

High Country News

Vol. 3, No. 4

Friday, March 5, 1971

Pressing Problem . . .

Nebraska Rivers Being Threatened

Most of Nebraska's rivers and streams are threatened and many may be destroyed or greatly altered within a few years, according to Ron Klatske, the National Audubon Society's West Central Regional Representative.

Klatske, who is organizing Audubon Chapters in the state, considers the crisis on our rivers as Nebraska's most pressing conservation problem. "If we don't tell people what is happening, and do something about it," he said, "the next generation in Nebraska will inherit a network of canals, ditches and dams. There won't be any natural streams or rivers." Practically every stream in the state is programmed for channelization, diversion and dewatering, or dams; however, we are particularly concerned about the mammoth environmental impacts of proposed water development projects on the Platte, Niobrara and Missouri rivers, Klatske reported.

The Bureau of Reclamation and Corps of Engineers are working on final plans to divert the Platte River near Lexington and effectively "dewater" it for a distance of more than 60 miles. The riparian habitat in this area is extremely im-

portant for wildlife of many species. Nearly a quarter of a million sandhill cranes congregate along the Platte River in central Nebraska for a couple of months each spring. It is also the only area north of the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge which is consistently utilized as a spring staging area for whooping cranes. Large numbers of ducks and geese use the river and associated wetlands during both migration periods. Thousands of mallards winter along this stretch of the Platte River, along with about 25 bald eagles.

Waterfowl hunting will be practically eliminated in the river between Lexington and Shelton, and reduced greatly on the reach of the river between Shelton and Columbus, according to a Fish and Wildlife Service report.

The National Audubon Society recently awarded Charles Frith of Grand Island a \$1,000 grant to study the habitat requirements of the sandhill cranes for a Master's thesis. Frith is an experienced biologist with the Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Audubon Society also hopes to conduct a breeding songbird census in the area (Please turn to page 12.)



Horseshoe Falls on the Niobrara River south of Cody, Nebraska.



Wyoming's Upper Green River. The need for water downstream may jeopardize this candidate for national scenic river designation.

River Reprieved . . .

Environment Wins In Wyoming Legislature

Wyoming environmentalists won a significant victory in the recently completed 41st Legislature. And the Upper Green River won a reprieve from proposed development.

The victory for the environment was a stinging defeat for Governor Stanley K. Hathaway. It was he who proposed a 26-page "feasibility" study which contained full-fledged bonding procedures and the guidelines for construction of dams in the Green River Basin. It was he who laid down the ultimatum that his proposal was the single most important piece of legislation to be considered by the Legislature. And it was he who cajoled and strong-armed Republican legislators to try to get his way.

Conservationists rose to the occasion. They pointed out that the governor had said he wanted a feasibility study only. They pointed out that a series of public hearings on the Green River, held shortly before the Legislature met, had been completely ignored and treated with disdain. If the governor had heeded those hearings, he would have known he was headed for trouble.

People poured letters, telegrams and telephone calls into their legislators and the governor. They expressed their distrust of a bill drawn by Philadelphia lawyers, extending far beyond feasibility, and being pushed so strongly by the governor.

Many concerned citizens rushed across the state to (Please turn to page 3)

HIGH COUNTRY

By Tom Bell

You wouldn't believe what happened to us on the way to press!

Background music here for the last few days has been the sounds of hammering and sawing as our new darkroom takes shape. The plumber is running in new pipe while I run copy to the printers.

I wondered what was cracking Marge and Mary Margaret up until I heard Marge say, "Guess where I found the pencil sharpener? In the bosses' file cabinet!" And then more gales of laughter. Sounds like happenings right out of the inner sanctum of the looney bin.

You're lucky to even get a paper this week, let alone a profound column. If it weren't for a serious conflict with other printing jobs, we would be going to press next week.

Anyway, if you will bear with us, we will be back to a more normal paper next issue. By that time, we should be settled in our new office. In the meantime, we will try to preserve our sanity. Please forgive us for the shortened version.



Note from the rest of the staff (if we can sneak this paragraph in when the boss isn't looking!): He's too modest to admit it, or maybe not really aware of it, but Tom Bell is the heart and soul of High Country News. Anything the rest of us may have contributed has surely been inspired by his sincere and steadfast belief in what HIGH COUNTRY NEWS is all about!



Senator Supports Environmental Bank

WASHINGTON — A MEASURE WHICH WOULD CREATE A National Environmental Bank has received the support of Senator Gale McGee, D-Wyo. during the 92nd Congress, the Senator's office has announced.

The bill, called "The Environmental Financing Act", is designed to help states and cities overcome the gap between growing environmental needs and a growing financial inability to meet these needs.

The measure would provide the financial ability to insure a liveable environment now and for future generations by authorizing and establishing an Environmental Bank, an Environmental Trust Fund, and environmental savings bonds.

"This bill will provide both a challenge and an unparalleled opportunity for all citizens to join hands in their quest for ecological survival," McGee said at the time he agreed to join in sponsorship of the measure.

The Senator said cities, states and other governmental units were finding it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to finance environmental programs.

He said the environmental bank would assist these governmental units by providing long term, low interest loans for the construction of waste treatment plants, for the separation of combined storm-sewer systems, and the establish-

ment and enforcement of air and noise pollution standards, and for "other urgently needed programs that would preserve, protect, and enhance the environment."

Under the environmental trust fund there would be perpetual, insured, and growing source of funds guaranteed for one purpose—trying to save the environment, he said.

Commenting on the environmental savings bond feature of the measure, McGee said citizens would buy the bonds and the proceeds would be placed in the trust fund. He said the trust funds would then be used as the capital to finance loans made by the environmental bank.

"As the cities, states, and other governmental units pay back their loans," McGee said, "these moneys will be utilized to pay the citizens when they redeem the bonds at maturation."

The Senator pointed out that best estimates have stated some 30 million people participated in Earth Day last year. He said if only two-thirds of these people had bought a \$25 environmental savings bond, \$500 million in capital would have been generated toward clean air and clean water.

McGee said the overall maximum interest rate ceiling charged on the loans made by the Environmental Bank to state and local governments would be three per cent.



The warm days of Spring can't be far away. In the meantime, the old, goldmine camp is still locked in Winter's grip.

Letters To The Editor



GREAT NORTHWEST
1820 FORT SNELLING 1970



Editor:

I refer to the letter from Mr. Ettlinger of Highland Park, Ill., in the Dec. 18 issue, regarding snowmobiles.

It is my impression that High Country News, as a conservation-oriented paper, attempts to appeal to as many types of recreationists as it can, and consequently among its readers (avid or casual) there are bound to be people with sharply different views and various emphases of interest. For example, although a considerable amount of space is devoted to hunting and fishing, indeed popular activities in the state, most of my acquaintances who use and love the Wyoming outdoors are not hunters and fishermen at all, but backpackers, snowshoers, ski-touring enthusiasts, and climbers who would never even think of carrying a gun or a fish hook into the backcountry. I believe there are a few of them who would tend to feel, as I did, that the Oct. 23 front-page photo of Charlie Farmer packing out the open-mouthed, dead body of the mountain goat was one of the most esthetically revolting pictures they had ever seen. I'm not trying to say there's anything wrong with hunting for sport; I'm just trying to say that within the camp of mountain-lovers there are individuals with very different ways of looking at things. Like, I take my photos of wildlife while they are free and alive.

I can assure you, Mr. Ettlinger, that there are people in Wyoming who share your views on snowmobiles. I do not consider myself an "anti-hunter"; I just don't have any use for the sport myself. But I must say that I and others tend to be much more

narrow-minded about recreational snowmobiling. It is difficult to ignore. And I'm not speaking of responsible or irresponsible handling, but of noise. It is extremely difficult to comprehend how anyone can so completely violate the silence of the winter forest on one of those ultimate examples of man's continued "conquest" of nature, and still feel that he is "at one" with nature and the backcountry.

My point is, Mr. Ettlinger, don't classify all Wyoming outdoorsmen and readers of High Country News as a single type—because they definitely are not.

But more power to Tom Bell for his attempts to rouse concern from all quarters on vital environmental issues in our state, issues which affect hunters and non-hunters, snowmobilers and non-snowmobilers alike.

Sincerely,
Kelly Patterson
1218 S. 15th
Laramie, Wyoming

Editor's Note: We greatly appreciate the foregoing comments. The announcement on page three of this issue should clarify the position of the paper from this point forward.

Editor:

Thank you so much for sending the papers so promptly after I sent in my subscription recently. I enjoy the paper very much. I was born in the mountain country and love every inch of it.

I am a school teacher and intend to use some of your articles in our Conservation of Natural Resources Unit, such as wildlife, soil, water, prevention of pollution, etc. Thank you again.

Esther Rice
Emporia, Kansas
Editor's Note: Thank you for your comments on our paper. We hope it will be of even greater use to you as we cover more environmental problems.

Editor:

Here is my check to renew my subscription for your fine newspaper. I have been very pleased with the increasingly high quality of HIGH

COUNTRY NEWS and hope you keep up the good work. The quality of the pictures and the variety of articles dealing with concerns of the Western states are well-done and interesting. I, too, prefer more articles on cross-country skiing rather than on snowmobiling.

I am a Montana girl and greatly appreciate the contact with my "home country" that your paper provides.

Sincerely,
Barbara Larsen
The University of Wisconsin
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Editor's Note: We also appreciate Miss Larsen's comments. We hope you, too, will like the new emphasis.

Editor:

Sorry I was late in renewing my subscription. But you can count on me renewing my subscription every year.

Sincerely,
John Hummel
Sacramento, Calif.
P.S. I hope the conservationists get their way on the Green River Dam plans.

Editors Note: We find many of our readers endorsing your post script.

Editor:

Enclosed check for yearly subscription to your wonderful outdoor paper, HIGH COUNTRY NEWS. I sure to enjoy reading all the articles in it and know most of the country that is described in it as we return to the great western part of our land every year.

We traveled through the Tetons, Wind River Canyon and Big Horns last year and really enjoy these trips through Montana and Wyoming.

Good luck to HIGH COUNTRY NEWS and its staff. You're real wonderful.

Sincerely,
Andrew Buteyn
Fox Lake, Wisc.

Editor's Note: We find our readers are wonderful people also.

(Please turn to page 3)

HIGH COUNTRY NEWS
Published Bi-Weekly at 259 Main St., Lander, Wyoming 82520. Tel. 1-307-332-4877. Copyright, 1970 by Camping News Weekly, Inc. Entered as Second Class Matter, August 26, 1969 at the Post Office in Lander, Wyoming under the act of March 3, 1879.

Subscription Rate \$10.00 yearly
Single Copy Rate 35¢

Environment . . .

Cheyenne to appear at a House hearing called on 24-hour notice. The hearing was scheduled at the end of a legislative day, at the worst possible time, and then witnesses were limited in their statements.

It took only three days for the Wyoming Senate to pass SF-124, with scarcely any dissent and with only a few amendments. All 26 pages went to the House.

Then the pressure really began. When it was over, the 26-page bill had been reduced to 3 pages which provides for a \$100,000 feasibility study only.

Senators who had eagerly followed the governor's wishes early in the session very quietly assented to the amendments by the House that reduced the bill to 3 pages.

The legislation now provides for a legislative study committee, along with representatives from a number of state agencies. The feasibility study will be under the aegis of the State Department of Economic Planning and Development.

Those concerned with the fate of the Upper Green River now have until the end of 1972 to gather the facts, propose valid alternatives, and gain public support.

Oil Spills Biodegraded

Accelerated microbial biodegradation is a new method being tested to clean up oil spills which harass the oil industry and conservationists alike, the Wildlife Management Institute reports. An "oil-eating" mixture of 20 different species of microorganisms has successfully broken down a 100-square-foot blotch of oil within four days during tests on a Potomac River estuary.

The Mixture, called Petrodeg, was developed by Bioteknika International, Inc. of Alexandria, Virginia. It contains both marine and terrestrial organisms along with chemical nutrients for microbial growth. The microbes reportedly work by breaking down the oil and changing it into harmless substances such as carbon dioxide, water, sugars, and proteins.

foreclose the possibility of accepting some advertising. They point out that some advertising will in no way compromise the policies of the newspaper. If we accept advertising at some time in the future, it will have to be of interest and service to you, and be tastefully done. In the meantime, we feel your responses have given us a mandate to carry on without resorting to advertising. We will keep you informed if it appears necessary to accept advertising. We do have a few commitments which we should honor.

High Country News has become an experiment in concern for and belief in a better world. With all of your support and assistance, we can make it succeed.



Letters . . .

Editor:

Enclosed is my renewal to your paper. You might be disappointed to learn that the paper is "recycled" by having it passed on to many others (most very interested in the paper but too cheap to subscribe). I'm sure other subscribers will report much the same story. Keep up the excellent work. Continue to report the rape of public lands by the cattle and lumber kings.

"Wyoming Lover"
Indiana

Editor's Note: No, we are not really disappointed at the "recycling" of our paper. We are just glad that people appreciate and enjoy it. But we also hope that they will help us by writing to their congressmen when we point out issues that only the informed and concerned citizen can do anything about.

Editor:

My husband and I just read an issue of HIGH COUNTRY NEWS. We truly do appreciate your support of conservation of this wonderful country. Enclosed is a check for ten dollars with which we wish to support the Wyoming Outdoor Coordinating Council (including a subscription to HIGH COUNTRY NEWS - a splendid periodical!)

Sincerely,
Mrs. Howard R. Smith
Pinedale, Wyoming

Our Editor

Says . . .



BY TOM BELL

Americans are great people. But I think the readers of High Country News are the greatest.

The response to our letter regarding the future of the paper has been heart-warming. I really can't find the right words to express our feelings but I can say very simply - we won't let the paper die! We read you loud and clear. Your letters and additional subscriptions which come pouring in every day are all that we have needed.

Some of you have written eloquently in response to our letter. What you have said touches us deeply. We would like to share what you have said with others of our readers and so with your permission, I will excerpt some of them:

"Yours is a fine paper - filling a vacuum in the Rocky Mountain environmental reporting area. I like it."

"Good luck! You and your newspaper are our one 'voice in the wilderness'."

"What you are doing is an important part of the battle. Acquainting the public with the basic issues is top priority."

"Your paper is excellent and must be saved! I wish I were rich and could endow you, but I am a struggling writer myself."

"Maybe the change in status is a blessing in the long run because it frees your hands to do the things that need doing and saying the things that need saying."

"The 'High Country' does indeed need a champion and spokesman. Hang in there - the High Country belongs to all of us."

"High Country News must survive if the newly emerging expansion of environmental awareness is to continue."

"I will continue to subscribe to your paper no matter how high the price must go to meet printing production costs."

And so they go - great words of encouragement to spur us on. We know there are fine people who care about our great country and what happens to it when you write as you do. Our heartfelt thanks.

There are only three of us to staff the paper now. Mary Margaret Davis has been our office manager and steadfast believer since the very first issue in May, 1969. We know there are blue days for her when the bills come due and there isn't enough in the treasury to cover. But you would never know of our troubles from her cheery smiles, through thick or thin, rain or shine.

Marge Higley came on later but she became a believer early. You know her as that anonymous voice from the circulation department. We know her as columnist, limerick writer, darkroom specialist, and the

voice of encouragement. Both of these gals have worked for four months without pay - coming to work each morning on faith alone. It is hard to beat that kind of dedication.

There really is more than three of us. Without husbands and wives and families who were willing to forego and forebear, there would be no paper in existence today.

My wife and I have given up our small ranch and the home we built with the help of our three big sons. It is not easy but we have already bought a smaller home in town. It is one of those things you do because you believe.

And then there are those who have worked with us and gone. Their hearts and their hopes are still with us, and ours with them. Joann Ostermiller, our girl Friday, has gone off to college where she has already made her mark (as we all knew she would). She is editor of the school paper.

Charlie Farmer continues his free-lance writing and will be a regular contributor to the paper in more ways than one.

"Faith without works is dead." Without the true belief in the environmental cause and a willingness to loan or to give generously to see High Country News succeed, the paper would long since have folded. Foremost among those who have helped are Mrs. Margaret E. Murie of Moose, Mr. and Mrs. Carroll R. Noble of Cora, Mr. and Mrs. Otis Carney of Cora, Mrs. Richard (Emily) Stevens of Dubois, Burton Marston of Laramie, Dr. Dewey Dominick of Cody, Mrs. Errol (Leslie) Peterson of Dubois, and many others.

My humble thanks go out also to two very dedicated conservationists who gave not only of their honest opinions and encouragement but also their financial help - Ernie Day of Boise, Idaho, and Tom Dustin of Hometown, Indiana.

Finally, I come back to you - the readers - the concerned people - the citizens who want to know what is happening in our states where there is still elbow room, clean air to breathe, magnificent mountains, untamed and wild rivers, and some hope for the future. Thank God for your concern for there are so few of us in all these states.

So, where do you go from here? With your support and help, I hope we can make High Country News the voice of the environmental matters in the Rocky Mountain states, but also support of environmental activities. Many individuals who are members (subscribers) from Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Utah, Colorado, and adjacent states are the activists who man the front lines in defense of the environment. By keeping them informed of developments which have far-reaching effects

throughout the area, they are better able to act in unison for all of us. Good examples would be clearcut timbering on the national forests, mining activities, and the effects of energy developments.

One of the greatest needs of the environmentalists right now is information on the side of the environment. Heretofore, there seems to have been only one way of doing things - the way of the industrialist and the developer. Now, we need alternatives and options. Hopefully, High Country News can develop the expertise to help gather, correlate, and then publish needed information.

The power of the printed word cannot be underestimated. Politicians, developers, exploiters, and bureaucrats take heed when facts and figures show the public the other side of issues. It is the greatest weapon we have to win the mounting battles we are facing.

We are setting up a new, non-profit Wyoming corporation to manage the paper. But we are not asking for tax-deductible status. We want to be in a position to point out to you - our readers - what you can do to influence legislation and bring pressure to bear on government officials who are not representing the public interest. We must be in that independent position or we will lose one of our main purposes.

We want to be able to cover environmental issues not only in Wyoming but in all the surrounding states. In order to do that, we will need input from those of you who see or know of potentially damaging proposals or developments. We will welcome any articles about matters in your various states.

We are going to try to substantially support the paper from subscriptions alone. However, reputable newspapermen and journalists have advised us not to



THE WILD WORLD

by Verne Huser

Last week I attended a public hearing in Boise, Idaho, concerning a BLM protective withdrawal of a 33-mile stretch of the Snake River in southwestern Idaho for the creation of a Birds of Prey Natural Area. The 26,366-acre withdrawal on the Swan Falls reach of the Snake includes a half-mile to a quarter-mile buffer zone along the river to serve as hunting habitat and protective zone for several species of birds of prey that nest in the areas.

Last summer twenty-four pair of golden eagles and forty-nine pair of prairie falcons nested in the area, perhaps the largest concentration of both species in North America. Other hawks and owls also frequent the Swan Falls reach of the river, known to millions of TV viewers as the filming location for both "Ida the Off Beat Eagle" and "The Valley of the Eagles."

Primarily through the efforts of William Meiners, Chief of the Division of Resource Management for the BLM in the Boise District; Morlan W. Nelson of the Soil Conservation Service; and members of the Idaho Wildlife Federation, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and faculty members at Boise State College the protective withdrawal was formulated by the Bureau of Land Management in accord with President Nixon's admonition last summer that "we must do more now to preserve additional areas of this priceless national heritage." (5 August 1970)

Meiners, who—with the photograph of Vernon Webb—put together the pictorial resume of the Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area, had made literally dozens of presentations to the public prior to the public hearing February 26. His slide lecture gave excellent background and graphic orientation. Nelson, who attended the hearings but said not a word, is an authority on birds of prey. Years ago, he recognized the unique qualities of the canyon and has been championing its rare attributes ever since.

One of the most critical attributes of this particular stretch of Snake River Canyon is its geographic orientation which provides cliff shade during the heat of the day when the young eagles and falcons need protection from the direct rays of the sun. Human pressure can also threaten the nesting raptors, and one of the primary reasons for the withdrawal is to provide protection from human intrusion during the critical nesting period (mid-February to mid-May).

Existing rights and the provisions of existing withdrawals will be recognized under the new management policy proposed by the BLM. But the lands in question will be withdrawn from all forms of appropriation and location under public land laws, including the mining laws—though not from leasing under the mineral leasing laws. Current uses include grazing, hunting and fishing, boating and hiking, powerline rights of way and pumping of water.

Hiking and hunting will be discouraged during the nesting period and existing laws, both Federal and state, protecting birds of prey will be enforced. Nelson has suggested that boats on the reservoir have little or no effect upon the nesting activities of raptors. It is the Sunday plinking by gunners who shoot at everything that moves that constitutes the greatest hazard to the nesting birds of prey.

Some seventy people participated in the hearings including local landowners and representatives from national conservation groups, ranchers and cattlemen and wool growers, biology teachers and students, hunters and fishermen, falconers and power interests, water users and bird watchers. They ranged in age from 14 to 77; they came from five states: California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Wyoming.

And they endorsed the protective withdrawal almost completely. Of the thirty-one people who actually spoke at the hearings, only five opposed the proposal, and three of those opposed it on invalid grounds—opposed it for reasons that did not hold water. For example, one old timer was afraid his fishing rights would be taken away, but when he learned they wouldn't be, he favored the proposal.

A representative from the Jackson Hole Environmental Action Society pointed out that since BLM land was involved, the land in question belongs to him as much as most of Jackson Hole (96% Federally owned) belongs to the other people at the hearings.

A local land owner who had raised sheep in the area for five decades favored the Birds of Prey Natural Area, saying "We should protect these birds that eat rabbits and rodents. In all my years of ranching, I've never seen an eagle attack a lamb." (A study of the ecology of the golden eagle in the area by John Beecham, who also spoke at the hearing, revealed that of 483 feed items found in 61 eagle eyries over a two-year period, not a single lamb remain was found. The study indicated that mammals—mostly jackrabbits, considered a predator in many western states—comprised 70% of the diet of eaglets.)

Another point made at the hearing was that eagles and falcons are a more efficient killer of rabbits and rodents than community clubbings and poison campaigns, and infinitely safer to man on both counts.

The hearing record will remain open through March 29,

1971. If you'd like to have your say concerning the Snake River Birds of Prey Natural Area, write to the State Director (William L. Mathews), Bureau of Land Management, Room 334 Federal Building, 550W. Fort Street, Boise, Idaho 83702.



The steelhead are on the move in Idaho's Salmon River. The ice is out of the river and fishermen are already reported having some success.



Photos by Bill Meiners

Morlan Nelson, an experienced falconer, holds a golden eagle. Where he stands is along the banks of the Snake River in the Swan Falls Reach, south of Boise, Idaho. Shown behind him and in the photo below are the cliffs where eagles and falcons nest. This is the area which has been proposed for a bird-of-prey sanctuary. Verne Huser tells about it in his column, *The Wild World*, on this page.



Covet The Green Envelope

Any resemblance between the following and what other deer hunters experience in their dreams is purely coincidental. This newspaper takes no responsibility for bad news which precipitates mental aberrations!! Editor.

by Jim Tallon

Twenty years ago it started as a simple newspaper sub-headline tucked back on the outdoor sports page: HUNTERS INCREASE; DEER DECLINE. Five years later the ratio drifted so out of proportion the game and fish commission put deer hunting on a permit-drawing basis for the few hunt units that could still stand pressure, and withdrew the rest of the units from all hunting other than small game. Still later, other steps had to be taken.

I stood in a line of hunters that extended several city blocks from the game and fish offices. A dozen girls at a counter labeled, DEER HUNTERS, spoke woodenly.

"Answer all questions on the application. Any blanks left open will cause automatic rejection by the Mode I computer. Return the application by the 16th for qualification . . . Answer all questions on the application. Any blanks left open will . . ."

At home I carefully filled out the form, giving my past hunting experience, the caliber of my deer rifle and federal registration number, my state-rated physical condition, my hunt insurance policy number, and my grades from the current survival and firearms safety classes.

Two weeks later I was notified that my application had successfully passed the Mode I computer, and to report at Hunt Base I for Mode II.

"Alright, men," the base warden said to our segment of exactly 100 hunters, "you've all fully memorized the Mode II regulations or you wouldn't be here. There has been a slight change because of unexpected numbers of hunters accepted by the Mode I computer. Therefore, hunt time limits for Mode II, determined by the Mode II computer, will be reduced from exactly 30 minutes to exactly 27.3 minutes. As you know, this serves to balance out the deer-mode factor."

We passed through a narrow, white corridor lined with extinct game species paintings. A uniformed sub-warden handed up maps of the hunt routes. No two were the same. A second sub-warden issued us the L-guns. He looked envious. No wonder, since game and fish surlies — they're called that because they rarely smile — are not permitted to hunt.

Next, we passed the mode-timer into the field. The mode-timer had given us audible watches, pitched so only the wearer could hear, keeping us informed of the exact time. Under such pressure from the clock, I leaned against a pine tree, took several deep breaths and psyched myself into a state of calmness. With the L-gun at the ready I made my stalk. Five minutes passed. Suddenly a mode-deer leaped into the trail in front of me. I fired and thought it a solid hit, but the deer kept going. They never fall, you have to wait until the Mode II computer makes its tally to know if you hit the deer at all.

Now my mind became troubled with uncertainty.

Did I really score? I paused for a moment, re-psyched myself, and a second mode-deer burst from the brush, its acrylic body practically indistinguishable from the real thing. The L-gun came almost automatically to my eye. I felt the recoil and knew the invisible ball-light projectile was on the way. I felt confident this time that I had made a good hit.

At 26 minutes, mode-deer three had failed to appear? Had there been a malfunction? Two points past 27 minutes I spotted it, standing quietly in a grove, apparently observing me. Surprised at my own coolness, I shot the mode-deer. An instant later the L-gun's ready-light blipped out, indicating the power had been negatized, and signaling the end of Mode II.

A week later I got my scores. Deer hunters are rated on a 1 to 1000 scale, and scoring, of course, depends upon where you shoot the mode-deer. Just one-thousandth of an inch off a head shot, for example, may drop your sum total ten points. The Mode computers are incredibly accurate. Of the over 2,000,000 contesting deer hunters in the state, the Mode I computer had chopped 157,000 for application errors. These were for such things as insufficient qualifications in categories such as survival. Now, the Mode II computer had mercilessly slashed Mode II hunters down to 1,000 high scoring finalists. I was exhilarated to find myself among them.

Hunt Base II is little different from Hunt Base I. You'd think that with only 1,000 Mode III deer hunters to process, the atmosphere would be more relaxed, more congenial. But it seems the warden and sub-wardens deliberately apply a certain psychological pressure. From personal resentment for being unauthorized to hunt deer, or if it's a factor to help weed out hunters unable to retain their coolness, I don't know. For sure, the hunt course is different and the Mode III acrylic deer, faster. This time, however, we were allotted the full 30 minutes because the number of Mode III finalists is always the same. This year even the mode-deer comptrollers seemed angry; the pseudo-animals flashed by at top speed. When the L-gun's light went out I heaved a sigh of relief; my palms were sweaty.

It was nearly a month, a long, agonizing month, before I received my scores. The green envelope, the

emblazoned sign of success nearly staggered me. I trembled with excitement as I opened the envelope. It was all there. My exceptional score, the unit in which I would hunt, even the list of the other nine successful hunters and their hunt units. I smiled. I remember back when I first shot in Mode II, I got a lot of fun and excitement hunting the acrylic

deer. A certain amount of my hunt instincts and ego had been satisfied. When I managed to qualify for Mode III, I reached an even higher level of satisfaction. Now to hunt real deer, one of the ten allotted for annual harvest by the game and fish . . . I'd have an entire unit in which I would be the sole hunter. Mode IV was the ultimate dream! Dream? I felt a

jostling.

"Wake up, Wake up" my wife, Vicki exclaimed. "You're raving like a madman!"

I jumped out of bed and stuck my head under the cold water tap for several minutes. I dried my hair and returned to bed.

"Vicki," I said, "you won't believe the horrible dream I just had."

Deer Hunting Restricted

Wyoming

Nonresident deer hunting licenses, limited to no more than 50,000 by the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission, have been divided among six regions in a move to control hunting pressure throughout the state. The new procedures do not affect residents of Wyoming.

Nonresident deer hunting licenses issued in 1971 will be valid only in hunting areas within the region for which they are issued. Applications will be received beginning February 1 and the quotas for the six regions will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis.

Maps showing the six application regions will be available as soon as they can be printed. A new application form will also be used which allows applicants to list up to six regions in order of preference.

The application regions and nonresident deer license quotas are as follows:

- Shoshone Region - 6,500.
- Big Horn Region - 12,000.
- Black Hills-Rawhide Region - 14,500
- Jackson-Bridger Region - 6,000
- Wind River-Sweetwater Region - 2,500
- Medicine Bow Region - 8,500.

The limit of 50,000 licenses will bring the number of nonresident deer hunters to the 1968 level and the quota figures are based on estimated hunting pressure that year.

Nonresident hunters may

write the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission, Box 1589, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001 for all the necessary deer license materials.

Colorado

Colorado deer hunters will find a drastically shortened deer season in 1971. In fact, the seasons and regulations for both deer and elk are the most restrictive that have been in effect for 25 years.

The Colorado Game, Fish and Parks Department has announced the season for deer will last only 13 days, from Oct. 30 to Nov. 11. It will be bucks only.

The elk season will be for ten days only and it will come before the deer season, Oct. 16-Oct. 25. Spike elk (yearlings) will not be legal game.

Reasons for the drastic cuts come mostly from man's intrusions into critical deer winter range, along with increasing hunting pressures. Housing projects, irrigation developments, and new highway construction are all cited as factors in reducing wildlife habitat.

Looking into the future, Colorado can see drastic changes in the environment as a result of oil shale development. The Piceance Basin in which much oil shale activity is anticipated is also range for many of Colorado's deer. What the total effect on wildlife will be is an unknown but Colorado's game managers can only foresee more habitat loss.

Idaho

The Idaho Legislature is considering several bills which would limit the number of non-resident big game hunters. One of the proposals would give statutory authority to the Idaho Fish and Game Department to limit numbers of hunters. Another would limit the number of out-of-state hunters to five per cent of the total resident hunting licenses sold the previous year.

The effect of the latter bill would be to limit non-resident licenses to approximately 5,800.

Permits Gone

The last of the 5,500 big game hunting and fishing licenses were mailed early in February to nonresidents who were able to get their application into the Wyoming Game and Fish Department before the supply was exhausted.

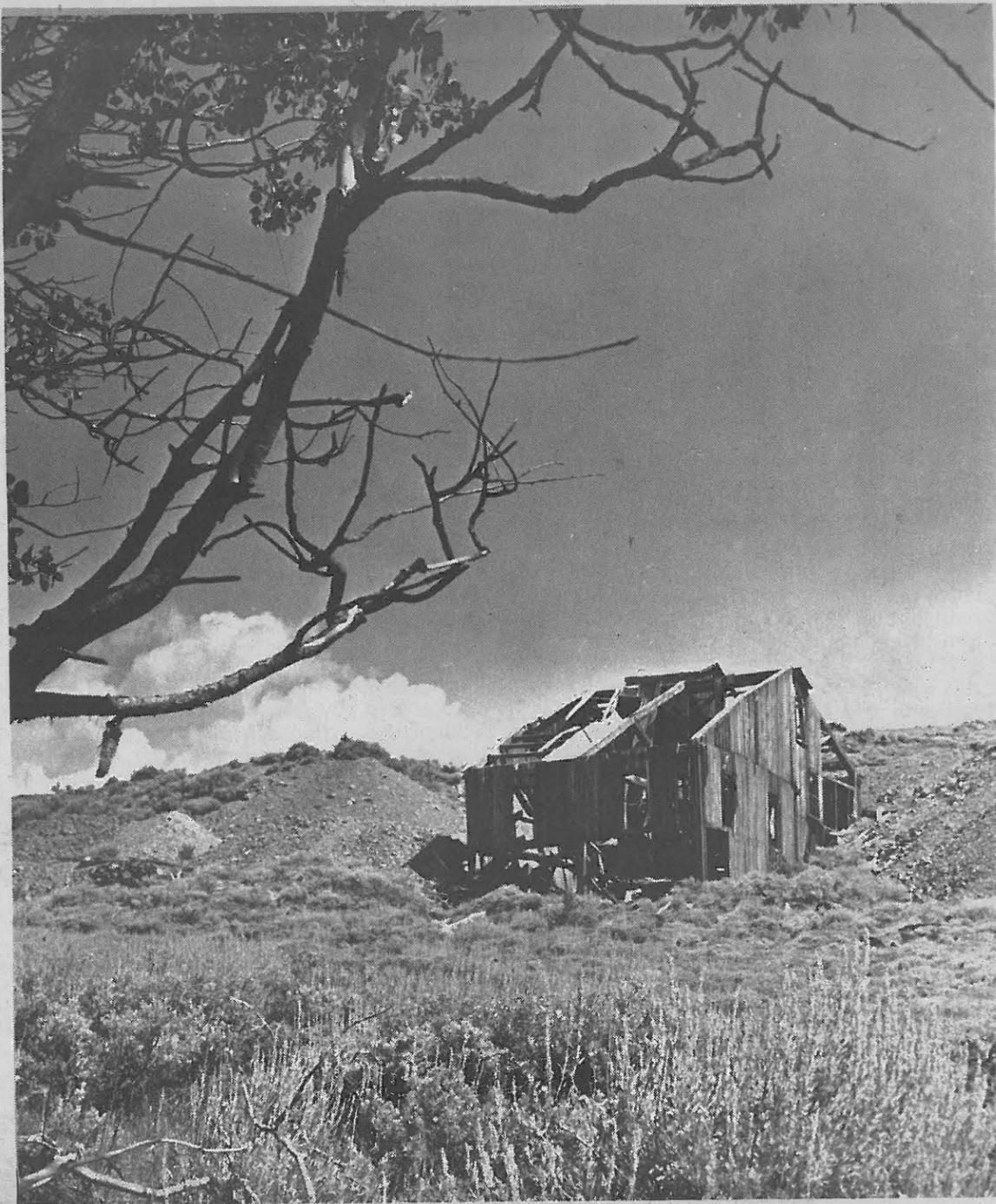
The nonresident big game license, priced at \$125, allows the holder to harvest one antlered elk, one deer, one black bear, birds and fish and is the only license allowing nonresidents to take an elk.

The nonresident big game licenses were sold on a first-come, first-served basis beginning January 1, 1971 and the last of the 5,500 permits was sold by mid-afternoon January 4. Any applications received after that date were returned to the sender the same day they arrived in the Game and Fish office.



A western mule deer amidst vanishing snowbanks in the early spring. Human pressures are even jeopardizing this abundant and prolific species.

RELI



What shattered dream-
mutely amongst the hills
fortunes were made and
laughter rang out - and

These photos are from
gold mining area, not
South Pass. Oregon Territory
gold-seekers bound for
near here by the thousands

At lower right are the
remains of Miners Delia
Martha Jane Canary, an
orphan, baby-sitter and
went on to become known



S OF A BY-GONE DAY

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Photos by Stan Rice





Photo by North Dakota Travel Department
Early day freighters at Bismarck, North Dakota, circa 1880.

Freight Trail Still Visible

One day in April, 78 years ago, 68 gold-hungry passengers paid \$23 apiece for the privilege of making the inaugural stage coach run on what is known as the Old Black Hills Trail.

The trail led from Fort Abraham Lincoln at Mandan 240 miles south to Deadwood, South Dakota, via a series of 21 way stations.

The Dakota Territorial Legislature approved construction of the road shortly after General George A. Custer and his Seventh Cavalry discovered gold in the Black Hills in 1874.

From the railroad at Bismarck, the coaches were ferried across the Missouri and driven to Fort Lincoln. Stage stations in North Dakota were located at Little Heart River, Chanta Peta Creek, Dogtooth Creek, Cannonball River and Cedar River.

Chanta Peta Creek was better known as Louse Creek, since bull-whackers camping at the crossing often marveled at the size and strength of the bugs inhabiting their bedrolls.

The freight wagons were drawn by oxen. Freight ranged from Deadwood's first piano to an entire locomotive. For the heavier loads, 15-20 yoke of oxen pulled a single wagon.

The Northwest Express and Transportation Company did the bulk of the freight hauling. The company, with a total investment of \$100,000, owned 26 Concord Coaches and 200 teams.

The railroad reached Pierre, S. D., in the summer of 1900, and the company moved most of its equipment there. But traffic continued along the old trail, now a well-defined road.

Several ranches were established near the road, and homesteaders began to stake claims. Then bridges

were constructed over the creeks and automobiles appeared.

In 1905, one could still make the trip by stage coach—\$1.50 one way. Freight charges were 50 cents per hundred weight.

Today, still-visible, grass-grown ruts and dips in the smooth prairie show where

the historic Old Black Hills Trail ran.

One half mile east of Flasher on N. D. 21, a marker erected by the State Historical Society and the Flasher Commercial Club commemorates the famous road and the hardy men who transported supplies to the isolated Deadwood miners.

Clearcutting Laid Bare

Clearcutting of timber in the national forests has become a matter of concern to many people. One of the foremost figures in the concerned ranks is Dale Burk, a state editor for THE MISSOULIAN at Missoula, Montana.

Burk has closely followed the sequence of events on the Bitterroot Forest. What he and others have seen there moved him to write THE CLEARCUT CRISIS, Controversy in the Bitterroot.

For those who would like a definitive analysis of what the clearcut controversy is all about, this book is highly

recommended. As Michael Frome, columnist for American Forests and conservation editor for Field & Stream, says in the foreword: "The story of the Bitterroot has been recounted fully . . . The author, Dale Burk, writes with sensitivity about natural resources, and clearly with much digging and research . . ."

If the book is not available from your local bookstore it may be obtained from the author at 103-B Sisson, Missoula, Montana 59801. The cost is \$3.50 plus a 25¢ handling charge.

Magazine Costs More

The Wyoming Game and Fish Commission announced today that the subscription and newsstand rates of WYOMING WILDLIFE Magazine, the Commission's official publication, will be increased to offset rising production and distribution costs.

The following price schedule will go into effect on July 1, 1971:

One year subscription - \$3.00.

Three year subscription - \$7.50.

Newsstand copies - 35¢ each.

Regular readers and new subscribers have until July 1 to take advantage of the

current, lower subscription fees, the Commission said.

WYOMING WILDLIFE circulation has increased steadily ever since January, 1967 when the publication's format was changed to a larger book with many pages printed in full color. The magazine is distributed to subscribers throughout the United States and abroad.

Wyoming's Red Desert Under Intensive Study

The Bureau of Land Management has announced completion of the first phase of its comprehensive land-use planning effort in the Red Desert area of south-central Wyoming.

In making the announcement, Daniel Baker, BLM State Director for Wyoming, said, "Our District staffs in Rock Springs, Rawlins, and Lander have made a concentrated effort to complete this inventory stage so that we can begin formulating management alternatives as soon as possible."

"It should be understood," he said, "that 'complete' is a relative term and indicates only that we have compiled information currently available. We have identified some significant data gaps, and our inventory will be constantly revised as these gaps are filled."

He indicated that much of the data was gleaned from the files and publications of many state and local agencies and organizations as well as federal agencies.

Because of many conflicting uses and demands placed on the area, BLM initiated a comprehensive study of about 5.5 million acres stretching from Interstate 80, between Rock Springs and Rawlins, north to the Crooks Mountains. The Red Desert itself is only a small part of that area, but lends its name to the total area under study.

Increasing national as well as local interest in this part of Wyoming by recreationists, the minerals industry, rockhounds, livestockmen, and those who just enjoy the desert prompted BLM to begin the study late last summer. The primary goal is to assess the demands and interests in the study area, which is about 65% federal land, and to formulate a management approach that resolves the major conflicts and which is responsive to the public interest.

In the next two months, BLM resource specialists will analyze the inventory data

New Magazines

Two new outdoor magazines have come on the scene. Both are beautifully done in color and black-and-white.

MONTANA OUTDOORS is the official publication of the Montana Fish and Game Department, Helena, Montana 59601. The January-February, 1971, issue is particularly good. The theme is "emphasis . . . Montana Environment." Subscription rates are \$2.00 per year, or \$5.00 for three years.

North Dakota HORIZONS is published by the Greater North Dakota Association, 303 North 5th, Fargo, North Dakota 58102. The yearly subscription rate is \$3.50.

and begin to develop a series of possible management alternatives. The analysis includes consideration of economic and social factors, including environmental features, as well as the physical resource information.

BLM plans to hold extensive meetings with public interest groups during May and June to consider the management alternatives before any decision is formulated. The agency thinks it imperative to discuss alternatives with interested people to insure that all needs and interests are made known and that all pertinent facts have been considered before any selection of management options is made.

Rhode Island Bill of Rights

The voters of Rhode Island have assented to a change in their 1842 constitution which adds an "environmental bill of rights" to the state's basic charter, according to the Wildlife Management Institute. The amendment was added to an old section guaranteeing to the public customary fishing and beach access rights.

The new provision states that the people shall continue to enjoy all fishing and beach rights but with due regard for the preservation of their values. The General Assembly is now charged with the responsibility to provide for the conservation of air, land, water, plant, animal, mineral, and other natural resources through establishing adequate resource planning.

Wild Horses Not Protected

A committee of the Colorado Legislature killed a bill to give protection to an estimated 300 wild horses in that state. Most of the animals are in the Book Cliffs and Piceance areas, northeast of Grand Junction.

The bill was sponsored by Sen. George Jackson of Colorado Springs. He said his bill was introduced in order to try to preserve some remainders of the Old West. The horses may not be shot, chased, and tormented without control by the state, he said.

The Agriculture Committee of the House killed the bill after it had earlier cleared the Senate. Many ranchers oppose protecting the wild horses because of competition for grazing.

Jackson's bill would have put the wild horses under the jurisdiction of the Colorado Game, Fish and Parks Department. A permit to "take" wild horses would have been required.

MOVING?		OLD ADDRESS (Attach old label if available)	NEW ADDRESS (Please print)
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	State	State	State
	Zip Code	Zip Code	Zip Code
Mail to: CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT Box K, Lander, Wyoming 82530 Tel. 1-307-333-6877			

By Marge Higley

THOSE "EMOTIONAL" ENVIRONMENTALISTS

A whole bunch of years ago, when I was in the fifth grade, I achieved a moment of glory and a small gold medal by winning a county spelling contest. They really should have given the medal to my mother, for her patience in coaching me. Each day, we would retreat to her sunny upstairs bedroom and she would pronounce words for me to spell. (To this day, I haven't the vaguest idea where she ever found those long lists of many-syllabled words!) When my attention started to wander and I yawned with boredom, mother managed to revive my interest by talking about the words--what they meant, where they came from, and how they were used. Well, the glory was brief, as fifth-grade fame is apt to be; the medal, in its red velvet box, now lies tarnished and almost forgotten in some dark corner of the basement. But I did gain one enduring reward--an interest in words. I love crossword puzzles and word games--even corny puns! And an unfamiliar word invariably sends me to the dictionary.

Recently, I found myself reaching for the dictionary to look up a very familiar word--EMOTIONAL. It started when I heard a newscaster saying: "U. S. prestige suffered a great setback when a handful of emotional environmentalists were successful in thwarting the appropriation for the huge SST." (He didn't mention that the economy of a large aircraft manufacturer also suffered a setback.)

As I have read the newspapers in the weeks since then, I notice that the word "emotional" crops up again and again. The chemical industry seems to be telling us that if those emotional ecologists don't quit fussing about DDT, the whole nation will starve. Or just in case you are not able to get the weekly wash as white as the driven snow, the soap-makers want you to know that the blame lies with those emotional conservationists, who object to phosphate going down the drain and eventually clogging up the nation's waterways with fishkilling algae. The oil industry is irked at emotional environmentalists who have caused people to question the wisdom of piping millions of gallons of Alaska's oil through earthquake-prone territory.

I guess the one that finally drove me to the dictionary was the automotive industry. Undoubtedly, they are trying to improve their product, but claim that this may take years and years. Those nasty "emotional" people seem to think the industry should spend the necessary money right now to figure out a way to keep all those emissions from poisoning the air we breathe. Somehow this reminded me of tales of early-day miners. If they suspected that a mine was filled with poisonous gas, they lowered a caged canary down the shaft. If the bird died, the men stayed out of the mine. No one scoffingly called them "emotional." They were, in fact, considered downright sensible! But just point out today that birds are dying of air pollution, and it's quite possible that you, too, will be labeled "emotional."

I thought emotional meant "with feeling," or in extreme cases, "with great feeling." So how come now it is suddenly starting to sound like a dirty nine-letter word, used to describe someone whose endeavors might possibly interfere with profits? I decided to check the dictionary to see if perhaps there was some obscure second meaning of which I was ignorant. Nope--according to my dictionary (vintage 1967) it still means "with feeling," or "motivated by feeling."

Just for fun, I flipped over to the other side of the book and looked up "unemotional." In case you're interested, it says: "Cold; stoic; hard-hearted; without feeling." A thought provoking point to keep in mind the next time you come across that phrase "emotional environmentalists!"



Conservationists get emotional about Silent Springs. It is difficult to be "stoic and hard-hearted" about the plight of some of God's threatened creatures.

Senator McGee Reintroduces Bill On Recreation Area

WASHINGTON--Sen. Gale McGee, D-Wyo., will introduce newly drafted legislation to create additional recreation facilities in Western Wyoming in the near future, his office has announced.

The McGee bill will be an improved version of the proposal put forth by the Wyoming Democrat last year to create the Bridger National Recreation Area out of a 200,000 acre portion of the Bridger National Forest east of Pinedale.

"The update draft of Senator McGee's bill will take into account the excellent suggestions which came from environmentalists and industry representatives at the hearing in Pinedale last August," a representative of McGee's office said.

Among the changes in the bill, he said, would be language to insure the protection of the multiple-use principle, particularly the rights of grazing permittees on the lands chosen for inclusion in the new National Recreation Area.

McGee put forth the bill initially last year in order to meet what he called the "unquestioned" need for new facilities to accommodate the waves of tourists in Wyoming, as well as the recreational needs of the state's citizens themselves.

This bill would provide for a third national recreation area in the state. Presently, such designation is given to the Flaming Gorge Area and the Big Horn Canyon Area surrounding Yellowstone Reservoir on the Montana-Wyoming border.

The new recreation area would lie adjacent to the Bridger Wilderness, but would not encroach upon it,

McGee's spokesman said. It would extend from the boundary of the Teton National Forest on the North to a point near historic South Pass city on the South.

In leading off testimony on his bill at the Pinedale hearings last August 17, McGee said the legislation to create the new recreation area would specifically reserve jurisdiction to control and regulate hunting and fishing activities to the State of Wyoming.

McGee said the bill would also protect the multiple-use concept by providing for utilization of natural resources in the recreation area consistent with proper management, ecological balance, and preservation of the forests in their natural state.

"As a result of the hearings, the Senator and his staff have carefully considered the language of the proposed bill," McGee's aide said, "and in consultation with the United States Forest Service and others concerned with management of the land and its proper use, have worked to improve the measure.

"As the Senator has said, Wyoming's economy is becoming more closely related to travel, tourism and recreation in general. It becomes increasingly important that we preserve some of our natural areas, and that we insure their accessibility for recreational purposes in a responsible manner," the spokesman said. "This bill is aimed at those twin goals."

Grand Teton Visitors Set A New High Record

More people visited Grand Teton National Park during 1970 than in any previous year. A total of 3,352,464 visitors were recorded, which represents a seven per cent increase over 1969.

Howard H. Chapman, the park superintendent said, "One of the most significant increases was in hiking. Approximately 116 thousand people wended their way along the parks backcountry trails -- 37 per cent more than 1969. This increased use by hikers means we need new management techniques and basic facilities to minimize the visitor impact along the trails and in the back-country."

The superintendent also noted that there were 376,653 persons who utilized the

camping facilities in the park -- 46,523 more than in 1969.

Concessioners with lodges and cabins accommodated 273,452 overnite visitors; an increase of seven per cent over the previous year.

More than 51 thousand persons, at the park, took a ride down the Snake River in a rubber raft, canoe or boat.

5,028 people attempted to climb one of the Teton Range peaks in 1970 -- 3,935 of the climbers reached the top.

Winter use of the park is growing rapidly. During January and February of 1970, over 16 thousand people visited the park. Twenty years ago only 16 hundred came during those months. Winter visitors find the park uncrowded and accessible via 100 miles of plowed roads.



"The whole trouble with you !! x **! * conservationists is that you're too !! x * ' \$ *! EMOTIONAL!"

Predator Control In Wyoming

by Verne Huser

Part One: OF Predators and Poisons

Wyoming is a big state, and it has a big predator control program. The livestock industry and the hunting and fishing industry seem to find predators incompatible with livestock and wildlife, ignoring ecological evidence to the contrary and persecuting numerous species. The biggest predator-control agency in the state is the U. S. Bureau of Sports Fisheries and Wildlife's Division of Wildlife Services headed by Fred Christensen and headquartered in Casper. Christensen has a staff of three area supervisors and thirty-two field men plus a pilot. In addition to this Federal program, three counties--Campbell, Converse, and Johnson--have their own predator control programs, and ranchers often organize campaigns against a wide variety of so-called predators.

With agriculture--largely sheep and cattle raising--running neck-and-neck with tourism as Wyoming's second leading industry, predator control programs enjoy heavy financial support at the county level, and even the Wyoming Game and Fish Commission--charged with the jurisdiction of "all the wild animals, birds and fishes within the state,"--contributes \$40,000 a year to the Federal program. In Teton County, where there are virtually no sheep and where only a dozen ranchers are making a living raising cattle, the county mill levy for predator control is four times as high as the county library fund levy (is it more important to kill predators than to provide good books for people to read?). One group of ranchers in the southwestern part of the state provide a \$500-a-month incentive to kill coyotes. Predator control is big business.

The Federal predator control program makes use of four major methods of destroying predatory animals and birds: trapping, poisoning, denning, and shooting. The first two methods are highly non-selective. The latter two methods, while somewhat more selective, are extremely unpopular with the public that is becoming more and more aware and concerned. Trapping is widespread on both public and private lands. Poisoning involves both 1080 stations (baits treated with sodium fluoroacetate) and cyanide guns (called "getters"), neither very popular with the public.

Denning, digging the young out of dens and killing them any convenient way, is usually done in the spring when the creatures have their young. Dens are located, often with the help of dogs, and the young are destroyed. Shooting includes both calling from blinds (often using the simulated cry of an injured rabbit) and searching from aircraft as well as ground hunting on foot and horseback. Leaving trapping, denning and shooting for a later

discussion, let's take a closer look at the poison practices of predator control programs at all levels in Wyoming.

Cyanide guns, small explosive charges that fire a cyanide pellet into the mouth of any animal that triggers the mechanism by nibbling a scented rag, are used extensively throughout the state. They have killed numerous pets and, in other states, have come close to killing people on more than one occasion. In Teton County alone, 23 coyotes were taken by cyanide guns in the Cliff Creek area of Teton National Forest the summer of 1968 on a handful of sheep allotments, and as many as 40 coyote getters were set in the Gros Ventre country last winter by Game and Fish personnel.

According to Christensen, 30% of all coyotes taken in Wyoming are killed by the cyanide guns, which he says are selective depending upon where they are located. In fact they are not nearly as selective as predator control authorities would like to have the public believe. Christensen himself admits that they also kill foxes, skunks, and domestic dogs, but that seems to be okay--these non-target species are pests and predators too and can be sacrificed. But what about the rare and possibly-extinct (in Wyoming) wolf, the wolverine, even the grizzly bear?

The big poison problem in Wyoming is 1080, which is used legally by the Federal agents and misused by the agents of the three county predator control programs and even worse, by illegal users throughout the state who possibly get their 1080 through the three county programs (1080 is controlled by the Federal Government, but an awful lot of it shows up throughout the state in out-of-control situations). This potent poison, for which there is no known antidote, is dangerous under any circumstances. It is an ecological crime to introduce 1080 into the ecosystem, but to date only two states--Kansas and New York--have outlawed its use. Legally 1080 is used throughout Wyoming with the exception of Teton National Forest (even there illegal baits have been found). It is also used in Targhee National Forest west of and adjacent to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks and in Shoshone National Forest just east of Yellowstone (there are a total of thirty-four 1080 stations within a 50-mile radius of Yellowstone's eastern boundary). There are seven 1080 stations on the Targhee in Teton County. All these stations threaten the endangered wolf that roams widely in Yellowstone and probably doesn't know the boundary lines. They possibly threaten the grizzly bear and the wolverine and for that matter, any meat-eating animal in the area.

For coyotes 1080 is used at the rate of .8 grams for 50 pounds of meat or 1.6 grams for 100 pounds of meat. That means a single pound of 1080 is enough to treat 28,350 pounds of meat, enough to kill thousands of coyotes. The

three county predator control agencies in 1968 purchased 75 pounds of 1080 (Converse County alone bought 28 pounds). Either an awful lot of meat was set out as poisoned baits--say something over two million pounds) or the dose was extremely high (high enough to kill all kinds of non-target species) or a lot of the poison leaked out of the three counties to be used illegally by untrained private ranchers.

Christensen claims that 1080 is selective in its killing potential but admits that non-target species such as bears, badgers, skunks, wolves, wolverine may be killed by the poison. Cats, he suggests, avoid poison baits, and eagles, he says, regurgitate the poison and are not killed by 1080. In California where the last remnants of the California Condor are slipping over the edge of extinction, a number of the great birds have been found in recent years, dead from the 1080 they picked up through eating rodents killed by the poison. This secondary poisoning is a distinct possibility, and scholarly authorities disagree with Christensen's suggestion that eagles will resist 1080 poisoning. Yellowstone National Park research biologist Douglas Houston is concerned about the proximity of 1080 stations to the habitat of free-ranging carnivores in Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks, and dog-owners everywhere need to be cautious.

The selectivity of 1080 is highly questionable. Baits are poisoned for coyotes, but a skunk, which won't eat as much of the treated meat as a coyote, doesn't need as much poison to kill it, and a grizzly bear, which will eat much more than a coyote, needs more 1080 to kill it. There is also evidence that as the stricken coyotes run from the source of poison and regurgitate the toxic sub-

stance that is killing them, the poison is spread to grasses and herbs.

Two baits set out by illegal poisoners were found on the Teton National Forest last winter by Wyoming Game and Fish wardens, but when they returned a few days later to pick up the baits, they were gone. No signs warning of the baits had been placed, and one of the baits was actually in the stream, no doubt poisoning the water for a considerable ways downstream--and 1080 is just as fatal to man as it is the other carnivores. It is in this same area that one trapper reports that there are no longer any mink or martin--all have been



poisoned by illegally-placed carcasses; it is in this area that one rancher reports there aren't enough coyotes left to clean up the natural carrion on his place. Federally trained baiters are required to leave baits in the open, never near water and never in the timber--and always marked.

In 1967 one of the same wardens who found the illegal carcasses last winter obtained a conviction on a charge of wanton waste of game animals related to illegal 1080 baits found along the Big Sandy River on BLM lands in the Green River Basin. A Rock Springs sheep rancher pled guilty to killing animals out of season (six quarters of deer and antelope had been injected with 1080), wanton waste of animals injected with 1080, and abandonment of parts of game animals. He refused to reveal his source of 1080, but Game and Fish authorities suspect that it came from the Johnson County Predator Control Board, probably

indirectly. When a Buffalo (Johnson County) trapper was convicted on a similar violation, the Predator Control Board paid his fine. Obviously, 1080 is readily available throughout the state from unknown sources quite likely in the three counties that have their own programs since the sale of 1080 is controlled by the Federal Government.

According to one game warden, the Division of Wildlife Services trappers are legal and use dead lamb and horse baits. They are willing to testify at any time against those who practice illegal poisoning because of fear that with too much illegal poisoning going on in Wyoming, it will blow sky high and ALL poison baits will be outlawed. (The Jackson Hole Environmental Action Society has recently recommended that all poison campaigns in Wyoming be phased out since they are ecologically unsound and environmentally dangerous). Many DWS agents believe that poison is necessary to control coyotes, and that coyote control is an important tool in maintaining wildlife populations. Yet the creatures that are targets of the poison campaign are also wildlife under Wyoming law and as such deserve protection too.

Two basic things happen when the coyote is persecuted: first, coyotes that survive begin to reproduce at a higher rate because their food supply is more plentiful (rodents and rabbits overpopulate providing more food for more coyotes). Second, if the control program is pushed too hard and the coyote population actually does decline, other species--the red fox, the bobcat, the skunk, and the badger--move into the area to replace the coyote in controlling the exploding rodent and rabbit populations. If such non-selective methods of predator (Please turn to page 11.)



Photo by Wyo. Game & Fish Dept.

Public opinion has begun to turn to the defense of the predators. Ecologists and game managers have long known of the value of these animals in maintaining healthy, thrifty game herds, and for keeping rodents in check. Now, coyotes, wolves, foxes, bears and others may get their day in court.

control as trapping and poisoning are used, eventually all the predators are decimated, and the rodents and rabbits take over, eating more grasses and herbs and forbes than the livestock. Basically, predators turn to domestic livestock for the most part in areas that have been overgrazed, in areas where their natural prey has been driven out by man's management programs.

Christensen stresses the point that in areas where coyotes have been reduced, other predators fill in the gaps. It therefore seems obvious that there is a place for the predator in the pattern of things. He believes that coyotes actually keep fox populations in check, not only through food competition but by actually killing foxes. Christensen, by the way, does not consider a carnivore a predator unless he causes economic damage.

"The coyotes in Teton County and the mountain lions west of Cody (in the wilderness areas) are not predators in my book," he says, but he does believe that "coyotes and lions are killers that kill for fun, especially the lion because he moves so much." (How ecologically unsound! How viciously man-centered! No predator has ever caused the extinction of any species. Man Has!) Christensen estimates the mountain lion population of Wyoming at between 50 and 75 animals.

It might be appropriate at this point to relate a story that Dr. DeWitt Dominick told at the Dude Ranchers Convention in Cody last November. Dr. Dominick, a retired physician and a former member of the Wyoming Senate, runs a cattle and dude ranch in Sunlight Basin. Last spring Dr. Dominick lost three calves to what he at first thought was a bear but turned out to be a mountain lion. The calf-killer got away, however, and wasn't seen or heard of again until early last fall when Dr. Dominick was driving a dude out to the ranch at dusk. The lion—or a lion—ran across the road ahead of the car, and the dude, seeing his first cougar in the wilds, was ecstatic. Dr. Dominick felt that it was worth losing those three calves just to experience the guests' excitement over seeing a rare wild animal in the wilds.

The wolf has returned to Yellowstone, and not a few of the tourists who come to Wyoming every summer are looking for him. More and more people seek out the grizzly bear, the mountain lion, even the bobcat and coyote, the lynx and the rare wolverine just to look at, just as a wilderness experience. And when we kill predators here in Wyoming, we are actually killing the potential tourists' industry. We have something unique here in Wyoming—something that brings millions of tourists here every summer—but we're doing our dead level best to destroy it, be it a free-flowing Green River or a rare species of wildlife.

When a game warden sees a pair of coyotes kill an adult bighorn sheep, does he examine the animal for signs of sickness or an injury?

Seldom, and the coyote becomes a villain in the eyes of the warden and his associates who hear the story. Every sound ecological study ever made concerning predator-prey relationship indicates the value of the predator in keeping the species healthy.

Turning to the livestock industry, circumstantial rather than ecological evidence is the basis for most of the knowledge cattlemen and wool growers have concerning predators. A brochure published by the Campbell County Wool Growers Association relates the story of a huge eagle (with a wing spread far in excess of ten feet—which is about two feet too much for me to accept) killing a fully-grown antelope. The fact that the antelope was "the last in the band" suggested nothing (sounds to me as if the animal was unfit, perhaps diseased). Nor did he examine the carcass of the kill to determine the health or condition of the animal.

Statistics published by the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the Wyoming Department of Agriculture concerning ranchers' losses to predators seem highly exaggerated, especially if you consider that they are based upon a questionnaire sent out to ranchers asking them to estimate their losses. Only 38% of the ranchers return the questionnaires, but the losses, I believe, are prorated on 100%. The estimates are often highly inaccurate, again due to circumstantial evidence. Weather and disease kill a lot of the animals listed as predator kills, and who gets blamed for the kills is usually left up to the prejudices of the rancher. Two examples should help to illustrate this point.

Before the red fox was officially listed as a predator in Wyoming, no one bothered to list the red fox as a source of lamb loss, but the first year the red fox was added to the questionnaire as a predator, suddenly 800 lambs were lost to red fox predation.

More than eight thousand lambs were reportedly lost to eagles in 1969. Eagles feed heavily upon carrion, and most of the lambs they feed upon were dead before the eagles found them if we can believe any of the ecological evidence from dozens of studies. Fred Christensen himself has said that as long as he has been in Wyoming as head of the DWS he has seen a total of three lambs that might have been killed by eagles—this out of the thousands of carcasses he has examined.

Is the eagle really a major killer of lambs or do the ranchers label him "killer" just because he cleans up the carcasses of weather kills and disease? Ecological evidence suggests the latter as Sec. of the Interior Walter Hickel pointed out to Governor Hathaway last spring and summer when the governor tried to get Hickel to open the season on eagles in Wyoming to appease the sheep ranchers.

A FURTHER DISCUSSION OF PREDATOR CONTROL PROGRAMS IN WYOMING WILL APPEAR IN THE NEXT ISSUE OF HIGH

COUNTRY NEWS (The author welcomes any opportunity to get out into the field and see for himself the ravages of predators or of predator control programs). Verne Huser, P. O. Box 186, Wilson, Wyoming 83014.

Park Limits Vehicle Size

Superintendent William J. Briggie recently announced a limit on the size of vehicles over Logan Pass in Glacier National Park, during the heavy visitation months of July and August. The purpose of this restriction is to provide a safer flow of traffic for park visitors on the Going-to-the-Sun Road by eliminating wide and lengthy vehicles and towed units on this narrow, winding, mountainous road. Eliminating these oversize vehicles will further enhance the opportunity for scenic viewing and is another step by the National Park Service to assure a quality park experience.

All vehicles having a width in excess of eight feet or overall length of thirty feet, including combination of units, are prohibited on the Going-to-the-Sun Road between Avalanche and Rising Sun Campgrounds. The eight feet width applies not only to the unit, but also mirrors and other extensions. Owners of vehicles with towed units in excess of length limitation may park their trailers temporarily at Rising Sun on the east side or in one of the regular campgrounds on either side of the park while they continue on their tour to the other side and return.

Prior to July 1 and following August 31 vehicles up to a maximum length of 35 feet and width of 8 feet may travel the Sun Road over Logan Pass.

Youth Corps Gets Funding

During the waning hours of the 91st Congress, an appropriation for the Youth Conservation Corps was cleared for Presidential action, the Wildlife Management Institute reports. The action came at the request of Senator Henry M. Jackson (Wash.) and provides a way for 2000-3000 young men and women to spend next summer working in National Forests and Parks throughout the nation.

Jackson said, "Congress has done everything within its power to get the Youth Conservation Corps program implemented; the rest is up to the President. The \$2.5 million appropriated by Congress is very small in relation to the total benefits that can be achieved by the YCC. I am hopeful that it can be expanded to include perhaps 100,000 young men and women in future years."

Senator Jackson said that the Departments of Agriculture and Interior will share responsibilities in administering the YCC, and inquires may be made directly to these agencies. The addresses are: Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240, and Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.



Photo by Idaho Dept. of Commerce and Development

Dr. Maurice Hornocker holds one of his research subjects - a cougar or mountain lion. Hornocker's intensive studies may result in having the big cats reclassified from a predator to a game animal in Idaho.

Mountain Lion Has Important Place

In the rugged unspoiled back country of the Idaho wilderness roams a most sought after trophy - the cougar. Where once the animal had the freedom of several states in the country, it now occupies only a small portion of the backlands. Powerfully built and very intelligent, the fast-becoming-extinct cougar is the object of a study that is now being done in the Gem State.

The importance of the study being done by Dr. Maurice G. Hornocker, Director of the Idaho Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit at the University of Idaho, is to show the cougar's vital role in maintaining nature's proper balance. Until such time as the surplus deer and elk can be removed by hunters,

cougar predation will remain beneficial.

In order to observe the habits of the cougar, hounds are used to tree the animal and then it is shot with tranquilizers. Hornocker has "bagged" numerous cats, some as many as 14 times. His work deals with animal behavior, habitat, life history, productivity, food habits, and diseases and parasites.

The cougar is vital to nature, and it is an important animal that Idahoans cannot afford to lose. People who worry about cougars while they are on an outing have nothing to fear, as the cat is relatively a shy tabby with no interest in man. With the natural abundance of a food supply, there is little threat to a human.

Idaho Lions May Get Game Classification

The Idaho Legislature is considering a bill which would remove the mountain lion from the predator list and make the big cat a game animal. Such a move has already been taken by Colorado, Utah, Oregon, California, Washington, Nevada, and the Canadian provinces of Alberta and British Columbia.

The bill would provide for both resident and non-resident licenses, for setting seasons and bag limits, and for taking lions causing predation on livestock.

Research done by Dr.

Maurice Hornocker shows the mountain lion is an important ecological factor in deer and elk populations. Although deer and elk are the principal prey of the lion, Hornocker found "lion predation appears incapable to limiting elk and deer populations in the Idaho Primitive Area (where he is conducting intensive research), but the effect and influence of such predation is of great significance in tending to maintain ecological stability in a wilderness environment."



Kane Canyon in Idaho's Pioneer Mountains. This beautiful mountain range has been proposed for inclusion in a new national park. In the meantime, many new mining claims, filed under the

archaic 1872 Mining Act, will make the task of getting a park more difficult.

Photo by Ernie Day

Nebraska Rivers Threatened . . .

next spring, and determine what other forms of wildlife will be affected if the Platte River eco-system is permanently altered.

A large population of white-tailed deer inhabit the Platte River islands and adjacent timberlands. They may almost disappear from the valley if the river is dried-up, channelized and cleared of vegetation, Klataske said. Following the diversion of the river's flow, it may be necessary to dredge and channelize the stream to maintain a flood capacity and prevent willows from growing in the channel. He predicts that much of the bottomland will be cleared of trees and farmed after the water table drops along the river. In the final analysis, he said, the indirect effects of the Mid-State Reclamation Project may be the most damaging to wildlife.

The National Audubon Society has also joined the Nebraska Chapter of The Wildlife Society in opposition to the O'Neill Project, a plan to dam the Niobrara River near Norden and divert its flow for irrigation at Atkinson and O'Neill. Klataske believes the beautiful Niobrara should be included in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The Niobrara is one of the most scenic rivers in

Nebraska. With its cottonwoods, pines and occasional cedars, the Niobrara River valley is a sharp contrast to the surrounding grasslands of the Sand Hills. Its natural beauty is its most significant value, and we should study ways to capitalize on the recreational uses which are compatible with its preservation, the Audubon Representative said.

"We can always dam, alter or destroy it later if it's necessary," Klataske stated, "but engineers will never be able to re-create another river as magnificent as the Niobrara."

In addition to the area which would be inundated by the Norden Dam, conservationists are also concerned about the diversion of the Niobrara River's flow and the environmental impact of a large concrete canal.

Although the Bureau of Reclamation recently agreed to return 100 cubic feet of water per second to the natural channel 95 percent of the time, this is less than the minimum stream flow recorded during any drouth period in the last 16 years on record by the U. S. Geological Survey. Lowering of the water levels in the stream may result in the disappearance of pools and ecologically productive

aquatic areas along the river, warming of water, and encroachment of the channel by vegetation. Under Nebraska water laws the river could be completely diverted or pumped dry by landowners below Norden Dam.

Klataske also said the 28 mile concrete portion of the O'Neill Canal will be a "death trap" for deer, and cited an earlier prediction by Nebraska wildlife biologists that as many as 150 deer may drown in the canal each year. A large number of deer have died in the Ainsworth Canal during the past several years, however, deer losses per mile in the O'Neill Canal are expected to be proportionately larger because deer populations in the vicinity of the proposed O'Neill Canal are much higher.

The basic logic of such water development projects is also under attack by conservation and sportsman organizations across the country. Although the O'Neill and Mid-State Reclamation projects will increase the crop yields on the lands to be irrigated, Klataske said, we are faced with surplus problems already and pay farmers to let their lands lie idle. He said other Nebraska farmers will have to compete with those who benefit from reclamation projects, while the general tax payer gets the

bill.

A proposal by the Corps of Engineers to channelize the last relatively natural reach of the entire Missouri River remaining below the mainstem reservoirs was sited as an "environmentally destructive" boondoggle, and their topic of Audubon study in Nebraska.

Governor Tiemann notified the Corps of Engineers in December that the State of Nebraska did not endorse the channelization project, while during the same month the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission went on record against it. The Commission's resolution called attention to the project's low cost-benefit ratio of 1 to 1, and stated that it was "an even trade off of public values for values largely accruing to private interests. . ."

The Corps project would shorten and straighten the Missouri river and direct its flow into a single canal-like channel, thereby eliminating the islands, gravel bars and miscellaneous aquatic areas which serve as resting places for waterfowl and spawning areas for fish. Several rare fish species would probably be eliminated, and research in Nebraska and other states illustrates that channelization results in a drastic reduction in game fish,

Klataske reported.

The National Audubon Society recently focused on stream channelization as a special action priority for 1971. "It's a destructive engineering fad supported by federal funds," Klataske said, "and we hope to spotlight it so people can see what it will do to the life and beauty of our natural streams."

Fire Problem From Logging

A. U. S. Forest Service spokesman says the most serious forest fire problem facing the Forest Service today stems from the slash and debris from logging operations.

William R. Moore, chief of the fire control division in the Northern Rocky Mountain Region at Missoula, Montana, said, "Almost every large, damaging fire we fought last season was complicated by the presence of logging slash."

Moore said the Forest Service goal in the future, ". . . must be to join fire protection planning, vegetative manipulation, and logging slash treatment in a common endeavor" to achieve fire safe forests.