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High Country News

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A Paper for People who Care about the West

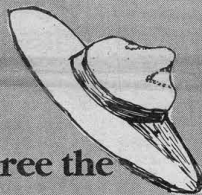
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TIMBER THEFT



Neal and Mary Jane Mishler

A caravan of trucks is loaded with Douglas fir logs ready for processing

Logging firms rob a lax agency

by Jim Stiak

For three decades, the Columbia River Scaling and Grading Bureau (CRSB) has been one of the largest companies of its type in the West. CRSB employees "scale" logs on trucks that roll off national forests in Alaska, California, Oregon and Washington — that is, they measure and inspect the logs, estimate the percentage of rot and defect in them, and come up with a figure of how much marketable timber they contain. From these figures, the Forest Service determines how much money it — and, in turn, we taxpayers — are paid for the logs.

But for three decades, apparently, CRSB has been ripping us off.

One former CRSB scaler, Paul Knapp, has already been sentenced to two years in prison for intentionally undervaluing some \$1.5 million worth of logs. An Oregon timber company, Bugaboo, avoided trial in the case by paying a \$1.6 million out-of-court settlement. And this October, CRSB and a second Oregon timber company, Thomas Creek, are scheduled to stand trial for allegedly defrauding the Forest Service of up to \$15 million.

CRSB is one of many "third-party" scaling companies hired by timber companies to measure and grade trees cut from national forests. It is not, however,

the only one cheating. Over the past few decades, some observers believe, the Forest Service has lost hundreds of millions of dollars to dishonest scalers. The crooks have not always acted alone. Silent partners in these crimes, some law enforcement officials allege, have been Forest Service employees themselves.

"The Forest Service's nonfeasance, malfeasance and naive procedures

can be traced to fraudulent scaling. CRSB alone, some Forest Service officials told the House investigators, may have defrauded the government out of \$50,000 a month for 25 years.

Scalers can cheat in many ways. They can measure the small end of the tree and extend that length to the end, even though the log may measure twice as much at its widest. They can overstate the amount of defective timber, assign a low grade to the sample logs used to value entire truck loads, or simply change or delete entries in handheld computers as trucks pull out.

Like several other government reports issued since the late 1960s, this year's House report recommends doing away with third-party scalers. Instead, it suggests, the Forest Service should base timber payments on tree measurements done by agency-hired timber cruisers who walk through a stand before it is logged and estimate the amount of wood there.

The Forest Service claims to be implementing the recommendation, but it is doing so at bureaucratic speed. In 1978, the agency set a goal of using tree measurement on 90 percent of its timber sales by the end of 1980. Twelve years after that deadline, the goal had been met only on eastern forests. In the big-timbered West, half of the sales still use scalers.

In a response to the House report, Forest Service Chief F. Dale Robertson

The Forest Service's object is to sell timber at any cost

allowed theft and fraud to run rampant," says Charles Turner, a recently retired U.S. Attorney who investigated several such cases. In a letter to the head of the Forest Service's Pacific Northwest region in 1991, Turner wrote, "Anyone who thinks the Forest Service is the protector of the public domain is sadly mistaken. Their object in life is to sell timber at any cost."

Although timber is stolen by a variety of methods, (see accompanying story), scaling may be the most popular. According to a House of Representatives Appropriations Committee report released this March, *Report on the U.S. Forest Service Administration of Timber Contracts*, 80 percent of the dollar value of stolen timber

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Dear friends,

Summer visitors

Recent visitors included writer Verne Huser, on the road between Aspen and his home in Albuquerque; Barbara Baxter from Tempe, Ariz.; Erik Ness and Cindy Coffin of Madison, Wis., who run a media project for *The Progressive* magazine; Marjorie Berkowitz, a speech therapist from Greenwood Village, Colo.; and Ina Miller-Wells, a teacher from Parker, Colo.

From Albuquerque came Sue Mullen along with friends Oscar Davis and DeeDee Loughran. And from Washington, D.C., came JoAnne and William Lanouette and their teenagers, Nicole and Kathryn. JoAnne works for a Friends school; Bill is with the General Accounting Office and recently had a biography of scientist Leo Szilard published.

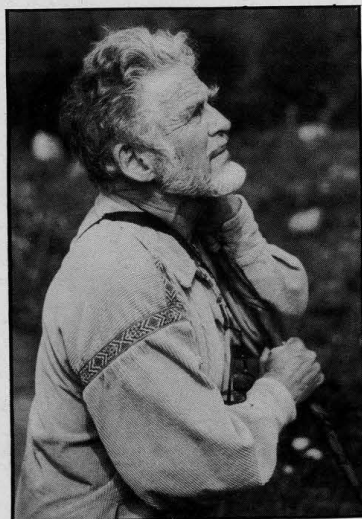
Among several visitors who floated here out of the Midwest was Kurt Hohenemser, an 87-year-old hiker who spends winters in St. Louis and summers in the Rockies.

The entire crew of the newspaper, *Out West*, drove up to HCN's door to see how we do our job. We were more interested in how Chuck and Rodica Woodbury do their jobs. With daughter Emily, 2, they spend a month each quarter in a Tioga trailer-newsroom writing about the West's back roads for publication in their folksy 42-page tabloid. In concept, *Out West* is a good natured, on-the-road newspaper. But Chuck said the kind of West he likes to write about is disappearing as the region becomes more urbanized. While they don't deal with clearcutting and damming, Chuck and Rodica do write about human ecology — courtesy and consideration in public places such as campgrounds and highways. Information about the paper can be had by contacting 10522 Brunswick Road, Grass Valley, CA 95945; 800/274-9378. Subscriptions are \$9.95.

Margo Bowie Hunt and Alan Hunt of Swarthmore, Penn., came by. Margo, who bears the name of a nearby town, is a descendant of former Paonia residents.

Sewage expert Peter Maier of Salt Lake, who was featured in HCN in April 1987, said he is still crusading for improvements in how the United States treats its waste. He is now working with the Utah chapter of the Sierra Club on the issue.

Joe and Lynne Horning of Washington, D.C., came by to outfit the family in HCN T-shirts and to bring us regards from former intern John Horning, who is now working for the National Wildlife Federation.



Stuart Mace

The Nature Conservancy's staff in Boulder came by in force: Ruth McMillen, Susan Wittow, Christa Edwards and Linda Lee.

The farthest visitors this fortnight were Jaime and Maria Mantilla. He is *Editores e Impresores* of *Hoy*, a nationally circulated daily newspaper based in Quito, Ecuador. The couple had spent a year as journalism fellows at Stanford University, and came through Paonia on their way first to Aspen and then to Florida and Ecuador.

Addendum

Craig Hicks of the National Academy of Sciences called to say that he liked the recent article on haze in the Southwest. But he also asked that we tell readers that the NAS report, *Protecting Visibility in National Parks and Wilderness Areas*, is not available from him, as the story stated. But it can be had from the National Academy Press, 2101 Constitution Ave., NW, Box 285, Washington, D.C. 20055 (800/624-6242) for \$38.

Stuart Mace

We were saddened to hear of the death of Stuart Mace, 74, whom the *Aspen Times* described as "that towering presence who was the spiritual guardian of the Upper Castle Creek Valley."

Stuart was a man who walked the talk: he knew about biodiversity and ecology long before they became buzzwords, he supported himself and others by encouraging and selling the work of artists and artisans, and he lived modestly in his Toklat Lodge and arts and crafts shop, which he had built 50 years ago near the ghost town of Ashcroft.

He also found time to help *High Country News*, supplying us at a very reasonable price with wonderful Zapotec rugs he imported from Mexico. The rugs were among the first premiums HCN offered after its move to Paonia. In addition to importing and selling the rugs,

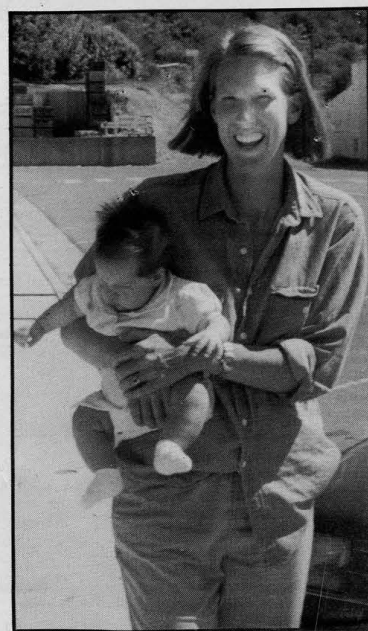
Stuart brought the children of the rural Mexican weavers to Toklat year after year, according to the *Aspen Times*.

The Mace family established the Malachite School and Small Farm for land-based education and sustainable agriculture. Friends of Stuart and of his family have established an endowment fund for the farm. Tax-deductible contributions may be made to the Malachite School and Small Farm, c/o P.O. Box 726, Rifle, CO 81650.

Stuart is survived by his wife, Isabel, and their children, Lynn, Kent, Alan and Bruce.

A parallel universe

Former intern Ashley Wills recently wrote to say how much he



Sally Gordon with Anne Hildreth in Paonia in 1991

enjoyed his time at HCN. "You can't imagine what a different world it was for me. There were days when I thought I was living in a parallel universe."

He is now back in his universe, working as Counselor for Public Affairs for the U.S. Information Service in Brussels. In response to a question from staffer Steve Hinchman, he wrote to tell us that 3,000 Bosnian refugees will be admitted to the United States. Those interested in the resettlement program, Ashley says, should contact the Bureau for Refugee Programs at the Department of State, 202/663-1077 or 202/663-1048.

Sally Gordon

Sarah (Sally) Hildreth Gordon, died Aug. 12, struck by a pickup while out for a walk near her ranch in Buffalo, Wyo.

It is hard to state the blunt fact because Sally, a member of the HCN board of directors since 1986, was so vibrant and passionate about environmental issues — so real — that a world without her seems impossible. No one who met her could ever forget her piercing eyes and equally piercing intelligence.

Sally, 37, leaves her husband, Mark, daughters Beatrice Louise and Anne Hildreth, parents John and Helen Gilmore of Massachusetts, and brothers Robert Wilson, Stuart Allen and James Reed.

Although born in New England, Sally developed an abiding love of the West and its rural communities. She was a stalwart of the Wyoming Outdoor Council as well as the Johnson County Library Foundation and Northeast Wyoming Family Planning.

A pianist, gardener, seamstress and photographer, Sally was all that, Mark says, "and her unsurpassed love of children propelled her through life and will be of lasting significance to all of those who were lucky enough to have known her."

Services were held on Monday, Aug. 16, in Buffalo, Wyo.

Mark asks that those wishing to remember Sally not send flowers, but give to the Sally Gordon HCN Memorial Fund, c/o *High Country News*, P.O. Box 1090, Paonia, CO 81428. The fund will help recruit and sponsor Native American journalists.

— Ed and Betsy Marston
for the staff

WESTERN ROUNDUP

Babbitt unveils new grazing proposal

RENO, Nev. — With the Clinton administration's budget freshly in the bag, Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt wasted no time hitting the hustings for public-land reform in the West. Saying it was good to be out of Washington, Babbitt unveiled grazing reform proposals at press conferences here and in Boise, Idaho, and promised work on mining reform would begin after Labor Day.

The grazing reform proposals will apply to Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service lands. The proposals include doubling grazing fees over three years, creating national standards and guidelines for rangeland health, and replacing rancher-dominated grazing advisory boards with resource advisory councils reflecting diverse interests in public lands.

While environmentalists welcomed the announcement, ranchers protested that the fee increase would drive out of business up to half the grazing permittees in the West.

In his press conference Aug. 10, Babbitt emphasized that the change would come slowly. "This is just the beginning," Babbitt said. "We're going to go through a tremendous process. We'll have public hearings in every one of the 11 Western public-land states. We'll have a couple more fights, I'm sure. And these proposals are subject to change if we hear good ideas."

The proposals were outlined in the *Federal Register* as an "advance notice of proposed rulemaking." A 30-day comment period is now in effect that also coincides with a "scoping period" for a draft environmental impact statement on the reforms. The Interior Department will publish a draft EIS and proposed rules in

December. Another 45-day comment period will follow with the EIS process lasting a year or more.

Babbitt said he hopes to have the new regulations in place sometime in 1994, but the process might drag into 1995. The proposed changes include:

- A phased increase in the grazing fee from the current \$1.86 per animal unit month to \$2.76 the first year, \$3.52 the following year, and \$4.28 the next. (An AUM is enough forage for a cow and calf or five sheep for one month.)

- A surcharge of 20 to 50 percent on the grazing fees of ranchers who sublease their public-land grazing allotments at a profit.

- Abolition of the BLM's grazing advisory boards and district advisory councils, now dominated by ranchers. They will be replaced by resource advisory

councils of wildlife managers, fisheries and biodiversity experts, environmentalists, ranchers and others interested in the public land.

- National rangeland standards and guidelines intended to restore and maintain healthy ecosystems on public lands grazed by livestock.

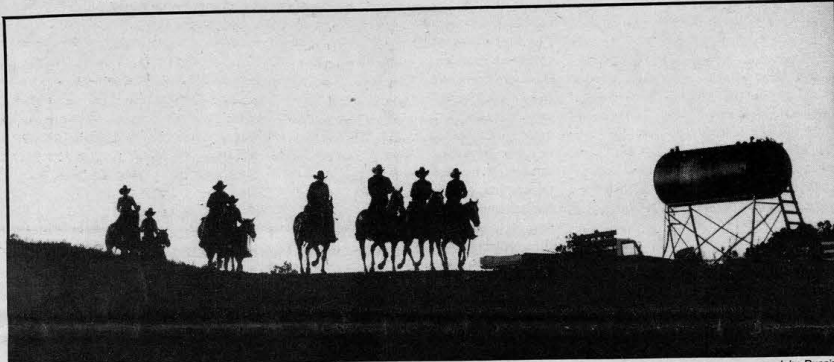
- Changes in permit tenure to give ranchers who meet goals for improved rangeland conditions 10-year permits. Others would receive permits of five years or less until they helped achieve management goals. A new form of conservation permit could be given to permittees for up to 10 years for specific programs to enhance rangeland conditions. Ranchers could also work with Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management staffers to create a "unitary" permit instead of a separate permit from each agency.

- A variety of strengthened enforcement provisions, including broader authority for BLM managers to implement "full force and effect decisions" even if the decisions are appealed, and increased sanctions against permittees who break any environmental laws.

- Federal ownership of new, permanent range improvements, including development of new water rights on public lands.

Written comments on the "Rangeland Reform '94" proposal should be sent to Michael J. Penfold, Assistant Director, Land and Renewable Resources, U.S. Department of Interior, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 65800, Washington, DC 20035-9998. The proposal was in the Aug. 13, 1993, *Federal Register*.

—Jon Christensen,
Great Basin regional editor



Cowboys at Cataract Ranch, Arizona

John Running

Wildlife officer says he is a victim of politics

After 14 years tracking poachers in Montana and Wyoming, the top federal game warden for the two states retired Aug. 4 to avoid a forced transfer, a method he fears is being increasingly used to harass civil servants.

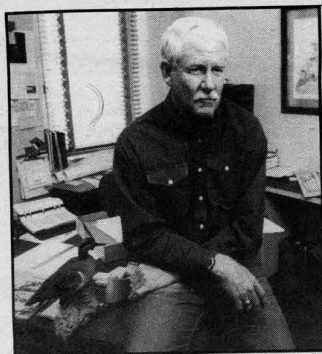
Joel Scrafford had been senior resident agent for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "These are the unethical terror tactics of the new regime of political animals to keep people in line," he said. Federal bosses, who Scrafford said are more driven by politics, have given him little explanation for the transfer from Billings, Mont., to a "special projects" job in Denver handling toxic waste offenses.

As head agent in Montana and Wyoming, Scrafford led "Operation Trophykill," a 1984 investigation that sent 18 people to prison, several for commercial poaching around Yellowstone National Park. Recently, he ran a probe into a poison-selling ring that included a Wyoming state employee, and he oversaw a raid on a Garfield County, Mont., ranch where a couple were alleged to have poisoned eagles.

Terry Grosz, Fish and Wildlife Service assistant regional director, said he ordered Scrafford to Denver only

because he has the talents to fight rogue mine operations, illegal oil sludge pits and poisons that are "killing birds like there's no tomorrow."

In doing so, Grosz admitted, "I



Joel Scrafford

Steven G. Smith

wrote off one area to try to save wildlife in another" because funds are inadequate for both. There was "zero" political pressure to move Scrafford, he said.

But Scrafford, who had recently refinanced his Billings home and planned to stay in Montana until he retired in four years, questioned that explanation. Oil and mine contamination

is a far bigger problem in Montana and Wyoming than Colorado, he said.

Even now, the five overworked agents in the two states can handle only about 20 percent of the wildlife offenses they see, Scrafford said, and his departure will lower that ratio. No one will replace him.

"It's going to leave two states, Yellowstone and other parks really hurting," he said. "A lot of valuable resources are going to be lost."

Area wildlife authorities said they were troubled by Scrafford's departure, which they predicted would hamper their battles against poaching.

"We still have hope that this is a nightmare, and we're going to wake up and it's not going to be true and Joel Scrafford will stay," said Dan Sholly, chief ranger at Yellowstone National Park.

Scrafford, 52, noted he joins the growing ranks of federal employees who have left natural resource agencies recently in the face of forced transfers.

"It's not only becoming more common, but it's reaching lower and lower on the totem pole," Scrafford said. "It has been abused in the past to silence people who ... are trying to be responsible to the taxpayers and have gone against the wishes of the political interests."

Scrafford has no evidence he is a victim of politics, but said he is suspicious of his removal from a job where he

has successfully fought wildlife crime since 1980.

In the past two years, regional directors of the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service have left their agencies to avoid forced reassignments. This year, the same fate befell two national forest supervisors in Montana who had earlier complained the agency was straying from its land-stewardship mission.

While all those officials were in high-level jobs subject to political maneuvering, Scrafford said he is a field professional who has not tried to climb within the bureaucracy.

"We need more people with integrity and less people with ambition in our agency," Scrafford said.

In his post, Scrafford supervised two U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service agents each in Wyoming and Montana and conducted his own investigations of wildlife offenses in Yellowstone and northern Wyoming and southern Montana, including the Crow Indian Reservation.

"If I was a millionaire, I'd pay them to let me do my job — I love it," he said.

But he admitted he was outspoken within his agency at times and "if anything got me in trouble, maybe that got someone upset and it came back on me."

—Michael Milstein

The writer works for the *Billings Gazette* in Cody, Wyoming.

HOTLINE



Wyoming Travel Commission

Devil's Tower in Wyoming

Climbers bedevil tower

Chalk marks and silver bolts on Devil's Tower in Wyoming testify to the monolith's growing popularity among climbers. More than 2,000 of them visited this rock mecca last year, hauling slings, ropes and other devices, some of which get left behind. To George Sutton, a Cheyenne chief from Oklahoma and representative of the Medicine Wheel Coalition for Sacred Sites of North America, the permanent bolts climbers use along difficult routes mutilate a site sacred to Native Americans. The prophet who gave the Cheyenne Tribe its religion lived on the rock pinnacle, Sutton told the *Casper Star-Tribune*. The National Park Service, which manages the pinnacle as a natural monument, has begun a series of meetings to broker a solution between potentially polarized groups, says monument supervisor Debbie Bird. "On the extreme end some climbers want absolute unrestricted and unregulated access," she says. "On the other, very extreme end of the spectrum are some Indian people who want the tower closed completely." For more information, call Debbie Bird or Jim Schlunkmann at 307/467-5283, or write Devil's Tower National Monument, P.O. Box 8, Devil's Tower, WY 82714.

A go-ahead for some logging

Timber sales stalled for months by the threat of an environmental lawsuit will resume on the east side of the Cascade Mountains in Oregon and Washington. The non-profit Natural Resources Defense Council told the Forest Service it would not try to block the sale of 20 million board-feet of timber on seven national forests, reports the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. The 66 sales don't involve any old-growth stands and mostly cover small areas of insect- and fire-damaged timber. They represent only a small portion of the hundreds of east side sales that the agency has delayed since March.

North Dakota wilderness plan draws fire

A Sierra Club proposal to designate 191,000 acres as the first wilderness in North Dakota is withering under a fierce attack.

In June, more than 100 ranchers, bankers, county commissioners, oil producers and elected officials packed a rally in Dickinson, N.D.'s Hospitality Inn to slam the wilderness proposal and the Sierra Club. An ad-hoc group called the Heritage Alliance of North Dakota made plans for an anti-wilderness media blitzkrieg and "arm-twisting" sessions with Gov. Ed Schafer and the state's congressional delegation.

"This Sierra Club is out of control. We need to go on the offensive," independent oil producer Mike Armstrong of Dickinson, pop. 16,000, told the *Bismarck Tribune*.

The Sierra Club released its plan, *Badlands on the Brink*, last May in a last-ditch attempt to save North Dakota's few remaining pockets of roadless terrain and wildlife habitat from booming oil and gas development. Supported by the National Wildlife Federation, Audubon Society and a dozen other state and national groups, the plan would permanently protect 157,000 acres in 11 parcels in western North Dakota's Little Missouri National Grasslands. It would also create wilderness in a 15,000-acre wildlife refuge along the Souris River in the north and in the 18,000-acre Sheyenne Grasslands in the southeast; it would also designate two wild and scenic rivers.

Although the plan is a political long shot at best, the oil and gas industry wasted no time attacking. In addition to the Dickinson rally, the North Dakota Petroleum Council and the Denver, Colo.-based Rocky Mountain Oil and Gas Association have held special meetings with grazing and stockmen's associations across western North Dakota. Oil company officials are also telling chambers of commerce and local newspapers that wilderness will eliminate oil and gas drilling, drive out ranchers with new regulations and bankrupt small towns.

Their campaign seems to be gaining. Coffee shop rumors have the Forest Service yanking grazing permits in proposed wilderness areas and banks denying loans to ranchers who graze the areas. Recently, county commissioners from four counties in the badlands passed a resolution oppos-

ing any wilderness designation.

"What you've been hearing about in other states is happening here, where certain environmental groups want to change from multiple use to a specific purpose," says Randy Mosser, president of the Medora Grazing Association. "If they change to wilderness now it's just to eliminate oil and gas. But soon they'll be getting rid of cattle too."

Some observers say that oil companies are playing fast and loose with the facts.

being developed. This spring two new exploratory oil wells and a two-mile road were bulldozed into the 21,000-acre Kinley Plateau roadless area (*HCN*, 4/19/93). In July the Forest Service rejected a Sierra Club appeal and issued a permit for a third well.

"We've probably lost about 1,500 acres in just the last month," says Schafer. "I guess the Forest Service hasn't the will to protect roadless areas. We need congressional protection."

Forest Service officials have been left



Kirk Koepsel

Kinley Plateau in the North Dakota Badlands

"The oil and cattle interests opposing wilderness designation in the badlands are creating the illusion that they're on the verge of losing their livelihood," says a *Bismarck Tribune* editorial. The newspaper reassures readers that, contrary to rumor, the badlands contain plenty of room for everybody.

Supporters of wilderness are scrambling to recover from the bad press, pointing out that despite the oil industry's claims, grazing rights won't be affected and ranchers will still be permitted to drive into wilderness allotments to maintain and repair equipment.

"I think it's just greed," says Wayne Schafer, who chairs the Teddy Roosevelt Group of the Sierra Club's Dakota Chapter. "The oil companies already have 90 percent of the badlands. Now they want every last acre."

In the early 1970s, 500,000 acres of the Little Missouri National Grasslands qualified for wilderness. Despite Forest Service management plans that guaranteed protection, most of the roadless areas and wildlife habitat have long since been turned into oil fields, says Schafer. By 1977, roadless acres were reduced to 270,000 due to oil and gas production.

Now, only about 157,000 roadless acres remain, and much of that is rapidly

out of the issue so far. Former Custer National Forest Supervisor Curtis Bates, who was fired in June for conflicts over timber sale issues, says the badlands deserve wilderness protection but on a smaller scale than the Sierra Club's "grandiose plans." If environmental groups had worked with the agency, he adds, they could have avoided conflicts over lands with existing roads, mineral leases and surface and mineral inholdings.

Statewide, the proposal has gotten cautious support, including endorsements from all of North Dakota's major newspapers. However, the state's governor and three-member congressional delegation say they won't introduce a wilderness bill to Congress until modifications are made and a consensus is worked out.

For a copy of the *Badlands on the Brink* Wilderness and Wild and Scenic River Proposal, contact Wayne Schafer, Teddy Roosevelt Group of the Sierra Club, 3305 Hillside Road, Mandan, ND 58554 (701/663-0944).

— Yvette La Pierre

Yvette La Pierre writes in Grand Forks, North Dakota. *HCN* reporter Steve Hinchman contributed to this report.

HOTLINE

Dying to spawn

Thousands of endangered cui-ui (kwee-wee) fish died this summer trying to get through antiquated fishways at Marble Bluff Dam near Pyramid Lake, Nev. In two separate incidents, schools of fish were trapped trying to move from the lake to their spawning grounds in the Truckee River. The cui-ui, which lives only in Pyramid Lake, was listed as an

endangered species in 1967 after Pyramid Lake dropped 80 feet because of upstream irrigation diversions. Marble Bluff Dam, built in 1976, includes a fishway that bypasses the dam and an elevator that lifts spawning fish from the lake level to the river. But in late May, some 1,000 fish smothered when they jammed the narrow fishway. Another 2,000 fish died when the floor of the fish elevator collapsed, depriving them of water for 15 minutes instead of the usual

30 seconds it takes to lift them to the river. The facility was built when spawning runs were much smaller, acknowledged manager Duane Wainwright, and was not designed to handle so many fish. Now that the population appears to be increasing and a negotiated settlement of conflicts on the Truckee River promises to deliver more water to Pyramid Lake, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service officials are considering changes at the dam.

Does Windstar have a future or only a past?

OLD SNOWMASS, Colo. — Several discouraged members of Windstar, the non-profit foundation created here by singer John Denver and aikido teacher Tom Crum, fear that the National Wildlife Federation is overwhelming the Colorado institution.

The federation's mismanagement and neglect have "blown the vision which drove Windstar," says Julie Bollinger of Dillon, a longtime member of the foundation's Colorado Connections group. "It's almost been like a corporate takeover."

Jay Hair, president of the National Wildlife Federation, explains, "I don't know what Windstar's original vision was, but it didn't work." Windstar is best known for an annual symposium called "Choices for the Future" that draws nationally known speakers.

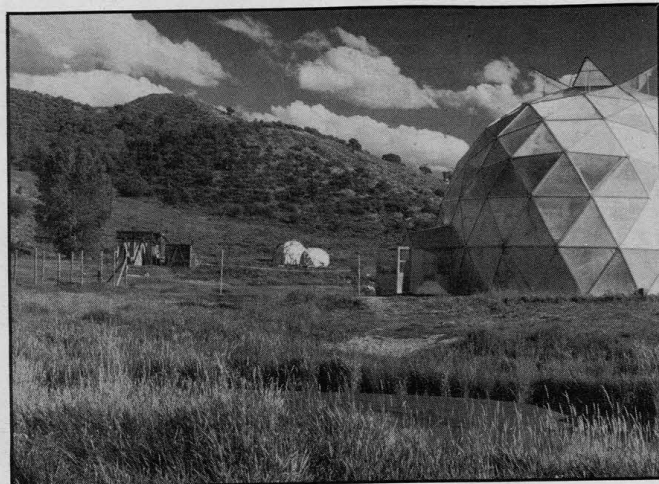
Hair said if the federation had not paid off Windstar's debts of \$600,000 in 1990, the foundation would have been dissolved and its 1,000 acres of pricey, undeveloped land sold. In return, the federation took over day-to-day operation of the property and Hair sits on Windstar's board of directors.

Hair adds, "I talk quite often to John Denver," who is still president of Windstar. "John agrees the foundation has problems and is frustrated about what hasn't worked."

Jane Cook of Lafayette, another Windstar donor and volunteer, says the federation squelches questions from members about the foundation's future and current management decisions.

She cites the decision to remove the Buckminster Fuller-designed biodome, a 50-foot-tall geodesic dome that served as an environment for growing everything from basil and potatoes to tropical plants. Members weren't consulted, and that's just a glaring example of the "lack of communication," Cook says.

The wildlife federation is currently working with the Windstar board to plan



Kirsten Llamas

A Buckminster Fuller-designed biodome once sat on Windstar property

the foundation's future, but "Windstar's future is not going to resemble its past, and those who want to hang on to the past should be studying paleontology or watching 'Jurassic Park,'" Hair says. "It will not be the unfocused free ride they seem to have fond memories of."

Hair says the biodome cost over \$55,000 a year to maintain and contained outdated technology. It was moved to Prescott College in Arizona.

An appeal to members has been launched to correct problems "besetting our beloved Windstar," according to a letter written by Kirsten Llamas of Miami, Fla., publisher of a newsletter called *Earth Network News*.

Her appeal says, "there is an enormous

reserve of good will, physical and financial support for Windstar, but it is not forthcoming" because of poor management. In addition, Llamas writes, "We find there is an old-boy network that wants to control Windstar for its own purposes without interference from the membership."

Hair says only a handful of Windstar members are complaining, and that Windstar's problems arose because "it has never been successful as a membership organization." The current membership of about 3,000 has remained static despite the federation's marketing and direct mail efforts, which Hair calls probably the best in the environmental business. The National Wildlife Federation has over 5 million members.

Steve Blomeke, former head of the

federation's Colorado chapter, now manages Windstar. In Llamas' letter she singles him out as guilty of mismanagement and arrogance.

A few weeks ago Blomeke came under fire for shooting skunks he had trapped on the property using steel, leg-hold traps. Windstar staffer Wynne Kenworth was fired from her garden position, she says, after protesting the skunk killings as cruel and hypocritical.

"The skunk thing was silly," says Hair. "Steve did everything right" with regard to trying non-lethal removal methods before resorting to killing the animals.

As for managing the land, "the property has been virtually useless as an educational tool," Hair says, because so few people — especially people of color or culturally diverse backgrounds — attend Windstar events.

He says the federation eventually wants Windstar to focus on environmental and outdoor programs that reach a large cross-section of people. Hair says its goals are to teach peaceful and sustainable choices concerning the future of the planet.

— *Jon Klusmire*

Jon Klusmire writes in Glenwood Springs, Colorado. The Windstar Foundation can be reached at 2317 Snowmass Creek Road, Old Snowmass, CO 81654 (303/927-4777).

Indians and environmentalists protest a Montana gold mine

As mine employees in white hard hats watched through binoculars July 17, 100 demonstrators walked four miles up a canyon road in central Montana. Their goal was a gate controlled by the Pegasus Gold Mine, which blocks the public from 17,400 acres in the Little Rocky Mountains, even though more than 90 percent of that land is publicly owned.

All the land in the area was once the domain of the Gros Ventre and Assiniboine tribes. Prospectors mined gold there in the 19th century; since 1979, Canada-based Pegasus Gold Inc. has run a heap-leach gold mine on the summit. Once called Spirit Mountain by the Indians, the company calls the peak Gold Bug Pit.

Pegasus plans to expand its mine, leach pond, quarry and other facilities from 400 acres to 1,000 acres (*HCN*, 5/3/93). The expansion, which would be the company's eleventh, is under study by the Bureau of Land Management in an environmental impact statement. It is also under attack.

The demonstration was a protest against expanded gold mining and the environmental damage it causes. According to federal monitors, mine wastes have increased acid levels in wells used by people on the nearby Fort Belknap Reservation.

Accompanied by three Indian spiritu-

al leaders on horseback plus drummers and singers who rode in a pickup truck, the walkers included environmentalists from the Mineral Policy Center and the Montana Environmental Information Center. They joined Indian families and activists from the Fort Belknap groups Red Thunder and Island Mountain Protectors, along with television and local newspaper media.

When marchers arrived at the company gate they festooned it with "Boycott Gold" stickers, then gathered in front of the Pegasus "No Trespassing" sign to say prayers.

"They don't realize what they are doing," said one of the Indian spiritual leaders, known as the Keeper of the Gros Ventre Flat Pipe. "They are hollow men."

Along with prayer, activists are counting on dogging the EIS process and mobilizing legal clout to make sure the federal Clean Water Act is adhered to. For more information, contact the Bureau of Land Management at 406/444-2074.

— *Don Bachman*

Don Bachman divides his time between Bozeman, Montana, and Silverton, Colorado.



Don Bachman

Demonstrators at the gate to the Pegasus Gold Mine

Earth First! logging protest evokes hostility in Idaho

You don't have to drive far in central Idaho before seeing store windows plastered with signs warning Earth First!ers to take their business elsewhere.

Dozens of Earth First! activists have set up camp five miles from Dixie, a small retirement and tourist town with less than 30 year-round residents, to fight — guerrilla style — the biggest timber sale in U.S. history (*HCN*, 2/8/93).

Activists have penetrated parts of the forest closed to the public, set up camouflage camps, installed tree-sitters, and pulled survey stakes. They say their offensive is an effort to stop what they call devastation of the largest unroaded area in the lower 48 states.

A rusted bus in the 20-acre base camp serves as communications center, complete with a computer, modem and fax. Newcomers are treated to non-violence and compass training, as well as hikes orienting them to the latrines, kitchen and satellite camps.

Earth First!ers say their goal is to stop the U.S. Forest Service from carrying out plans to slash 200 clearcuts — a total of 6,328 acres, according to an environmental impact statement — through old-growth tree stands in the Cove-Mallard area of the Nez Perce National Forest over the next six years.

Locals and loggers dismiss the activists' efforts as uninformed attempts to save a doomed lodgepole pine forest. Lodgepoles, thin, spindly trees that dominate areas of Cove-Mallard, burn almost as easily as they grow. Forest Service spokeswoman Elayne Murphy says the 80-year-old forest will go up in flames unless the trees are sent to the mill.

"It's primarily lodgepole," Murphy says. "And I checked with the local mill — they say that's a valuable species right now."

A 10-mile hike to several proposed clearcuts, however, supports the environmentalists' claims. With a few exceptions, trees scheduled to be chopped are part of an old-growth forest. Lodgepole pine trees that border the roads and surround the sale areas gradually give way to lush undergrowth nourished by fallen, rotting trees, huge firs with towering canopies and standing snags. Douglas fir, grand fir, subalpine fir, and a few spruce, many in wet areas, survived the lodgepole fires of the late 19th century and of 1910 and are still growing. They provide habitat for moose, fishers, pine martens, goshawks, gray wolves, salmon and owls.

The site is surrounded on three sides by legally protected wilderness, including the Frank Church River of No Return, the Gospel Hump and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

About 80 Earth First!ers are living on the 20-acre base camp, owned by an activist who calls himself Ramon. Signs at the front gate to the hillside encampment proclaim "Clearcutting is murder: Stop the genocide" and "No drugs, no guns." Stern activists working a security shift find out who you are and why you're there before lifting the 15-foot pole that serves as a gate.

According to Ramon, Base Camp is designed to serve as a supply center for a number of satellite camps, each with about 25 activists.

The satellite camps, three of which are already in place, allow people to move quickly through the forest. Tree-sitters climb high into trees — sometimes more than 100 feet — to set up platforms to prevent loggers from cutting their tree. This tactic is usually used to halt road-building, as are blockades. At night, activists smuggle food to sitters, dig trenches across unfinished roads, and chain themselves to gates and equipment to delay construction.

According to Forest Service spokeswoman Murphy, those caught in the closed area face a fine of up to \$5,000 and six months in jail. Six people were arrested for chaining themselves to a gate at the beginning of July. Since then, 30 activists have been arrested and 100 have received citations for offenses ranging from being in the closure to driving with a broken tail light.

The Forest Service closed off 27 square miles of the forest last month, after a Father's Day incident when equipment being used to build a road was damaged. The skidder, excavator and pipe trailer belonged to Highland Enterprises Inc. of Grangeville. Don Blewett, Highland's owner, says the June 20th damage totalled \$50,000 to \$60,000 from smashed windows and gauges, slashed tires and hydraulic hoses, and sand- and dirt-stuffed fuel tanks.

Blewett and other local residents believe that Earth First! is behind the vandalism.

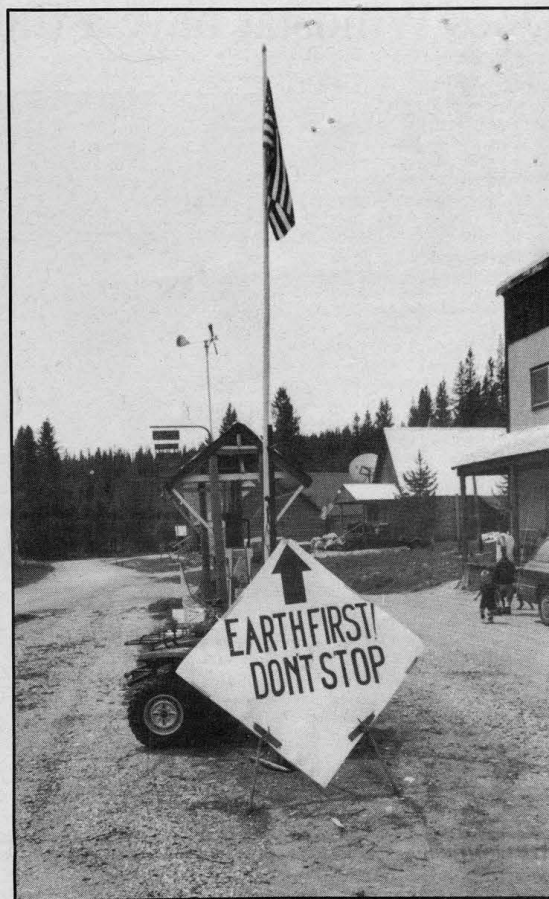
"There's plenty of reasons why an Earth First!er may have done this," responds Erik Ryberg, an Earth First! activist from Missoula, Mont. "But there's also reasons pointing to someone else having done it."

In what may be preparation for a grand jury investigation, 34 Forest Service agents raided the Earth First! encampment Aug. 8 at 5:30 a.m. Agents confiscated climbing equipment, diaries, receipts, hammers, nails and shovels.

Meanwhile, activists have good reason to fear violence from local residents.

Men and women bellying up to the nearby bar talk idly about blowing away activists' kneecaps; many say they travel with loaded guns.

Although the Earth First!ers have adopted a non-violent credo and generally



Charley Lyman

An Earth First! placard in the town of Dixie

agree to forego property destruction this summer, the mood in Dixie is confrontational.

The activists set up two tree-sitters recently in the path of Forest Service road builders preparing a route for loggers from Shearer Lumber Products, the Kooskia, Idaho, company that paid more than \$1.5 million for rights to the trees.

One sitter said he stayed about 120 feet up in a Douglas fir for a week, braving thunderstorms and attempts by loggers to knock him down.

"There were several uniformed men and one guy without a uniform," the sitter says, referring to the people threatening him. "They asked, 'Are you going to come down, boy? 'Cause we're going to knock you down.'"

When the activist, who asked to be identified as "Emerald," refused to leave, one of the men on the ground knocked a wedge out of a neighboring tree, sending the giant fir careening toward the sitter.

"I crawled off the platform to the other side of the tree and held on," Emerald says. "It hit the branches under my platform and shook the tree violently." Emerald left his tree a few days later during a hailstorm.

Emerald was caught later that night, after hours of bushwhacking through the forest. Although he is charged with being inside a closed area of the forest, he says police have no evidence connecting him to the tree-sitting.

Tree-sitters are not the only ones to have a close call with what Dixieans are calling "old-time law."

Earth First!er Ryberg called the

media from a pay telephone in Dixie recently to let the press know that activists had set up a camp of 10 people inside an area closed by the Forest Service. Jim Miller, owner of Dixie's Lodgepole Pine Inn, jumped on his horse and threatened to lasso Ryberg.

"As soon as that son-of-a-bitch comes out of that phone booth, he's taking a ride down Main Street on the end of a rope," Miller was quoted by the *Lewis-ton Morning Tribune* as saying.

Ryberg escaped the roping, mostly due to Idaho County Sheriff Gene Meinen, who escorted him to safety. But Dixie residents do not believe the confrontation is over.

"I'll leave them alone, but if they don't leave me alone, somebody's going to be dead," says Dixie resident Jim Huntley.

Along with the activists, residents complain, comes unwanted police and media attention. "You used to be able to drive your truck around without bothering to register it," Huntley says. "Now there's cops everywhere, (and) dust on the road. It's an invasion of our privacy."

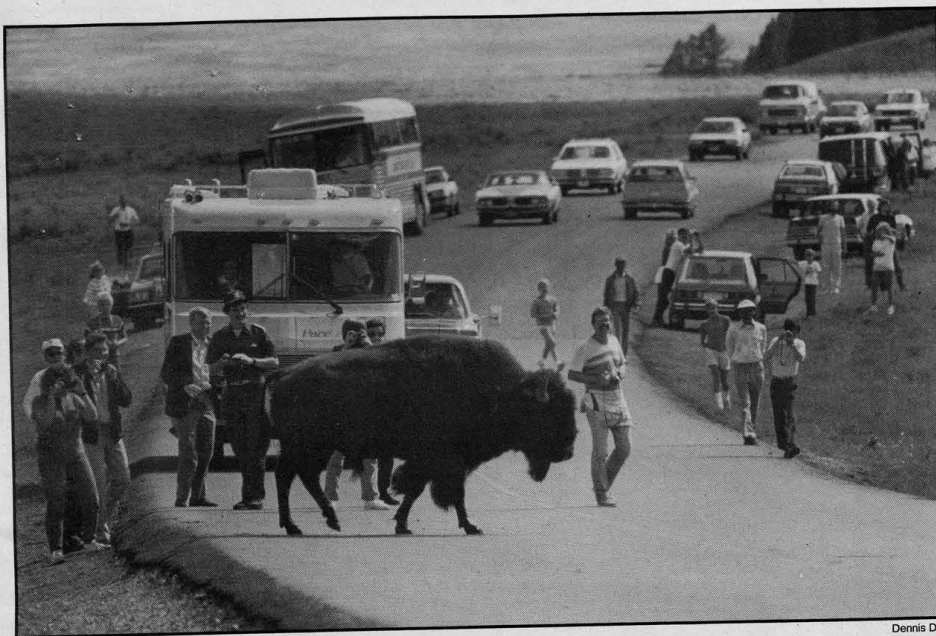
Ryberg says the situation is an example of blaming the messengers for the bad news they bring to town. "Dixie is a tourist town because it's surrounded by wilderness areas. If it were surrounded by clearcuts, no one would want to come here."

— Andrea Barnett

Andrea Barnett works in Missoula, Montana, for the *Missoula Independent*, a weekly newspaper, whose address is 115 S. Fourth W., Missoula, MT 59807.



Charley Lyman



Dennis Davis

Bison, pedestrians and traffic mingle on Yellowstone Park roads

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by Jim Stiles

This ain't the same old range.
Everything seems to change.
Where are the pals I used to ride with?
... Gone to a land so strange.

The Sons of the Pioneers

MOAB, Utah — In my never-ending quest to make some sense out of what is happening here in the rural West, I haven't "been to the mountain top," but I've been to the Sand Flat, and the view from there is discouraging. A few days ago, my attorney and I took a drive to survey the destruction. (I hadn't been back since the "Easter Weekend Riots.") Besides being surprised at the number of campers still enduring the 100-degree heat, I was shocked at my reaction to another sight that should have only caused more aggravation. After wading through a hundred or more mountain bikers, we came around a corner and saw local rancher Don Holyoak with a couple of dozen cows. Smelly, stupid, fly-ridden cows ... "stinking bovines," Ed Abbey used to call them.

I was glad to see them.

Don't get me wrong. I still believe that the mismanaged use of our public lands for cattle has done immeasurable damage to the land, fouled countless streams and water sources, and been a burden on the U.S. taxpayer. In fact, efforts by the extractive industries to literally tear up the West for maximum profit continue at a devastating rate. But I have become painfully aware of a bewildering shift in my thinking. There are more than a few of us longtime environmentalists who are suffering from an identity crisis.

Edward Abbey once wrote, "The idea of wilderness needs no defense; it only needs more defenders." But what it means to be a defender of the West has changed in 15 years.

Just who poses the greatest threat to the West? Where does the real danger lie? I'm afraid it's become more complicated than I ever thought it could. This is not just another complaint about our changing town — the New Moab. What's happening here is happening elsewhere. And what's coming may be bigger than even we doomsayers would dare predict.

Barring a miracle, we are about to enter a new phase, the last phase, in the taming of the West. When it's over it won't be "the West" anymore. We all know "how the West was won." What we are about to see is "how the West was done." Pretty soon, you will be able to stick a fork in it. And all of us, no matter how much we love the country, bear responsibility.

When I first moved here in the late '70s, threats to the canyon country were obvious: the extractive industries of oil and gas, uranium, timber and cattle. Operations that actually reduced the quality of the resource were the natural target of environmentalists. In those years, the desert was turned upside down by seismic crews and oil rigs, chaining operations, and a never-ending series of harebrained ideas to exploit the fragile Western landscape. For almost a year, we could see the big mercury vapor lights on an Exxon oil rig in Gold Basin, a place too beautiful for such a monstrous intrusion.

Seismic crews worked right to the edge of Arches and Canyonlands national parks, collecting geologic information that they could sell to other energy companies. In their wake, they left hundreds of miles of ugly scars that will take centuries to heal. The Department of Energy wanted to build a high-level nuclear repository adjacent to the Needles in San Juan County. The Bureau of Land Management continued to chain thousands of acres of piñon-juniper forest as part of its "range improvement" policy (and one of my favorite euphemisms, I might add, next to "nuclear exchange").

In short, there was plenty to complain about. And we complained loudly and often. We, who actually lived here in the heart of the country we were trying to defend, felt honored and proud to be on the front lines. It was, after all, not easy to live in the rural West; it required sacrifices. Just trying to find a way to eke out a living was a challenge, for most jobs were low paying and many were seasonal. In addition, poor infrastructure, lack of cultural opportunities, underfunded schools, and an extremely closed, conservative population made it difficult for an "outsider" to survive. That is why, despite warnings by some about the threat of "industrial tourism" for more than 25 years, the effect on the West by all those millions of gawkers seemed trivial compared to the damage bulldozers could do.

There were, of course, blatant exceptions. Some of the West's national parks began to show the effect of abuse and overuse decades ago. Several small towns, from Aspen and Telluride to Jackson and Taos, were transformed from sleepy, even dying, little mining and ranching villages, to bustling communities full of trendy

restaurants and boutiques. They became rustic playgrounds for the rich and famous.

But they were the exception. The rest of the West changed very little from a demographic standpoint. Generation after generation grew up in the same small Western communities. The towns looked the same, decade after decade. A person could go away for years and come back to his home town and find the same grocer behind the cash register, the same postmaster behind the stamp window. But it was more than just the way these little towns looked. It was the *pace* that set such communities apart. While some may call it stagnation, it was comforting to find continuity in a world that turns itself inside out on a daily basis.

All that is changing at breakneck speed. We are watching, in effect, the last land rush, and when it's over, the West will bear little resemblance to what it still is today. The decay of America's cities and urban areas, the congestion, the pollution, the crime, the stress of urban life, are driving millions to the wide open spaces. And the explosive growth of tourism is creating, for the first time, the climate necessary for that kind of exodus.

For the first time, West Coast immigrants can dream of moving to a rural community. No sacrifice is needed to sell a \$500,000 home in California, buy a \$100,000 home in a small Western town, invest \$200,000 in a business, and put the rest in the bank. A few hope to be modern-day Charlie Steens, who hit it rich on uranium. But this time, fortunes won't be made with a second-hand drill rig and a thousand-dollar grubstake. Instead, speculators buy up land for JB's and McDonalds' franchises the way miners staked uranium claims in the '50s.

As long as people in the cities can sell their homes at a great profit and can take that money and reinvest here, where the prices are still substantially lower, we will continue to see this remarkable inflow of humanity.

Is it all that bad? In some ways, it's not. Critics of tourism as an economic base claim that such an industry is too unstable, that a town that builds its economy around tourism is asking for trouble, that sooner or later, the bubble will burst and all the tourists will go somewhere else. But I just don't see that happening. While energy towns have gone boom and bust for decades, I cannot think of a single tourist town that went belly-up. Maybe business in these communities has ebbed and flowed with the national or regional economy, but dry up and blow away? Never.

So ... with an established tourist base, a changing community profile that demands better educational and cultural opportunities, and a larger tax base, positive changes are inevitable. And yet, in a perverse way, those same improvements represent the final nails in the West's coffin, changes that guarantee the demise of the West as we know it.

For me, "the West" is a lot more than the sum of its parts. The West is the desert, the canyons, the mountains and the wildlife that roams among them. It's the wildflowers that bloom in the most unexpected places and the gnarled spruce that clings to life at 12,000 feet. It's the polished skies and the exploding cotton clouds that loom over the high peaks each afternoon. It's the kangaroo rats and fence lizards that we see all the time and the cougar that we wait a lifetime to see just once for a fleeting moment.

But the West is more than that.

The intangible aspect of the West is as vital to its survival as the resource

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Diane Sylvain

the New est, herds cattle are being placed by hordes of tourists

itself. It's the solitude, the silence, an almost pleasant loneliness that this country evokes in the souls of those that love it. These are an integral part of the West as a state of mind. Abbey could not describe this land without references to the "strange and mysterious" country that he loved so much ... "the voodoo rocks." Even the inhospitable aspect of the West itself became a quality to be admired and respected. You loved the West on its terms and made the sacrifices required to be a part of it.

Solitude was not something to avoid, it was something to love and respect, and even to depend on.

So today, as I re-examine what the West is, I find a strange contradiction in the experiences I seek out. For instance, I can hike into the badlands country north of Arches National Park, into country that was torn apart 40 years ago by the uranium industry and which still bears the scars, and there amidst the rubble can feel like I'm in the West. I poke my head in a deserted miner's cabin and find a great horned owl in the rafters waiting for nightfall. I sit down on the rocks above the Big Ape mine and watch the sun set behind the Devils Garden. Magnificent silence, brilliant light, only the wind and the hooting of that owl to disturb the silence of the evening ... the West.

But I can hike to Delicate Arch, where the resource has been preserved, but also promoted to the far corners of the planet, and I feel like I'm in Disneyland. Surrounded by dozens of camera-snapping, video-taping tourists, screaming kids and well-armed rangers, I think to myself ... this is not the West.

But it may be the future of the West. It seems to be what people want. Those wonderful intangibles do not appeal to many of the New Westerners. In fact, all that solitude appears to scare a lot of them to death. Look at the way recent visitors, and even our most recent residents, "explore" the country. They travel in groups. Some might say they travel in herds ... that we are seeing one herd (livestock) being driven from the country, only to be replaced by another. Where visitors once came here for the peace and solitude and beauty of the land, now they come for "breath-taking thrills." Those who found a trip to the canyon country to be akin to a religious experience have been replaced to a large degree by "recreationists" who regard this country as a playground, and who seem to have a diminished or non-existent environmental ethic. So people come here looking for organized ways of having fun.

Before skiing became popular, the mountains were cold and hostile and forbidding. They were nice to look at from a safe distance. But the sport changed everything. Here in the desert, it was the same story. Hot, desolate, a nice place to watch from the comfort of an air-conditioned car, but who the hell would want to live in this godforsaken place? When I was a Park Service ranger, tourists thought I'd been assigned to Arches as punishment ... "What did you do wrong to get stuck in this hell hole, boy?"

Again, the sport, in this case mountain biking, changed everything. It changed the very reason people come here. We went from mystical to macho, from watching a hawk to "riding the rock." From "desert mystics" to "adrenalin junkies."

The sport, of course, and the reputation and notoriety it creates, spawn the ever-growing stream of businesses that are created to pro-

vide equipment and services for those organized thrills. And once a newer, more hip tourist infrastructure is in place, with a plethora of restaurants, boutiques, Southwest art galleries and jewelry shops, the *nouveaux riches* suddenly find the area much more appealing, and start looking for little "ranchettes" upon which to build their million-dollar summer homes.

Here is the most frustrating aspect of the change. While some speculators see the West as a product to be marketed and sold like soap or headache remedies, a great majority of the new businesses that cater to the tourists and recreationists are simply people who are longing to escape their miserable, polluted, crime-ridden urban existences for the simpler life. The overwhelming number of new residents in Moab didn't come here to get rich. They simply want to live here. Once they arrive, they wring their hands and hope that the situation doesn't get any worse. I've done my share of hand-wringing. My paper's circulation has doubled in one year and I should be thrilled, but it's also an indication of what's happening to the town ... we're booming. Does my paper somehow encourage more people to move here? The fact is, sheer numbers of immigrants alone will almost certainly mean that what they're running from ... congestion, pollution, crime and stress ... will follow them here. That, in turn, will diminish the quality of everyone's life.

But who has the right to say "Go away!"?

Californians, Coloradans from the Front Range, as well as entrepreneurs from across the country are buying commercial and private property in rural counties all over the West. In Wayne County, Utah, out-of-state property sales are at an all-time high and property values have increased dramatically. There is a housing shortage in Emery County because so many homes are owned by absentee landlords. In New Mexico and Arizona, the story is the same.

Is there a solution to all this? Is there a way to preserve the West? Can we protect the resource and those precious intangibles? I think the answer is "no." Fighting strip mines and oil wells was easy. They were such black-and-white targets. What's happening now is much more insidious. Where would someone even begin?

The truth is, all the ordinances and regulations in the world can't change our lifestyle. We can't begin to see that the Real Enemy is the face we see in the mirror every day of our lives. Humans and their toys ... What a deadly combination.

Someone once asked the great humorist Dorothy Parker to use the word "horticulture" in a sentence. She replied, "You can lead a horticulture, but you can't make her think."

Parker would have understood the New West. ■

Jim Stiles publishes the monthly *Canyon Country Zephyr*, Box 327, Moab, UT 84532 (801/259-7773).

The impossible dream: some suggestions for keeping a small town rural

- Pass an ordinance prohibiting absentee ownership of commercial or private property in Grand County. If you want to buy here, you've got to live here.

- Pass an anti-Walmart ordinance: Limit the size of commercial buildings that can be constructed within the county. I'll take Brig's Hardware or Moab Hardware over the big guys any day.

- Pass an ordinance that requires any new business that hires more than a certain number of employees (5? 10?) to provide employee housing. Who better than the businesses to resolve the shortage of low-cost housing?

- Require new motels to pay the single-family dwelling rate for water use in each unit of a motel. Where are you more conservative with your water use, at home or a Holiday Inn?

- Lobby for the right to use transient room tax revenues for dealing with impacts from tourism. Or simply eliminate the tax and do away with the Travel Council.

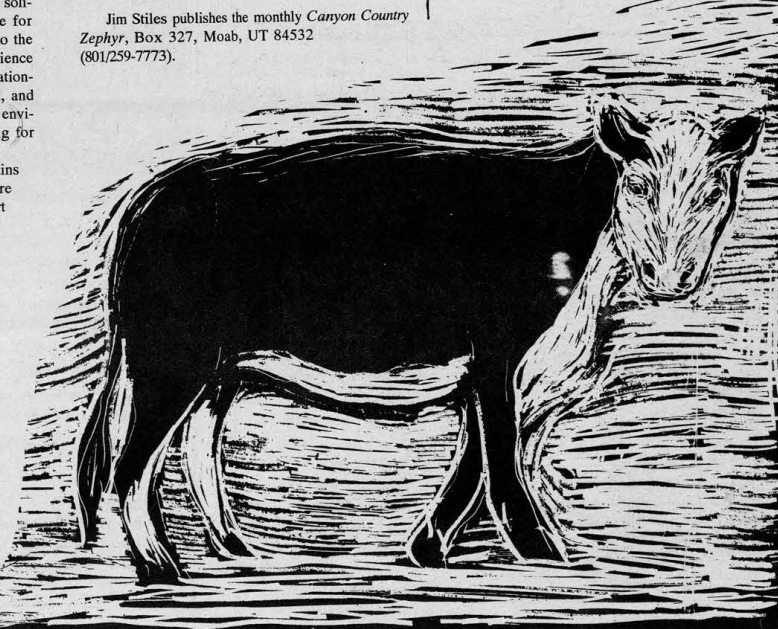
- Use some of the transient tax to purchase vital "green space" within city limits and in adjoining developed parts of the county. Don't wait too long. It's going fast.

- For spring-time only: Ban all undesignated camping within a 30-mile radius of Moab. Work in conjunction with federal land agencies to develop designated camping areas, with shared costs and shared revenues from the collection of user fees.

- To keep Moab looking shabby and thus undesirable to developers, pass an ordinance that requires all property owners to keep at least one junk car in the front yard, at least part of the yard in noxious weeds, and require that one day's garbage be strewn about the premises.

Could any of these proposals work? Is there a snowball's chance in hell that either of the governing bodies in this county might enact such ordinances? Don't hold your breath.

—J.S.



HOTLINE

**Vandal adds
a drawing**

A few months after a controversial road was put in to Idaho's Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, conservationists who opposed the road said they were proven right: Better access invited vandalism. Using a rock or a nail, someone scratched a bow and arrow on a stone near the petroglyphs at Pittsburg Landing. "They didn't damage the petroglyphs themselves," Forest Service Ranger Ed Cole told the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. "They added one of their own." Conservationists say the vandalism is a predictable outcome of the Forest Service developing the area. "What they did is build a thoroughfare to the site, doing everything but putting a neon sign pointing to the petroglyph," said Ric Bailey of the Hells Canyon Preservation Council. But Cole, who manages the recreation area, said putting in interpretive displays was the best way to protect the 2,000-year-old petroglyphs, which predate the Nez Perce Tribe in the area. The Forest Service is developing the area with a boat launch, parking and a campground for recreational vehicles, above the Snake River near Lewiston, Idaho.

**Roads are lethal
for bears**

Charging that Forest Service roads kill grizzly bears in the Yellowstone ecosystem as surely as bullets, a coalition of environmental groups filed three lawsuits July 20. One targets the Gallatin National Forest in Montana, where three to four miles of road cross every square mile of bear habitat. A second suit focuses on Idaho's Targhee National Forest, which has a road density of five to six miles per square mile, and a third says the Forest Service broke the law when it failed to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service before increasing timbering and road-building in the Targhee National Forest. Attorney Doug Honnold, who works for the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund, says anything over one mile of road per square mile of bear habitat leads to the death of grizzly bears.

BARBS

**How about fake development
then?**

A Utah developer said his proposal for a 60-unit lodge and a golf course in secluded Provo Canyon was the best way to protect it "from any real development," reports the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

Don't tell Oprah.

Older male purple martins lure younger males to their nests so they can mate with the females the younger birds attract, reports Nevada researcher Lewis Oring in *National Wildlife* magazine.

Unclassifieds

ADMINISTRATIVE/FUND-RAISING ASSISTANT for environmental organization; Lander, Wyoming. Half time, \$8,000-\$11,000/year DOE. Fund-raising experience not necessary; excellent writing and organizing skills critical. Wyoming Outdoor Council, 201 Main, Lander WY 82520; 307/332-7031. Deadline: Oct. 1.

WHITE HOUSE FELLOWS serve for one year as full-time, paid assistants to cabinet secretaries or to other top-level executive branch officials. Fellows with an interest in environmental policy have the chance to work with figures such as Bruce Babbitt, Hazel O'Leary, Carol Browner, Katie McGinty, Tim Wirth and Al Gore. Applicants are judged on the basis of their professional, academic and other accomplishments, and upon their demonstrated interest in public service. The program and selection process are non-partisan. For a copy of a White House Fellowship brochure and application, call 202/395-4522 or write to: President's Commission on White House Fellowships, 712 Jackson Place, NW, Washington, DC 20503.

CAMP CONFERENCE ON WOLVES and wolf hybrids, Sept. 24-26. Topics include: Mexican wolf recovery; wolf sightings in northern New Mexico; public issues and training of wolf hybrids; wolf in Indian folklore; veterinary practices; etc. Information: Becky Farris, 461 Cheryl Ave., White Rock, NM 87544 (505/672-3920). (2x14p)

THE ENDANGERED SPECIES COALITION seeks outreach coordinators for northeast and southeast U.S. to recruit and mobilize activists and work with local media to strengthen the federal endangered species program. Grass-roots experience and willingness to travel required. Salary: \$25,000. Send résumé to: Grass-roots Coordinator, Endangered Species Coordinator, 666 Pennsylvania Ave., SE, Washington, D.C. 20003. (2x14b)

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"OUTDOOR PEOPLE AD-Venture" lists 60-word descriptions of active, outdoor-oriented singles and trip companions nationwide. \$3/issue, \$12/ad. Outdoor People-HCN, P.O. Box 600, Gaston, SC 29053.

ALTERNATIVE ENERGY CATALOG for remote homes. Solar electric, wind, hydroelectric generators, wood-fired hot tubs, composting toilets and more. \$2.50, refundable with order. Yellow Jacket Solar, Box 60H, Lewis, CO 81327.

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LEICA BINOCULARS #40 305, 8x20 BC, Trinovid, unused, won as First Prize in Sierra magazine 1993 nature essay competition. Retail: \$550, will sell for \$400 OBO, all money goes to Havasupai Grand Canyon anti-uranium mining efforts. Send offers to: Sojourner, OCSR#14, Flagstaff, AZ 86001, 602/779-5502 info., will return calls collect.

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John Running

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Vol. 25, No. 15

A lax agency ...

continued from page 1

said that efforts to switch to tree measurement have met with "significant resistance" in the West. Old-growth timber can contain a large percentage of rotten wood, he explained, which can't be detected just by looking at the outside of a standing tree. The rot can be seen only after the tree is cut down, which is why scaling is a more accurate way to determine marketable timber.

Despite the resistance, Robertson said, the Forest Service is making a "major effort" to make the switch.

To stem the flow of stolen timber, the Forest Service in 1991 formed a Western-based Inter-Regional Timber Theft Task Force. It is now investigating more than 20 cases, says team leader Hank Kashdan, involving "millions of dollars a year that I can substantiate."

The task force is looking into both criminal charges and the recovery of losses through civil lawsuits, says Kashdan, who is based in Sacramento. Beyond that, it is trying to transform the way timber theft is viewed. Forest Service personnel need to "change their attitude," he says, and realize that some of the people they've trusted may not be worthy of that trust.

Kashdan thinks that the fudging scalars often don't make much money themselves for the illegal work they do for logging companies. Their motives, instead, center on camaraderie.

"It's more a brotherhood, friendship sort of thing," he says. "These people, the loggers and the scaler-graders, are all working in the small town vicinity, all going to the same bars at night."

But John McCormick, a special agent for the Forest Service for 16 years until he retired in 1992, disagrees. In the hundreds of timber theft cases he looked into, he says, the motive was greed.

"The people who scale and grade the timber are hired and paid by the timber industry," McCormick says. "To have the people cutting the trees controlling the cash register is ridiculous."

McCormick says the checkpoints are remote, perhaps a hundred miles from where logs are cut. A company eas-

ily knows where random checks are made and can send a light load through. Then the next 30 or 40 loads will be charged at that measurement.

If the Forest Service wants to get serious about stopping timber theft, McCormick says, it should make sure that law enforcement agents run investigations with separate budgets and separate lines of command.

"They've got to turn the agents loose," he says. "But they're working for the very people who allow this to happen. They control and restrict the budgets and won't let the agents stay in one place long enough to complete an investigation. In my estimation, it's to prevent a meticulous, objective and accurate investigation from taking place."

In the face of these roadblocks, Kashdan's task force fights its battles. But the entire force has only nine criminal investigators — four in the Sacramento office and five in Portland. Kashdan says his team is hobbled by such a small staff. "We asked for eight more agents," he says. "One position has been approved but not filled due to lack of funds."

With such meager resources, the House report noted, "the success of the Task Force is doubtful." What is needed, the report concluded, are institutional changes. It urged the Forest Service to:

- Make Forest Service law enforcement agents independent. Currently, the Forest Service employs approximately 180 criminal investigators and 600 uniformed law officers who are often supervised by non-law managers — sometimes the very people they are investigating. These agents should have their own managerial hierarchy.

- Use sealed bids. When timber companies bid on sales, they often do so in open auctions. Under this system, a timber purchaser only has to bid a small amount above a competitor. Sealed bids, the report found, consistently result in higher prices. Despite this finding, most bids on national forest timber in the West are still oral. One Forest Service official said, "There's a lot of political pressure to keep it that way."

- Eliminate a contractual clause known as rate redetermination. Currently, if a company purchases a timber sale and then the price of timber falls, the company can renegotiate the sale price. This loophole allowed one timber company in Alaska to slash its payment by more than two-thirds — from \$3,170,000 to \$912,000.

- Create a computer database to track timber theft.

When asked by House investigators, the Forest Service could not come up with a list of timber thefts in the past few years. Kashdan says the agency is now working on such a database.

- Raise penalties. Currently, individuals convicted of timber theft can be fined up to \$5,000 and are barred from bidding on Forest Service contracts for two to three years. This is little more than a slap on the hand, since many companies have enough timber purchased to continue operations that long. Legislation introduced in Congress in 1991 (HR 3745) would raise penalties to at least five years' disbarment, fines up to three times the amount of timber in question, and 20 years in prison.

The time to act, the report concludes, is now. Both Forest Service and timber industry representatives told the House investigators that, as environmental concerns reduce the amount of timber available for logging, the amount of timber stolen is sure to increase. ■



A log truck makes its way across a clearcut hillside

Jim Stiak writes about the Northwest from Oregon and Hawaii.

For more information about the 32-page *Report on U.S. Forest Service Administration of Timber Contracts*, contact the Committee on Appropriations, Rep. Sidney Yates, D-Ill., Chairman, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C. 20515.

There's more than one way to steal a tree.

Leslie Jantzer, a logger in southern Oregon, was recently sentenced to 14 months in prison for cutting trees he'd never bought. Two other loggers, Maynard Campbell and Eileen Kunkel, were convicted of stealing hundreds of thousands of dollars of trees near their mining claim in Oregon. (Campbell was also charged with threatening the life of a federal judge in the case.)

Although forest rangers are supposed to inspect logging operations regularly, the House Appropriations Committee *Report on the U.S. Forest Service Administration of Timber Contracts* last March said agency visits to oversee contracts were "sporadic and cursory." Sometimes inspectors didn't bother to get out of their cars. Other times they traveled in helicopters owned and operated by the timber companies and were steered away from possible contract violations. This last oversight allows fly-by-night loggers to get away with scams such as using their

How to steal a tree

paint to illegally mark trees for logging.

Timber thieves also know how to cut after hours. During Christmas week of 1990, when many Forest Service employees were on vacation, a crew from the Circle DE Lumber Company of Klamath Falls, Oregon, was busy in the Plucker sale unit of the Deschutes National Forest. Loggers chopped down stands of lodgepole pine and trucked them to a mill. A substitute Forest Service inspector who happened by discovered that the trucks didn't have the required "product removal tickets," meaning that the trees hadn't been paid for.

Subsequent investigation revealed that Circle DE had illegally hauled off 18 truckloads of pine. It wasn't the first time the company had been caught with its grapple hooks in the woodland cookie jar. The previous year, Circle DE had been cited for removing 49 truckloads of logs without proper paperwork. Its truckers were also

caught twice bypassing Forest Service checkpoints where their loads would have been tallied.

Forest Service law enforcement agents started looking into the matter, but were instructed by their superiors not to look too hard. One of the agents was told not to investigate beyond the Plucker sale, preventing him from detailing a pattern of violations which would have helped build a successful criminal case. Circle DE avoided any fines or criminal prosecution.

The Forest Service's handling of the case prompted U.S. Attorney Jeff Kent to tell reporters from the *Sacramento Bee*, "You may as well indict the agency for its attitude as to indict the individuals in this case." Kent has since been told by his superiors at the Department of Justice not to talk to reporters.

The Forest Service attitude toward the Circle DE investigation is not atypical, says John McCormick, who

worked as a special law enforcement agent for the agency until retiring last year. McCormick says the Forest Service compromised cases and pressured him against bringing criminal prosecution. "Anyone who reported thefts was considered a snitch," he says.

"The incentive is there to steal," McCormick adds. "If you get caught, you just pay what you would have anyway. There's very little fear in the timber industry of anyone going to jail. Even with a conviction, a judge is reluctant to put away some poor old logger who maybe just made a mistake. Meanwhile, he's allowed to log other sales."

This give-the-fellow-a-break attitude may be responsible for some of the Forest Service's laxity in prosecuting theft, says McCormick, but there could be another motive as well. "Nobody has ever looked at the possibility of pay-offs," he says. "There's a lot of money involved."

— Jim Stiak

BULLETIN BOARD

COMBAT ZONES

Over 4 million acres (6,250 square miles) of Nevada are occupied by military bases, training grounds and bombing ranges. And even though the military uses 70 percent of the state's air space, it now wants an additional 10,000 square miles. David Loomis, an environmental planner for the Bureau of Land Management, gives an insider's view of the politics of military withdrawals in the new book, *Combat Zoning: Military Land-Use Planning in Nevada*. Loomis offers valuable lessons for states such as Colorado and Idaho, which face military expansion. Citing Nevada as a case study, Loomis documents broken promises of public access to vast areas such as Nellis Air Force Range, which is larger than Connecticut and Rhode Island combined and covers most of the 2,300-square-mile Desert National Wildlife Refuge. Loomis also illuminates the sometimes contradictory role state politics plays. While state officials in Nevada maintain general opposition to federal military expansions, they have embraced controversial proposals for bomb and rocket test ranges and a state National Guard range for tank training. Loomis argues that the military must and can be opened up to "participatory democracy" by the kind of resolute citizen action that has begun to gain ground in Nevada.

University of Nevada Press, Reno, NV 98557. Cloth: \$24.95, 168 pages, photos, maps.

—Grace Bukowski

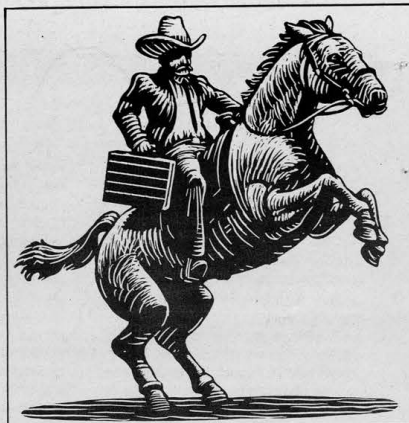
MOVING BEYOND STALEMATE

Beyond Polarization: Emerging Strategies for Reconciling Community and the Environment examines how communities in the Northwest have begun to make progress past the economy vs. environment stalemate. A product of the Northwest Policy Center, the 67-page report also gives policy recommendations to help resolve the dispute over logging old-growth forests. "The most promising initiatives do not seek a mythical 'balance' between economy and environment," writes author Kirk Johnson. "Instead, they look to create synergies: ways that economic activity can promote a healthy environment, and that healthy ecosystems can enrich their inhabitants, economically and otherwise." Drawing on case studies in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and British Columbia, Johnson provides examples. In one, The Wilderness Society joined with two counties in Washington and Oregon to develop tourism strategies to diversify the local economy.

For a copy of the report (\$10 plus \$1.50 for postage and handling), contact the Northwest Policy Center, University of Washington, 327 Parrington Hall, DC-14, Seattle, WA 98195 (206/543-7900).

PUBLIC LANDS OF THE FUTURE

What role will the free market and ecosystem management play in the future management of Western public lands? Rep. George Miller, D-Calif., and Jim Baca, director of the Bureau of Land Management, lead a host of public lands experts in discussing these issues at a conference in Boulder, Colo., Sept. 19-21. "A New Era for the Western Public Lands," sponsored by the Natural Resources Law Center and the University of Colorado Law Review, will also address conflicts between public values and private rights. Speakers include Jim Ruch of the Grand Canyon Trust, Colorado Attorney General Gale Norton, Marla Mansfield from the University of Tulsa School of Law and Reeves Brown from the Colorado Cattlemen's Association. The conference costs \$250, but discounts and scholarships are available. For more information contact conference coordinator Katherine Taylor, Campus Box 401, Boulder, CO 80309-0401 (303/492-1288).



J. MacDonald

INDIAN LAW CLINIC

A new Indian Law Clinic is already making its mark on the West. Founded 18 months ago by the University of Colorado's School of Law in Boulder, the clinic has handled over 300 cases ranging from consumer problems to religious freedom. Currently, the clinic is helping the Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana, which wants to stop the expansion of a gold mine in the Little Rocky Mountains. Native American activists say the cyanide heap-leach mine is harming sacred Indian lands and the area's water supply (see page 5). Clinic director Bob Golten says the staff of upper-level law school students serves both urban and rural Indian populations by providing free legal service to low-income Indian clients.

Golten says the goal of the law clinic is to produce lawyers with a "particular enthusiasm for public service." For more information contact the CU-Boulder Indian Law Clinic, Campus Box 404, Boulder, CO 80309 (303/492-0966).

FAT TIRES

Socorro, N.M., throws its second annual Fat Tire Festival, Sept. 25-26, complete with guided trail rides, bicycle repair clinics, obstacle courses and a street dance. A new booklet, *The Socorro Country Fat Tire Trail Book*, helps visitors by mapping 25 of the more popular year-round local rides, which vary in elevation from 4,700 to nearly 11,000 feet. The book, published by the Socorro Chamber of Commerce, offers advice on desert riding and the area's weather, as well as a self-guided bicycle tour through the central New Mexico town, population 14,764. For more information contact the Socorro Chamber of Commerce, 103 Francisco de Avando, P.O. Box 743, Socorro, NM 87801 (505/835-0424).

CULTURE IN CRISIS

Roger and Nicolas Brown have made a documentary about ranching that came straight from the heart; unfortunately, it needed a lot more from the head. Its title, *Western Ranching: Culture in Crisis*, is inadvertently accurate. It faithfully follows ranching's party line, thereby showing the kind of denial and distortions that have landed ranching in trouble. Technically, it is balanced, giving Democratic Rep. Mike Synar as much time as Republican Sen. Malcolm Wallop. In fact, Synar gets in a lot more words because Wallop has to talk while saddling his horse. Missing from the scenery and heartfelt admiration of ranchers, however, is a balanced presentation of the facts. Much time is spent on a snow-covered allotment, implying that ranch-

ers pay \$1.86 per animal unit month for grass buried under snow. Later a Nevada rancher claims there is no riparian problem, and that fencing cows out of streams won't bring the streams back. The documentary also shows dying Western towns and blames their deaths on federal regulations. There is no mention of the many streams that have been resurrected by excluding cattle; the damage ranchers have inflicted on themselves by raising beef rich in chemicals and fat is also ignored. The video's worst moment occurs when a land-grant range professor says that diversion of spring runoff from swollen streams helps stop erosion. He fails to mention what happens in the fall, when irrigation diversions dry up streams and destroy fisheries. The video's tragedy is that it largely ignored the progressive ranchers who acknowledge past and ongoing abuses, who work at restoration, who cooperate with environmentalists and federal land managers, and who are learning to market to an increasingly picky consumer. If *Culture in Crisis* were a steak, it would be larded with fat and loaded with steroids. It will play on local PBS stations in late summer and fall.

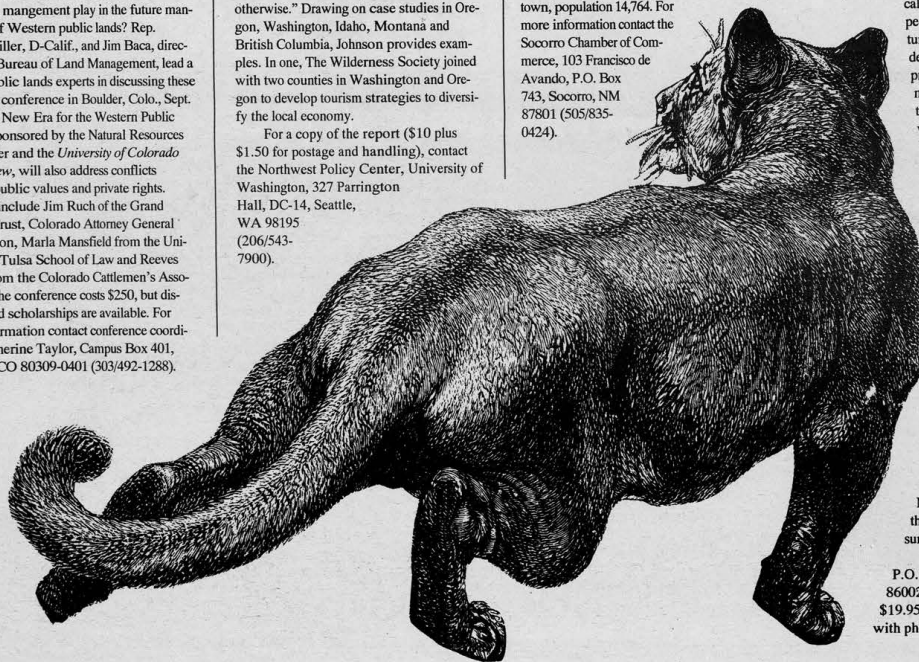
—Ed Marston

THE AMERICAN LION

Although cougars have inhabited human fable and folklore for thousands of years, little is known about the elusive animal's habits. *Cougar: The American Lion*, offers an intimate portrait of the large cat's anatomy, life cycle and place in the balance of nature. Former park ranger and author Kevin Hansen calls the cougar an almost perfect predator. Every feature on the big cat is designed to detect and catch prey, from its extraordinary night vision to whiskers that help the cat determine where to inflict a killing bite. Humans are the greatest threat to its survival. In the 1500s Jesuit priests initiated extermination programs; between 1937 and 1970 the modern Animal Damage Control Agency killed 7,255 cougars. While domestic dogs kill some 20 people a year and bee stings kill 40, neither generates as much concern or fear as cougars. But, Hansen tells us, they have fatally attacked only 10 people since 1890. Nowadays, he concludes, they need our forbearance to survive.

Northland Publishing, P.O. Box 1389, Flagstaff, AZ 86002 (800/346-3257). Paper: \$19.95, 144 pages, illustrated with photos.

—Arden Trewartha



CRACKING THE WIPP

An ill wind is blowing through the site of the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant in southeastern New Mexico, a facility scheduled to store nuclear waste in salt beds more than 2,000 feet below ground. A local watchdog group says the plant's air monitoring system fails to meet the Department of Energy's safety standards. The Environmental Evaluation Group, a federally funded WIPP watchdog, issued a 145-page report saying the underground air monitoring system "is not fail-safe, and operations appear to be affected by high levels of salt aerosol and poor detector performance." This is not the first time the Environmental Evaluation Group has taken the DOE to task for faults in WIPP's air monitoring system. In the 1980s the group criticized an earlier design which the DOE consequently discarded. This latest criticism comes after a bitterly protested bill, passed earlier this year, that allows the DOE to proceed with controversial tests to see if the site meets federal nuclear and hazardous waste standards (HCN, 12/28/92). For copies of *An Evaluation of Air Effluent and Workplace Radioactivity Monitoring at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant*, contact the Environmental Evaluation Group, 7007 Wyoming Blvd., NE, Suite F2, Albuquerque, NM 87109 (505/828-1003).



CROCKPOT PORK AND DOCK

Baked cattail pollen is one of those things you wouldn't miss if you never tried it. But author Kay Young says in *Wild Seasons: Gathering and Cooking Wild Plants of the Great Plains* that once you taste it, you're hooked. The 300-page book describes over 50 different plants found in the region between the Texas panhandle and Canada, the Rocky Mountains and the eastern forests, offering recipes like crockpot pork and dock, stuffed milkweed pod casserole and stinging nettle noodles. Some plants are familiar as wild foods, such as raspberries, blackberries and dandelions. Others, such as cattails, smooth sumac and milkweed pods, are relatively obscure. The book includes drawings of the plants with their common and botanical names and descriptions of habitats, edible parts and the best season for collecting. Young spices this framework with personal observations, describing, for example, her first taste of dandelions. "I remember how very good the greens tasted and how wonderfully secure I felt to realize that if I were ever lost and without food there were plants, all around me, that could be eaten. I don't suppose children today would think about such things, but it was the Depression then and even young children were aware of the hard times."

University of Nebraska Press, P.O. Box 880520, Lincoln, NE 68588-0520 (402/478-3584). \$15 paper, 318 pages.

—Orna Izakson

OVERLOOKING OVERGRAZING

In an unsigned report, some employees of the Bureau of Land Management charge that their agency has allowed the degradation of millions of acres of publicly owned rangeland. Released by the nonprofit Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), the report says the agency's practice of maximizing the number of livestock on public lands threatens wildlife species and entire ecosystems. In summarizing the management history of the BLM and its "range improvement" programs, the 24-page report concludes that "BLM resource specialists and managers make decisions for the benefit of individuals in the livestock industry and to the detriment of both overall ecosystem health and future generations of Americans." After seeing the report, BLM Director Jim Baca called PEER and encouraged employees of the agency to freely express their concerns. For a copy of *Public Trust Betrayed: Employee Critique of BLM Rangeland Management*, contact Jeff DeBonis (503/484-7158), Bob Schaeffer (617/489-0461), or PEER, P.O. Box 428, Eugene, OR 97440 (503/484-7158, FAX 503/484-3044).

LET THE PUBLIC THROUGH

The Salt Lake County Commission will soon vote on an ordinance requiring developers to donate up to 5 percent of their land for trail construction. The goal is to ensure access to public lands. "No trespassing" signs and luxury homes block public access to seven of 20 canyons in Salt Lake County, reports the *Salt Lake Tribune*. Rapid growth along the Wasatch Front threatens to block more. "I have been threatened, yelled at and told to get off property I honestly thought was a public corridor," says Steve Lewis, a Salt Lake attorney and hiker. Earlier this year a task force appointed by commissioners recommended that the county buy land, negotiate easements and exchange properties to assure access to the spectacular peaks and canyons above the city. The group also recommended that the county adopt tougher zoning regulations. For a copy of the Front Access Team's report, *National Forest Access: Big Cottonwood to Point of the Mountain*, contact Jim White, chairman of the now-dissolved Front Access Team, Salt Lake Ranger District, 6944 South 3000 East, Salt Lake City, Utah 84121 (801/943-1794). For more information about the status of the county ordinance, contact Salt Lake County Commission Chairman Jim Bradley at 801/468-3350, 2001 S. State, Salt Lake City, UT 84115.

NEW ROLE FOR LAND GRANTS

A conference this fall on "The Role of the Land Grant University in the Management of Public Lands," sponsored by Utah State University, will look at the changing mission of these venerable institutions. Speakers include Oregon State University economist Emery Castle, *High Country News* publisher Ed Marston, Ted Stewart, executive director of the Utah Department of Natural Resources, and several Utah State University researchers, who will talk about public-land management of wildlife, rangeland, wilderness and agriculture. For more information about the Sept. 27-28 get-together, contact Registration Services, Conference and Institution Division, Utah State University, Logan, UT 84322-5005 (801/750-1692).

BRAZIL OF THE NORTH

According to Canada's Future Forest Alliance, a coalition of environmental groups and local governments, Canada is becoming the Brazil of the North. Canada has sold its trees to multinational corporations "who tyrannize the public by virtue of their wealth and political influence," says the alliance. What Canada and Brazil share, the coalition charges, are the impacts of erosion, a decline in biological diversity, displaced native cultures and a dwindling economic base from deforestation. The coalition urges restructuring the way Canada manages its forests to increase forest industry regulation, expand forest conservation, respect native people's rights, extend public access to information and require studies of the forests and their uses. According to the Inland Empire Public Lands Council of Spokane, Wash., timber companies in British Columbia are cutting forests faster than the entire United States' national forest system. One result is eroding soils draining into the Columbia River Basin and endangering salmon.

A 36-page newspaper report, *Brazil of the North*, features aerial photographs of clearcuts and forestry reports from each Canadian province. Copies are \$2 from Canada's Future Forest Alliance, Box 224, New Denver, British Columbia, Canada V0G 1S0 (604/358-2660).

—Greg Peterson

GREEN DIRECTORY

The new, inch-thick *Rocky Mountain Environmental Directory* has a long subtitle: *A directory of citizens groups, government agencies, and others concerned with environmental education and environmental action in the states of Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah and Wyoming*. This handy guide lists 1,800 of them, briefly describing each by its geographic coverage, membership, paid employees, focus and publications. The 332-page directory is a project of EcoNet, a division of the Tides Foundation, and costs \$18.50. Write to Rocky Mountain Environmental Directory, 8850 O'Brien Creek Road, Missoula, MT 59802 (406/543-3359). The directory is also available in electronic form from EcoNet, 18 De Boom St., San Francisco, CA 94107 (415/442-0220).



Julie Nelson

FROM FLAKES TO CHIPS

Teachers can brush up on their archaeology, natural history and science by attending a three-day workshop sponsored by the Colorado



Archaeological Society, Oct. 1-3. Set at the Colorado Outdoor Education Center 35 miles west of Colorado Springs, "From Stone Flakes to Computer Chips" teaches teachers

how to integrate environmental and archaeological education into required curricula. Professionals from the fields of education, anthropology, history and archaeology will give talks on a variety of current topics, ranging from kiva murals to Western settlement. For more information, contact the Colorado Archaeological Society at 303/468-2197.

PRAIRIE BIRDS TAKE A NOSEDIVE

Native bird populations of North America's grasslands declined more rapidly than any other U.S. bird group over the past 25 years, reports the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. An agency survey found that seven out of 12 species endemic to the Great Plains region declined, with the mountain plover, Franklin's gull, Cassin's sparrow, and lark bunting most at risk. Others showing marked declines include the eastern meadowlark and grasshopper sparrow. People are the culprit, say federal biologists. Over the past 100 years we have plowed under the prairie, eliminated fire cycles, channeled water courses for flood control and irrigation and destroyed vital parts of the ecosystem such as prairie dog and bison populations. "The important thing is that we have identified the problem and we have already begun tackling it on an ecosystem-wide basis," says Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. John Corneley of the Fish and Wildlife Service says his agency recently hired a second regional coordinator to focus on non-game bird issues. He also says government agencies and environmental groups have started the "Partners in Flight" program to improve monitoring species in trouble. For more information contact Jack Hallowell or Sharon Rose (303/236-7904) or write the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6, 134 Union Blvd., Lakewood, CO 80228. For a copy of the agency's findings as presented in a paper by Fritz L. Knopf, contact the author at 303/226-9462.

Free the paper pushers!

essay by Ron Steffens

First, let me apologize to the many permanent park rangers who are witty, charming, dedicated, resourceful, professional, courageous and, above all, my friends. You are the ones fighting to maintain the standards of the National Park Service.

But there are road-rangers who write tickets as if they're at war with the tourists. Rangers who mistake their offices, cruisers and helicopters for armor against the tourists and the landscape. Our parks might be an inspiration for the world. But bureaucracy tends to honor the ranger who either entertains the tourist or arrests him. What falls between the cracks is the land itself.

I write this as a civilian. But each summer I become again a seasonal park ranger, a profession with role models as contrary as Ed Abbey and Doug Peacock. I may be as pleasant as a permanent park ranger, but I don't get health insurance or a pension, which pleases me just fine. Without permanent status, we seasonals tend to retain our rambunctiousness. We honor the land first, the bureaucracy a distant second.

After 12 seasons of seasonal life, I find I'm incapable of holding a "real job." Many seasonals run ski patrol in the winter. Some clean hotels, teach, seek the holy grail of unemployment or the holier grail of winter seasonal work in Everglades or Organ Pipe. Anything to keep the summers free for park work.

I don't mean to trivialize our freedom or paint the permanents as prisoners of their uniforms. But here's the nut: Most all of us, seasonal or permanent, began our Park Service careers as lovers of the land, sacrificing income and often our independent voices.

But permanents find themselves in front of a computer and a window with a view of the mountains, while seasonals, relegated to the grunt work we love, walk around outside with shovels and binoculars, drive ambulances or fight fires. Permanents have all the

power and responsibility; we have the bulk of the fun. The permanents train us, evaluate us, lead us, befriend us. But they are also forced to commit 95 percent of the paperwork.

When seasonal rangers go permanent they, too, become paper- and office-bound. They join a family whose home is the office, and it becomes easy for these permanents, isolated in the remote headquarters of most parks, to split "us" from "them." Park Service culture teaches rangers to celebrate their superiors and denigrate their inferiors — the seasonals, the tourists.

This spring, in order to return to my summer job at Grand Teton, I dutifully completed over a dozen forms, including my annual oath not to overthrow the government. Six additional forms were attached to a urine sample that circled the country on a drug-testing excursion. Minor irritations, perhaps, forgotten as soon as a seasonal hits the trail. But it reminds seasonals that we do not belong to the bureaucracy. When a seasonal speaks, you are more likely to hear the voice of the land than that of the government.

There has been a reaction to this caste system. In Yosemite, a movement to enfranchise the seasonal work force went so far as to write a Seasonal Bill of Rights. But such activism emphasizes the humans, not the land, and if successful — if we begin sleeping too intimately within the Park Service Family — it might circumvent the seasonals' authentic focus for rebellion, which is a rebellion for the land.

For years my weekly commute into the backcountry was 18 miles on foot, not counting my daily hikes. And as one bootstep followed another, I began to dream a wilderness revolution. I dreamed that parks might become wilder if seasonals ganged up on the bureaucracy. And if we won, if the parks had fewer roads and scenic parking lots, then it might be necessary for tourists to walk, which might eliminate the more inane questions ("Where is the bathroom?" "Where are the bears?") since walking adds regularity

to your bowels as well as your soul. And if tourists walked, then park rangers could get out of their patrol cars and visitor centers.

This rebellion must be coherent, organized, even respectful, and rebellion, particularly one within a bureaucracy, requires new rules to replace the old. Mine are shown below.

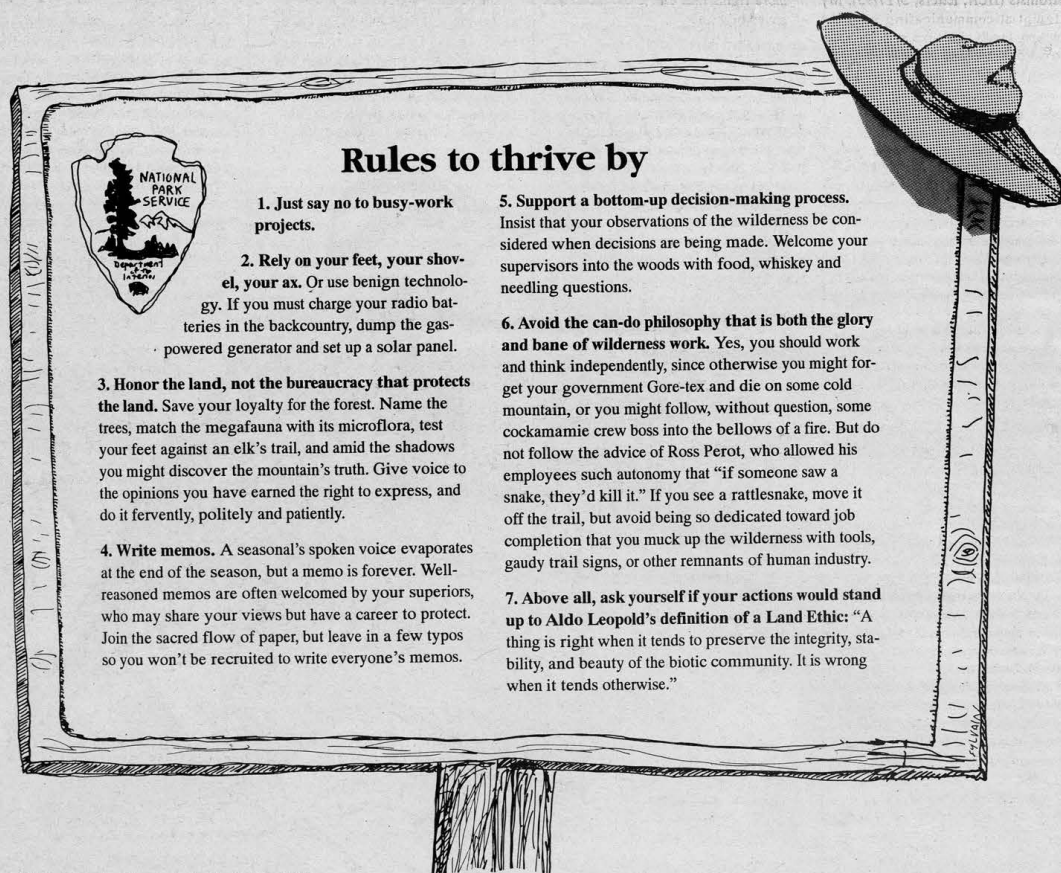
The Park Service is ready for change. Last summer, working at headquarters in Grand Teton, I attended a meeting wherein the Rocky Mountain regional director declared war on unnecessary paperwork. I took him at his word, and figured the best way to stop paperwork, and get real work done, would be to boycott my desk.

Actually, I had anticipated the regional director's edict four seasons earlier, in the backcountry of Saguaro Monument in Arizona. Officially, my job description there called for a survey of trees and the monitoring of wildfires. But like many rangers I practiced the art of the generalist. So as I waited for fires, and surveyed ponderosa, walking from ridge to valley to ridge, I dabbled in natural history.

I credit those miles of walking with the discovery of a new orchid in the park and the rediscovery of nesting peregrine falcons. I plotted the nests of a threatened subspecies of goshawk and tracked the hoot of the Mexican spotted owl. After a few seasons I learned to quantify a certain ratio of trees to humans, perhaps 15,000 trees for every human, at which I feel most comfortable.

This love of solitude isn't entirely selfish. As I work in a wilderness with my hands and my feet, I find it easier to keep my head honest. And it is this connection of the head to its body, of the office to its mountain, that may explain why the Park Service needs me as much as I need its wilderness. ■

Ron Steffens works winters as a writer and teacher and summers as a fire monitor in Grand Teton National Park.



Rules to thrive by

- 1. Just say no to busy-work projects.**
- 2. Rely on your feet, your shovel, your ax.** Or use benign technology. If you must charge your radio batteries in the backcountry, dump the gas-powered generator and set up a solar panel.
- 3. Honor the land, not the bureaucracy that protects the land.** Save your loyalty for the forest. Name the trees, match the megafauna with its microflora, test your feet against an elk's trail, and amid the shadows you might discover the mountain's truth. Give voice to the opinions you have earned the right to express, and do it fervently, politely and patiently.
- 4. Write memos.** A seasonal's spoken voice evaporates at the end of the season, but a memo is forever. Well-reasoned memos are often welcomed by your superiors, who may share your views but have a career to protect. Join the sacred flow of paper, but leave in a few typos so you won't be recruited to write everyone's memos.
- 5. Support a bottom-up decision-making process.** Insist that your observations of the wilderness be considered when decisions are being made. Welcome your supervisors into the woods with food, whiskey and needling questions.
- 6. Avoid the can-do philosophy that is both the glory and bane of wilderness work.** Yes, you should work and think independently, since otherwise you might forget your government Gore-tex and die on some cold mountain, or you might follow, without question, some cockamamie crew boss into the bellows of a fire. But do not follow the advice of Ross Perot, who allowed his employees such autonomy that "if someone saw a snake, they'd kill it." If you see a rattlesnake, move it off the trail, but avoid being so dedicated toward job completion that you muck up the wilderness with tools, gaudy trail signs, or other remnants of human industry.
- 7. Above all, ask yourself if your actions would stand up to Aldo Leopold's definition of a Land Ethic:** "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

Focus on the land, not the money

Opinion by Ed Marston

"After me, the deluge." Louis XIV said that, but it was also the motto of the Reagan-Bush cowboys — former Interior secretaries James Watt and Manuel Lujan, BLM heads Bob Burford and Cy Jamison, and U.S. senators from the West like Malcolm Wallop and Jim McClure.

For 12 years they worked with the ranching establishment to hold back change on 260 million acres of federal grazing land. As part of the strategy, ranchers joined in unholy alliances with loggers, miners and oil and gas companies. Not content with straight-arming reform, some ranchers even attempted to claim the public's land and water.

Fortunately, the short-sighted Reagan-Bush saboteurs have been succeeded by a constructive group headed by Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. Instead of the well-deserved deluge, Babbitt, BLM head Jim Baca and Assistant Secretary of Agriculture Jim Lyons have crafted administrative reforms that could strengthen progressive ranchers while transforming single-purpose livestock allotments into natural grasslands.

The recently released Rangeland Reform package (see page 3) asserts both public control of the public's land and determination to institute ecosystem management. The reforms would replace Grazing Advisory Boards made up of ranchers with diverse Resource Advisory Councils; penalize subleasing of grasslands to discourage use of public lands as cash cows; give interested citizens a voice in BLM grazing allotment

decisions; provide local BLM and Forest Service officials with the power to move quickly; allow grazing leases to be used for conservation purposes; and vest title to fences and water rights and other range property with the public rather than with the rancher.

By strengthening the public's hold on the land, the proposal should encourage cooperation between ranchers and other users of the public land. The likelihood of cooperation is heightened by recent changes of attitude in parts of the environmental community, which is coming to recognize the stake all Westerners have in public-land ranchers.

Ranchers could be very valuable allies in the fight against the subdividing of the West. They are rooted in the region; many have the habit of leadership; and they command the (often grudging) respect of other Westerners.

Until recently, ranchers used their strengths mainly to protect their public-land perks and to deny other Westerners legitimacy and a place at the table. Only recently have some ranchers climbed off their high horses and begun to work with those environmentalists who have also chosen to climb off their high horses. As a result, there are groups of ranchers and non-ranchers engaged in the often painful process of mutual education and sharing of turf.

While the proposed reforms should encourage this process, there is one problem: the proposed fees. Fully implemented, they will cost a 500-unit cow-calf operation an extra \$6,000 to \$7,000 a year. Ranchers say this will put many of them out of business.

It would be tragic to blunt the push for reforms

with a fight over fees. To see why grazing fees are a minor issue, it must be understood that most Forest Service and BLM land is managed, on the ground, by ranchers, while agency personnel manage paperwork. Until now, many ranchers have done that managing without attention to the public interest. But lately, in response to public pressure, more and more have become progressive.

But that's not enough. They all need to become progressive, and to understand that the running of livestock will be allowed on the public land only if it advances the public's broader interest in the land.

Babbitt and his colleagues have proposed reforms that attempt to turn public-land ranchers into land stewards who are earning a living while serving a broader public interest. Ranchers need to accept this stewardship responsibility.

And non-ranchers need to understand that what we want from the ranchers is the same thing we want from the BLM and the Forest Service — healthy land, streams and wildlife.

The fee issue interferes with that agenda by attempting to obtain both stewardship and money. We should recognize the contradiction, limit the fee increase to a token 10 to 20 percent, and keep in mind that we allow public-land grazing only because we value stable, small, non-recreational communities and responsive stewardship of both the public land and the surviving private ranch land. ■

Ed Marston is publisher of *High Country News*.

LETTERS

WHAT WE HAVE HERE IS A FAILURE TO COMMUNICATE

Dear HCN,

I was inspired to see that community organizer Dennis Winters advises ranchers not to negotiate with us preservationists (*HCN*, letters, 5/17/93). My attempt at communicating with the ranching family that lives next door has provided no evidence that such compromising is possible.

Soon after moving into my rented trailer I couldn't help but notice the overflowing irrigation ditch which turned my driveway and yard into a small pond. My polite request of the rancher to alleviate the flooding was ignored, and when I attempted to adjust the flow myself, he reprimanded me for interfering with his livestock watering.

This ranching family has three young ones who enjoy killing birds with their B-B guns. Upon witnessing one of the little cherubs aiming his gun into the tree in my yard where my bird feeder hangs, I called the rancher's wife in the hope that she or her husband would teach the son about the difference between hunters and killers: hunters eat what they kill and practice responsible gun handling. "They're only dirty little sparrows," she said, and if I wanted trouble, they'd be happy to oblige me. She then hung up.

My final attempt at communicating with the family occurred after I drove up a nearby canyon to visit a friend. A cattle drive was in progress, and I was instructed by some cowboys to pull over and let the cattle pass. I pulled as far off the paved highway as possible and shut off the motor. As the cattle jostled past my car, my parking light assembly was broken. I asked the trail boss for a phone number, and when I called that number, I discovered that the cattle belonged to my neighbor's wife's father. Since I had replaced the light assembly myself, I only requested reimbursement for the part, \$54.

He refused, because "cattle have as much right as cars to be on that highway." This means either of two things:

One, if he had run into my parked car with his car, he would not consider himself liable because he's lived in the area longer than I have; or two, cattle have more rights than cars to use the nation's paved highways.

All three generations have exhibited nothing but contempt to this "outsider." If I don't like being flooded, seeing birds shot off my feeder or having my parked car trampled by their cattle, I can always move to Denver or back East. They did not have to be told by Dennis Winters to refuse to negotiate with preservationists: it comes quite naturally to them.

Countless newspaper articles show that this avoidance of communication with preservationists (i.e., anyone who isn't associated with the cattle, timber or mining industries) is a quality held in common by nearly all ranchers. Why should they negotiate? No one ever advises them to graze more cattle, and that is the only thing that they would want to hear. Preservationists only tell them to not shoot eagles from helicopters, not to poison wildlife, not to pollute rivers with cow shit, and not to beat up non-cowboys in heeeyah drunken Friday night revelries.

We preservationists won't let them have any fun at all, so what is to be gained by negotiating with us? Hell, we even want to stop subsidizing their degradation of our public rangelands with below-market grazing fees. We preservationists are impossible to deal with, because we (gasp!) care about things other than cattle.

The answer to this dilemma, this "failure to

communicate" (as Cool Hand Luke said) was inadvertently given in Debra Thunder's article "Cowboys ain't Indians; buffalo ain't cows" (*HCN*, 5/31/93). She stated that a letter writer had chided her for not understanding that "rancher(s) are now the Indian(s), and the federal government is trying to remove them from the land."

Thunder questions the validity of this analogy, pointing out that "the Indians and buffalo were either destroyed or herded onto reservations ... to make way for cowboys and cows," and such a fate has certainly not befallen the ranching "culture."

But wouldn't it be awesome if it did? Then the analogy would be correct, the circle would be completed, and the American conscience would be cleansed by serving up a big ol' heaping of cowboy karma. A Bureau of Cowboy Affairs would see to it that all cowboys and

cows were destroyed or herded onto reservations to make way for the millions of non-ranching Americans and the wildlife they treasure.

So, Dennis Winters, thanks for putting into words the thoughts that many ranchers and non-ranchers have held for quite some time. Negotiation is futile. Let history repeat itself. The cowboys can be the new Indians, their cows can be the new buffalo, and Wyoming and Texas can be the new reservations. Now, isn't this solution so much simpler than all that complex negotiation?

Eddie Kinnamon
Laporte, Colorado

The writer just completed a master's in environmental health at Colorado State University. He'll be moving to Oregon in late August.



The New Okies head east and north

report by Miles Corwin

At dusk, the lights of Los Angeles are beginning to twinkle in the distance and the downtown skyline is silhouetted against the pastel sunset.

The people gathered at the Hollywood Hills hotel have one of the most spectacular views in the city. But these 97 Los Angeles residents are not at the penthouse meeting room because they enjoy the city's vistas.

They are here because they hate Los Angeles. That is why they have paid \$29 to attend a course titled: "Escape from L.A."

Tom Evons gives these disaffected Los Angeles residents tips on relocating to a small town, finding a new job, exploring small-town business opportunities and avoiding unscrupulous real estate agents. He emphasizes to class members that after they move, they should become involved in small-town political and planning issues.

That way they can ensure that developers do not take over and that their town does not grow too quickly and turn into another, well, Los Angeles.

In Bend, Ore., where Evons lives, people were so frustrated by all the Los Angeles residents moving north and by the new housing tracts despoiling the landscape that they scrawled on the bridge leading to town: "Welcome to Little L.A."

Evons warns the class that pastoral surroundings and blue skies will not solve all their problems. In many small towns throughout the Northwest, marriage and family counselors are doing booming business. Sometimes the stress associated with a major move can exacerbate longstanding tensions in marriages, he said, especially if the couple has financial problems in the new city.

One couple Evons knows sold their house in southern California and moved to a small town in central Oregon. They appreciated the change of seasons in Oregon and even enjoyed their first few winters, Evons told the class. But those winters were mild because of the drought; last winter was a real Oregon winter, with

near-record snowfall and unending days of gray skies and subfreezing temperatures.

The winding rural road leading to their house, which had always seemed so charming, now imprisoned them. They were afraid to leave the house at night and risk driving on narrow, icy roads. They could no longer drive to Portland on weekends for shopping, movies and the theater because the mountain roads often were impassable. They grew increasingly depressed as the winter dragged on and they were stuck at home. This was a facet of life in the Northwest, they complained, that no one had

Van Nuys: "When do I want to leave Los Angeles? Yesterday. Right before this class I was making a telephone call on the corner. I was afraid of every person walking down the street. I was holding onto my purse for dear life. I was choking on exhaust fumes. Why should I have to live like this?"

Steve Crook, an electrician from Hawthorne: "I went to Hawthorne High School — that's where the Beach Boys went. I've always liked the beach and I'm sure that'll be one of the things I'll miss about L.A. But, you know, the beach isn't what it used to be. The water is so polluted that you can't even go in anymore."

Lilyan Lin, a therapist from Sherman Oaks: "You know where me and my friend spent a Saturday afternoon? At a gun show in Pomona. Two nice Jewish girls spending the day looking at guns. We should have been on Rodeo Drive shopping for clothes. Instead we were checking out .38s and semi-automatics with these yahoos in Pomona. We're both so afraid of getting attacked in L.A., this is what it's come to."

Irv Harris, a salesman from Hollywood: "My wife and I both lost our jobs and we hope we'll have better luck somewhere else. My son just got married. They want to leave the city and we want to be near them."

Shawna Harris, Irv's daughter-in-law: "We don't want to raise a family in L.A. Why? Because it's dangerous and horrible here."

Evons, who once lived in San Diego and then made the move to a small town, empathizes with those who have great antipathy toward Los Angeles.

During a visit to downtown L.A. in March, his car was broken into after being parked by the Convention Center for only 10 minutes. And that is why, when he drove down again from Oregon for his "Escape from L.A." class, he drove down alone. After the last trip to Los Angeles, his wife said she would never return. ■

Miles Corwin reports for the *Los Angeles Times*, where this article originally appeared.



told them about.

They finally sold their house and moved back to California.

Those who sat through the three-hour class, sponsored by the Learning Annex, listed a now-familiar litany of reasons for wanting to leave Los Angeles. The crime, the congestion, the smog, the economy, the high cost of housing.

Mary Herrington, an advertising saleswoman from

Convenience is making life unlivable

essay by Peter Shelton

Here's what it feels like to live in a small, exceptionally beautiful town at the edge of the mountains close to Telluride, Colo., that has just been "discovered."

It's an invasion, physical and emotional. And it has the sickening feel of inevitability to it, an inexorable stripping away of what was once sustaining.

What was so great about the old place, the new people ask, with your dusty roads and tiny grocery and your school that houses kindergarten through 12th grades under one roof? The new people (and to be fair some of the old people who can't see beyond the hoods of their pickups) want to fill the meadows with subdivisions and the night air with "authentic" Wild West shows. And now they want City Market, the giant West Slope supermarket chain.

They say City Market will bring jobs, add to the tax base, and be a real nice convenience for the residents of the town.

But I say City Market will destroy small businesses in our downtown core. It'll bring big traffic, strip development on the highway, noise and light pollution, and it'll contribute mightily to the homogenization of our valley. Ridgway USA becomes Anytown USA.

I also say that convenience is a trap. More than a trap, it's a death wish at the heart of opportunism. Convenience dismantled the tracks and sold us the private automobile. It invented the rock-hard, tasteless tomato, the aerosol can, the microwave dinner, and call-interrupting on your telephone. Convenience killed letter writing and substituted

cable TV. Convenience, thinly disguised as Manifest Destiny, plugged every great river in the West so L.A. could splash and Vegas could dazzle. Even the Cold War was largely convenient, a good way to keep the resources flowing (the aspirations of the Third World were definitely inconvenient) to a whirling military-corporate engine.

Sooner or later convenience exacts a toll. The very notion of convenience is misunderstood. There's the story about the crusty old guy out in the country whose kids finally convinced him to put in a telephone. During a family visit soon after, the phone starts ringing, and rings and rings, and the old man makes nary a move. "Aren't you gonna answer it?" one of the kids asks. "Hell no. I put that thing in for my convenience, not theirs!"

Would it matter, in the big picture, if I am no longer able to walk to the store for an onion, then scratch Jack's dog's ears on the way home, and instead have to get in my car and drive across the river across the highway to a five-acre parking lot? Does it matter that these days Jeep Cherokees choke the back-roads

bikeways that I used to count on to restore my soul? Or that I wake now to the belching of big machinery carving out duplexes across the creek?

Not in the big picture, no. What matters is carrying capacity, water, air, space, peace and quiet. Human pressure on natural systems. Overuse and overpopulation. Especially in the arid West, where for the first time this fragile beauty and not gold or gambling or grazing has caused the boom. Think about Jackson, Santa Fe, Kalispell and Bend.

Nobody on our town council much likes talking about the big questions, how, in the name of the quick buck we always seem to foul our nests, even the loveliest ones, maybe even especially the loveliest ones, and move on. And how many of us there are. And how we're running out of places to move to.

The council faces an interesting debate on annexing land for City Market, and I'm betting there will also be a referendum. Will we lie here and acquiesce to the still-dominant presumption that if something can be done, marketwise in a capitalistic society, then it should be done? Or will we say no, this once, against profit, against convenience? ■

Peter Shelton writes about the outdoors for a variety of publications in Ridgway, Colorado, population 400.

A recent reader's poll by *The Ridgway Sun* newspaper, Box 607, Ouray, CO 81427, found that 22 opposed City Market opening a new store in Ridgway USA and 15 supported the plan. On the question of the town annexing land for the supermarket, 23 opposed and 14 supported the proposal.

