

The Environmental Bi-Weekly

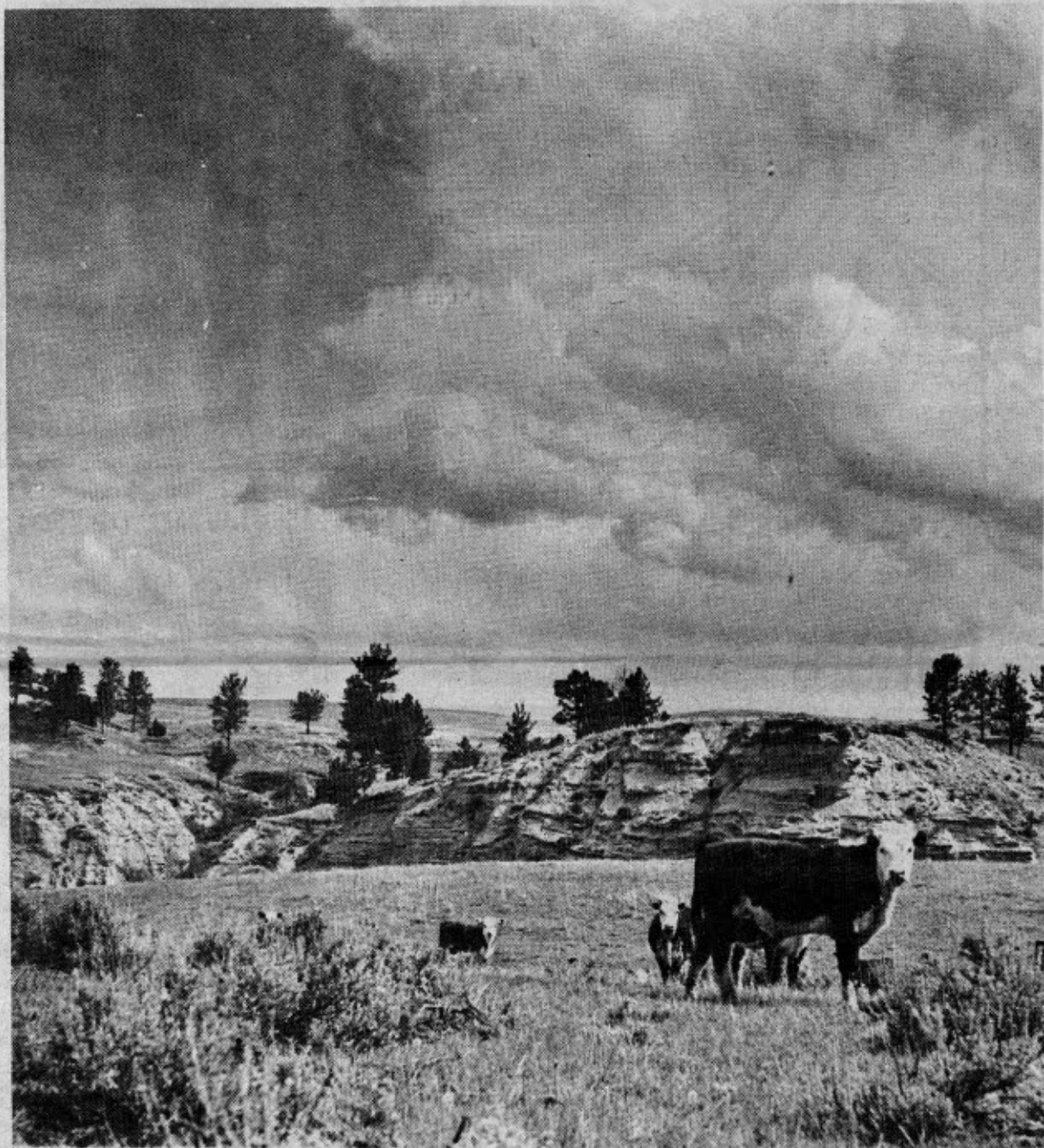
# High Country News



Vol. 6 No. 20 35¢

Lander, Wyoming

Friday, October 11, 1974



A rural scene east of the Northern Cheyenne Reservation

## THIS IS MY HOME

What's that I hear?  
Is it the rhythmic sound of distant drums?  
Or is it the faint heartbeats of the many proud souls  
Laid to rest beneath the rich, brown earth?

Listen! Is it the soft hoot of an owl  
In the clearness of the evening?  
Or the chatter of the busy magpies  
In the early morn'g?

Could it be . . . No!  
It is the hideous sound of the rape of the earth.  
Turning under culture, life and love  
With every selfish bite.  
They say that it's progress.  
Have you ever found an arrowhead?  
Or seen a tipi ring?  
Or watched a deer drink from a clear, blue creek?

Yes, it is with deep sorrow and a heavy heart  
I say this.  
Cannot someone stop them . . . these unwanted invaders?  
This is my home!

by Susan La Fever, N. Cheyenne student  
at University of Montana  
Reprinted from A'tome

## Cheyenne Fight, Again, for Land

The Northern Cheyenne Indians, long called the "Race of Sorrows," walked more than 1,000 miles, facing blizzards, malaria, starvation, and 10,000 soldiers — just to return to the land they loved in eastern Montana 96 years ago. Today these people are combining this determination with new found sophistication in the ways of government and of big business to wage an unprecedented battle against the coal companies whose contracts threaten the existence of the tribal group.

by Marjane Ambler

To those who live in the urban centers of the country, the Northern Plains might not look like much of a sacrifice to meet the energy demands of the nation. With low rainfall and short

seasons, the land is not nearly as productive as other agricultural areas. Nor are the bluffs and sagebrush-covered flat lands as spectacular to the tourist's eye as some of the mountain mecas.

And underneath lies at least 1.5 trillion tons of coal.

There are, proportionately, not many people who live in Montana, Wyoming, and the Dakotas. However, to many of them, the land is the foundation for their lives. The prospect of extensive strip mining is a threat to their crop and pasture land, to their homes, to their way of life, and they are organizing to resist it.

Straddling the Montana-Wyoming border is the richest coal concentration in the region, between Colstrip, Montana, and Gillette, Wyoming. Near the center of it is the Northern

Cheyenne Reservation. There the struggle may be the most intense: with almost half (49%) of  
(Continued on page 4)

On October 4 the leading oil shale development firm, Colony Development Operation, announced that it had indefinitely suspended plans to build this country's first commercial shale oil plant. Inflation, tight money, and the absence of a national energy policy were cited as reasons for the announcement. Does Colony's decision signal the beginning of the end of an oil shale boom that never really got off the ground? For the whole story see page 12.

# HIGH COUNTRY

By Joan Bell

The grim realities of massive energy development finally seem to be dawning on many westerners. But lack of information still handicaps officials and citizens alike in truly assessing the impacts which can and may occur. A recently released Draft Report of the Northern Great Plains Resource Program poses many more tough questions than it answers. And the questions relate to critical and adverse impacts on the social, economic and environmental web of life as it now exists in the better part of five states.

Still, there are indications of what lies ahead. At a recent meeting of the Federation of Rocky Mountain States in East Glacier, Montana, government and business leaders took a look at what has already happened in several impacted areas. Information now available from such energy centers as Rock Springs and Gillette, Wyoming, and Colstrip, Montana, was used to portray the modern version of the boomtown. Resource City was the hypothetical result.

Resource City is an area of burgeoning populations, unplanned and uncontrolled growth, intolerable living conditions, social instability leading to high crime rates and a cancerous growth of mental illness, and a landscape which no longer holds beauty and attraction. A 21-page report on Resource City says such a situation is not exaggerated. "The conditions described in this paper do exist and will exist in many sections of our region," it warns.

The NGPRP Report says that 35 percent of the housing units in Gillette were mobile homes in 1973, and "the number is rapidly increasing." In Resource City housing is almost impossible to find. Tents are common. More than 35 percent of the population lives in house trailers. (Some of these are nothing more than recreational campers.) The setting for the trailer cities are barren, open, wind-swept areas, plagued by either mud or swirling dust. There, trailer rentals may cost up to \$85 per week. Motel rooms in the towns proper are rented in eight-hour shifts.

Job turnover is high because of living conditions and the high crime rate, up 400%. The kids come and go through crowded classrooms. The welfare rolls have quadrupled.

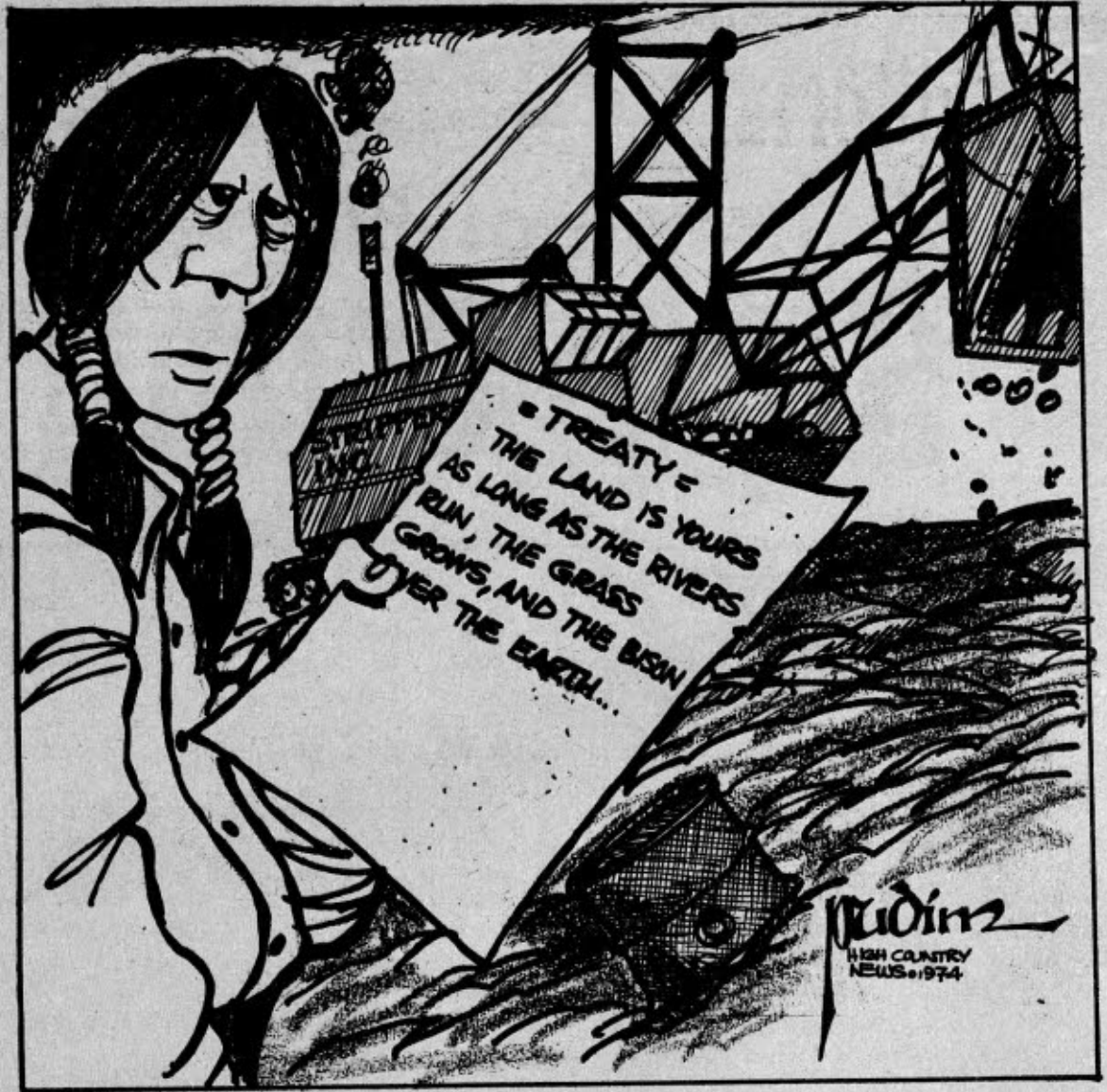
Traffic in Resource City has increased five-fold leading to further problems for an understaffed police force. Some workers commute 70 miles and more. If workers want to take their families to a good hospital and doctors which are not overworked, they go 150 miles or more. Long lines develop and there is a three-hour wait at the hospital emergency room.

Divorce rates are far beyond the regional rate and child abuse is more prevalent. There is a 1,000 percent increase in the caseload at the mental health clinic. There are no adequate recreational facilities. Local bars flourish.

The local jail is a haven for wives seeking protection from the beatings of drunken husbands. The jail also holds alcoholics and psychiatric patients.

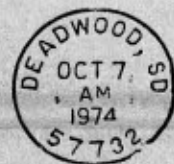
Hunting and fishing which was once one of the important pastimes around Resource City has virtually disappeared. Vandalism of private property and scenic and historic sites has greatly increased. Clean air and wide-open spaces have disappeared along with the game animals. So has the tourist industry. There is much more that could be told about the effects on local businesses, on tax rolls, on land use, and on a myriad of other aspects of massive energy developments.

There are various reactions to these impending developments in the states that would be involved. In Montana, continuing resistance, especially by ranchers, has led to Japanese rejection of contracts to supply 10-million tons of coal a year. The effects reach 1,000 miles from Montana's grazing lands to the shipping port at Astoria, Oregon. In Wyoming, coming elections will be greatly influenced by an awakening electorate. Nevertheless, developments are already underway and it is a matter of speculation as to how much effect people can have on their future.



"THIS IS ONE CLAUSE THE WHITE MAN IS LIVING UP TO"

## Letters



Dear Editors,

I have been a subscriber to the HCN for one year now. I would like to take this opportunity to commend you on the guts and gumption displayed in keeping the HCN afloat and in doing an outstanding job on the format and contents of the paper. You provide the line of communication desperately needed so that one can keep informed of developments in an important part of this country.

Never, absolutely never, back down from fear of intimidation by those who are ravaging this country. You have a lifetime reader and since I expect to live considerably longer than my 26 years, I expect to see the HCN in my mailbox for many years.

Cordially,  
Stuart Hirsh  
Medford, Ore.

\* \* \*

Dear Joan:

This is to express our most sincere thanks for the coverage you gave us in the Sept. 13th edition of HCN on the Escudilla/Watts Sale controversy. Far, far more than we ever expected or hoped for, and it is hard to tell you how much it will eventually help in bringing this issue to a successful conclusion.

In its simplest terms such coverage helps immensely in maintaining the controversial aspect, by carrying the information concerning it beyond local and state boundaries.

Again our deepest appreciation,  
Ernest L. & Mary Anne Youens  
Alpine, Ariz.

Dear Editor,

As pointed out in the September 13 edition of HCN under the title, "Farms Need Tax Flexibility," the present archaic taxing structures create severe problems for the American farmers, and these problems are so severe that in many cases they force sale of family farms and ranches to developers.

One factor which did not receive its proper emphasis from author Stallings is the insistence by the Internal Revenue Service and by many states that valuation of land for estate tax purposes be based on the development potential of the land.

A comparative analysis of estate taxes for a typical ranch in this area (Pitkin County, Colo.) reveals that state and federal taxes which in 1954 were a reasonable \$20,092, by 1974 had risen to \$342,500! Most of the increase is attributable to inflated land costs which in no way reflect the value of a piece of land as an agricultural unit.

The result, unless the deceased had been possessed of remarkable foresight and had utilized one or more of the available estate planning methods, would be the forced sale of all or of a substantial portion of this hypothetical ranch.

At any rate the ability of one generation to pass on to the next generation family agricultural units has been seriously impaired if not completely destroyed. At the present time there is nothing to indicate that Congress will act to correct this situation.

The G.A.R. (General and Active Reserve, see HCN, Sept. 27), an organization dedicated to the saving of the West and composed of representatives from all segments of the population including ranchers, businessmen, and environmentalists, will be taking dead aim at this

## Editorial



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# Cheyennes not Blinded by Dollar Signs

Too often, when one strips back the overburden of sound-good rationalizations, one finds that only one value was considered: Is it economic? Perhaps justifiably, governing bodies seem to think that the voters — or the stockholders — measure success in dollars and cents: how much it costs and how much return there is on the investment.

Two current examples are reported in this issue: House Appropriations Committee's orders to the Environmental Protection Agency not to use tax dollars on any program that "reduces the supply or increases the cost of electricity or food to the consumer." And Colony Development Operation's decision to indefinitely postpone construction of an oil shale plant in Colorado because of inflation and tight money.

It's easy enough for us to criticize decisions on the bureaucratic level which use exclusively economic standards, and many of us are willing to take that next step, if proven necessary, and agree to pay the extra fuel dollars or the additional taxes.

Yet, on the more immediate levels, the question becomes more complex. Can a rancher who has been losing his family's food dollars on high feed and low market costs, whose resources are down to zero, afford to turn his back on an offer

from a coal company that's more than anyone could pay him who wanted to use his land for agriculture? Can a community with a high unemployment rate say no to the coal man who comes with armloads of brightly wrapped presents, which he says contain jobs and tax dollars?

One of the joys of work at this publication is being able to tell the stories of those who do consider other factors on an equal basis with economics, even when to do so is unprofitable. Such is the story of the Northern Cheyenne in this issue. As a people, their lives have been ruled for a century by poverty and all its accompanying burdens: poor housing, sometimes impassable roads, inadequate or nonexistent health care facilities, and, until recently, inferior schools.

Suddenly, they were told of wealth that had been buried beneath them all these years. Willingly at first, they signed the exploration permits and accepted the checks coming in. Then someone stopped to worry about the historic tipi rings up above Muddy Creek, and someone else thought about the children and the soon-to-be-overcrowded schools, about life on the reservation after the coal rush.

Gradually, the difficult decision was made to call a halt to the permits and leases — and also to the dollars. For some tribal members, the turning point may have been a financial concern when they learned that the royalties they were receiving were lower than they were getting for gravel. And it's hard to say if others would have been as worried if it had been Indian coal under white ranchers' land, as is the case with the neighboring Crow Indians and their coal in the Sarpy Creek Basin.

However, at least some of the Northern Cheyennes seem to be weighing cultural, historical, social, and environmental costs against the financial gains to decide what would be the "best" use of the reservation land. Steps are being taken to develop a land use plan, to explore other economic alternatives, to study present resources, and, throughout, to get the facts before all the Northern Cheyenne people through the reservation newspaper and through public meetings.

There are difficult times ahead. As Dave Robinson, head of the Northern Cheyenne Landowners Association, said at a recent public



meeting, "As long as the Northern Cheyenne live in poverty, there is the temptation to take the easy way out and sell the resources of the reservation. We must seek economic alternatives which will not destroy our land base and are in keeping with the Cheyenne Way."

It is possible that the Northern Cheyenne will choose to proceed with strip mining on the reservation. Hopefully, they will find other alternatives. Whatever decision they make, they are to be commended for stopping awhile to gaze into the fire to envision which destiny should be theirs. There have been too many other communities which have been blinded by the flash of the dollar signs and ignored the necessary step of planning.

The coal companies — and the nation — can afford to wait. —MJA



critical problem. We ask that your readers assist us by investigating the situation in their area and by writing of their concern to their Congressmen.

Bob Child  
Acting Chairman  
Colorado State Council G.A.R.  
Snowmass, Colo.

## Guest Editorial



Reprinted from the FAIRBANKS ALL-AMERICAN WEEKLY.

# Town Regrets Pipeline Praise

In the past few years we have written so many editorials supporting the trans-Alaska pipeline project and urging that we get on with it, that now that the project is beginning, we feel a bit hypocritical in writing an editorial complaining about its impact.

Nonetheless, we feel compelled to point out that thus far the project is having very little positive impact on the average citizen, that in reality it is having a negative impact on most of us.

One of the biggest impacts has been the project's impacts on the price structure, forcing us into a whirlwind of inflation, the likes of which we have never seen before.

The cost of real estate has skyrocketed and landlords have started raising their rents to almost unbelievable figures. And various groups of tenants are having to band together in associations to fight what they call unconscionable rent increases, evictions, etc.

The demand for building lots with utilities available is particularly great, and it appears that before long the vacant lots in the city will disappear. The population of the city will go up, of course, but it's a cinch that it will not be as

comfortable living in a crowded city with little breathing space.

Construction will probably boom outside the city in the borough (county), but there again there is apt to be environmental impact. The impact could be serious on the public health since a study not too long ago showed that at least one third of area wells were polluted.

Then there is the impact on traffic. Once we had a few snarls at eight in the morning and at noon and traffic jams at the five o'clock rush. Now the traffic is running heavy all day, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to get around anytime during the day from eight to five.

The cash registers of the businessmen are beginning to jingle. And those who are fortunate to be employed on the pipeline construction are in a good position. That green stuff will allow them to overcome their problems.

But by and large the average citizen is being hit, and hit hard. The easy-going slow-paced Fairbanks is losing its personality and is becoming another old, crowded, stilted, impersonal fast-paced city.

And what does all this add up to for the average citizen? A great deterioration of the quality of life.

### HIGH COUNTRY NEWS

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## Cheyenne . . .

(Continued from page 1)

their reservation now covered by coal exploration permits or leases, the Cheyennes have reason to believe that full-scale development could threaten their continued existence as a tribal group. Many Indians believe the impact of mining on the reservation was not even considered when the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), an agency within the Interior Department, approved contracts with the coal companies — contracts which conflict with the Department's own regulations protecting Indian resources.

Instead of waiting for their destiny to overtake them, the Northern Cheyennes are fighting to keep hold of their land. The battle may soon move to the courts, following a statement leaning in their favor by Interior Secretary Rogers C.B. Morton. Responding to a petition presented to him by the Tribal Council in January asking that he void all contracts, Morton acknowledged the validity of many of their legal arguments. In his June 4 statement, he also authorized the tribe to take the coal companies to court to test the permits and leases.

Although several billion tons of coal lie under nine reservations in the Northern Plains and although many are under the same questionable BIA contracts, the Northern Cheyennes were the first to resist. The neighboring Crow Indians have since followed their example and petitioned the Interior Department.

On another front, the Cheyennes are joining many of the other non-Indian residents of the Northern Plains in forming Landowners' Associations to fight the coal companies.

### COAL INTEREST INTENSIFIES

Surprisingly, the present turmoil was preceded by a period when on the reservation, as elsewhere in the region, there was only isolated concern. Peabody Coal was the sole bidder in 1966 and in 1969 for exploration permits. Until clean air legislation changed the priorities, there was little hurry to scrape out the low sulfur coal. The bidding became competitive in 1971 with 12 bidders. Four were granted exploration permits, including AMAX Coal Co. (under the name of Meadowlark Farms); Consolidation Coal; a Billings attorney, Bruce L. Ennis; and lease brokers, Norseworthy and Reger. Drilling of exploration wells intensified, and today there are 5-6,000 on the reservation.

In Lame Deer, the reservation's largest town, a few people started talking about the coal companies and where their increased activity might lead. Dorothy Robinson became involved in the



Dorothy Robinson pushed her husband, Dave, to start the Landowners' Association to fight the strip mining. They feared the social impact on the reservation, much of which is like their Muddy Creek Ranch pictured here which is used primarily for grazing cattle.

to do something about it.' Finally, I told him it was just as much up to him as to anyone else, and he might as well do it," Mrs. Robinson remembered.

Since then, her husband has become well-known — notorious in some circles — for his outspoken defense of reservation resources as chairman of the Northern Cheyenne Landowners' Association. Robinson, 56, is a Northern Cheyenne. He traces his name and his light coloring to some Scotch ancestors — fighting Scotch. He could easily be mistaken for a white man, until he speaks out for his people.

### ILLEGAL LEASES

Voicing the major concerns of the tribe in this testimony before Sen. Clifford Hansen (R-Wyo.) and Sen. Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.) of the Senate Interior Subcommittee, Robinson cited the Code of Federal Regulations to point out how the BIA had been derelict in its trust responsibility, which is to serve as the legal protector of Indian resources.

The regulations limit leases to 2,560 acres, but several were larger — almost ten times

whether reclamation would ever be possible in the dry climate.

Robinson also testified that no technical examinations had been conducted until May of 1973 to determine the ecological, cultural, historic, and scenic factors that might be affected by mining, although the examinations are also required in the Federal Regulations.

After pointing out how he believed the BIA had failed to live up to its trust responsibilities, Robinson emphasized the necessity of the BIA following through with its philosophy of self-determination for the Indians and criticized regulations which did not allow for tribal participation in protecting their own resources.

Many of these points were reiterated in the petition presented by the Tribal Council to Secretary Rogers C.B. Morton of the Interior Department in January, 1974. In the June response that seemed to many observers to be surprisingly conciliatory, Morton concurred with many of the points.

Interpreting the practical effect of Morton's statement, tribal attorney Al Zientz said at a public meeting in September that it gave control back to the Northern Cheyenne tribe without admitting violation.

### ACCUSED OF SCARE TACTICS

Back in 1972 when Robinson followed his wife's urging and started the Landowners' Association, not many people on the reservation knew about the problems with the contracts nor did they have any idea what the coal future held for them. A few of the tribal leaders, including tribal council chairman Allen Rowland, did recognize the problems, and they were among the first members of the Landowners' Association.

Believing that the information alone could swing most of the people on the reservation when they learned what their fate was likely to be, the Landowners tried to think how to get the information out. At that time, there was no newspaper on the reservation. With the help from sympathizing fund raisers, the Landowners decided to have a feast.

*"It's just like when you buy a horse: If the brand or the description of the horse is wrong, you don't just amend the bill of sale. You tear it up and throw it away." —Dennis Limberhand, referring to faulty coal contracts.*

discussions at work each day, and returning to her home up Muddy Creek, she'd talk about it with her husband, Dave. The Robinsons, who had seen enough of boom towns when living in Oklahoma, were concerned about the social impact. There are now 2,926 people on the reservation. The tribe could expect, on the average, more than 1,500 new permanent residents for every export mine with many more for gasification plants. Before long, the Indians would become a minority on their own reservation.

"My husband kept saying, 'Somebody ought

larger in the case of one Peabody Coal lease for 25,160 acres.

Robinson told the senators that there were no guarantees that the acres to be stripped would ever be reclaimed. Performance bonds, which are required to guarantee reclamation, are so low that the cost insured by Peabody Coal for reclamation averages out to \$1.88 per acre, Robinson figured.

After further study and talk with experts since the hearing, Robinson now questions

**"We've learned not to accept anything until it's down in black and white. They're a bunch of fancy talkers, and words are cheap."**

**—Dennis Limberhand, tribal council member**

Knowledgeable speakers were invited. They included Alvin M. Josephy, Jr., a leading authority on American Indian affairs who had been involved in exposing the bilking of the Hopi and Navajo tribes by the federal government and corporations for strip mining on Indian lands in the Southwest. Dr. Clancy Gordon, the director of Environmental Sciences at the University of Montana, spoke on local reclamation considerations.

Other experts and local leaders spoke, sharing their vision of the tribe's future: ravaged lands, water becoming even harder to get, an onslaught of non-Indians on the reservation and finally, perhaps, the end of the tribe as the Cheyennes were driven off their reservation.

Although the Tribal Council and the Landowners now have a good working relationship, some of the Tribal Council members accused Robinson and the other Landowners of using "scare tactics" at that time. Robinson doesn't deny the accusation, but he points out that after the feast, many of the older Cheyennes went home convinced.

Since then, a newspaper has started which is further increasing awareness on the reservation. *A'tome* conscientiously seeks out stories on every aspect of the coal question including scientific studies on the effects of mining on water, federal and state officials' statements, and interviews with key people on the reservation.

#### COAL COULD MEAN JOBS

Robinson, sitting in the shade of his trailer home relaxing for a moment, analyzes the new level of awareness. "When you get the older ones, the young usually follow," he says. The middle age group keeps Robinson worrying, particularly because they might benefit most by the new jobs created by the mining.

Dennis Limberhand, 27, is one of those in the "middle" age group, but Robinson knows he doesn't have to worry about Dennis. At a time in his life when many young people concentrate on settling down with a secure job, Limberhand devotes a major portion of his time to the fight. Last year he and another member of the Tribal Council's Natural Resources Development Committee spent several weeks in Washington, D.C. representing the tribe.

Although he occasionally contemplates quitting his council work and "living like a normal person," he recognizes that serving during this period is a good experience. Two years ago, while in a body cast for six months, he accepted a dare from his buddies to run for council. At 25, he became the youngest councilman the tribe has ever elected.

Despite the light-hearted start to his political career, Limberhand takes his role seriously — both serving the tribe as a whole and representing the young people of the reservation. He realizes that the decisions made by the council in the next few years will have a crucial effect on the future of the Cheyenne people.

Home in Lame Deer for the summer months, he talked about his people as he drove over the dust-filled roads. Unemployment is high, with estimates ranging from 11.1% to 26% in a state where the rate is 5.5%. Although by the end of the summer the tribe seemed to Limberhand to be pretty unified in thinking they were not getting "a fair shake" under the present contracts, he is not sure what the majority of the people now think about allowing strip mining on the

reservation. "Many people my age have families and seek job security. They have higher skills than they had six years ago and are ready to compete. . . ."

"The tribal council believes it shouldn't be an issue that is just railroaded through. We must go slowly and give the people time to think," he said.

#### TIME TO THINK

Without action by the Tribal Council and the Landowners, there would have been no time to

**"We began asking a lot of questions, but we got no answers. We thought the United States government wouldn't rip us off, so we let it ride." —Allen Rowland, N. Cheyenne Tribal Council Chairman**

think. At the same time that the council first asked the Department of Interior to void the contracts, Peabody Coal announced in March of 1973 that it would supply 500 million tons of coal from its Northern Cheyenne strip mine to gas companies based in Omaha and in Oklahoma City, which jointly would build four gasification plants, presumably in the vicinity of the mine. Each plant would employ up to 600 people and construction of the first plant would start in 1976.

However, the council did take action, and the government, finally, did respond. After receiving Secretary Morton's statement answering their complaints, the tribe considers all of the coal permits and leases void. "It's just like when you buy a horse. If the brand or the description of the horse is wrong, you don't just amend the bill of sale. You tear it up and throw it away," Limberhand explained.

If the coal companies do not agree with this interpretation of Morton's statement, the issue may eventually end up in court. If the courts agree that the contracts are void, then the tribe will start again at the beginning with the coal

companies, with the objective of getting control over its own land. According to Limberhand, the council members feel that if limited coal development under the tribe's stringent control were put before the people on a referendum, it may be approved.

Tribal leaders have different ideas of what they would like to see in the new contracts, assuming the tribe does regain control. Robinson would prefer to have no power plants near the reservation. He explained, "They haven't found anything yet in the United States that is completely pollution free, and the plants' water consumption is too high for this region." In late September, the Landowners Association that he leads sponsored an economic alternatives workshop to explore means of improving the

overall economic conditions of the tribe without introducing massive strip mines and energy conversion facilities.

Limberhand said he personally would like to see limiting the acreage involved in mining, building plants only near the edge of the reservation with non-Indians housed off the reservation, a guaranteed level of Indian employment (including skilled positions), profit sharing, and guaranteed reclamation.

He believes that if the tribe would invest it carefully, the new money could mean improved roads, most of which are now covered only by inches of red, choking dust during the dry months and are deep in mud during the wet. It could mean a new medical clinic. Improving the land through irrigation, forestry projects, and soil inventories. And education and training programs — now the tribe has a few scholarships, but Limberhand said it's about all the tribe can do to afford keeping the students it has in college.

For young Limberhand and for the tribe as a whole, the struggle itself is an educational pro-

(Continued on page 6)



Councilman Dennis Limberhand (left) talks with George Hiwalker, Jr. and with Moke Eaglefeathers about the concerns of the people in the "middle age" group on the reservation. Hiwalker, economic development specialist with the tribe, advises that strip mining could be good for the future of the tribe — only if the tribe has complete control.

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## N. Cheyenne . . .

(Continued from page 5)

cess. Their new way of perceiving government and big business is not an optimistic one, but they feel it will serve them well in future transactions.

### AN EDUCATIONAL STRUGGLE

As Limberhand says, they have become sophisticated. "This has been quite a business experience for the tribe. We've learned not to accept anything until it's down in black and white. They're a bunch of fancy talkers, and words are cheap."

Back in 1966 when the first permits were signed by the tribe, they were not as sophisticated. Limberhand was not on the council, but Allen Rowland, who now is tribal chairman, explained in an article in *A'tome*, "We began asking a lot of questions (about coal leases) but we got no answers. We thought the United States government wouldn't rip us off, so we let it ride." The council signed.

Many people credit the offer from Consolidation Coal (Consol) with opening the tribe's eyes. Previous contracts had been for 17.5 cents per ton for coal, with a floor of one dollar an acre, on a competitive bid basis. Rowland said the tribe was getting 18 cents per ton for gravel, as a comparison. Consol offered 25 cents a ton and \$35 an acre, urging the tribe to forget about competitive bids this time. Plus it offered the tribe \$1.5 million toward the cost of a new health center.

The tribe's naivete ended soon thereafter.

Limberhand hopes the Northern Cheyennes have not been the only ones to learn from the experiences of the years since 1966. Although he admits the Interior Secretary's interests are divided between his trust responsibilities to the Indians through the BIA and his involvement in solving the energy situation, Limberhand hopes the government will begin to have a new attitude toward Indian resources as a result of legal action taken by the Northern Cheyennes.

He also hopes that other tribes have learned from the Cheyennes' experiences. "I hope our action will open the door, cause Indians to take a little harder look at the piece of paper they get

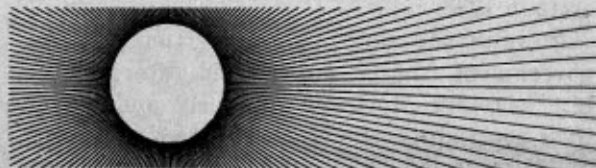
in exchange for timber rights or other resource development on their reservations."

U.S. Senators Mike Mansfield (D-Mont.) and Lee Metcalf (D-Mont.) have helped them open doors. Last March Sen. Mansfield indicated their support for the Northern Cheyenne in testimony before the Senate saying their rights should be given every consideration.

Most encouraging to the tribe and its supporters was Morton's pledge, "The Tribe and the coal companies may be assured that the terms and conditions upon which mineral development may proceed on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation will require their joint agreement and support prior to any further approval from me." The tribe is not likely to jointly agree with the coal companies on the present permits and leases at all, Limberhand predicted, but will insist on starting over with more tribal control.

Asked what he thought explained the apparent change in the government's attitude, Limberhand said he supposed it was because the petition presented by the tribe had no loopholes. "It sure ain't sympathy," he added.

Even if the tribe's belief that all the contracts are void is verified in the court tests that possibly will follow, there are more battles ahead as they decide what will become of the coal, of their land, and of their people. Much thoughtful, thorough study of the many alternatives for economic development will be necessary.



For the Northern Cheyennes, as for many other Plains Indians, the circle is a sacred symbol, a symbol of hope. When the tribe was threatened almost 100 years ago, they survived, and the circle remained intact. Now, once again, it looked to some as if the circle might be broken, the future of the tribe lost in a deep coal-black chasm. Yet members of the tribe are resolved this will not be their fate. This time they will be armed with a traditional fighting determination and with sophistication — not with faith in the sympathy of others.

## To Escape Eastern Prices, Unions? TVA Secretly Deals for Montana Coal

On the heels of the controversy over Wyoming coal (and water) going to Arkansas by slurry pipeline and over Montana coal being test-burned in Japan, comes the news that the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA) is on the verge of signing a contract for strip mined coal from Montana.

The *Mountain Eagle* of Whitesburg, Kentucky, has revealed the contract negotiations, which the TVA Fuels Procurement Division has been keeping a closely guarded secret for the four months that the *Eagle* has been investigating the story. Although the TVA officials still deny knowledge of any contract details with the Western Energy Co. of Colstrip, Mont. (a wholly owned subsidiary of Montana Power Co.), a secretary and an accountant with Western were eager to help the *Eagle* with the story.

The TVA's coal supply is critically low, but United Mine Workers spokesmen claim the planned purchase is stimulated by the possible strike by mine workers on November 12. TVA

has called on its 2.5 million customers, both residential and industrial, to voluntarily cut back electricity use about 20 percent because of scarce coal supplies. Without voluntary cut-backs, customers may face possible rationing or mandatory allocation of power this winter.

The six-month contract being discussed with Western Energy is for 450,000 tons of coal. The accountant interviewed told the *Eagle*, "TVA would like to bid on more, but that is about our capacity for the present." He said the only apparent problem holding up the final signing of the contract was the availability of rail cars to ship the coal to TVA. He said the average price of coal the company sells is \$4-\$5 per ton. With shipping costs, the price to TVA at the steam plant would still be well over \$20, he figured.

The United Mine Workers spokesman, Tom Bethell, said, "TVA sits on top of the largest coal reserves east of the Mississippi, but yet it goes West to circumvent the eastern coal price structure and to avoid areas where the laborers are well-organized."

## Wyoming

This year's race for Wyoming's sole seat in the U.S. House of Representatives poses a hard choice for the state's conservation-minded voters. Challenging the incumbent Democratic Rep. Teno Roncalio is Republican State Sen. Tom Stroock.

Roncalio's main achievement in the eyes of environmentalists was his opposition to the underground nuclear stimulation of natural gas-bearing sandstone formations in the West. Roncalio's efforts helped lead the way to the cancelation of the scheduled Wagon Wheel nuclear experiment near Pinedale, Wyo. Roncalio has been a champion of wilderness and wildlife issues in Congress and introduced legislation to put four Wyoming rivers into the study category for inclusion in the Wild and Scenic Rivers system. Roncalio has been the "most cooperative and approachable member of the Joint Atomic Energy Committee, which is generally hostile to conservationists," according to the League of Conservation Voters. On the other side of the coin, Roncalio voted to kill federal land use legislation, he voted to expedite construction of the trans-Alaska pipeline, and he is currently working against a House measure that would ban dams from Hells Canyon on the Middle Snake River in Oregon and Idaho.

The League of Conservation Voters gave Roncalio a 79% rating in 1971, a 15% rating in 1972, and a 57% rating in 1973. (These percentage figures refer to the number of times Roncalio voted with the LCV on selected environmental issues in House floor votes.)

Stroock is a state senator from Natrona County. He sponsored the Wyoming Air Quality Act and the Wyoming Water Quality Act. He was Chairman of the Mines, Minerals and Industrial Development Committee which fashioned Wyoming's Environmental Protection Act. He was also active in the enactment of Wyoming's Billboard Control Act. Stroock is an oil broker and a member of the National Petroleum Council.

The Wyoming Outdoor Council has been following Stroock's environmental and public interest voting record in the state legislature for the last two sessions. In 1973, the WOC rated him 90% on environmental and 100% on public interest. In 1974, Stroock scored 60% on environmental and 0% on public interest. (Again the percentages refer to votes in agreement with the WOC. Only one public interest vote was monitored in both sessions so a senator either received 100% or 0%.)

To find out more about these candidates, *High Country News* asked each one to respond to the series of questions that follows. Candidates were each allowed additional remarks. Only Stroock sent along additional comments which are printed at the end of the question section.

the editors.

**HCN — How should surface owners be protected from coal strip mining activity if the coal under their land is federally owned?**

**Stroock —** By requiring written consent of the surface landowner before any operations may begin.

**Roncalio —** This first question has been occupying virtually every afternoon of my time for the past three weeks in conference with

# Candidates Speak Out

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Senators debating precisely what your questions asks. There is, of course, no answer except to insist that the Senators recede from their position and concur in the House version which requires surface owners' written consent for the mining of any Federal coal under the surface. We may not get the House version; we may end up with the Mansfield amendment which is outright prohibition against mining any Federal coal, or we may end up with the Senate version which claims to protect the surface owner by allowing a bond to be posted to compensate them for damages. I hope the House version will prevail.



Rep. Teno Roncalio

**HCN — Should strip mining or other industrial developments be permitted on National Grasslands?**

**Stroock —** There are presently a few mineral leases in existence covering small portions of the National Grasslands. As to these leases, the mining should be carefully controlled and the reclamation regulated. These few leases can serve as "pilot projects," to determine how environmentally fragile the Grasslands are. It has been estimated that there are 24.5 billion tons of strippable coal in Wyoming's share of the Powder River Basin alone. Of these, about 9 billion tons are in the Thunder Basin National Grasslands. If we impose a moratorium on further leasing at this time in the National Grasslands, there will still be available for mining 15.5 billion tons of coal in Wyoming's share of the Basin alone, without taking into consideration the total strippable reserves of the Northern Plains. Clearly, the national need for energy will not be endangered if we impose a moratorium on further leasing in the Grasslands.

**Roncalio —** Yes, I think strip mining should be permitted on national grasslands, and other "industrial development" has already taken place on most of Wyoming's grasslands. There are few places in Wyoming more pocked with evidence of flaring holes, oil and gas lines, storage tanks and heavy oil "industrialization"

than the Grady Field and the Highlight area, some of which is in the Thunder Basin National Grasslands. In conference, we were able to assure that mining will continue in the grasslands, but we were also able to insure that no strip mining shall take place in the national forest. We are pleased with this result.

**HCN — Do you feel present nuclear energy safeguards are adequate? If not, would you favor a nuclear moratorium until adequate safeguards are proven?**

**Stroock —** In 1973, the Atomic Energy Commission disclosed that nuclear generating plants reported 861 "abnormal occurrences," 43% of which had "potential safety significance." On the plus side, it is important to point out that, in the entire history of nuclear generation, not one person has sustained injury by reason of radioactivity. And there are plants — many of them — which have impressive records of safety and productivity.

I am concerned about the quality control of nuclear generating facilities. At the same time, I think it is important to keep things in perspective. It has been estimated that electrical energy needs by the year 2000 will require the heat energy equivalent to the daily movement of 100,000 railroad cars of coal to the utilities. If our fear of the atom results in abandonment of the rich promise of nuclear power, and in an increasing dependence on coal to generate electricity, the result will be an environmental catastrophe.

I believe we must improve the technology and quality control of nuclear generation by building upon the experience obtained through plants already operating. I believe that we must make significant increases in appropriations to both the public and private sectors, to improve our technology. I would favor a moratorium on unproven design concepts until the technology is established beyond doubt.

**Roncalio —** I feel that present nuclear energy safeguards are sufficient to continue the manufacture and planning of nuclear power generating plants. I will persist and insist on continuing quality assurance and a standard of safety that is unparalleled in America. I believe there is no record of safety comparable to the safety of nuclear power generators in our atomic submarines and in existing plants in the history of American engineering and manufacturing. For these reasons I would not favor a nuclear moratorium.

**HCN — What role should the federal government play in land use planning?**

**Stroock —** I believe that the Federal government should establish a program of grants-in-aid to regional state and local authorities for the development and implementation of coordinated land use planning programs. All too often, programs which are initiated at the Federal level establish National criteria which do not take into consideration problems peculiar to specific localities.

I do not subscribe to the view that all wisdom reposes in Washington, and that we in Wyoming are too provincial to intelligently resolve the challenging problems of land use. We must also recognize that there are, in Wyoming, areas having more than local significance, where land use patterns will have an impact going beyond the immediate environment. For



State Sen. Tom Stroock

that reason, I also favor grants-in-aid in regional land use planning authorities, to finance the cooperative participation of local state and regional land management policies and programs.

**Roncalio —** The Federal government plays quite a rôle in land use planning, though sometimes it isn't defined as such. Much of our legislation in the strip mine bill and in other bills coming from the Interior Committee carry certain facets of land use planning inherent within the legislation. As for a specific land use planning bill, I suspect we will be getting around to one in the next few Congresses, although I was personally committed to vote against final passage of the land use bill as finally reported out from the Interior Committee several months ago in the House.

## STROOCK'S COMMENTS

The challenge with which we are confronted can be simply stated: how can we accommodate our energy needs, and yet not only protect, but actually enhance, our environment?

I believe that hope for the environment is bleak indeed, so long as "progress" is reckoned in terms of increases in the gross national product, and an uncaring waste of resources that is utterly prodigal.

We can no longer — if we ever could — tolerate the philosophy of planned obsolescence, a concept resulting in shoddy products which predictably self-destruct after two or three years of use. Russell Peterson has observed that Americans use twice as much energy as an Englishman, 2½ times more than a German, and 4½ times as much as our Japanese counterparts.

Our policies and philosophy of government should be geared to our historical "waste not, want not" heritage. The National Commission on Materials Policy reports that about two percent of our aggregate energy requirements could be satisfied by recycling steel, paper and aluminum. Government can help by providing economic and tax incentives encouraging solid waste and resources recovery.

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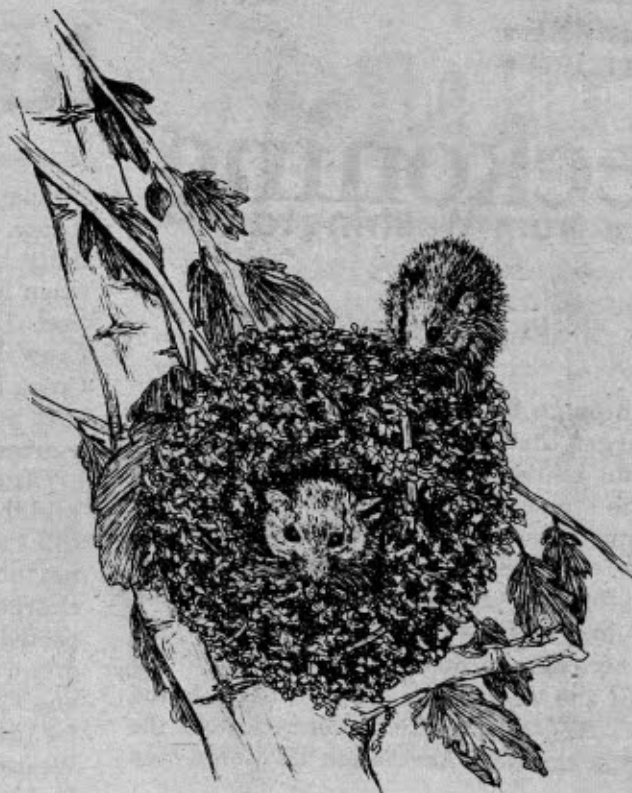
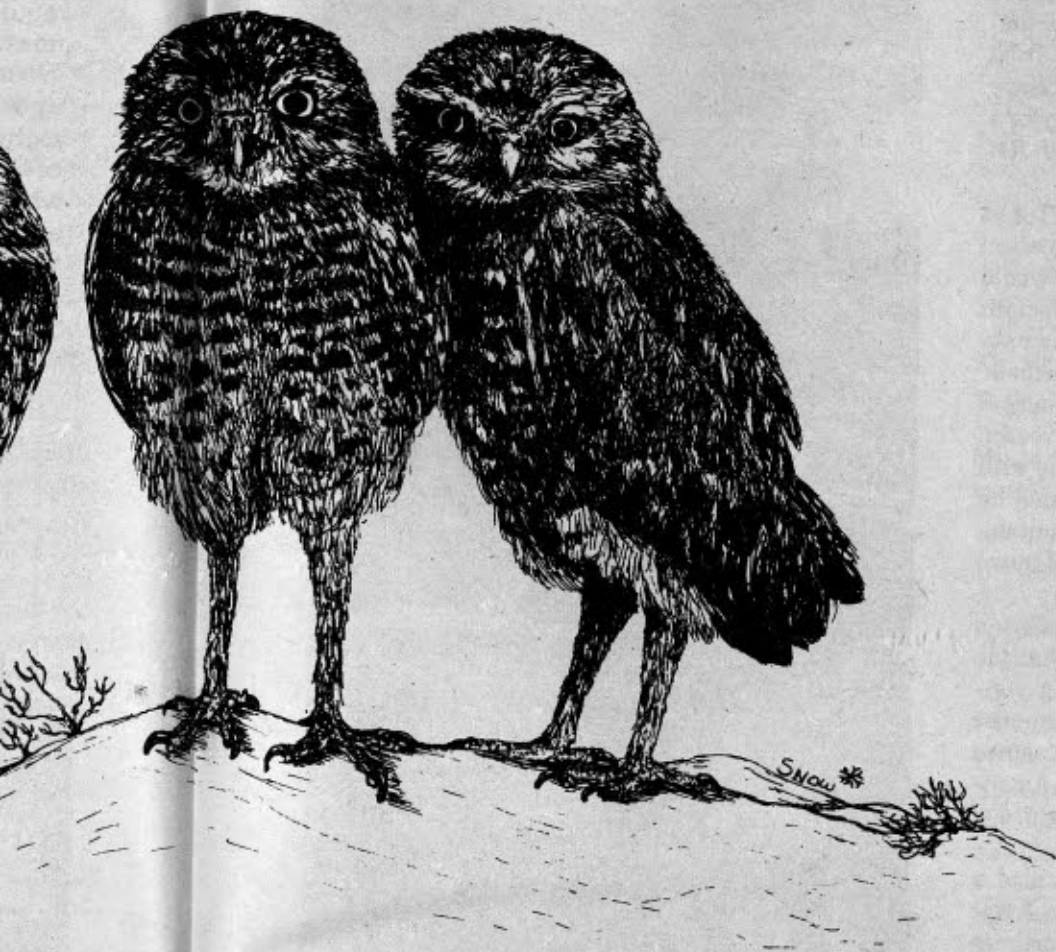


# A PEN IN

Carol Snow used to live in Lander  
HIGH COUNTRY NEWS when it  
WEEKLY. Today she lives in Boise  
number of environmental projects  
drawings on these pages appear on  
for sale as Christmas presents and  
write to Carol Snow, Route 5, South  
Other Carol Snow drawings will be  
the future.

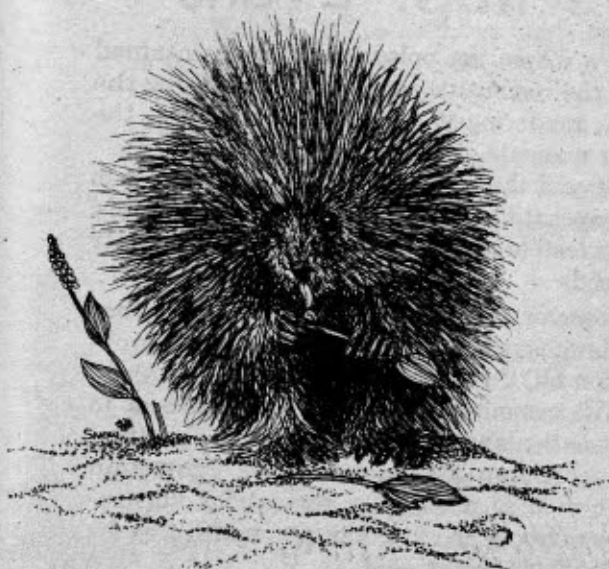






# IN THE WILDS

ve in Lander, Wyo., and write a nature column for  
WS when it was known as CAMPING NEWS  
lives in Boise, Idaho, where she is involved in a  
ntal projects including wildlife illustrating. The  
es appear on cards and prints that she is offering  
resents and greeting cards. For a free brochure  
oute 5, South Five Mile Road, Boise, Idaho 83705.  
vings will be featured on the pages of this paper in



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Friday, Oct. 11, 1974

## Reckoning from Washington

by Lee Catterall

In his campaign for Congress, Republican Tom Stroock charges that Rep. Teno Roncalio (D-Wyo.) "flip-flops" on issues to the point that voters can't know how he stands.

This column followed Roncalio closely on two major issues that Stroock cites — the land use bill and a proposed rollback of crude oil prices. Did Roncalio really "flip-flop" on those?

We became aware of Roncalio's opposition to the land use bill the week before that bill came to the House floor. And that weekend Roncalio told the Wyoming Stockgrowers Association he would vote against it.

That came as quite a surprise, because Roncalio had voted in the Interior Committee in favor of sending the bill on to the floor rather than killing it.

We asked him why he was "switching" against the bill. He said he wasn't, that he had voted to "report" the bill from the committee because he thought the bill "deserved to be debated" on the House floor. When the theory was advanced that a vote like that in committee was, in political reality, a vote for the bill, Roncalio fumed and said he wasn't interested in this column's view of political science.

He added he had never been on record in support of the land use bill, and that no transcripts had been taken of the committee sessions in which the bill was written and debated.

Ah, but transcripts had been taken. Our suspicions aroused, this column combed through those. We found they supported Roncalio's contention. He had indeed failed to support the bill, and said he would oppose it if a certain amendment were adopted. The amendment was adopted.

On the House floor Roncalio voted for allowing the bill to be considered. That vote failed, and Roncalio never got an opportunity to vote against the bill itself, as he said he would do.

The oil price rollback was another story. The day after Roncalio voted for the rollback, we asked him if that rollback would harm Wyoming's oil industry. He said it wouldn't. We then told him then-President Nixon had said that morning — after the vote — that he would veto the proposal. Would Roncalio vote to override the veto?

"Did he say that?" Roncalio asked. "I don't know that he'll veto it."

The reaction in Wyoming to Roncalio's vote was hot and heavy. Two weeks later, Roncalio's office issued a press release saying Roncalio had voted for the rollback as a protest against rising propane prices, and "taking President Nixon at his word that he would veto the bill and that Wyoming's oil industry would not suffer as a result."

Were those "flip-flops?" Much probably depends on your view of political science. On the land use vote, Stroock holds the view that a vote in committee against reporting a bill is a vote against the bill, and he thinks it's silly of Roncalio to say otherwise.

"Flip-flop" is a loaded phrase describing the act of changing one's mind, or at least one's position. We've had plenty of that in recent times.

We vividly recall a Senator seven years ago who startled a panel of newsmen by saying he thought the United States should get out of Vietnam.

One incredulous newsman asked him if this wasn't a change in his position, since he had previously been a hawk. The Senator acknowledged that it was. He was asked why he switched. The Senator said he'd been doing some reading up on the subject of Vietnam.

What about his previous stand?

"I was wrong," he said, and landed on his feet.

# Japan Nixes Crow Coal

Japan has stopped negotiations for thousands of tons of coal from Montana strip mines, partially because of the controversy that arose when Montana ranchers learned of the situation. Ten thousand tons of coal, bought from Crow Indians and stripped from the Sarpy Creek Basin, was quietly shipped to Japan for a test burn in August by Westmoreland Resources.

Officials of the Mitsui Mining Co. of Tokyo told the Associated Press that the main reason talks were stopped was that the purchase would not have been profitable. They said freight charges were much higher than they had expected. They said opposition from a ranchers' group was "another factor" but not the principal one. Coal quality was also suggested as a reason for the company's ending its negotiations with Westmoreland. Gov. Thomas L. Judge said he had been told that Mitsui found the Montana coal's BTU content insufficient for its planned use.

The president of Westmoreland, Pemberton Hutchinson, told the Associated Press that the Japanese were afraid any "brawling controversy" might result in legislation to limit the export of other coal reserves from Eastern states. Japan is the largest importer of American coal, with contracts for nearly one-third of this country's export total in 1973.

When the test burn shipment was revealed, a delegation of Montana ranchers called on Judge to protest. Bob Tully, chairman of the Northern Plains Resource Council, said, "We are called upon to make a sacrifice of our land for energy for our country — you know, the patriotic thing — but they will not tear up the landscape of Montana for coal that's going to be sent to Japan."



Westmoreland Resources mine in the Sarpy Creek Basin

Montana Power vs. Game and Fish, et al

## Media Power Battle Continues

Despite a one-day ceasefire, the media will still remain a battlefield as Montana Power Co. and environmentalists argue the merits of expansion of the Colstrip power generating complex in eastern Montana.

Montana Power Co. (MPC) agreed to halt its \$100,000 radio and television campaign after a request from the Montana Department of Natural Resources that advertising be postponed until the draft environmental impact statement is released in November. However, MPC put three conditions on the agreement: 1) an end of the Montana Fish and Game Department counterattack, 2) an agreement from all other organizations either opposing or

supporting the Colstrip project, and 3) an agreement that state studies of public opinion be kept secret.

The third request was considered "absurd" by the Northern Plains Resource Council which refused the following day to take part in the ceasefire. The public opinion studies referred to by MPC reflect a high level of antagonism toward the MPC development at Colstrip, according to a state official quoted in the *Billings Gazette*.

The Fish and Game Department agreed to the ceasefire, but since other, non-governmental agencies did not, MPC announced that it would continue its campaign.

## EPA Hamstrung, says Rep. Evans

Legislators are feeling more pressure from consumers than from environmentalists a report from Rep. Frank Evans' (D-Colo.) office indicates. Evans called attention to a directive from the House Appropriations Committee to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which, he said, could gut the power of the agency to enforce environmental laws.

Evans said the committee, of which he is a member, has directed that none of the \$13.4 billion environmental and consumer protection appropriation be used for a program that "reduces the supply or increases the cost of electricity or food to the consumer."

The directive was contained in a report accompanying the bill.

In a dissenting opinion, Evans maintained that the committee action will "hamstring the EPA, rendering it powerless to carry out the clear mandate of the law."

He said the enforcement of laws relating to the operation of non-polluting plants could often lead to increases in the cost of electricity or food.

However, the committee made it clear that the language will be put in next year's appropriation bill if EPA doesn't follow its directive.

"The committee agreed it would be best to include the language in the report at this time and to rely on the Environmental Protection Agency to so modify its regulations and requirements as necessary to accomplish this directive," the report said.



# Emphasis ENERGY

in the Northern Rockies and Great Plains



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Friday, Oct. 11, 1974



## The Hot Line

across the country

A joint federal-state study predicts that **Idaho will need 24 new power plants** by the end of this century. The study estimates that 16 of the new plants will be hydroelectric plants on the Snake, Salmon, Payette, Boise and Clearwater rivers. The remaining eight plants would be either coal-fired or nuclear.

The Public Service Commission of **North Dakota** would be given authority over **power plant and transmission line siting** under a newly proposed state act. The bill would apply to plants generating 50 megawatts or more of electricity, 100 million cubic feet of gas per day or more, or 50,000 barrels or more of oil.

In the last two months, estimates of **water requirements** of the prototype **oil shale** industry in Colorado and Utah has increased by 40%. In July the Interior Department claimed 79,000 acre-feet would be needed for development of the four 5,120 acre tracts of leased land. Now, according to a new report by the Bureau of Reclamation, about 111,000 acre-feet will be needed.

**Sierra Club** attorney H. Anthony Ruckel has called for a **halt to strip mining in the Northern Plains** until more is known about western coal's sulfur content. Ruckel told the **Rocky Mountain News** that the Club has developed evidence refuting industry claims that "low sulfur" western coal can be burned without costly sulfur dioxide emission controls. Ruckel said a federal study of "low sulfur" coal mined near Gillette, Wyo., revealed that 70% of the samples taken would exceed federal sulfur standards if burned in a power plant without sulfur emission controls.

**Southeastern Montana** coal development may cause **drought** and millions of dollars of crop losses downwind, says Dennis Arnett, director of the Institute of Atmospheric Sciences at the South Dakota School of Mines. Arnett says the tiny particles produced by steam generating plants cause water vapor to condense in droplets too small to fall from the sky. He estimates that the rainfall in the Dakotas could decrease by as much as 10-15%.

Wyoming State Senator Robert Johnson (D-Sweetwater) has reported that State Engineer Floyd Bishop thinks **trans-basin diversion of water from the Green River** is probable. Johnson said the time for decision on future use of the Green River is near. "We're at high noon. Anyone who lives here should be concerned," said Johnson.

The **Weiser, Idaho** area has been identified as the most promising **geothermal** site in the state, according to a report just released by the Idaho Department of Water Resources and the U.S. Geological Survey. Hot water in underground reservoirs in the area may be as high as 454 degrees Fahrenheit, according to the report.

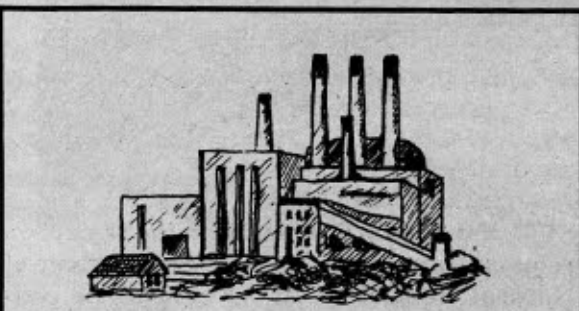
**Idaho's thorium** reserves are being proposed as a substitute for uranium in power reactors by two nuclear fuel experts. Linton Lang and Arthur Granger of Pacific Nuclear Fuels, Inc. say uranium reserves are running out but the thorium reserves of the Lemhi Pass area near Salmon are larger than all the known uranium reserves in the country.

"Should Montana adopt a long-term policy of **export-only use of its coal**, then that decision must be allowed to stand," **Montana Gov. Thomas Judge** told the Federal Energy Administration at Project Independence hearings in Billings. "The people who have created the demand for our coal must also share some of the environmental costs associated with the conversion of that coal."

**Utah** holds 95% of all known **tar sands** deposits in the country. The state's tar and bituminous sands could produce an estimated 25 billion barrels of oil if technical and water supply problems could be overcome, says Utah Rep. Wayne Owens. Owens has introduced a bill in Congress to facilitate tar sand development by revising leasing procedures.

Wyoming Democratic gubernatorial candidate **Ed Herschler** says he has reason to believe that the **Madison Formation** contains both drinkable and brackish water. If there is brackish water in the formation, he feels it should be used to slurry coal from Wyoming to Arkansas instead of the potable water. "It could be that the company wants the pure water to use for cooling the power plant in Arkansas," says Herschler.

**Intake Water Co.**, a subsidiary of Tenneco, Inc. has applied for water use permits from Montana and Wyoming to construct a **dam on the Powder River** near the border of the two states. The 160-foot-high dam would be built near Moorhead, Mont., and back water 25 miles southward into Wyoming. The reservoir would hold 564,400 acre-feet of water and inundate 10,560 acres of rangeland. Tenneco says water would be for municipal, industrial and agricultural uses — but the bulk would go to industry.



**Labor favors the development of the coal resource, but under the strictest environmental controls.** Former President Nixon, in a speech to the California Chamber of Commerce July 25, called environmental laws faddish and said that we ought to do away with them because they cost money. Labor disagrees. We are unwilling to witness a footrace of coal companies to see who can be the first to tear the lid off the land and get the coal shipped to all points of the globe at rock-bottom costs. We are opposed to that because one of the bottom line costs will be workers. They will be abused, underpaid, over worked and threatened with unsafe and unsound mining procedures. We cannot let that happen.

**James Murry, Executive Secretary  
Montana AFL-CIO  
Project Independence hearings in Billings**

**Federal Energy Administrator John Sawhill** told a House subcommittee that the **energy crisis is over**. He said there are spot shortages and price problems but the supply crisis in American petroleum is over.

The **Atomic Energy Commission** has ordered 21 of the 50 **nuclear reactors** in operation in this country to **close down** before December to determine whether cracks are developing in the pipes of their cooling systems. The order was issued after cracks were discovered in the pipes of three boiling water reactors within 10 days.

**Carl Hocesbar**, a leading nuclear safety expert has resigned his position with the Atomic Energy Commission so he can "be free to tell the American people about the potentially **dangerous emissions** in the nation's nuclear power plants." He said the AEC uses "wholly unacceptable methods to judge the danger of reactors."

Air pollution equipment that takes health-endangering **sulfur out of power plant smoke** has been proven to be effective, according to the Environmental Protection Agency. EPA Deputy Administrator John Quarles said that, contrary to power-industry publicity, sulfur scrubbers will allow the use of all the nation's coal. "This makes it possible to make full throttle use of Eastern reserves of high-sulfur coal, without requiring a shift to Western low-sulfur coal," Quarles said.

The **United States** has stopped **shipping uranium to India** until it hears from the Gandhi government on its nuclear testing policy. Enriched uranium has been sent to India in the past to fuel an American financed and built reactor near Bombay that supplies 380 megawatts of electricity. India's manufacture of a nuclear bomb that was exploded last May caused the U.S. to re-evaluate its position. The Canadian have also suspended nuclear aid to India.

A national crisis is about to be precipitated by the Atomic Energy Commission with a decision to allow the nuclear power industry to use **plutonium** as fuel, say Senators Walter F. Mondale (D-Minn.) and Philip S. Hart (D-Mich.). "This is perhaps the most dangerous single product known to man," Mondale said. The lawmakers and a group of scientists contend that the decision will dramatically increase the dangers of cancer and terrorist activities.

The nation's largest utility, the **TVA** (Tennessee Valley Authority), is panicky over **rising coal prices** according to the **Mountain Eagle**. A TVA employee told the **Eagle** "It's getting a little freaky around here. Everytime someone mentions the word coal, someone else tries to bid on it. I wouldn't be surprised to hear that Aubrey Wagner (the TVA chairman) himself was out on the side of the road picking up the coal that falls off coal trucks." TVA has called for a voluntary 20% cutback in electricity usage by consumers.

An **Interior Department** internal memo uncovered last week revealed government intentions to lease "all promising areas" off the Atlantic and Pacific coasts for **oil drilling** next year, according to **Land Use Planning Reports**. The memo came from Undersecretary John C. Whitaker. Environmentalists claim the memo indicates Interior plans to initiate immediate action and is "not willing to wait for the facts about offshore drilling and its impact on coastal economic development."

## Beginning of the End?

## Colony Pulls Out of Oil Shale Race

by Bruce Hamilton

"There's a great race to be number two in oil shale development," an industry representative once told this paper. To him the biggest question was an economic one: Just how much will a barrel of shale oil cost to produce? If one company would dare to take the last giant step, go to full-scale production levels and prove to the world it could make a profit in today's marketplace, then the scramble to follow would promise great profits with little risk since it was already proven that the race could be won.

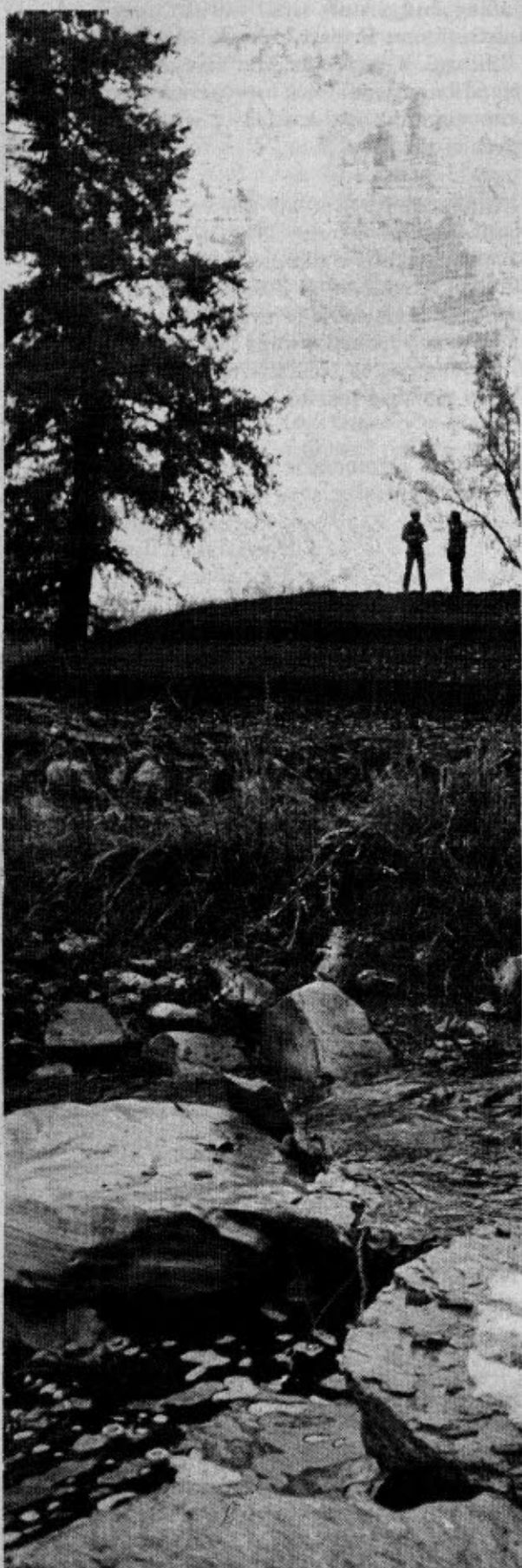
But always that hurdle — economics — loomed in the middle of the track. It scared away competitors for the last 75 years, and it was only with the advent of the energy crisis this past year that the barrier seemed surmountable — that the profit margin looked sufficiently favorable to warrant taking the uncertain step that would lead either to the winner's circle or financial ruin.

In the great oil shale race, the favorite with all the bookmakers was the industry's fair-haired child — the Colony Development Operation. Colony is a consortium of Atlantic Richfield, The Oil Shale Corporation (TOSCO), Shell Oil and Ashland Oil. Since the sixties, Colony had been sizing up the economics of oil shale from the vantage point of a pilot plant in western Colorado's Piceance Basin. If any company had a good guess as to the cost of a barrel of shale oil it was Colony — and Colony wasn't letting a single preliminary pricetag escape its fenced and guarded compound on Parachute Creek. In response to Colony's silence, the other interests in the field remained noncommittal. The race's spectators in nearby communities like Rifle, Grand Valley, and Meeker, Colo. yawned — it was a pretty boring race that had been going on for three-quarters of a century.

But then suddenly, during this past year, the pace of the race quickened. Colony announced that it would build a full-scale 50,000 barrel-a-day plant. Construction was to begin in the spring of 1975 with a completion date set at 1978. To the other competitors, the signal was clear: green light for oil shale development. When the federal government offered public oil shale tracts for lease in early 1974 they were astounded at the turnout and stunned by the overwhelming size of the bids — the first tract of 5,120 acres brought in a \$210 million bid from the Rio Blanco Oil Shale Project (a joint venture of Gulf Oil and Standard Oil of Indiana). The second tract netted an even greater offer per barrel of recoverable shale oil. The race to be number two was in the home stretch. The spectators perked up and started waving their pennants, land sales boomed, trailer courts were laid out in anticipation, Colony announced the construction of a new town to be built near their plant site.

Then, on October 4, 1974, the unexpected happened. Colony stumbled, fell and pulled out of the race. Citing inflation, tight money and the absence of a national energy policy, Colony announced the indefinite suspension of its plans to build the first commercial plant. Hollis Dole of Colony said estimates on the plant had soared from \$450 million to \$800 million and that there were "too many uncertainties to assume the risks at this time." Colony public relations man Curt Burton emphasized that his company's plans had only been suspended, not abandoned. He explained that the company was suffering from a lack of "internally available dollars."

Oil industry and government officials were shocked at the announcement but tried to maintain the appearance of business-as-usual. A spokesman for the Rio Blanco Oil Shale Project



Since 1964, the Colony Development operation has spent over \$24 million in assessing the feasibility of shale oil production on a commercial scale. This picture shows one of the revegetation test plots (the black pile of spent shale that the two employees are standing on) and the surrounding canyonlands on Colony's private holdings in Colorado. Last week, Colony indefinitely suspended plans for a commercial shale oil plant citing economic reasons. Will other oil shale interests follow suit?

Photo courtesy of Colony Development Operation

said there would be no delay in his group's plans but added, "We're not nearly as far along as Colony was."

A spokesman for Colorado's oil shale-boosting Gov. John Vanderhoof said, "The governor has always said that coal is going to be bigger than shale."

In environmental circles the response to the news was far more candid and enthusiastic. Oil shale development had been viewed by the major conservation organizations as an ecological disaster and an inflationary menace.

"As more of these companies come closer to the construction phase they are going to be hit by the same problems that Colony has come up against," said Sierra Club attorney H. Anthony Ruckel.

"We have always felt projects that aren't environmentally sound are also economically questionable," said Carolyn Johnson of the Colorado Open Space Council.

Kathy Fletcher of the Environmental Defense Fund called Colony "the bellwether of the industry; its demise can only mean the other oil shale projects are extremely uncertain. We can question seriously whether the federal government should spend any more time or money on the prototype leasing program. The developments on public lands make at least as little sense as the Colony proposal."

Amid this enthusiasm, Carolyn Johnson sounds a word of caution. She thinks it's possible that Colony may be giving up its venture on private land to develop the public land where the subsidies are greater. She notes that the same companies that comprise the Colony consortium are the ones that submitted the highest joint bid on tract C-b. Those four companies now have the exclusive right to develop that 5,120 acre tract of public land in Colorado. And Colony still hasn't ruled out changing its fickle mind and going ahead on private land.

"Colony makes it sound like they can just turn on the faucet again at any time in the future and go ahead with their private development, but I'm not so sure the public will stand for that," says Johnson. "Colony told the town of Grand Valley to prepare for 1,000 new school children next fall. Now Colony won't say whether those kids will show up for classes or not." She feels the local communities and the state won't stand for such indecision.

A final factor that may have led to Colony's decision to lay low for awhile is the problem of net energy, says Johnson. She says Colony and the other companies are beginning to worry about how much energy they will have to expend in terms of machinery, man power etc. to produce a barrel of shale oil. A study conducted by Joel Schatz of Oregon's Office of Energy Research and Planning shows that in order to produce 1000 BTU (British Thermal Units) of electricity from oil shale rock, you have to invest 1172 BTU of external energy. This negative net energy output makes the industry unfeasible economically.

Harry Johnson, an oil shale specialist with the Department of Interior, says Schatz may have been nit-picking on energy use in the manufacturing process to arrive at the negative net energy figure. "We're not going to trace energy use back throughout shale oil's entire processing system," he told Gannett News Service reporters Jeff Stansbury and Edward Flattau. When asked why not, he replied, "Because nobody asked us to."

Now, at last, the questions are being asked. The preliminary answers make the economic future of oil shale development look dim.

# Western Roundup

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## Family Sues Idaho Lead Company

An Anacortes, Wash., family, former residents of Kellogg, Idaho, has filed suit in U.S. District Court, Boise, claiming more than \$1 million damages allegedly caused by lead pollution from the Bunker Hill Co. smelter near Kellogg.

The suit was filed against Gulf Resources and Chemical Corp. and the Bunker Hill Co. The family charges the companies with "malicious conduct which threatens the safety of others and has resulted in injuries to . . . citizens in the community. . . ." They charge they were forced from jobs with the Bunker Hill Co. because of their efforts to individually gain compensation for injuries they suffered.

The suit follows studies that have shown dangerous levels of lead in 98% of the school children tested in the community. (See HCN, Sept. 13 and 27, 1974)

Meanwhile, the Bunker Hill Co. has expressed corporate concern, faith in the community's doctors, and a belief that the test results by the state will be disproven if there is retesting. The lead and zinc smelting industry also plans to spend \$100,000 to initiate a study.

Idaho's top health official expressed distrust of the industry study and said the state plans to conduct its own study. "I would hate to see these Kellogg-area children being used as guinea pigs in a mining industry-sponsored study of duplicated efforts," James Bax, head of the Department of Health and Welfare, said.

## Subdivision Has Gilpin Worried

Residents of Gilpin County, Colo., let their planning commission know that some Colorado residents don't agree with the growing number of subdivisions — especially when they're encroaching on their patch of mountain serenity. As one resident expressed it, "Denver is moving in from the east, Los Angeles and Vail are moving in from the west. They will meet at the Continental Divide."

Development plans of Goltra Ranch, which would be located on Colorado Highway 119 between U.S. 6 and Black Hawk, call for more than 3,800 new residents. This addition would more than triple the county's existing population. The county had already zoned the land for development and approved the developer's sketch plan before the public hearing which was attended by 150-200 residents.

The Gilpin Planning Commission will take up the proposal again Nov. 13, after the election.

## Western Water Shortage by 1995?

Unless the federal government takes steps to insure a water supply to Upper Colorado River Basin drainage area, Utah and other states face a possible water shortage by 1995, an Interior Department official said.

Speaking to representatives of nine western states, Assistant Interior Secretary Jack O. Horton said there is a \$16 billion "backlog of water projects authorized in the United States but not funded," some \$6 billion of which are sponsored by the Bureau of Reclamation. Many of these projects, he added, "will never be completed."

"Since that is the case," Horton said, "we need to build the best, the most important projects and let the other ones fall by the wayside."

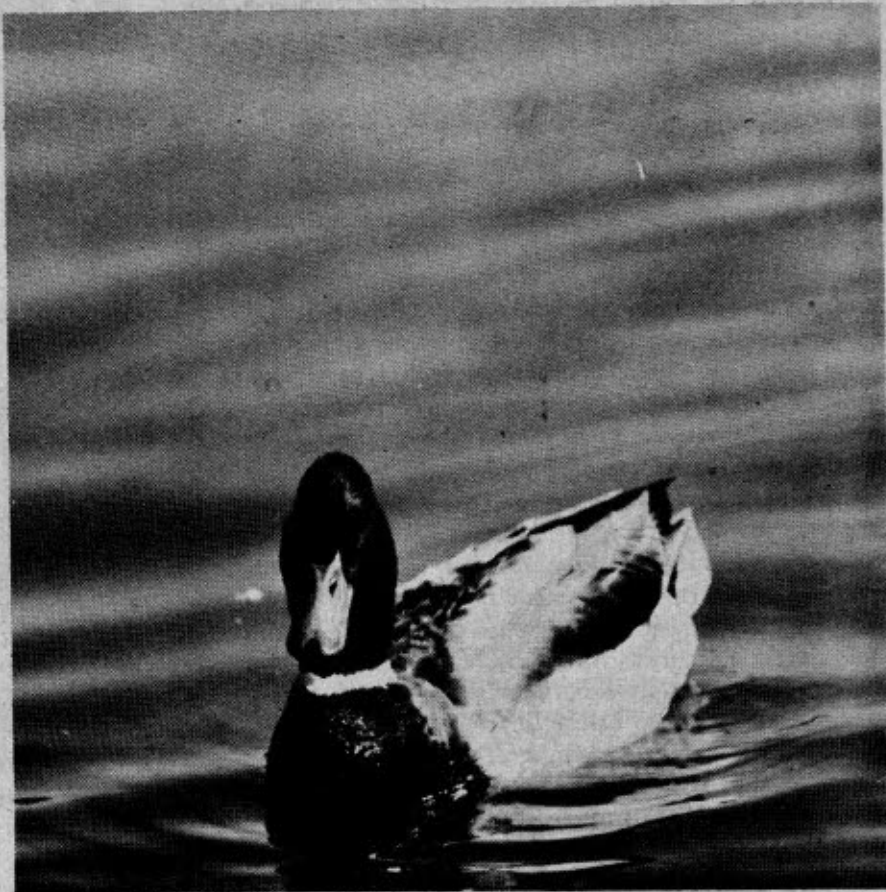
## Boulder Battles Growth in Court

Boulder, Colo. is having a hard time using its water and sewer services as a tool for controlling growth. The city passed a comprehensive plan that doesn't allow for development in one area until "after 1990" but the area is already serviced by city utility lines. A developer, Lawrence Robinson doesn't want to wait until "after 1990" and District Judge William Neighbors said he won't have to. The judge said the city's water is a public service that cannot be withheld from a customer once it is brought into an area. The city is considering an appeal to the Colorado Supreme Court.

## Senate Wants Study of 12 Rivers

The Senate has passed legislation requiring that segments of 12 Colorado rivers be studied for possible preservation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Presently no Colorado rivers are protected under the system. Segments of the Dolores, Yampa, Gunnison, Los Pinos, Big Thompson, Green, Conejos, Elk, Cache la Poudre, Piedra, Encampment, and Colorado will be studied. All river studies covered by the Senate's bill must be completed within five years except the Dolores study which must be completed within one year because of the proposed McPhee Dam on that river. Environmentalists wanted to see more rivers in Colorado included in the bill. The Interior Department has identified 90 rivers in the state with "significant free-flowing values."

Photo by Tom Baugh



"We are now entering the season where many fathers will embark on the time-honored tradition of taking their sons hunting on prairie marshes. In the excitement of watching mallards circle into the decoys, and in the fellowship of hours spent in the field, most hunters will probably not realize that future generations will not be able to experience the thrill of listening to whistling wings in a pre-dawn sky unless the public shows greater vigilance in preserving remaining marshes," says Herb Troester, President of the North Dakota Chapter of the Wildlife Society.

Troester warns that while North Dakota has the best wetland habitat remaining of any state in the continental United States, increased drainage of prairie marshes will destroy much of this valuable resource in the near future. He stresses that two water development projects in North Dakota, the Garrison Diversion Project and the Starkweather Watershed Project, will cause the greatest harm to prairie marshes of any two projects in North Dakota's history.

The Starkweather Project would open a large area to intensified drainage, Troester says, with the potential for destroying 50,000 acres of prairie lakes and marshes in the heart of some of the most valuable waterfowl production habitat remaining in the United States. The Garrison Diversion Project, he continues, will result in the direct drainage of over 27,000 acres of wetlands in this same prime waterfowl producing region; with the degradation of at least 29,000 acres of additional wetlands with excessive water levels, pollutants from irrigation return flow water, and the introduction into marshes of fish which compete with waterfowl for food supplies. The combined loss of waterfowl production habitat under these two projects would be over 100,000 acres.

"Too many hunters view waterfowl as a resource that always will be present in abundance, and always available as a source of recreation during the hunting season. Continued indifference on the part of many hunters to the threat of accelerated wetland drainage will mean that autumn skies of the future will be hauntingly empty."

## Senate Passes Hells Canyon Bill

The Senate has passed the Hells Canyon National Recreation Area bill by a voice vote. The bill seeks to protect the deepest gorge in North America from further dams on a 101 mile section of the Middle Snake River between Hells Canyon Dam in Idaho and Asotin, Wash. S. 2233 also designates 280,000 acres along the river as "instant wilderness." The bill was backed by Idaho Senators Frank Church and James McClure and Oregon Senators Mark Hatfield and Bob Packwood. Sen. Floyd Haskell (D-Colo.) raised the only discordant note, refusing to vote for the measure because it established "instant wilderness" without official surveys of the minerals that underlie the area. The House has yet to act on a parallel measure. Rep. Al Ullman (D-Ore.) says he is willing to substitute the Senate passed bill for his Hells Canyon preservation bill but Rep. Teno Roncalio (D-Wyo.) who sits on the House subcommittee that will consider the bill says he "will not stand in the way of a 600,000 kilowatt dam in Hells Canyon at this time."

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## Thoughts from the Distaff Corner

by Marge Higley

Fall is a nostalgic time of year. It seems especially so today — perhaps because I know that within a week I must leave this well-loved mountain sanctuary and return to "civilization."

Most of the aspen leaves are gone, and the bare white trunks and dark branches look like smoke-colored clouds scattered among the green conifers on the hillsides. In the more sheltered coves and glens there are still vivid patches of color where the leaves cling tenuously. With each small breath of wind they drift earthward in a golden shower.

Today, the sky is leaden, and the radio weatherman is predicting showers and possibly snow in the high country. Reluctantly, I folded up the patio chairs and stored them away for the winter. There are lots of other little "close-up-for-winter" chores, but most of them are inside, so I decided to procrastinate. If it snows tonight I'll get at them tomorrow — but today is too pretty to stay indoors!

Apparently my sister, Pearl, had the same thought. As I stepped outside, she came down the path from her cabin and suggested that we go for a walk. It was cloudy but not cold as we walked briskly down the road. The high mountain grasses along the roadside and in the meadow have turned from lush green to pale amber, dotted here and there by clumps of brittle brown skunk-cabbage.

About half a mile from the house we left the road and took a seldom-used one which leads past an old deserted homestead and up a steep hillside. Climbing over, under, and around fallen logs, we followed the trail to the rocky ridge at the crest of the hill. The rocks are covered with bright-colored lichen, and in the summertime there are pasque flowers and sego lilies in bloom. Today, there were no flowers — only dried stalks and bare bushes. A chill wind at the top of the hill dissuaded us from lingering too long to enjoy the view.

About halfway down we decided to inspect at close range the weathered old log buildings on the homestead, so we left the trail and meandered through the trees to the grassy knoll below. Like children, we shuffled through piles of fallen leaves, savoring the crisp aroma. The ground looked as though some giant hand had strewn it with confetti. Mingled with the gold and orange aspen leaves were the shiny green leaves of low-growing kinnikinnick, scarlet geranium leaves, the pale yellow-green of fading huckleberry leaves, and the crimson leaves of the wild strawberries.

The old buildings seemed more dilapidated than when I last saw them, a few years ago. (I was especially interested in them today, because only last night I had read the log cabin chapter of *The Foxfire Book*.) The roofs had all fallen in, but there was still chinking between the logs of the low building which we think was the living quarters. The sandy chinking crumbled at our touch — how has it managed to withstand so many winters?

We followed the zig-zag trail of greyed fence logs for a short way, then cut across the dry meadow toward the road and home. Low-hanging clouds hid the mountaintops, and the air smelled like rain — or snow. Pearl shared her supper with me, and as we finished eating, the rain started. Just a few drops at first, then the welcome moisture pelted down for almost an hour. By now it has turned into a steady drizzle. I shall be surprised if there isn't snow on the ground in the morning.

I'm awfully glad that I didn't do indoor chores today!



Aspen and ponderosa pine near the base of Laramie Peak, Wyoming on the Medicine Bow National Forest.

## BULLETIN BOARD

### BRIDGER WILDERNESS PLAN

The proposed management plan for the Bridger Wilderness in the Wind River Range in Wyoming has been released and is available from the Forest Supervisor's office, Bridger-Teton National Forest, Jackson, Wyo., 83001. Anyone desiring to make written comments should submit them to the supervisor, Charles T. Coston, before October 30, 1974. The plan proposes to restrict recreational use of the wilderness through a permit system in an effort to reduce visitor impact on the ecology of the area. It also expresses a need for an additional 143 campsites and a number of new parking areas at the nine entrances.

### POWDER RIVER COAL IMPACT

A final edition of the impact statement on proposed coal development in the Powder River Basin in Wyoming will be published in mid-October. About 600 sets of the final study will be mailed to those who commented on the first draft. Remaining copies will be distributed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to others interested in the development question. The BLM's Cheyenne office address is Box 1828, Cheyenne, Wyo. 82001. The final statement consists of six volumes and about 2,600 pages.

### GEOTHERMAL SHORT COURSE

A three-day introduction to the field of geothermal resources and a survey of current geothermal development in Idaho and nearby areas will be offered in a short course at the Roadway Inn in Boise, Oct. 16-18. To enroll, send a letter to the Geothermal Resources Council, General Short Course in Boise; P.O. Box 1033, Davis, Calif. 95616.

### COLO. LAND PLANNING

The Bureau of Land Management has requested the cooperation and help of all individuals and organizations who may be interested in developing detailed land use plans for the National Resource Lands for the eastern-central portions of Garfield County, nearly all of Rio Blanco County and the southwestern corner of Moffat County in western Colorado. Oil shale production is expected in these areas soon. For additional information, notice of upcoming public meetings, or to submit written comments on land use plans, contact: Meeker Resource Area Office, Bureau of Land Management, P.O. Box 957, Meeker, Colo. 81641.

### LIFESTYLE INDEX

To cut down on meat consumption is an energy conservation measure, two scientists of the Center for Science in the Public Interest say in their 64-page "Lifestyle Index." Albert Fritsch and Barry Castleman have found that more energy is needed to produce meat than dairy products or fruits and nuts.

A few of their findings include:

—if you happen to drink two aluminum cans of beer per day and fail to recycle the cans, you waste more energy alone than is used daily by each of a billion human beings in poorer countries.

—a 1.5-mile trip in a cold car takes twice as much fuel as the same trip in a fully warmed-up car.

Copies of the Lifestyle Index are available for \$1.50 from the Center for Science in the Public Interest, 1779 Church St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

### ENVIRONMENTAL JOB

Montana's State Council of Trout Unlimited (TU) has been given approval to hire a full-time person to coordinate activities in Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. TU is a non-profit organization with chapters throughout the Northern Rockies. Their main goal is the protection of coldwater fisheries and the promotion of environmentally-sound fishing practices. Persons interested in applying for Regional Director should contact Dick Williams at 300 Colorado No. 4, Butte, Montana 59701.

### ORV MONITOR

The Environmental Defense Fund is publishing a new bi-monthly newsletter from its California office to create a communications network for those concerned about off-road vehicles (ORVs). In the publication, *ORV Monitor*, scientists will explain the environmental impact of ORVs. Regional editors will report local ORV news and describe area campaigns to control vehicle use. *ORV Monitor* will report on governmental actions and lawsuits, notify readers of the time and place of public hearings, and report the progress of governmental studies on the ORV problem. A year's subscription is \$6. Write to *ORV Monitor*, Environmental Defense Fund, 2728 Durant Ave., Berkeley, California 94704.



Book Reviews

# American Habitat

Barbara Gutmann Rosenkrantz and William A. Koelsch, eds., The Free Press, New York, 1973. \$10.00, hard cover. 364 pages. Illustrations.

Review by Peter Wild

**American Habitat**, a hefty book, is an attempt to place between two covers a good chunk of the social, economic, and political history, from colonial times to the present, that has resulted in the state of today's environment. As such, the approach is at once the book's virtue and its failure. The fact is that only an encyclopedia could come anywhere near accomplishing the task. Necessarily, then, there are gaps in **American Habitat**, and on occasion a reader will find transitions between some sections of the book puzzling. However, there's much good reading here. This collection of writings by colonial officials, physicians, architects, historians, and conservationists ranges from the representatives of King George III, through the nineteenth-century historian Francis Parkman, to the present-day pioneer landscape architect, Andrew Downing, and professors from a number of universities. Thus it provides a kaleidoscopic, if somewhat overwhelming, view of the changing relationships of Americans to their land resource over the past three hundred years or so. If the book lacks a certain continuity, it succeeds on the other hand by its variety and the depth of individual essays.

Interested in the complex relationship of cotton, slavery, and soil exhaustion in the South?

It's there in a chapter of that title, whose sections detail the role of slavery, fertilizers, and lack of crop rotation in depleting soils. Or perhaps you need to know about the ins and outs of the congressional machinations of the last century that created the pattern of land use still haunting us. It's there in a well written chapter, "Congress Looks West: Liberal Ideology and Public Land Policy in the Nineteenth Century," a quick course on the influences of the thunderous Senator Thomas Hart Benton, the avaricious railroads, and the liberalism that eventually annihilated itself.

One suspects that **American Habitat** was designed as a text which would provide resource materials complementary to lectures in courses on the environment. It would be a good text, and those who teach such courses on the college level should consider using it. Others, for example writers or politicians concerned with the environment, will find this a valuable reference and source book to keep handy on the shelf. And for those with a general interest, such as myself, **American Habitat** makes fascinating browsing.

# Cache Trails

by Mel Davis and Ann Schimpf USU Foundation, Logan, Utah, 1974, \$1.50.

Review by Anne Turner

**Cache Trails** is a guide book to many hours of pleasure on foot. For anyone living or vacationing in the Cache Valley area of Utah it is a very useful pocket trail guide. It also offers a format well worth emulating by anyone compiling a similar guide to his own part of the country or favorite recreation area.

The first and presently only hiking guide to the northern Utah area surrounding Logan, this little book is remarkably complete. It is written with the snowshoer and cross country skier as well as the hiker in mind.

The first few pages provide a general briefing on the geology, flora and fauna of the area along with some helpful tips on climate, clothing and what to do if you get lost. Trail descriptions are grouped into three main geographical divisions and are prefixed by such pertinent information as destination, distance and elevation gain for easy assessment.

The descriptions are generally clear and detailed enough to keep you fairly close to the straight and narrow path. No small feat, considering most of the trails are neither well marked nor well maintained.

**Cache Trails** is written in a refreshingly informal and conversational style. Short verses and delicately penned sketches highlight the descriptions which include interesting historical postscripts — such as where to hunt for stolen treasure supposedly hidden in one of the hollows during the last century.

The book identifies practically every major trail in the Cache Valley area and will treat you to the discovery of many you never knew existed.



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 Friday, Oct. 11, 1974

# Eavesdropper

LOONEY LIMERICKS

by Zane E. Cology

The tribes were offered beads and satin,  
 "Strip mine your coal and your coffers we'll fatten."  
 So they leased out their lands,  
 With blessings from Unc' Sam,  
 A better deal was the sale of Manhattan!



Americans may be giving off odd odors — smelling more like people — in the near future. This is because the U. S. Food and Drug Administration has concluded that deodorant soaps may be harmful because they kill too many germs. The FDA says naturally occurring germs on the skin serve a protective function and when wiped out by deodorant soaps, are replaced by more harmful germs.

The Balanced National Growth and Development Act of 1974 (H.R. 16585) seeks to consolidate federal domestic policies related to growth and development. The bill's sponsor, Rep. George Brown (D-Calif.), says an impressive amount of effort has gone into new approaches to control growth, but he's disappointed by the results. Part of his bill's remedy is the required preparation of "growth impact studies." Sen. Hubert Humphrey (D-Minn.) has introduced a similar measure, S. 3050, in the Senate.

More than half of the nation's drinking water comes from underground supplies, but there still is no national legislation to protect those resources, the executive director of the National Water Well Association warns. Dr. Jay Lehr blames the powerful oil and gas interests with blocking adequate groundwater safeguards. He says the energy interests dislike stringent underground waste disposal regulations.

Santa Clara County, Calif., which includes San Jose, is trying out a new mass transit scheme called "Dial-A-Ride." Over a million people live in this low-density suburbia which now has door to door bus service anywhere in a 240-square mile area. The fare, regardless of the length of trip, is a quarter. Persons over 65 or under 18 pay a dime.

A captive breeding program to insure the survival of the endangered peregrine falcon has suffered a major setback — the death of one of the first two birds to be reintroduced into the wild. "We had everything completely solved except man," said Dr. Heinz Meng of New Paltz, N.Y., who in 1971 successfully bred the falcons in captivity. He said the falcon was killed by a man with a knife or hatchet.

A scientist studying bats in the lava caves of southwest Washington has discovered a new species of spider — Speleonychia Sengeri. The spider is whitish, the color typical of organisms that live beyond the reach of sunlight. Its founder, Dr. Cyle Senger, says his discovery came as a surprise because the caves are so young geologically that it was generally believed there was insufficient time for creatures to evolve to live in them.

New Mexico Sen. Pete Domenici has proposed an amendment to S. 3752 to permit tax-exempt industrial development bonds to finance energy recovery from wastes and recycling facilities. Domenici says the bonds are "a useful carrot to be able to dangle in front of the waste disposal industry."

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## A CONSERVATION PORTRAIT: Rancher/Environmentalist Art Fawcett

"For environmental reasons" Wyoming rancher Art Fawcett quit milking his cow a couple of years ago, breaking over thirty years of established habit.

He made the change "because Wyoming may be under greater threat from industrial development than any other place in the nation," Fawcett says. He feels a responsibility to do something about it. "I've had to arrange the ranch so that I have time to get away. The only justification for it is that I may be doing some good."

Fawcett is currently serving as chairman of the Wyoming group of the Sierra Club. Despite his ranch and conservation duties, he still finds time to add to an impressive collection of wildflower and wildlife photographs and participate in local community life. Both he and his wife, Ruth, have made homemade gift items which are on display at a local shop near Esterbrook, the Panther Creek Trading Post. Fawcett specializes in hand-made picture frames and color photographs of the mountain country close to his home.

Fawcett freely shares his piece of Wyoming. Environmentalists occasionally hold meetings on his Squaw Peaks Angus Ranch. He has given the movement his time, the benefit of his training as a forest ranger, and whatever peace they can find in his beautiful country. The rolling land at the edge of Laramie Peak's ponderosa pine forests gives the volunteer conservation workers a reminder of what it is they are trying to save.

If town-bound conservationists are charged and charmed by Fawcett — the reverse is also true.

"One of the greatest rewards for me is the kind of people I run into in this work — friendly, interesting people who enjoy living. They're not so tied up with the necessity to make money that they forget how to live," Fawcett says.

Since his territory includes the entire state of Wyoming, Fawcett drives 20,000 miles a year or so running Sierra Club errands. Like other active club members, he receives a minimum of financial compensation — just gasoline money. Like others, he moves around the state economy-style.

"We travel with our bedrolls, seldom have to rent a room, and we eat just as cheaply as possible. That way we can spread it out a little longer," Fawcett says.

He was born on a farm in Ohio. For the first 12 years of his career, Fawcett worked as a forest ranger in the northern part of the country, from Idaho to New England. He left the Forest Service in 1941 to settle down on the Squaw Peaks Angus Ranch and tend a hundred head of cattle.

"In those days I had a tendency not to be a joiner," Fawcett says. "But when some wilderness problems here in Wyoming came up, I finally realized that you could be more effective by joining. I'm convinced now that if you really want to make your work and knowledge usable, you have to belong to an organization — in our society as it's set up today."

When Fawcett joined the Sierra Club a dozen years ago, there were only about 10 members in the state. Today there are more than 250. In January, the Wyoming organization hopes to move from group to full-fledged chapter status.

The Wyoming Sierra Club is locally organized, but it can tie citizens into a national network when they need help, Fawcett says with pride. Local groups take responsibility



Art Fawcett

for things that affect them at home. Through the Regional Conservation Committee, these things can then be carried on to the Sierra Club's national Board of Directors. The board can use its influence and approve legal action if it's appropriate.

"But it's a regional thing," Fawcett says. "Our individual policies don't have to be approved by the entire nation."

In the past, Fawcett was most interested in wilderness issues. He fought for the passage of the Wilderness Act prior

to 1964. He's now doing his best to protect the Medicine Bow National Forest — which he managed as a forest ranger and which is now adjacent to his home.

Timber cuts and grazing abuses were his main concerns before, but now he worries that energy development may also damage his cherished mountains.

"We're going to get an impact. If there are large groups of people following industry into the state, they are going to be looking for recreation in the mountain areas," Fawcett says. "We feel that something needs to be done to prepare. Land use planning is going to be the answer, but we don't know just the best way to do it yet."

"Why can't we minimize the impact on areas such as Wyoming and Montana — and at least give our scientists a chance to come up with another answer before we use the last of our fossil fuels?" Fawcett asks. "It is my understanding that there's enough coal in West Virginia alone to satisfy this country's needs for 10 to 15 years. And no one can deny that within the next 50-70 years we're going to have to have new sources of energy."

"There are lots of good studies being made. But if we don't delay this thing through our legislators and state officials until these studies are completed, it'll be like shutting the barn door after the horse has been stolen. The studies will be useless," Fawcett says.

Fawcett wishes that more citizens would fight for their rights. "The energy companies have led us around and told us what they were going to do. I think the people can start telling these energy companies what they will be allowed to do."

With a twinkle in his eye, Fawcett apologizes for his earnestness. "If I come on too strong," he explains, "it's because there's so much to be done and we need more help." —JN



## Dear Friends of HCN:



Marjane Ambler

We thrive on letters from readers. They usually lead us in the right direction.

A note last winter from Nancy E. Gregory of Cold Comfort Farm in Golden, Colo. has proved especially fortuitous. She told us of a Nebraska news woman with "lots of guts and lots of experience" who was homesick for the Rockies. That woman, Marjane Ambler, is a native Coloradoan who was working as news editor of the *Seward County Independent*.

Ambler herself came through our office this summer. By then, she'd quit her job in Nebraska and was headed for Montana to investigate and write about a situation that concerned her: The Northern Cheyenne Indians and their coal dilemma.

Ambler's story about Indian coal is published in this issue. And, we are pleased to announce, she has agreed to settle down to regular duties as associate editor of *High Country News*.

She took the job, she said, because we offer her "new challenges in an area of personal concern." (Nobody comes to HCN for the pay.) Beyond that, her heart has been in the Rockies — and she's pleased to be home.

Although Ambler comes to us from a Midwestern daily community paper, she's no newcomer to in-depth environmental reporting. Her experience covering agriculture, land use planning, solar power, and the energy crisis in Seward, Neb. have given her insight into the rapid changes that plague us in the Rockies. She grew up in the Denver area and studied English at Ft. Lewis College in Durango, Colo. and the University of Colorado in Boulder and in Denver.

We're proud she's chosen to help us. And we're sure she's a gain for the environmentalist cause in the Rockies.

the editors.

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