN,

As Kay Matthews points out in her essay Sept. 21, it's unseemly — on moral, political and environmental grounds — for environmentalists to be opposing the land claim of the Sandia Pueblo in New Mexico.

Among other things, it reflects the shortsightedness that has led to disparagement of the environmental movement by those who find it too little concerned with social equity. Further, the environmental and Native American communities are natural allies — both respecting the integrity of this planet and wanting to maintain it. Thus, it seems foolish to me to be drawing lines in the sand.

Robert J. Golten
Boulder, Colorado

Robert Golten is director of the American Indian Law Clinic at the University of Colorado Law School.

FOX WAS FAIR AND OPEN

Dear HCN,

About the letter in your Sept. 21, 1992, issue from Woody Hesselbarth: Mr. Hesselbarth may well be right about there being a repressive atmosphere inside the BLM in which professionals who value their jobs are afraid to criticize upper management. I assume that he is an insider and would know, while I am an outsider and would not.

I thought it was very mean-spirited of him, however, to make this point by making disparaging remarks about Jim Fox, who is now the chief of range resources for the BLM and who originally wrote to HCN to say that professionals in the agency have an obligation to give their managers the benefit of their best advice, whether it is popular or not.

As deputy state Historic Preservation Officer for the state of New Mexico, I spent a number of years working with Jim Fox, who was until recently a BLM district manager in this state, on cultural resource preservation issues. I found him to be fair, willing to listen and committed to responsible management of all the resources under his jurisdiction. When Fox says that any professional worth his or her salt will give management the benefit of his or her best professional opinion and that any manager worth his or her salt will act upon that advice, he is simply describing his own management style. I'm sure that Fox is practicing that style in his new job in Washington, and if Hesselbarth wants to end the repressive atmosphere for professionals that he perceives inside the BLM, he should start hoping that more people like Jim Fox make it inside the Beltway and stop sneering at responsive managers who expect the best from their staff.

Lynne Sebastian
Albuquerque, New Mexico

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The 1992 Election ...

continued from page 1

long fights over logging, mining and wilderness.

In Idaho, the successor to retiring Sen. Steve Symms may follow Symms' policies, but he will do it in a less aggressive, less in-your-face manner. The two Idaho House members — one a Democrat and one a Republican — are also more moderate, especially when compared to past Idaho congressmen such as George Hansen and Larry Craig, now a U.S. senator. Colorado's senators — a Democrat and a Republican — are almost indistinguishable on environmental matters, especially when compared to past Colorado senatorial pairs.

This pragmatic conservatism becomes outright environmentalism in Washington, where the region's new economies are dominant. This former natural resource state is now powered by a diversified economy — Boeing, Nintendo, Microsoft — that dwarfs even the timber industry, let alone ranching and

agriculture. A direct confrontation of the old and new ways resulted in a sweep by environmentalists of all statewide races.

The shifting, muddling-through nature of the West is visible in the U.S. Senate, where the powerful regional bloc of senators — 20 — lacks a leader. If the region is indeed becoming more centrist, then possibly a cohesive Western bloc of senators may again form.

The Clinton-Gore administration will accelerate change in the West. Since 1980, the traditional economies and cultures have received enormous help from the Reagan and Bush administrations. Wilderness bills were vetoed; public-land administrators were bullied, transferred or fired; citizen rights to appeal public land decisions were threatened or subverted; and BLM land, national parks and national forests were micromanaged by Western congressmen working through officials in the departments of Interior and Agriculture.

Clinton is not a revolutionary. Nevertheless, environmental constituencies now can expect at least a level playing field.

Reform may even be possible. The Bureau of Land Management and the National Park Service seem to have generated momentum for reform, and may be ready to take off under Clinton appointees. But it will take a drastic move — the appointment of a very competent and prominent outside chief — to save the Forest Service. A political hack or another up-from-the-ranks chief could well doom this General Motors of the federal government.

Changes in the West's day-to-day relationship to Washington, D.C., could be dwarfed by a new national policy. For the past 12 years, the West has been largely left to its quarrels and to the vagaries of congressional and executive branch meddling and judicial decisions. The last time the region was the object of a stated national policy came in the late 1970s, when the West was made

beneficiary of Carter's mega-billion-dollar drive for energy independence. Had the Reagan victory and a dive in energy prices not derailed the Carter policy, the West would have been physically dismembered.

Clinton takes power at a time of economic distress. Given his record of sacrificing Arkansas' environment for economic development, it is possible that he will seek to rescue the national economy at the expense of the environment, rather than by implementing efficient use of natural resources and ecological restoration, as his vice president will presumably recommend.

Whatever path Clinton chooses, he will be forceful. For the first time since Richard M. Nixon, the nation has a president with an appetite for governance and the ability to focus on his goals. Those who care about the West should pray that he does not choose to mine, log, dam, drill and generally inflate and produce his way out of our economic problems.

Whatever happens, the West's 12 years of drift are over. The region is about to become fully engaged.

An election roundup

The West gets a little greener

by Ed Marston

Washington

Timber interests, opponents of the Endangered Species Act, and sportsmen nostalgic for the beer-and-bullets approach to wildlife took it on the chin in Washington on Nov. 3.

Symbolically, the most important natural resource race pitted Republican Ann Anderson against Democrat Jennifer Belcher for state lands commissioner. Anderson was supported by big contributions from the timber industry — Weyerhaeuser, Plum Creek and Trillium each gave at least \$48,000 each — and she outspent Belcher three to one.

Belcher, who was strongly supported by environmentalists, won the election by a 53-47 percent margin. Starting in January, she will administer 5 million acres of state forest and grasslands and will set timber practices on private land.

In the gubernatorial race, conservative Republican Ken Eikenberry went after the hook and bullet vote, pledging to fire the director of the Wildlife Department and turn it back into the Game Department. He was also accused by his critics of attempting to reignite the Indian fishing wars that convulsed Washington in the 1970s.

His opponent, former congressman Mike Lowry, a Democrat, went after the outdoor vote by stressing the need to protect and restore habitat, and to preserve wild salmon rather than increase hatchery production.

Lowry, who emphasized his independence by not accepting more than \$1,500 from any interest, received 28,000 contributions and won the election 53-47 percent.

The timber industry was also set back in the race to succeed retiring U.S.

Sen. Brock Adams, D. Republican Rod Chandler, who was supported by the timber industry and who favors weakening the Endangered Species Act, was defeated by the "mom in tennis shoes" — Patty Murray, a Democrat who was a champion of growth controls while a state legislator. She won 54-46 percent.

Women did extremely well in Washington's congressional races, taking three of the nine seats. Democrats

took eight of the nine seats. In the last Congress, there was one woman representative, and five of the eight seats were held by Democrats.

The most significant change from a public-lands perspective may be the election of Democrat Jay Inslee, a Yakima attorney, who will represent a rural district east of the Cascades. Although he will be dominated in the Congress by Majority Leader Tom Foley, who also represents eastern Washington, Inslee is expected by his supporters to be a voice for reformed management practices in the east-side forests, which are beset by insects and fire threats.

The Democratic candidates may have also been aided by the state Republican platform. Christian fundamentalists succeeded in forcing the adoption of a platform that advocated corporal punishment and the teaching of creationism in the schools, the reclaiming of the Panama Canal, a return to the gold standard, a ban on abortions and the barring of homosexuals in teaching and health care.

South Dakota

This conservative farm state went for George Bush while casting a pro-environment vote on two important initiatives. Voters also ended 16 years of Republican control of the state Senate. Democrats now have a 20-15 percent

margin. Republicans remain in control of the state House, 43-27 percent.

By 216,000-93,000, voters rejected the giant Lonetree landfill. A division of the Burlington-Northern Railroad proposed to bury 1 million tons per year of out-of-state garbage near Edgemont, in the southwest corner of the state. The 1 million tons equals one-half of 1 percent of the nation's total annual garbage.

The landfill had been permitted by the state legislature; voters reversed that decision. The landfill developer is going to court to ask for damages, arguing that the loss of the right to build the landfill is a "taking." Until recently, a new landfill permit was seen as a license to mint money, but recycling and the extending of the useful lifetime of existing landfills have dampened the boom.

After years of saying no, South Dakota voters approved an initiative requiring that the state's open-pit gold mines be reclaimed as mining proceeds. Past initiative battles have been hotly contested, with Homestake and other gold mining firms spending millions and environmental groups spending tens of thousands on the initiatives. This referendum was largely ignored. Pete Carrels of Aberdeen, S.D., says he believes it passed because of past work and because many voters have now seen the accumulating effects of open-pit gold mining on the Black Hills.

In routine races, Sen. Thomas Daschle, D, was elected to a second term, and Rep. Tim Johnson, D, was elected to his fifth term. South Dakota also approved term limits.

Utah

Western environmentalists suffered their bitterest defeat here, as Democrat Wayne Owens lost 55-40 to Republican



Patty Murray

William Bennett in the contest to succeed retiring U.S. Sen. Jake Garn. Owens was the staunchest supporter of wilderness in the West. Part of his election problem was the House bill he introduced to create 5.4 million acres of BLM wilderness. Toward the end of the campaign, Owens turned to negative commercials, attempting to convince voters that Bennett's involvement in the Watergate scandal made him unfit to serve in the Senate.

Owens' House seat in relatively liberal Salt Lake City was taken by Karen Shepherd, a Democrat, who was trailing in the polls until her opponent, Enid Greene, started running negative advertising. Shepherd has said she "wants as much wilderness as possible."

In the other two congressional races, incumbent Republican Jim Hansen and incumbent Democrat Bill Orton, a conservative, won easily.

In the gubernatorial race, Republican Mike Leavitt beat Stewart Hanson, a Democrat endorsed by the Sierra Club, and independent Merrill Cook. Leavitt got 42 percent of the vote, Hanson 23 percent, and Cook 34 percent. Leavitt succeeds Republican Norman Bangert.

Finally, Bill Clinton brought up the rear in the presidential sweepstakes. George Bush won 43 percent of the vote, Ross Perot 27 percent and Clinton 25 percent. In 1988, Bush won 66 percent of the vote and in 1984, Reagan won 75 percent of the vote.

Idaho

If not for the news from "outside" Idaho Republicans could have imagined themselves in the best of worlds, as they swept the state at all levels. However, Clinton did better here than he did in Utah. In Idaho, Clinton beat Perot 29-28; Bush took 43 percent of the vote, down from 62 percent in 1988.

In the race to succeed Republican Sen. Steve Symms, who chose not to run, Republican Dirk Kempthorne, mayor of Boise, beat four-term Congressman Richard Stallings 57-43.

Stallings' vacated 2nd district House seat was won by Mike Crapo, a Republican state senator, who beat J.D. Williams, the state auditor, two to one.

The lone Democrat on the Idaho delegation will be Congressman Larry LaRocco, who was re-elected 60-40 to a second term.

Questions surround the newcomers to the delegation. One observer said, "They will not be a Steve Symms crazy or a Larry Craig meanie." But Kempthorne, a moderate mayor of Boise who talks of the importance of quality of life, was advised by Symms' chief of staff and former Idaho Sen. James McClure.

Kempthorne's most important decision may be whether he retains Symms' chief of staff, Phil Reberger, who is more conservative than Symms on some issues. Crapo, like Kempthorne, is considered a moderate Republican who will talk to environmentalists.

At the very least, the congeniality and openness of the Idaho delegation has gone up.

At the state level, Republicans regained a veto-proof state legislature by increasing their already strong hold on the state House and by changing the state Senate from a 50-50 split into a Republican stronghold.

Native Americans suffered a setback in a statewide referendum which banned casino gambling in Idaho. Tribes saw gambling as a source of revenue, and see the ban as an attack on their sovereignty.

The measure will probably be challenged in the courts. It won with 58 percent of the vote.

Montana

For the first time in 28 years, Montanans voted for a Democratic presidential candidate, giving Clinton 38 percent of the vote to Bush's 36 percent and Perot's 26 percent.

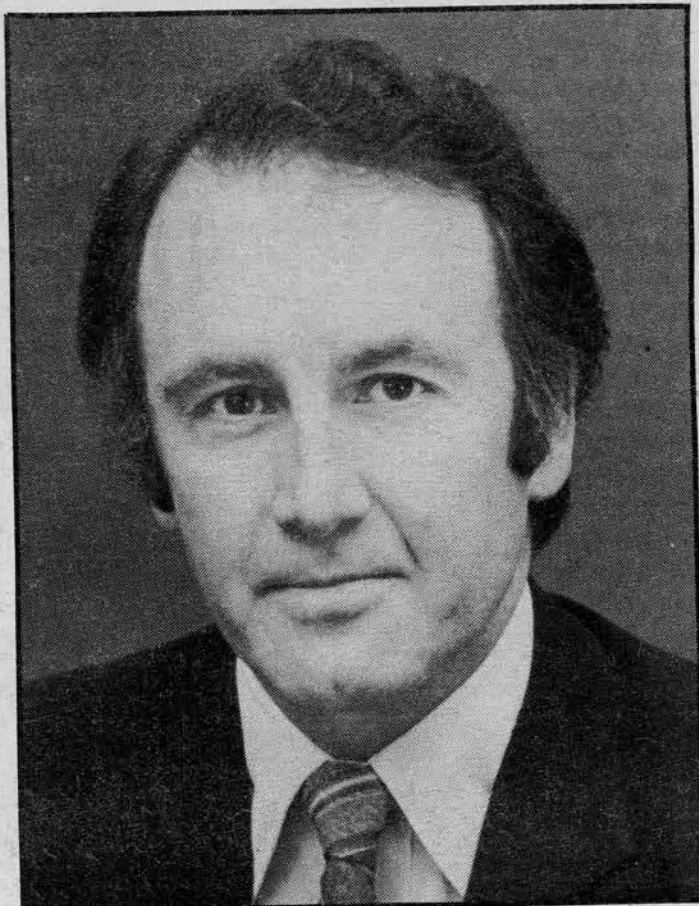
In a nationally watched congressional election, Democrat Pat Williams beat Republican Ron Marlenee 50-47, with a Libertarian candidate picking up the rest. The two incumbents were thrust into the same statewide congressional district due to the 1990 census. It was argued that Montana gained a seat by losing one, because Marlenee and Williams cancelled each other out in most House votes.

As expected, Williams won a 28,000-vote margin in his western Montana district while Marlenee won a 14,000-vote margin in his rural eastern district. Williams only carried 16 of 56 counties, winning big in such urban areas as Missoula and Bozeman. The exception to his rural weakness came on Montana's Indian reservations: Williams took six of the state's seven reservations.

Marlenee opposes all wilderness and other forms of preservation, and despite tough competition has been the Attila the Hun of the northern Rockies. Nevertheless, in a possible sign of the mood in the region, Marlenee attempted to paint himself as a moderate on natural resource

issues. But Williams became the candidate of the center by giving Montanans hope that the long, bloody, internecine war over wilderness, mining and logging can begin to be resolved.

On the state level, Republican Marc Racicot was elected governor over Democrat Dorothy Bradley 51-49. Racicot is expected to be more moderate on natural resource issues than outgoing Gov. Stan Stephens. However, Bradley would have been an activist when it came to Montana's numerous environ-



Pat Williams

mental problems.

Racicot's election sends the same moderating signal as Williams' election. As attorney general, Racicot didn't look away from environmental abuses, while outgoing Gov. Stan Stephens did.

Indians suffered a heavy symbolic blow when 72 percent of the voters rejected a referendum that would have added a Native American to the state university board of regents.

In other voting, 70 percent of the electorate supported a term limitations referendum, and three Democrats and consumer advocates were elected to the five-person Montana Public Service Commission: Bob Rowe of west-central Montana, Nancy McCaffree of southeast Montana, and Dave Fisher of Butte.

In the state House, the GOP won 17 Democratic seats to take over that body 53-47. The state Senate remains in Democratic control, 30-20.

Wyoming

It was ho-hum in this strongly conservative Republican state, although for a while it appeared that Clinton might give Bush a race. But in the end, Bush took 40 percent of the vote to Clinton's 34 and Perot's 26. Rep. Craig Thomas, a Republican, handily beat challenger Jon Herschler, an eye doctor who emphasized his health care plan. Thomas, who will now serve his second full term as the state's only congressman, originally replaced Richard Cheney when the latter became secretary of Defense.

The railroads and the trucking industry battled to a loss for each, as voters approved an initiative banning triple trailers on state highways and a retaliatory initiative requiring railroads to file emergency preparedness plans. A term limit initiative also passed easily.

Colorado

For the first time since Lyndon Johnson ran in 1964, Colorado cast its vote for a Democratic presidential candidate, giving Clinton 40 percent, Bush 36 percent, and Perot 23 percent. The state also went strongly for moderate Democrat Ben Nighthorse Campbell. He beat conservative, anti-abortion, anti-gun control, anti-government Republican Terry Considine 52-43 percent. Campbell becomes the first American Indian in the U.S. Senate since the 1930s.

Campbell's western Colorado congressional seat went to a moderate

continued on next page

Utah county decides to start over

Citizens of Grand County in east-central Utah voted 55 to 44 percent to overturn their form of government and start over. Frustrated by what many called unresponsive government, voters approved a referendum to replace the three-member county commission with a non-partisan seven-member council. Beginning after a special election in February, the new council will include one representative from each of five districts in the diverse county surrounding Moab. It will also include two at-large members.

"It's going to be chaotic; it's going to be nutty," says Jim Stiles, editor of the *Canyon Country Zephyr*, a monthly newspaper. "But everyone is really excited. There's a new sense of empowerment in what was an entrenched government. Lots of people are coming out of the woodwork to run."

The three current commissioners and their predecessors, elected "at-large" instead of by district, had generated anger and controversy. They appointed relatives to key positions in the county, used their posts to enrich

their business interests and acted without public participation in key decisions, says Moab photographer and activist Norm Shrewsbury.

"There are so many allegations and rumors (about the current commission) that I'd like a grand jury investigation," says Shrewsbury. He helped form the group Grand County Citizens for Responsible Government, which led the fight for change.

He credits the initiative's victory partly to a new, diversified electorate that has grown increasingly fed up with old-guard Utah politics. But, he says, even many of the conservative Republicans who still make up a majority of the rural county had grown tired of the commission's nepotism and corruption.

According to one local survey, 74 percent of respondents called the commissioners' job performances "unacceptable." One highly criticized move was pushing the county to buy a disposal pit for hazardous waste, supplied in part by Commissioner David Knutson's business associates. The site was later ordered closed by the Environ-

mental Protection Agency and clean-up costs are now estimated at \$2 million, says Shrewsbury.

A seven-member council, he says, will better reflect diverse interests in the large county and provide extra people-power to keep pace with changing needs.

But until the new government takes over, Grand County just might fall into anarchy. In a post-election day letter published in the *Moab Times Independent*, Commissioner Knutson announced his immediate resignation. "The results of the election make it clear to me that the direction the county wishes to take is significantly different than the direction I'm willing to lead," he wrote.

If the remaining two commissioners resign before February, the county would have no government. Says bitter Commissioner Manuel Torres: "Nobody knows what's going on, so maybe the governor should declare martial law ... If you come to Grand County, bring your six-shooter."

— Florence Williams

The West gets greener ...

continued from previous page

Republican, Scott McInnis, who beat Lt. Gov. Mike Callihan 55-44 percent, giving the Republicans four of Colorado's six congressional seats. All incumbents won easily.

The real excitement in Colorado was over amendments to the state constitution, and here the state moved onto the fringe of American politics.

The voters approved, by 53-47 percent, an amendment which bans civil-rights protection for gays. It may force Aspen, Denver and Boulder to repeal their anti-discrimination ordinances. Supporters of the amendment say it is meant to deny gays "special protection." Opponents say it is a hate measure. Denver will sue to overturn; and a group of gay doctors has cancelled plans for a Colorado convention.

Voters approved 54-46 percent a tax limitation amendment whose impacts will take a while to sort out. Gov. Roy Romer said, "This is one of the dirtier tricks you could pull on children." It is expected to complicate the funding of everything from schools to shopping malls subsidized by publicly backed bonds.

Voters rejected a 1 cent sales tax hike for education 56-44, and turned down 67-33 percent an amendment that would have required public education funds to be given to parents in the form of vouchers usable at private schools.

Both amendments supported by environmentalists won. The spring bear hunt ban won 70-30 percent and the measure to force the state Legislature to use lottery proceeds for parks and open space instead of prisons passed 58-42 percent.

Perhaps because of the state's miserable experience with its first gambling towns, voters trounced four amendments that would have permitted gambling in various communities.

Arizona

Tired of its reputation as the West's wackiest political state, voters treaded a relatively moderate path in this election. They approved an amendment making Martin Luther King's birthday a state holiday. This is an issue that has convulsed Arizona, which is 3 percent black, for five years.

Much of the state's recent turmoil has revolved around Evan Mecham, who was elected governor in a three-way race in 1986. He rescinded former Gov. Bruce Babbitt's Martin Luther King holiday proclamation, then became embroiled in various controversies and malfeasances that led to his impeachment.

Nostalgic for public office, this year Mecham inserted himself into the U.S. Senate race between incumbent Republican John McCain and Democratic challenger Claire Sargent. Both candidates took strong pro-environment stances. McCain has fought for Grand Canyon protection and emissions controls at the Navajo Generating Station, but has been hurt by the savings and loan scandal. However, he beat Sargent easily. And Mecham wasn't a factor. It just may be that Arizona is finally done with him.

Going into the election, the Arizona congressional delegation was made up of four Republicans and one Democrat. National reapportionment gave it an

additional seat, and now the House delegation is balanced at three and three.

The new seat went to Karan English, a Democrat with strong environmental support. She beat former White House aide Doug Wead, who was supported by national religious-right groups. Wead was seen as so extreme that Barry Goldwater supported English. English may be that rarest of creatures: a social liberal who is fiscally conservative. She told the *Wall Street Journal* that she supports a constitutional amendment to require a balanced budget.

In the one defeat of an incumbent, Republican Jay Rhodes was beaten by Democrat Sam Coppersmith in Phoenix. Rhodes was hurt by bad checks; Coppersmith was endorsed by environmentalists.

In other races, incumbents Bob Stump, Jon Kyl, and Jim Kolbe, all Republicans, and Ed Pasztor, a Democrat, won. The latter has Mo Udall's old seat in Tucson.

The initiative to ban steel-jawed traps from public land in Arizona was defeated 62-37 by opponents who spent between \$800,000 and \$1.5 million, depending on whose figures you believe. Proponents described the initiative as applying only to the handful of trappers who use public land. But opponents led by the National Rifle Association charged that the measure threatened all hunting and fishing because its goal was to manage wildlife "with humane and non-lethal methods."

An initiative to repeal the Arizona takings bill — The Private Property Protection Act — barely missed making it onto this year's ballot. A long legislative session delayed submission of the signatures until after the ballots were printed. As a result, the initiative won't be voted on until 1994.

The delay suspends the takings bill until the election can take place. Supporters of takings legislation are expected to try to invalidate the petition by throwing out signatures. Failing that, they may attempt to pass different takings legislation. Supporters of takings legislation are firmly in command of the state House.

New Mexico

Although this one-party state is totally controlled by the Democrats, Bill Clinton is the first Democratic presidential candidate to win here since Lyndon Johnson in 1964. Clinton received 46 percent to Bush's 38 percent and Perot's 16 percent. Clinton was endorsed by the leaders of all of New Mexico's Indian tribes and pueblos, including Peterson Zah, who heads the Navajos, the largest tribe in the nation.

Overall, the election was dullsville. The Democrats retain control of the state House, with 28 of the 32 candidates endorsed by the Conservation Voters Alliance winning. The three congressional incumbents — Republican Steven Schiff, Republican Joe Skeen, and Democrat Bill Richardson — were all re-elected. Sens. Pete Domenici and Jeff Bingaman and Gov. Bruce King had byes.

Nevada

A Democrat won Nevada's presidential sweepstakes for the first time

since 1964. Clinton squeaked past Bush 37-35, with Perot picking up 26 percent of the vote. The Clinton-Gore campaign says Nevada was the only state the Democrats did not target but won anyway. It has four electoral votes.

Sen. Harry Reid, the incumbent Democrat, beat challenger Demar Dahl, a Republican rancher-sagebrush rebel, 51-41 percent. "None of the above" got 3 percent. Four candidates split the remainder.

In the Congress, Democrat James Bilbray, who represents Las Vegas, won with 58 percent. Republican Barbara Vucanovich, who represents rural Nevada, won re-election to a sixth term by beating Democrat Pete Sferazza 48-43.

Nevadans hope the new administration will help them in their fight against Indian gambling. The state's leaders also wonder if Clinton-Gore will side with them in the fight against nuclear waste storage at Yucca Mountain. Reid and Gov. Bob Miller claim links to the Clinton-Gore administration. But Yucca Mountain is also driven by powerful congressional Democrats, such as Senator J. Bennett Johnston, La., and Rep. John Dingell, Mich., who are also likely to be strengthened by the Democratic presidential win.

Oregon

The big contest in Oregon had nothing to do with candidates. It revolved around Proposition 9, which would have officially damned homosexuals and homosexuality by labeling them "abnormal, wrong, unnatural and perverse." The state's leaders and newspapers joined the gay community in helping to send it to a 57-43 percent defeat. Proponents say they will be back in 1994 with a more moderate proposition.

In a closely watched, bitterly fought senatorial race, incumbent Republican Robert Packwood, a timber industry advocate, beat Democrat Les AuCoin 52-48 percent. The congressional seat AuCoin vacated was won by Democrat Elizabeth Furse. She beat Republican Tony Meeker 54-46 percent. Furse supports the Endangered Species Act and environmental conservation; Meeker favored revising the act to remove protection for species with little chance of survival.

All nine ballot measures, except one imposing term limits on state and federal elected officials, were defeated. They included two that would have closed the Trojan Nuclear Power Plant, a measure tapping fuel taxes for parks, a measure allowing bonding for parks, a ban on triple truck trailers and restrictions on fishing on the Oregon side of the Columbia River.

Not all of the West's representatives and senators come from the region. Legislators from all over the nation take an interest in the West's public land. In this election, three prominent members of that out-of-region delegation lost their House seats.

Congressmen Jim Jontz, D-Ind., lost 49-51 to Republican Steve Buyer. In his three terms, Jontz has been a hard campaigner for ancient forest protection, an advocate of national parks, an opponent of below-cost timber sales and a proponent of wilderness.

Peter Kostmayer, D-Penn., who lost his bid for an eighth term in the House,

was also a strong wilderness advocate. He also fought to protect the public's ability to participate in nuclear power plant licensing and to impose a moratorium on new incinerators.

A third loser was Minnesota Rep. Gerry Sikorski, a Democrat, who has been a leader on the Clean Air Act, and who led the congressional investigation that sought to determine if National Park Service Regional Director Lorraine Mintzmyer and Forest Service Regional Forester John Mumma had improperly lost their jobs. Along with Jontz and Kostmayer, Sikorski was a sponsor of the regional wilderness bill — the Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act.

There were also survivors, including Rep. George Miller, Democrat of California, who chairs the House Interior Committee and who just steered through the Congress the new water reform bill; Rep. Bruce Vento, Democrat of Minnesota, who also sits on the Interior committee, who chairs the Subcommittee on National Parks and Public Lands, and who has sought to reform federal water projects and to logging on national forest lands; and Gerry Studds, Democrat of Massachusetts, who is in line to chair the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee, which will have a major voice in the reformulation of the Endangered Species Act. Studds, who maintains a low profile when it comes to legislation, has been a strong supporter of strengthening the act.

California's senatorial delegation will have a very different look. Former Rep. Barbara Boxer and former San Francisco Mayor Diane Feinstein, both Democrats, will replace retiring Democratic Sen. Alan Cranston and incumbent Republican Sen. John Seymour. Cranston and Seymour had largely cancelled each other out on such issues as the California Desert Wilderness Bill and water reform in California. The two new senators are expected to be more cooperative with each other and with the state's environmental constituency.

Thanks for the help

This election report was compiled with the help of telephone calls and fax messages from the people listed below. They are not responsible for mistakes.

Geoff O'Gara of Lander, Wyo., Rocky Barker of Idaho Falls, Idaho, Maggie Coon and Tom Robinson of Seattle, Wash., Tony Davis of Albuquerque, N.M., Pat Ford of Boise, Idaho, Pete Carrels of Aberdeen, S.D., Karil Frohboese of Park City, Utah, Todd Wilkinson of Bozeman, Mont., Jon Christensen of Carson City, Nev., and Jim Stiak of Eugene, Ore.

— E.M.

ESSAY

by Tim Wirth

What does Bill Clinton's election portend for the West? Where will he stand on hot-button issues like mining law reform, grazing fees, wilderness, below-cost timber sales and oil exploration in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge?

Based on his Arkansas record, Clinton's environmental policies are likely to be moderate and pragmatic. It's hard to imagine him coming out with a hit list of water projects as Carter did. The president-elect is also an activist, reformer and conciliator, someone who likes to hear all sides. Last but not least, Clinton is progressive, a forward-thinker.

The upshot is that Clinton, though not a Westerner, may be just the president the West needs at this moment in our history. Beholden to neither environmentalists nor the energy and natural resource industries, a Clinton administration may have the gravity to pull Westerners back to a place we've too long neglected, a place called "middle ground."

Middle ground is the space between extremes. On the political spectrum, it lies somewhere between the Sagebrush Rebels and the Sierra Club. Put differently, if you took one compass bearing off the bald pate of James Watt, Reagan's first Interior secretary, and another off the bearded chin of Earth First! founder Dave Foreman, and then aimed to a point halfway between, you would, after a long bushwhack through tall grass, arrive at middle ground.

Since Reagan's election in 1980, the middle ground has been the biggest wilderness area in the West. Steeped in the myths of the Old West, Reagan was a throwback, a partisan, an extremist. "Count me in," he told the Sagebrush Rebels. Reagan's proclaimed intent was to set back the clock, to subvert two decades of environmental law and accomplishment. For obvious reasons, this was a recipe for warfare — and that's what we've seen. For 12 years the West has been at war with itself. Save a few brief forays off the reservation — to veto Two Forks Dam and sign the Clean Air Act — Bush clove to Reagan's vision.

Unfortunately, extremism feeds on itself. As the debate over public lands became polarized, the middle ground was abandoned. Wackos and kooks multiplied. Eagles were poisoned, timber was spiked. With real issues obscured by shrill rhetoric, simplistic solutions to complex problems proliferated. If cows sometimes damaged riparian areas, well then, "Graze Free by '93!" Energy crisis? "Drill ANWAR!" Hungry? Out of work? "Eat an environmentalist!" As confrontation trumped dialogue, public land

policy became paralyzed with animosity.

To say that this deadlock has been destructive is a vast understatement. It's been destructive to forests, rivers, fisheries, wildlife and most of all people. Under Reagan-Bush, land-use disputes that foresight and leadership might have finessed if not avoided, were aggravated and inflamed for political gain. Wilderness bills were stalled and vetoed; roadless areas bulldozed. The U.S. Forest Service, Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management were politicized to an unprecedented degree. As land managers flouted environmental laws and right-wing litmus tests replaced science as the basis for resource decisions, species were needlessly endangered. Imprudent levels of timber harvest, following decades of overcutting, cost thousands of loggers their jobs. Rangelands deteriorated.

Worst of all, needed reforms of archaic laws and

our natural resources.

Overcutting has depleted the timber inventory, overgrazing has reduced range productivity, the easy-to-get oil is gone, and the good dam sites have been taken. The "extractive" economy is also being squeezed by new industries based on "attraction" — recreation, skiing, fishing, hunting and tourism — and by an in-flow of new residents.

The West is no longer an empty outback. Not so long ago, forests could be clearcut without quarrel or qualm. Today, satellite photos showing forest fragmentation in the Northwest appear in *The New York Times*. For growing numbers of Americans, the West's natural landscapes are a stronghold of hope, a reservoir of dreams.

People in Georgia and California care what happens to federal lands in Montana and Utah, even if the converse is not true. Whatever their feelings about loggers, ranchers and miners, the public overwhelmingly rejects cut-and-run forestry, overgrazing, boondoggle water projects, mines that spill cyanide into streams, and indiscriminate slaughter of predators — particularly if they're paying for it, as they often are.

These trends are being felt in Congress. The political power of the extractive industries is waning. Pressure to pass new wilderness legislation and reform the outdated 1872 Mining Law is growing. Proposals to change the grazing fee formula regularly pass the House only to be blocked in the Senate. But the new Senate will be more urban, Democratic and progressive than the last. Change is inevitable. The West is evolving and land management policies must follow suit. The question is whether we adapt gracefully and wisely or whether we do it precipitously, adopting ill-considered reforms that will come back to haunt us.

There is a story, perhaps apocryphal, about a Western senator who, in the heat of debate, stood up and declaimed, "If we don't stop shearing the wool off the goose that lays the golden egg, we are going to pump the well dry."

The American people understand this. The issue is not whether we continue to have multiple use — that's a given — but how we encourage appropriate use — use that maintains or, better yet, enhances the land's capacity to produce grass, timber, clean water and wildlife.

As Teddy Roosevelt said some 90 years ago, "We are not building this country of ours for a day. It is to last through the ages." The concept of safe harvest is a simple yet profound principle on which all reasonable people can agree. Hopefully, the 1992 election ushers in a new era in which Westerners begin to articulate the unspoken consensus that has been obscured by the angry clamor of the past dozen years.

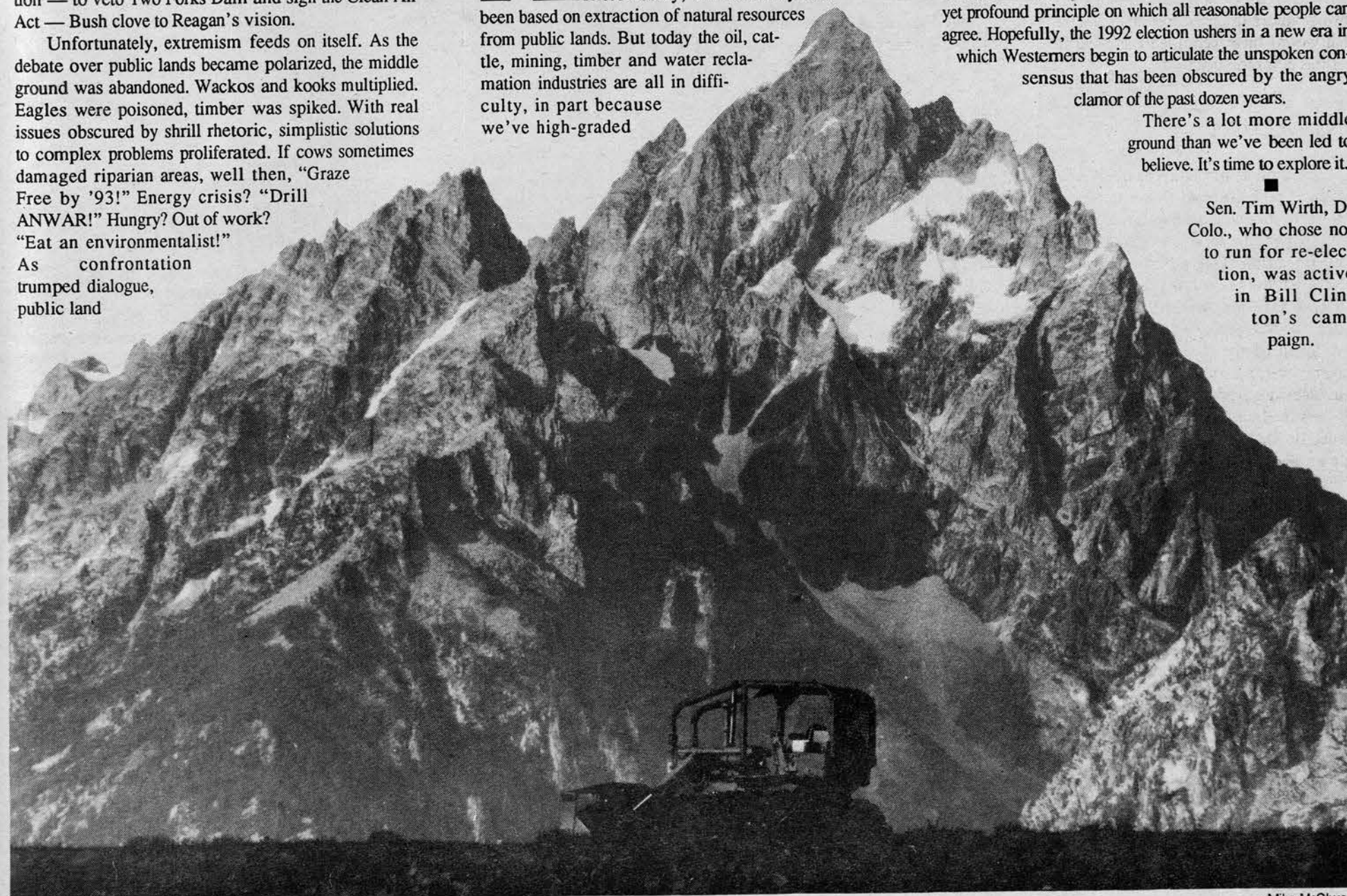
There's a lot more middle ground than we've been led to believe. It's time to explore it.

Sen. Tim Wirth, D-Colo., who chose not to run for re-election, was active in Bill Clinton's campaign.

What Bill Clinton means for the West

unsound policies were stonewalled. Time, energy and goodwill that could have been spent resolving the wilderness issue, developing sustainable grazing and logging methods, and helping rural communities dependent on natural resources diversify their economies were wasted on confrontation and litigation. At a moment when we should have been developing better land-use practices, we reverted to poorer ones. Reagan's pretense was costly. You can't turn back the clock — but, in trying to, you can go backwards.

As the new administration takes office, Westerners have some catching up to do. We need to catch up with change. The region is in transition. Historically, our economy has been based on extraction of natural resources from public lands. But today the oil, cattle, mining, timber and water reclamation industries are all in difficulty, in part because we've high-graded



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Clearcuts in the High Uintas in Utah's Ashley National Forest

LETTERS

GRASS DOES NOT FOLLOW THE COW

Dear HCN,

This letter is in response to Dan Dagget's essay in the Sept. 21, 1992, issue about how environmentalists and ranchers are getting together to improve rangelands. Dagget repeated the Holistic Resource Management (HRM) idea that cattle are a "tool" used to restore overgrazed lands and bring about "ecological" recovery. But HRM is a myth. Just as Western boosters claimed that rain followed the plow, HRM supporters claim — using anecdotal evidence — that grass follows the cow.

HRM doesn't promote whole, naturally functioning ecosystems. Rather, it is a mechanism that helps ranchers efficiently crop our rangelands; and anyone claiming differently doesn't understand how ecological processes work.

In a similar manner, some ranchers practicing HRM can demonstrate temporary improvement in their lands. However, prior to practicing HRM, most of these ranchers were anything but deliberate or careful in their range management practices. Furthermore, HRM requires a tremendous investment of time, money and effort. It may be a mechanism that helps some ranchers achieve better range practices, but the jury is still out as to whether it can be sustained over the long haul.

And none of this should be interpreted to mean that rangelands "need" cattle. Grasses tolerate cropping to one degree or another. But just as I get a sun tan as a defense against too much sunshine, this should not be interpreted to mean that I "need" all that sun. Many grasslands evolved defense mechanisms to deal with periodic cropping, but most survive just fine without cropping.

In many scientific studies HRM methods have shown no measurable superiority to other equally well-monitored, but more traditional, management schemes. In many cases, HRM has less favorable results. For example, research has shown and continues to show that intense cattle hoof action does not improve water infiltration; rather, it causes soil erosion to increase. The limiting factor in most arid rangelands is not decomposition of litter — though it is slow — but water.

HRM or any other management strategy which uses livestock still has major ecological impacts upon the West's ecosystems and biodiversity. Forage that is being transferred to domestic livestock is that much less for native wildlife, from grasshoppers to elk. Fewer grasshoppers means less food for birds and rodents. Fewer elk may mean less carrion for grizzlies and coyotes.

As long as domestic animals are ranged over habitat that supports native species, disease transmission from domestic to wild animals is a threat. Diseases from domestic sheep are a major reason why bighorn sheep are absent from much of their former range. As long as we are trying to economically support domestic animals in the arid West, our aquatic ecosystem will continue to be destroyed by dams and water diversions for hay production. Predators will not be welcome on most livestock ranges, and forage competition between domestic animals and rodents, like ground squirrels and prairie dogs, will still be treated with poison. And stripping all the above-ground grass and litter — as is often the case with such inten-

sive, short-duration grazing — reduces the likelihood of natural fires. Grazing and fires are not evolutionary or ecological equivalents.

I could go on and on, but the point is that HRM is not a panacea for the degradation and destruction wrought by domestic livestock. And it doesn't address the question of whether we should be producing livestock in the West at all! HRM suggests it works to make the cow act more like the bison. My question is: why do we try to force cows to be bison when we still have bison?

At least on our public lands we should be promoting native species, not alien, exotic animals. If meat production is the goal, the same investment of time, money and effort in a wetter part of the country could produce more meat with fewer ecological costs.

Let's support rural agricultural communities where agriculture makes sense — in the Midwest and East. These people need to make a living, too, and farm-

youth." He steamed at the phrase "refreshments were served." It became "refreshment was served."

Last year when the Knickerbocker story in the *Christian Science Monitor* about *High Country News* was being copied many places, I felt very proud and vowed to subscribe.

So here is my check. Each issue I receive I know that I shall feel that "refreshment is served" once again from Paonia.

Dixie McGrath Munro
Lamar, Colorado

WILD BURROS AREN'T A BOON

Dear HCN,

Regarding Howard Parker's "Let's Stop Horsing Around" essay (HCN, 10/19/92), hear, hear! In the '60s, I hiked in the Grand Canyon where feral burros lived, and while it was kind of fun spot-

supposed to be spent on wildlife shows why ranchers aren't paying enough to graze our public lands.

The wildlife funds were supposed to offset the loss of 8,750 acres of habitat that will be flooded when new Bureau of Reclamation dams at Lake Pleasant and Roosevelt Lake are finished.

That's because the Bureau is required by the 1958 Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and state wildlife agencies about the adverse impacts of its water projects on wildlife. The act also requires the Bureau to get approval from local land-management agencies for wildlife projects that result from the consultations.

Tonto officials made it clear during negotiations with the Bureau that they would not participate in any wildlife project that would adversely affect ranchers operating on the 11 grazing allotments adjacent to the lake. The \$650,000 wildlife project finally agreed upon with Gun Creek means the national forest

basically builds a lot of fence and watering troughs in order to more evenly distribute cattle.

While this will bring some improvement to the area's wildlife habitat, it can't honestly be called a wildlife project. The Forest Service is merely implementing range management that should have been in place long ago.

According to Tonto officials, the biggest reason they haven't been able to do a better job of range management is money.

They are reluctant to admit it, but there hasn't been enough money because the grazing fees ranchers pay to use public lands are so low, insufficient revenue is generated to finance more adequate range management. Contrary to claims made by the livestock industry, the government pays most

of the costs of range improvements on public lands.

For example, range improvements in the 22,606-acre Roosevelt Allotment will cost the government \$43,000, with \$35,000 of that coming from the Bureau of Reclamation.

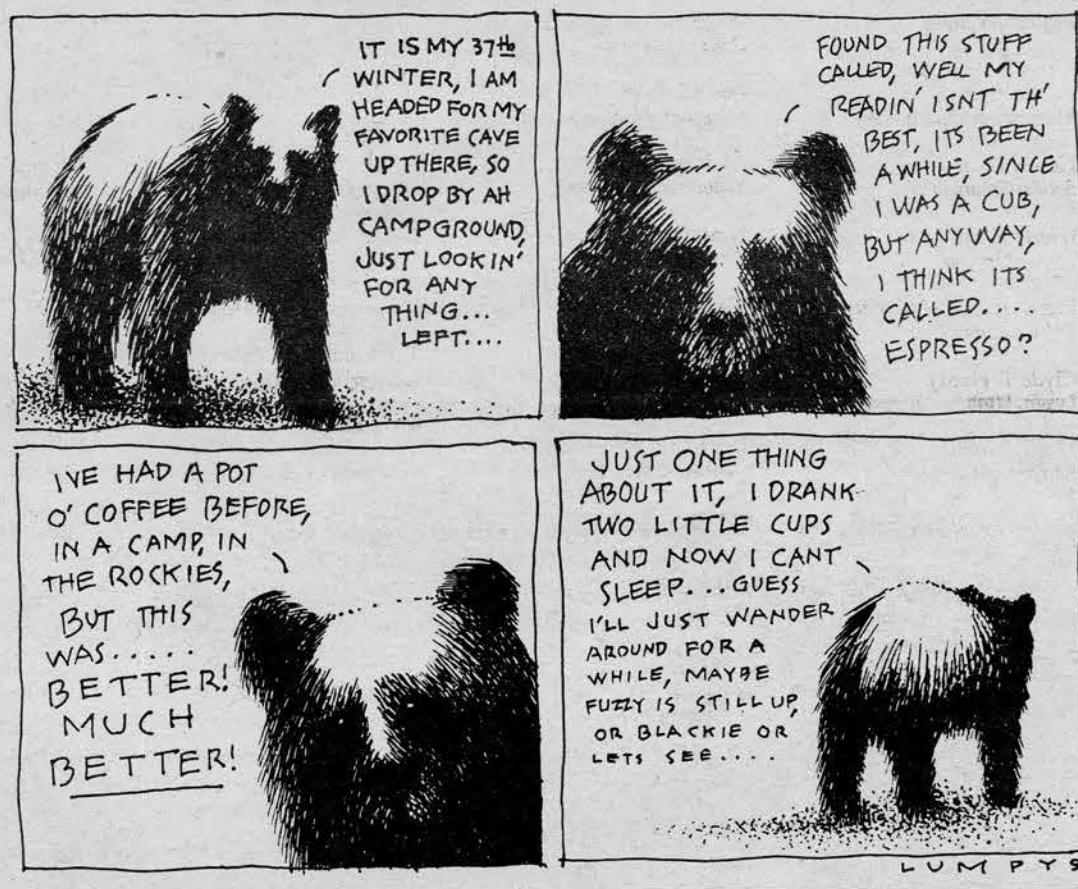
The allotment generates a maximum of \$9,300 in grazing fees annually. Only half of that is returned to the Forest Service for its range betterment fund. That means it will take more than nine years for this ranching operation to pay back the agency for the cost of improvements. During that time, the agency will spend plenty of additional money for administration and maintenance, and by then the improvements will probably have to be rebuilt.

Keep in mind, this calculation doesn't even consider the many other costs inflicted on the taxpayers by public-lands grazing. It seems obvious to me that it's time to raise grazing fees when the government has to divert wildlife funds to finance improved range management.

Jeff Burgess
Tempe, Arizona

OFF THE WALL

Larry Van Over



ing in Vermont, Missouri and Wisconsin makes vastly more sense than trying to coax a reluctant and arid Western landscape into production. HRM may be the motivator that gets ranchers to start paying attention to what they are doing with their cows, but it is no substitute for our native species and natural ecological processes.

George Wuerthner
Livingston, Montana

KEEP ON SERVING

Dear HCN,

Fifty years ago I was teaching English in Paonia High School. It was quite the most delightful place one could imagine. There, if anywhere, one could forget the violence ranging over the earth.

We had a working arrangement with Mr. Craig of *The Paonian*. I once sent down a lively student feature story on the technique of successful spit wad manufacture. He politely returned it as the "unseemly writing of wayward

ting them from a distance, it was no fun putting up with fouled springs and thousands of burro trails. I watched them drugged and hauled out by helicopter, a hideously expensive process which resulted in a lot of dead burros. Now I enjoy a more pristine Grand Canyon with increased sightings of bighorn sheep, which are more fun than burros ever were.

I fully sympathize with ranger friends at all afflicted national parks and monuments who patrol with guns on their dashboards to unofficially deal with some of their resident hoofed maggots — oops — wild burros.

Slim Woodruff
Chandler, Arizona

RANCHERS AREN'T PAYING THEIR FAIR SHARE

Dear HCN,

A decision in Arizona to finance range improvements on the Tonto National Forest with money that was

This process is out of control

by David H. Getches

"If the Spanish explorers could have foreseen the many bitter conflicts over the Colorado," speculated historian Norris Hundley, they might have named it "River of Controversy."

Competition for the waters of the Colorado River has sent neighboring states to the Supreme Court half a dozen times. It touched off an international incident with Mexico when the trickle that reaches the border became too salty to use. And in the 1930s, an Arizona governor deployed the National Guard to stop Los Angeles from building a dam.

Today there are new competitors and new issues. But there is still no regular means to work out differences, let alone to cooperate in the management of a resource so vital that it has been called the "lifeline" of the West.

The existing arrangement dates back to 1922, when representatives of the seven states in the basin came together at Bishops Lodge near Santa Fe, N.M., to hammer out a compact. They guessed that future claims for agricultural and municipal water would occur earlier in lower basin states, especially California. Without some agreement about water rights, they feared uncertainty. So they worked out an allocation scheme that simply divided the river between the upper basin (Colorado, New Mexico, Utah and Wyoming) and the lower basin (Arizona, California and Nevada).

Having divided the river, California was able to press for federal aid to build Hoover Dam. And Colorado was relieved to secure a share of water that would be legally protected no matter how fast the lower basin states of California and Arizona grew. But despite the agreement, the problems of allocating the river had just begun.

Though the United States' lead negotiator, Herbert Hoover, urged the states to create a permanent Colorado River Commission to deal with ongoing problems, the states failed to see the need. They

could not foresee that the West would become the most urbanized region in the nation, that Indian tribes would claim over a million acre-feet of water, that tourism would surpass agriculture in economic importance in almost every Western state, and that there would be political support for laws protecting quality of life and even endangered fish so strong that they would limit development.

Seventy years of legal wrangling have failed to bring peace. Besides layers of new legal provisions, each crying out for interpretation, a host of interests never considered in 1922 have become involved.

Today, one must look to interstate compacts, international treaties and special federal statutes, collectively known as the "Law of the River," to see how the river's bounties are to be shared. Billions of federal dollars have been spent to increase those bounties — water for farms and cities, hydroelectric power, flood control, recreation. An enormous plumbing system is in place but its operations are hotly debated. Every issue becomes the basis of a new negotiation or lawsuit or task force or advisory committee or study or environmental impact statement.

Struggles over the river resemble a free-for-all, lacking predictable outcomes and producing contradictory results. When states are pitted against one another, Colorado and its upper basin neighbors are dwarfed by California's great political clout. Moreover, the influence of all states is diluted by having many more players in the game. Environmentalists and Indian tribes now win some bouts in court or Congress, though they depend on the vicissitudes of particular facts and current political alliances.

The dominant force in Colorado River basin affairs remains the federal government. Under the Law of the River, the Bureau of Reclamation has czar-like authority to operate dams and make far-reaching decisions.

But increasingly, the federal establishment has internal conflicts. The Environmental Protection Agency may contend that operation of a Bureau of Reclamation dam violates the Clean Water Act. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service may be pitted against a federal project that would interfere with an endangered species.

Remarkably, there is no organization or institution with overall responsibility for finding solutions. Instead, there are continued legal squabbles, political power plays, and federal pre-emptions.

A reasonable approach would create a permanent regional body. This "authority" or "commission" or "forum" could try to resolve disputes, operate dams now run by the Bureau of Reclamation, seek better basin resource management and develop reliable data for everyone to use.

Control of the organization could be broad-based. Tribal governments and interests like commercial recreational users, sportsmen and environmentalists all could take a place at the table. The influence of the states might be balanced rather than reflect the weights of their congressional delegations. The Bureau of Reclamation's responsibilities would be largely assumed by the new entity, shifting power to the states and the newly represented parties.

The mission of a Colorado River basin organization should be as broad as possible. Issues like power generation, storage, release and delivery of water from dams, Indian water rights, endangered species, administering water sales across state lines, and better management of ecosystems could be within the organization's purview. Responsibilities now handled exclusively by the federal government could be assigned to the organization up to the point that a bona fide federal concern, like international relations, became implicated.

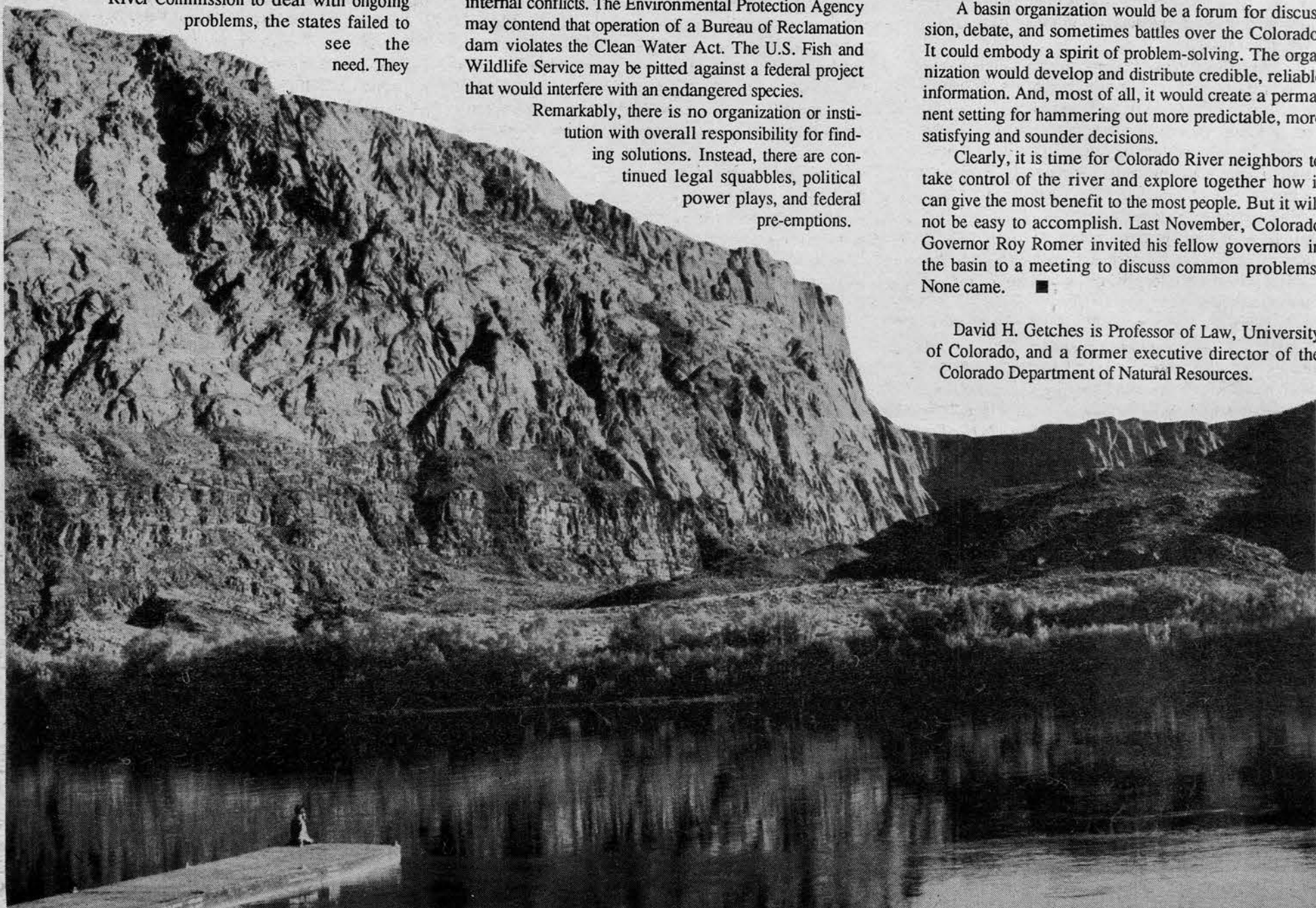
A tiny surcharge on the wholesale hydropower prices, now only a fraction of market rates, would run the organization handsomely. Just one-tenth of a cent per kilowatt-hour would produce over \$20 million a year.

This isn't a new idea. Even before Hoover suggested it in 1922, John Wesley Powell set out his ideal for governing the West according to river basin lines. A leading geographer, Gilbert White of the University of Colorado, proposed a Colorado River basin forum in 1983. Former governors Richard Lamm of Colorado and Bruce Babbitt of Arizona both suggested a commission in the 1980s.

A basin organization would be a forum for discussion, debate, and sometimes battles over the Colorado. It could embody a spirit of problem-solving. The organization would develop and distribute credible, reliable information. And, most of all, it would create a permanent setting for hammering out more predictable, more satisfying and sounder decisions.

Clearly, it is time for Colorado River neighbors to take control of the river and explore together how it can give the most benefit to the most people. But it will not be easy to accomplish. Last November, Colorado Governor Roy Romer invited his fellow governors in the basin to a meeting to discuss common problems. None came. ■

David H. Getches is Professor of Law, University of Colorado, and a former executive director of the Colorado Department of Natural Resources.



Lee's Ferry below Glen Canyon Dam in the Glen Canyon National Recreation Area

Kent and Donna Danner

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Biosphere II: Balanced on the 'cutting edge of the cutting edge'?

by Florence Williams

ORACLE, Ariz.—Under a sweltering fall sun, a small crowd of believers gathers to celebrate the birthday of Biosphere 2. One year ago, eight eager biospherians entered the giant greenhouse in the Sonoran Desert north of Tucson. The first "crew," as they are called, has one more year to go before a new team takes over.

At the moment, the crew looks somewhat gaunt and pale as they watch the proceedings from behind a big glass panel. "A year ago today, we closed the door and entered a 100-year voyage of discovery," Margret Augustine, CEO of Space Biospheres Ventures, tells us from a podium.

Over 5,000 visitors paid \$11.95 each to celebrate today's occasion and tour the complex. We get to explore four gift shops, three food kiosks, a satellite-linked hotel ("rooms with a view of the future") and the Biosphere Cafe. Future tourists will be able to fly in and play golf, and perhaps, someday, spend the night in a private biosphere of their own.

For many in the audience, the anniversary was a repeat visit. "Each time I come I see more and more," says Catherine Flanagan, a resident of nearby Oro Valley. "This is something you see no place else in the world. They're closed inside there. It's the second earth."

Such reverie is nurtured by the biosphere's promotional material and its high-tech tourist facilities. Each visitor walks through dazzling mini-terrariums just like those inside Biosphere 2, watches an interactive video show called "Meet the Biospherians," and takes a self-guided audio tour around the 3.15-acre glass structure, inside of which are 3,000 species in seven biomes. Says the tape between riffs of new-age music: "Biosphere 2 is much more than a scientific lab. It is a place where dreams are made real, where a new kind of vision has been born."

It is a vision rooted in the American spirit of showmanship, optimism and venture capitalism. With \$150 million in seed money from Texas billionaire Edward P. Bass and undisclosed amounts from other investors, Space Biospheres Ventures has created what it hopes will become a lucrative tourist attraction, a product and manufacturing firm, a scientific research lab, and, ultimately, a ticket to the universe.

That sounds like a tall order. But the developers are an ambitious lot. Consider biospherian Jane Poynter, who says: "My long-range goal in life is to live on another planet."

Space Biosphere co-founder Mark Nelson talks to me from a telephone inside the glass bubble: "To think life is limited to Planet Earth strikes me as a provincial attitude ... Mars is the most inviting planet. I'd like to go." He explains that his ideal colony would contain a small population specially "selected" for intelligence and environmental sensitivity.

Mars? Isn't the purpose of Biosphere 2 to demonstrate how to live better on Earth? That is, after all, what we're told on the audio tour.

The project's mastermind, however, is interested in far more than ecology. New York's *Village Voice* reported that co-founder John Allen ran a "survivalist cult" in the 1970s. While he denies his theater troupe was a cult, he freely discusses his desire to live on the red planet. "We do not have a goal of space exploration," he says. "But if someone else is going to send a space station, we'd like to be a subcontractor."

Most of the biospherians along with the upper management of Space Biosphere, including Bass, have long-standing ties to Allen's theater group. Only one of the crew holds a doctorate. He is Roy Walford, a gerontologist and author of *The 120-year Diet* (\$4.95 in the gift shops). The 68-year-old doctor says his personal project inside the biosphere is to create "ritualistic ecological performance art."

Inevitably, the project has come under fire from many in the scientific and environmental communities. After months of bad press alleging corruption and



Space Biospheres Ventures

Linda Leigh talks to visitors from inside the biosphere

secret openings of the greenhouse's "airlock," Ed Bass commissioned a scientific panel largely made up of consultants hired at one time or other by Biosphere 2. They concluded that the project put commercial concerns before science, failed to seek peer review, produced inadequate data and needed to hire more qualified scientists on staff.

Not a few environmentalists are disappointed in the project. "What I originally thought was an excellent idea is turning out to be more and more of a sham," says disenchanted Flagstaff geologist Bill Breed, once hired by SBV to write a scientific paper. "It bothers me that they put on a cloak of scientific grandeur."

Other critics say the project is merely replicating the crises on Earth it was touted to help correct: overuse of resources (Biosphere 2 uses enough external energy on hot days — 3 megawatts — to supply 3,000 homes and depletes local groundwater supplies by 60,000 to 80,000 gallons a day, according to the *Tucson Weekly*); an imbalance of oxygen and carbon dioxide (hence a secretly installed scrubber); and overpopulation (the biospherians were unable to grow all their own food and broke into two months' worth of food stored in the biosphere before closure.)

In addition, Space Biospheres Ventures is getting into real estate development in a big way. The company recently applied to Pinal County for a zoning change on its 2,500-acre spread. It wants an airport, a golf course, residential houses, another hotel, an RV park and a gas station.

Such plans have generated not a little skepticism among the local environmentalists who once liked the project.

"I personally wonder if this isn't some sort of land development scheme," says Paul Huddy, a Tucson physicist. "Biosphere 2 is taking on more and more of the trappings of a theme park. This is theater. It's an event. It's not science, not even weird science."

A few dozen yards from where Augustine stands at the podium, several booths offer year-round memberships (\$40 buys unlimited family visits to Biosphere 2), information on holding conferences at the hotel, and my favorite, a display of the company's first patented device: the Airtron. Disguised as a giant potted palm, the Airtron is really an "air purifier." For \$449, it will motor the air in your living room through a soil layer filled with pollution-eating microbes.

"The spin-off technologies will ultimately

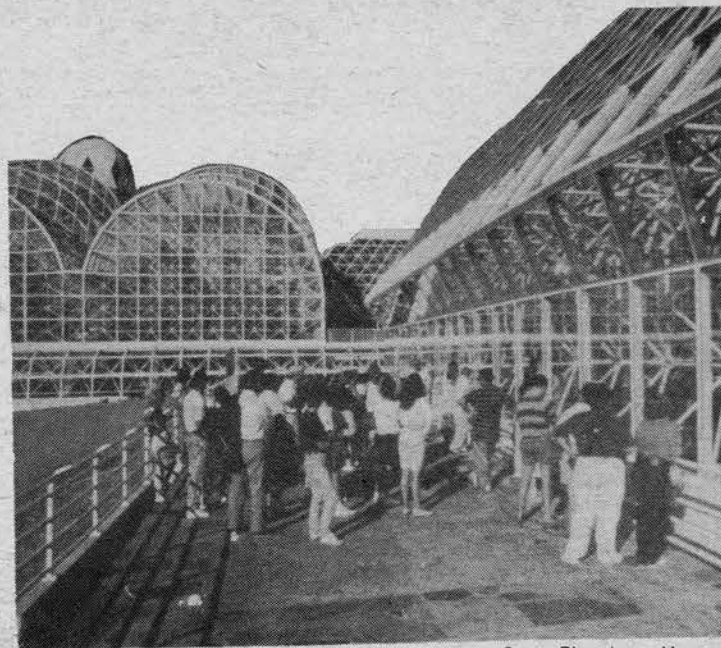
be our primary source of revenue," explains Neil Furman, the company's cheerful associate marketing director. So far, Space Biospheres Ventures has patented six technologies and has 12 more patents pending. They may include such products as super-biodegradable soap and waste recycling systems (but these are corporate secrets).

"We are on the cutting edge of the cutting edge," says company vice president Carolita Oliveros. She says even the closed-system biosphere itself may be marketable. "Mini-biospheres," designed to be fully sustaining life-support systems, could be excellent educational tools for schools and universities, or, say, for deluxe health spas. Oliveros reminds me that the eight biospherians have dropped excess calories, dramatically lowered cholesterol levels with their diet of grains and vegetables, and breathe cleaner air than the rest of us.

By next summer, visitors will enjoy a "postal retail center" (mail stamped "Biosphere"), an exotic plant store and three more food kiosks.

For the time being, most of the 250,000 annual tourists at Biosphere 2 don't seem to mind the project's cyberspace gizmos or its dubious qualifications. "So what if it's a cult?" asks Peggy Kennedy, a 60ish visitor from Tucson. "It's making history."

Adds Phoenix visitor Hilda Schneider, 53, blinking into the bright Arizona sun: "I don't think there's anyone brainwashed. I wouldn't mind going in there for a year if the price was right." ■



Space Biospheres Ventures

Visitors tour Biosphere 2

afield

by Carlyn Jervis

I always liked magpies, but never gave them much thought until the birds began turning up in unexpected places. I associate magpies with prairies because I first saw them in western South Dakota, where I grew up. Later, when I moved to eastern Washington, magpies flew through the foothills of the Blue Mountains. Now I see them in pastures and among cottonwoods in the Rio Grande Valley of northern New Mexico and southern Colorado.

Although different, these places all fall within the magpie's natural habitat of grasslands, brushy country and open rangelands punctuated by scattered trees. But last fall and winter, I was surprised to see them in a dense pine forest behind my house and in spruce woods at 10,000 feet.

It turns out wandering is natural behavior for magpies.

Like their larger cousins the crows and ravens, magpies are considered quite intelligent and they exploit a variety

This bird fills more niches than a coupie has bugs

of food sources, including garbage and dead animals. Ranging widely increases the probability of finding food to scavenge. In fact, the birds I saw at 10,000 feet were feeding on an elk carcass; and I would bet the one I saw in my backyard pines knows the exact location of the dump across town.

Most of the magpies' varied foods do not conflict with the interests of their human neighbors. People approve when magpies help the vultures keep highways clean or eat mice, flies, maggots, ticks and snakes.

But they are less welcome when they consume grain crops, eat the eggs of ducks or game birds, peck scabs on newly branded livestock, or eat honey bees.

The magpie's flashy plumage originally drew my attention. It shows off its conspicuous black and white pattern and its remarkably long tail in slow flight, and when it lands it flicks its shiny, dark green tail upward.

The dark wings look black from a distance, but up close in sunlight they shine an iridescent greenish-blue. The name magpie refers to this black and

white, or pied, plumage. The first half of the name may come from one of its calls, a querulous *mag* or two syllable *ma-ag*.

But another theory holds that magpie is shorthand for "maggot pie," which derives from the bird's flipping of cowpies in search of insects.

In winter's bare trees, magpie nests are revealed as bulky balls of sticks. The birds roof their nests with thorny sticks for protection against owls and hawks. But squirrels or other predators do snatch some eggs, and fledglings are vulnerable until they learn to fly well.

Surviving young tend to stay with their families for a few months. In the fall and winter, magpies may wander well outside their home range. Although I have seen wanderers only singly or in pairs, they occasionally gather in groups as large as 50. Some of their group dynamics display an almost human aspect. A young, unmated male may zoom close by a hawk or coyote, sometimes even pulling the predator's tail. It looks a lot like a teen-ager showing off.

Reference books credit Lewis and Clark with "discovering" the American magpie on their 1804-1805 expedition up the Missouri River. They were astonished at its boldness in invading their tents and snatching food from their plates. But long before Lewis and Clark came along, Native Americans in western North America were sharing food scraps with the magpies and observing their behavior.

In the Northern Plains, the Cheyenne and Sioux tell how Magpie helped the Two-leggeds (people) win a race against the Four-leggeds (bison, deer and others), enabling two-legged people to eat the four-legged people ever after. Magpie is the slowest of all the birds, but through her cunning (hitching a ride on a buffalo's back so she wouldn't get tired) she helped the two-legged creatures win. Because they are grateful, the people never harm Magpie.

In the Southwest, some Pueblo tribes see Magpie's plumage as the white of dawn against the black of night and consider the bird to represent the

East. A story from one Pueblo village relates how two sisters competed to see which one the rising sun would shine on first. The older sister asked Magpie to fly to the east and shade the younger sister as the sun rose, but on the way

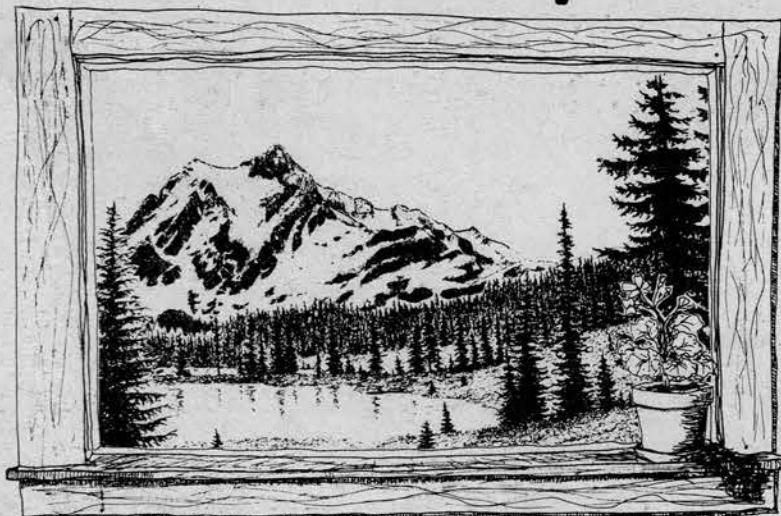
Magpie stopped to feed on a carcass and got blood on parts of her pure white plumage. Even though she won the contest, the older sister was angry because Magpie had disobeyed her instructions to fly straight toward the rising sun. She decreed that from then on Magpie would not hunt but eat what others killed or what had spoiled. She also decreed that Magpie would no longer be white but spotted.

Plants and animals were not just natural objects to the Indians, but symbols that revealed the world. When I see a magpie, I realize it also has symbolism for me. I not only see a bird flying over an open landscape, but I feel spaciousness and freedom. A flash of black and white wings flapping slowly across a field lifts my spirit. As my eyes follow the beating wings and rise from prairie grass bending in the wind to distant mountains, I know that a country with magpies is a country where I belong. ■

Rita Claggett

Carlyn Jervis is a ranger/naturalist at Bandelier National Monument near Los Alamos, New Mexico.

This holiday season, give a view of the West



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