

The Environmental Bi-Weekly

High Country News

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Lander, Wyoming

Friday, December 6, 1974

Wide open spaces in trouble

Ranching industry on the rocks

by Bob Child

Everyone has at least a small stake in ranching. This industry is central in preserving the characteristics which make the west a very special place to most of us.

As the year 1974 draws to a close, the cattlemen of this country find themselves in a precarious position. Circumstances have combined so that the cattleman finds himself confronted by an array of problems such as have not been seen since the Dust Bowl days of the depression years in the 1930s.

HIGH COSTS

Inflation is everyone's enemy. There is not a household in the country which is not feeling the pinch. However, the majority of people are bringing home more of the inflated dollars with which to do their shopping, whereas the cattleman is finding that his "take-home pay" is actually reduced, and his family has the same needs as yours.

Inflation is reducing the "take-home pay" by forcing the rancher to pay literally exorbitant prices for those items necessary to the conduct of the ranching business. Prices for new equipment, spare parts, gasoline, fertilizer, labor, and feed have soared to new heights. Net profit has been substantially reduced.

Many ranches operate on the bank's money, and you know what has happened to the prime interest rate in the past year.

LOW PRICES — SLUGGISH MARKETS

If the ranchers' gross income was increasing at a pace approximating that of the increase in costs, the condition of the industry would be vastly improved. The truth is, however, that the prices which the cattleman is forced to accept are roughly **one-half** of those which he received in 1973. This is attributable to a number of factors, but especially significant is the very nature of the product which is being sold. A yearling steer cannot be stored in a warehouse awaiting a favorable price trend. Neither can the rancher afford to keep his marketable animals for an extended length of time, because the added feed expense quickly erases any price advantage he may gain.

Not only is the price scale at an absurdly low level, but the very ability to sell has been dampened by the reluctance of many feed lot operators to buy feeder cattle. A lack of feed and a disastrous 1973

(Continued on page 4)

Bob Child is a cattle rancher in Snowmass, Colo.



"Ken Hunder — Working Cowboy," a black and white photo of a color painting by James Bama of Wapiti, Wyo. Bama's art, the subject of this issue's centerspread, goes beyond the realism of photography. His subject is the West.

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HIGH COUNTRY

By Jane Bell

Editors' note:

Tom telephoned us to say that snow and a failing power plant had made him lose track that this was press week. So, no "High Country." We look forward to hearing from him next issue.

Letters



Dear High Country News,

David Sumner's special article "The Last Great Carving Up of America" was a superb article, well written and well thought out, and clearly to the point. It was enjoyable reading, but thought provoking. If articles such as his do not wake up the people of Wyoming, Montana, North and South Dakota to what is taking and will take place; then there is absolutely no hope for our land and waters and wildlife.

Certainly if we can place men on the moon we must have the scientific and engineering ability to reclaim the land and keep the rivers and waters clean; and also to keep the air free of pollution and dirt.

More articles like this one would certainly be welcome whenever possible. It was great.

Sincerely,
LeRoy Seyhers,
Lead, S.D.

Dear Editors,

As one of the active members of the Citizens for Glenwood Canyon Scenic Corridor, I am writing to you to inform you of our position regarding the canyon cut by the Colorado River along U.S. Route 6, outside Glenwood Springs, Colo.

We are a citizens group attempting to obtain for the 13 mile canyon stretch a Scenic Corridor Designation, similar in concept to naming it a Scenic Area. Thus, we are circulating a petition directed to the Governor of Colorado requesting that he implement such designation for not only one of Colorado's, but one of the Rocky Mountain area's, unique geologic landmarks. We are hoping to gather as many as 100,000 signatures.

We feel that such designation is critical to protecting the canyon from the potentially irreparable damage from construction of Interstate 70 through the canyon, especially along the canyon floor. Although the canyon has not been officially declared as a corridor link of I-70, the Highway Department virtually eliminated alternative routes in its design invitations.

Our concern is that unless the Governor of Colorado and his Highway Department are made aware of the public's desire for preservation of Glenwood Canyon's natural uniqueness and beauty, the canyon will become merely a transportation corridor. Such an irresponsible treatment of the canyon will destroy the multiple use potential that the area has. Multiple use would include besides transportation, camping and hiking, picnicking, fishing, still and whitewater sports, wildlife habitats, and the simple visual enjoyment of the canyon's tremendous geologic features.

Basically, we would prefer to keep the existing roadway, but with additional safety measures taken. These modifications would include but not be restricted to installation of better guard rails, improved banking of the curves, three lane passing sections, and a lowering of the legal speed. With Interstate maximum speeds set at 55 m.p.h., the

time lost in the canyon traveling safely at 45 m.p.h. for 13 miles will be less than 7 minutes.

If such retention, however, is unfeasible a plan which places the new highway up and away from the canyon floor deserves additional study and consideration.

Because the Colorado Highway Department is working behind relatively closed doors on the Glenwood Canyon issue, we desire to expose the issues as fully as possible.

For an information sheet or a petition contact:
Howie Mallory
P.O. Box 7
El Jebel, Colo. 81628

Dear Editors:

I hate to be critical again so soon, but I must agree with those who oppose use of your mailing list by any political candidate — whether outstanding or not. It's really worthwhile, but can only result in complications and trouble to loan the mailing list. Hope you can avoid such in the future.

Now, re the article on Meeteetsee and the complex situation with conflicting needs. It was a superb job. Meeteetsee, and other communities like it, have a real problem of survival and unpleasant alternatives. With little economic opportunity, especially with a very depressed livestock situation, there's not much left to keep them going, but it's important that they do survive. The Kirwin copper mine is not a pleasant solution — maybe, it's better than nothing, but could well overdo the growth. Marjane's article pointed out very well these contradictions. We need a way to keep the small towns alive without overdevelopment or the abuse that much modern mining will bring to surrounding environments.

Sincerely,
Francis J. Walcott
Absarokee, Mont.

Dear Editors:

With regard to the "mailing list mayhem":

When I received the letter from Lamm-Brown headquarters my first reaction was similar to that of Mr. Schneider. Upon reflection, however, I realized that this was a method whereby I might become aware of other environmentally-oriented groups and organizations. As long as you use discretion and recipients of your list parallel your outlook, I not only welcome the release of my name, I insist upon it.

This attitude can only be based upon a trust in the proper discretion and in your principles. Although I have disagreed with you in the past on some points (and will, I am sure, in the future), I feel that HCN is in the interest of Wyoming and the world.

If the choice is between a viable and solvent HCN or no HCN at all, I opt for the former, whether it takes mailing lists or small amounts of discreetly chosen advertisements.

Encouragingly,
James R. Beckett
Laramie, Wyo.

Dear Editor,

Having just read the 2 letters complaining that the HCN had given their names to the Lamm headquarters, I should give you my opposite reaction.

Thank you for giving my name. I was happy to support Governor-Elect Lamm, and no doubt wouldn't have gotten around to doing it without an assist from you.

I wish all unsolicited requests for contributions were as worthwhile.

Sincerely,
Mary El-Negoumy
Bozeman, Mont.

Dear Editors,

After spending the last half hour sorting out my weeks mail and carrying two large bags of unsolicited mail to the garbage can I sat down to read the Nov. 23 issue of HCN and find that you too are contributing to the huge volume of junk mail we receive daily.

I agree with reader Fred L. Schneider that this is an "unsavory situation." If you wish to maintain high quality and credibility you cannot afford to subject subscribers to this wasteful practice.

Sincerely,
Donald A. Gullickson, M.D.
Lander, Wyo.

Dear High Country News,

In no way did the mailing from candidates Lamm and Brown offend me, partly because I felt that their environmental records indicate that they will work to protect Colorado, and partly because a mailed request for funds does not impress me as an intrusion.

If High Country News had not obtained a mailing list with my name a few years ago and requested my subscription, I would have been unaware that such a publication existed. For this reason alone I am more than happy to see you continue to sell or exchange your mailing list to increase your subscription base and to make the environmental problems that we face known to more supporters.

Don Thompson
Denver, Colo.

Attention readers

Editors' Note:

We appreciate the letters we have received to help us form policy on the use of the HCN mailing list. Eleven readers took a stand on the issue. No real consensus of opinion emerged, but we did receive some good ideas about how to solve the problem.

In the future, for those readers who do not object, HCN will continue occasionally exchanging mailing lists with carefully selected causes, remaining non-partisan and true to our environmental convictions. For those who do object, we will keep careful track of their names and see that they are never included in an outside mailing.

We will require that whoever uses the names we supply use them only once. To avoid waste, we will also ask that the user screen out the names of our readers who are already on their mailing or membership list.

To make this system work, each year we will print a coupon for new readers to send to HCN if they do not wish their name to be used in outside mailings. Readers who have already sent in letters discouraging use of the mailing list need not notify us again. Others wishing to have their names taken out of circulation may send in the coupon below or drop us a note.

Though this system may cost you some time and a stamp, we hope you'll understand. The flexibility of the policy will allow us to honor our readers' wishes, to pursue financial stability (by trading our list for the names of other people who might be interested in HCN), and to help spread the word about other environmental efforts which we believe deserve support.

Please do not use my name for any outside mailings.

Name.....
Address.....
City.....
State..... Zip.....

Send to High Country News, Box K, Lander, Wyo. 82520.



Conference planners in box canyon

by Colleen Kelly

The Wyoming Planning Conference in Casper November 22-23 opened with Wyoming's Chief of State Planning noting that industrial development is inevitable. Although Dave Ellis' observation, to a degree, would seem to be correct, "degree" should be emphasized. The degree of industrial development is within the state's ability to control.

To begin a planning conference with such a defeatist expression is discouraging, to say the least. Instead of directing our future, this attitude seems to underline the present state policy of merely reacting to what comes.

Workshop sessions designed for in-depth discussion of impact and solutions covered community development, providing amenities to expanding communities, financing planning and facilities, and housing alternatives. And the discussions again reflected the inevitable — here it comes, so let's make way. Measures aimed at controlling the pace and location of developments received little attention.

Legislation to create a state-wide bonding agency, to set standards for mobile home construction, and to levy production taxes on coal dominated the conference. Although such legislation is important, an orientation toward control might have expanded discussion to include industrial facility siting, export policy and its implementation through planning, and coal conversion taxation to control siting of conversion facilities.

The upcoming land use planning act, a proper interest for the state's planners, was not even on the agenda.

The conference, sponsored by the Wyoming Planning Association, was designed to bring together planners and industry, municipalities and financial institutions — hopefully, all those who will be involved in creating the impact problems and developing solutions. But industry participation seemed excessive. Allied Chemical, the Wyoming Mining

Association, Atlantic Richfield Company, Burlington Northern — the list of conference sponsors reads like a who's who in Wyoming minerals development. And the course of discussion probably couldn't have pleased them more, with control receiving so little attention.

Brainstorming sessions among the planners themselves to deal with problems of planning at the county and state levels were totally lacking. Perhaps industry should have been more candid about the problems their development will bring so the planners could respond with answers to control or avoid those problems altogether. But questions addressed to company spokesmen about whether or not new towns were actually in the planning stages drew little more than blank stares. And there was

no talk from planners about what their communities desired as far as quality of community and how population increases would affect that quality. Inevitability seemed to have everyone's creativity and imagination in a box canyon.

If Wyoming's planning efforts continue on this course, we will find ourselves in the not-too-distant future with all the problems our hearts could desire to mitigate and "plan." Or we could take the bull by the horns and actively direct the pace and extent of industrialization.

Some of those at the conference obviously seemed to feel we can't, or shouldn't — but some think otherwise. Leslie Peterson, director of the Wyoming Environmental Institute, put it simply: "The heck we can't!"

Rocky Mountain governors unite

Rocky Mountain states may have new backbone in state leadership, if promises made at the Democratic Governors' Conference in South Carolina are any indication.

At the conference, several newly elected governors of Rocky Mountain states — Dick Lamm (Colo.), Jerry Apodaca (N.M.), and Ed Herschler (Wyo.) — met with Montana Gov. Tom Judge to discuss the formation of a regional organization on resource development.

"We've got to organize," Judge said, "or the eastern banks and corporations, helped by the Ford administration, will pick us off one by one."

Colorado's Gov.-elect Dick Lamm, who campaigned on a platform of "assertiveness" toward energy-producing companies, said he was "amazed" at the unity he found among Judge, Herschler, Apodaca and himself. Adding to that the potential of help from Democratic governors Cecil Andrus of Idaho, Arthur Link of North Dakota, and Calvin Rampton of Utah, Judge hopes to form a political

block strong enough to resist solutions to the energy crisis "that mean plowing and plundering our states."

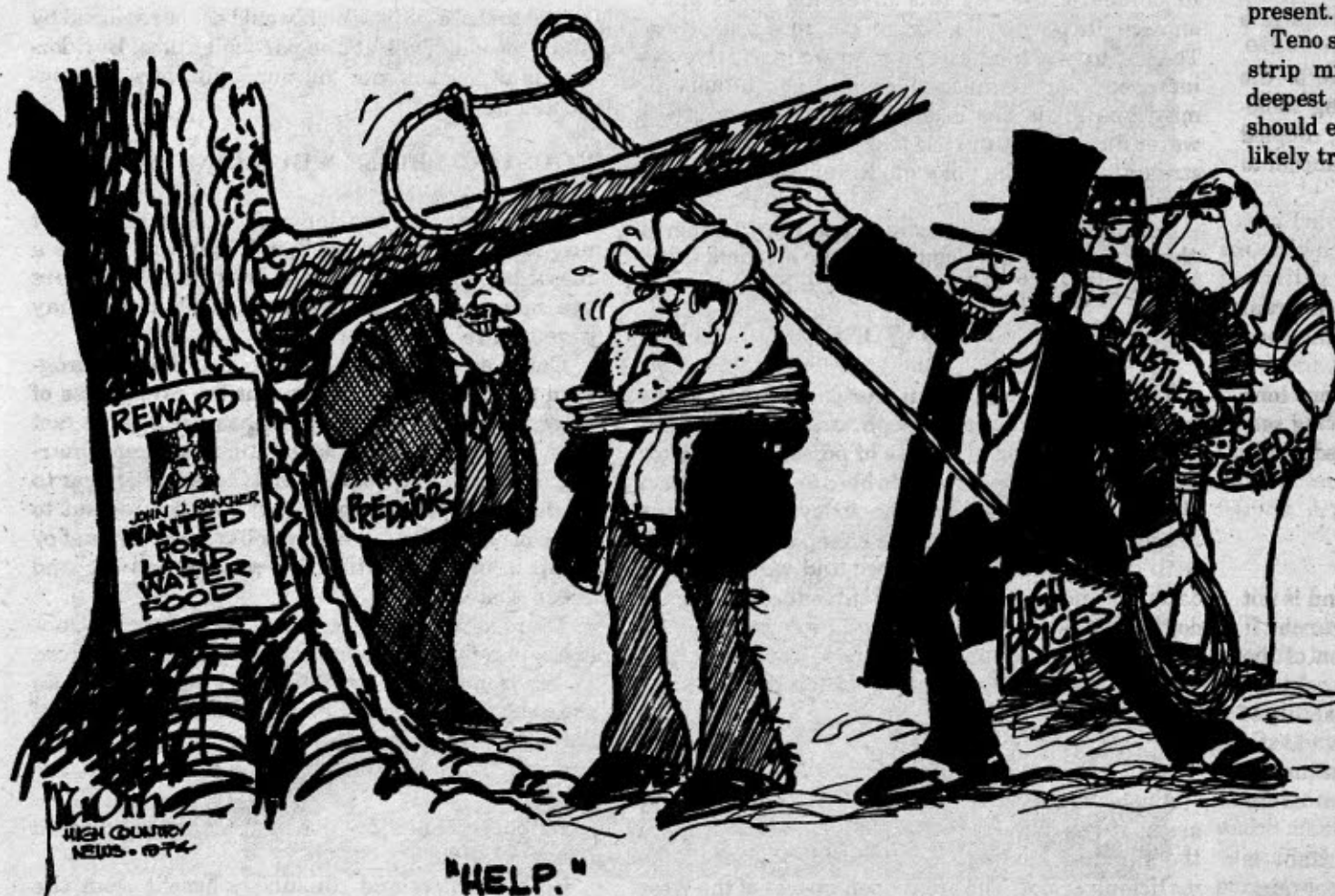
That's a revolutionary stance for western state leaders, who have traditionally vied with one another to see who could attract the most industry. It is also a stance vitally linked to the survival of the West in these Rocky Mountain boom times. —JN

Teno & Hells Canyon

Congressional maneuverings on Hells Canyon preservation legislation are sorely trying our patience.

One of the major obstacles to progress on this bill is our own sometimes-faithful Rep. Teno Roncalio (D-Wyo.). On Nov. 22 at a crucial moment in the House Interior subcommittee markup session, Rep. Roncalio and Rep. Joe Skubitz of Kansas walked out of the meeting, leaving the subcommittee one vote shy of a 13-member quorum. Rep. Lloyd Meeds (D-Wash.) says there would have been enough votes to pass the bill comfortably — if a quorum had been present.

Teno says a dam in Hells Canyon might mean less strip mining in Wyoming. We don't think the deepest canyon on the North American continent should even be suggested as barter for such an unlikely trade. —JN



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Ranching in Snowmass, Colo. — an "emotionally rewarding" job, according to Bob Child. He finds that financial rewards this year are not so clear, however.

Ranching...

(Continued from page 1)

have contributed to a lack of willing buyers at local livestock auctions.

SHORTAGES

Shortages of heretofore readily available items are becoming commonplace, and we are told that this is a trend which will definitely not improve. On the ranches, some of the shortages were of a critical nature. Ranchers owning wiretie balers had great difficulty in locating wire in 1973. Baling twine is becoming more difficult to find. These shortages are forcing some ranchers to abandon their existing hay systems in favor of one which does not require a continuous supply of tying material.

Commercial fertilizer, the major source of the great increases in crop yields, is becoming somewhat difficult to obtain. The short supply, coupled with the increased cost, is forcing many a rancher to re-assess his fertilizing program.

WEATHER

Many experts have been forecasting a great drought for the middle part of the 1970s. The summer of 1974 made the experts look good.

In some sections of the West, there were long periods without moisture during the growing season. Indications are that crop yields showed a substantial drop.

LAND PRICES

An increase in the valuation of ranch land is not desirable, unless you want to sell your ranch. It increases property taxes, makes expansion of the ranching operation by purchase of additional land prohibitive, and, worst of all, it reduces the ability of one generation to pass family ranches down to the next generation. Estate taxes are based on the development potential of the land, even when no development is contemplated by the heirs.

These factors become increasingly important as land values are pushed upwards by the great numbers of people moving to the West. The potential for

energy sources and recreation sites adds impetus to this upward thrust.

WATER

The ability of a ranch to produce foodstuffs can be related directly to the availability of water. Many, if not most, of the ranches in the West must irrigate their crops. Anything that disturbs the balance of land and water can have an enormous impact on the nation's food supply. This is true whether the disturbance be man-made, or natural, such as a reduced snow pack following a relatively dry winter.

Man, in his eternal wisdom, seemingly strives for the ultimate disturbance of that balance. Municipalities such as Denver have diverted enormous quantities of water from agricultural use to domestic use. As this diversion takes place, another factor further diminishes food production. The salinity of the water remaining in the rivers is increased, as the ratio of water to pollutants diminishes. This has decreased the quality of the water for agricultural use to the point where downstream users of the Colorado River are now considering litigation.

Salinity is expected to increase even further if there is a major development of the oil shale industry in Colorado, Wyoming, and Utah.

PREDATORS

The general public contributes to many of the ranchers' problems. Public opinion was a major factor in the banning of the use of poisons in predator control. The ban is justifiable because of the impact of some of the poisons on the ecosystems. But the rancher, and particularly the sheep rancher, is left with the problem. The number and variety of predators is increasing. Man has introduced legions of dogs into the ranching country. The dogs kill just as surely as the coyotes, and they, further, cause weight losses in the livestock which they chase.

PEOPLE

As the numbers of people moving into the rural areas of the West increases, so grows the problem the rancher has with trespassing, whether it be malicious or not. The great open spaces of the West offer an irresistible lure to the recreationist. And it

is admittedly difficult to distinguish between the public and private lands in many cases. But the loser is the rancher who is left behind to pick up the litter, mend the cut fences, close the opened gates, and sort out the mixed-up livestock.

Scratch a rancher and you will generally find a generous and hospitable person. He is getting a little uptight about the more flagrant acts of trespassers, however. We are likely to be seeing more "No Trespassing" signs. In some cases, he is justified in his attitude, since the rustling of animals is on the increase.

WHY BOTHER?

After getting this all down on paper, I realize that people will wonder why anyone in his right mind would want to stay in ranching. Probably the simplest way to say it is that other occupations may be rewarding economically, but ranching is rewarding emotionally. The office worker may get a momentary lift upon the completion of a particularly difficult task, but that lift can never compare to the exhilaration of hearing the first, mucus-clearing snort of a new-born calf after a difficult birth.

It is then, while kneeling in the intimate light of a flashlight in a cold, drafty barn, your hands bloody and your body exhausted by the effort of assisting a young heifer, that you know that what you are doing is the right thing for you. It is then that you are renewed in spirit and resolve, and you realize that problems do have solutions.

BEATING HIGH COSTS

The solutions to some of our problems of escalating costs have not been found, so we have to address ourselves to those that do offer possibilities.

A reduction of the property tax burden in all counties should be sought through lobbying for a reform of existing state law.

Grain exports should be monitored to verify that foreign markets do not have an unfair advantage when they compete with our domestic market.

Although normally I would not support government competition with private enterprise, I do feel that the crisis proportions of the ranchers' condition justifies a program of low interest government loans. Such a program was recently initiated, but its scope needs to be broadened.

Individual communities can reduce the impact of high equipment costs by cooperative purchasing and using of equipment. This would have to be limited to those items which would not be required by all of the neighbors at one particular time. Bulldozers, land levelers, and manure spreaders are suggested items.

BOOSTING PRICES & BUILDING MARKETS

Appraising the situation realistically, there is not any single thing that we can do which will have a major impact on the current low prices. Yet, there are many approaches which in combination may give real relief to the rancher.

Cattle associations have already initiated a program to educate the public about the advantages of buying beef, and this program has stressed the fact that beef is still the best bargain at the supermarket. This is a good program, but it does not appear to be doing the job. I suggest that it be pointed out to the consumer that every dollar spent for beef or lamb is buying continuing wildlife habitat and green space.

There is already a great deal of pressure on Congress to reduce the amount of imported beef. From an environmentalist's viewpoint, it does not make much sense to expend the fuel necessary to ship beef from Australia, especially when we are having a problem with consuming the beef raised in this country.

Purchase of beef for consumption by the armed forces could help.

Both ranchers and consumers benefit from the direct sale of grass-fed beef to the consumer or to

food co-ops. Some may argue that the quality ("tenderness," or fat content) of the beef is diminished, but, on the other hand, this eliminates the much criticized feeding of large amounts of grain in order to gain some dubious benefits.

DEALING WITH SHORTAGES

The rancher is in the same boat as the rest of the country when it comes to dealing with most of the current shortages. He must rely on improved management practices to **reduce** his needs first, and then to insure that adequate supplies are on hand when needed. And lastly, he can look for substitutes.

Shortages can prove to be a blessing in disguise, too. The shortage of fertilizer is not likely to ever improve. This fact is forcing a lot of ranchers and communities to examine the feasibility of using sewer sludge to increase yields. In the end this may be a much cheaper source of fertilizer since the disposal of sludge is a problem of major proportions for most large communities.

WAITING ON THE WEATHER

Should man attempt to modify the weather? I believe that, until we have satisfied all of the arguments against weather modification, the only recourse of the rancher will be to avoid those grasses which require great quantities of water. If the ranch is dependent on irrigation, water-saving programs should have already been initiated as a part of good management.

LAND PRICE AND TAX REFORM

The growing awareness of land use problems has produced a number of alternative methods for dealing with the tax problems created by today's high land prices. Unfortunately, there has been little movement to the cleanest and simplest method, a reform of our existing estate tax laws, which would benefit ranches and farms across the country.

Other methods have been established in scattered areas throughout the country on a local basis. County purchase and lease-back of agricultural land must be limited in its use by the enormous capital expense involved. The method holding the greatest promise, a development rights transfer program, has been limited in its application. This program allows landowners to sell and dispose of

the right to develop while retaining possession of their land. Through such a program ranchers and farmers could share in the prosperity of the community without destroying valuable agricultural lands.

Agricultural zoning can be effective in restoring valuations to true agricultural value, but it has seen only limited use, probably because of the native distrust ranchers hold for zoning regulations.

UNITING FOR WATER

Ranchers and environmentalists are really not strange bedfellows. This is true especially in their concerns for water use and water quality in the West. Alliance of these two groups may be the most effective way of resisting undesirable water diversion schemes and water uses which threaten to greatly reduce the quality of the water.

The G.A.R., General and Active Reserve (HCN 9-24-74), may be the organization to bring about this alliance. At any rate, no effort should be spared to keep quality water flowing in our rivers and streams and to maintain the water table in the already semi-arid West.

CONTROLLING PREDATORS

The depredations of "man's best friend" can be reduced to an acceptable level with a program of dog control which re-defines the role of the dog in today's society, and which clearly identifies the responsibilities of the dog owner. Once this predator is under firm control, we will be able to accurately measure the damages properly chargeable to the natural predator. The coyote probably has his place in the scheme of things, but certainly not in the great numbers which exist today. A case has not been made for either poisons or selective hunting. Perhaps we should be looking a little more closely at the use of a natural enemy to control the coyote numbers. The wolf is such an enemy. We may find the cure is worse than the disease, but there are signs that the time may be right for experimentation on a limited basis.

Until such time as the domestic and natural predators are under reasonable control, sheepmen are entitled to the collection of partial damages. I say "partial" because "inventory losses" are a part of every business. We should not totally support poor managers.



Photo by Steve Child
The rancher who put up this sign gives permission for people to cross his land, but asks that certain rules be followed. Otherwise, when the strangers are gone he finds himself left to pick up litter, mend cut fences, close opened gates, and sort out mixed up livestock. Irresponsibility on the part of recreationists and other trespassers may be producing an increased number of "No Trespassing" signs on alluring ranches in the West.

EDUCATING PEOPLE

The Lord's Prayer says, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us," indicating that trespass is not a problem unique to this age and this place. Perhaps the best that we can do is to "forgive those who trespass against us." I have found that it is fairly effective to be friendly, but firm, with those who ask permission to go on our place. We give permission, but we also ask that certain basic rules be followed. Many of those who have passed through our gate have become close friends. A few have been asked not to return.

THE CHOICE

These problems are by no means exclusive to the western rancher, and the solutions suggested are neither original nor exclusive. Rather, this is intended to be a summing up of common problems confronting an industry in which everyone has at least a small stake. If action is not forthcoming soon to solve some of these problems, the characteristics which make the West a very special place to most of us will be lost. Perhaps it was intended to change as part of a grand, evolutionary plan. I choose to believe not.



Splicing a broken wire.

Photo by Steve Child

6-High Country News



Keeping western ranches in agricultural production can be accomplished through land use planning. This ranch is in Colorado.

State controls on land use

Wyoming proposes land planning act

by Monty Grey

The quality of a living environment is largely dependent on the uses made of land. From coal mines and condominiums to railroad lines and Ramada Inns, decisions about when and where development will occur are shaping the future of Wyoming. Today these decisions are being made by landholders and developers who need not put the public costs of private development on their books. The disruption of life styles, increased sediment loads in trout streams, rising local taxes, and the loss of prime agricultural land are among the costs we pay while the developer takes his profit.

If the citizens of Wyoming want to shape their own future they must effectively manage the uses made of the land. **Land use planning is making the kinds of futures people want happen.**

One of the most far reaching bills coming before the Wyoming legislature in 1975 will be a state land use planning act. This legislation is the result of a year's work by the Wyoming Conservation and Land Use Study Commission. This article takes a look at that proposed act, compares it to land use planning legislation already in effect in other states, and notes some of the things it does and does not do.

In outline form, the proposed legislation:

- establishes a state land use commission supported by a state department of land use administration and advisory committee.
- requires the establishment of statewide land use goals, policies, and guidelines and a state land use plan.
- calls for the identification of critical areas and areas of more than local concern and the establishment of guidelines for development within such areas.
- requires local governments to develop land use plans subject to approval by the commission.
- creates a land use information service to develop an adequate data base for planning.

TRUST IN THE GOVERNOR

The proposed land use commission would be responsible for putting teeth behind the bill. The

Study Commission left the working definition of key terms such as "areas of critical or more than local concern" and all the goals, policies, and guidelines for both the state plan and local plans to the rulemaking power of the commission.

This poses a problem for the citizen. How do you know what you're getting? To take one case in point, would the stream bottoms so vital to agriculture in Johnson and Sheridan Counties be designated as areas of critical concern? There is no way of knowing until the bill passes, the commission is formed, and the rules are made. A great deal of trust must be placed in the governor who will appoint this commission.

HOW CITIZENS FIT IN

There are minimal provisions for citizen participation in the proposed legislation. There is a 27 member advisory committee, the membership of which is unspecified. Citizens are placed in the unfortunate position of reacting to planning rather than participating in it.

A first step toward including the public would be to require the commission to present alternative sets of goals, policies, and guidelines to the people through public hearings, publications, and other media. Reaction could be judged through hearing records, the press, public opinion surveys, or advisory ballots. Or, to take democracy seriously, the commission might be required to hire advocate planners for all groups concerned — industry, agriculture, realtors, environmentalists, sportsmen, minority groups, and so on. The planner would serve at the pleasure of the interest represented and would be supported by the group and the commission on an ability-to-pay basis. This would give everyone concerned professional, responsive representation in the planning process.

Finally, citizens must be given standing to sue the commission to force it to fulfill prescribed duties or enforce its own rules.

HOW THEY DO IT ELSEWHERE

Several states have recently enacted land use planning legislation. Such legislation takes many forms. Comparing the proposed Wyoming act with some representative samples will clearly point out

some options the Study Commission did not take.

Administrative Structure. As the table illustrates there are three basic ways to organize state land use planning. Special land use commissions are already at work in Colorado, Hawaii, and Vermont — where they are called environmental boards. The governor's office is deeply involved in planning in Florida and Oregon. Existing agencies handle land use planning in Maine, Nevada, and Wisconsin. The agency is typically the equivalent of Wyoming's Department of Environmental Quality.

Which system is best? That depends on many factors. The governor's office offers prestige, ready access to power, and the possibility of dynamic action as seen in Oregon Gov. Tom McCall's administration. But the governor must believe in planning and devote an important share of his energy to it. The use of an existing agency helps keep the bureaucratic maze simple, but may not give land use planning the central place it deserves. Creating a new agency (as is now proposed for Wyoming), or a new division of some existing agency, could highlight the planning issue.

Levels of Government. As the table shows, both state and local government are playing major roles in land use planning. The proposed Wyoming legislation — like that already in effect in Colorado, Florida, Hawaii, Oregon, Vermont, and Wisconsin — attempts to integrate state and local planning efforts. The use of some kind of regional planning as in Florida or Vermont has not been attempted.

Regional planning offers several advantages where developments of the large scale expected in Wyoming are concerned. The regional level combines perspective on problems that spill over city limits or county lines with a measure of local responsiveness. The political marketability of regionalism is not good in conservative areas, however.

Specificity. The states used in the table split evenly between those with fairly specific and those

Monty Grey has a graduate degree in land use policy and administration and experience in planning at both the state and local levels in Wyoming.

with general legislation. The specifics set forth in acts like Vermont's include definitions of major developments and areas of concern, and descriptions of what should be in state or local plans.

Which approach is best? That depends on who makes the rules under the general approach. Citizens might want to see the composition of the land use commission specified so as to include representatives from the concerned interests. Popular election of this commission is another possibility.

Coverage and Management. This comparison is difficult because each state has its own approach to land use planning. The table shows six combinations of coverage and management mechanisms:

"Local planning within state guidelines" — used in Colorado, Oregon and the proposed Wyoming legislation, this possibility simply requires that local governments plan, and it establishes guidelines for their doing so.

"State management of critical areas" — used in Nevada and the proposed Wyoming legislation, this option gives the state the ability to guide development in designated areas.

"State management of large scale development" — used in Maine, this combination gives the state control over the siting of all kinds of major facilities, including subdivisions.

"State land use planning with implementation powers" — used in Hawaii, a land use commission divides the states into four broad use zones to guide growth.

"State land use planning without implementation powers" — provided for in Colorado, Nevada, and the proposed Wyoming legislation, this possibility allows for planning as an advisory mechanism and a framework for actual management powers in specific areas.

"Integrated state-local land use planning" — in Florida all levels of government are involved in planning development of regional concern and critical areas. In Vermont, state and district levels are preparing development and land use capability plans and have the power to regulate developments of major importance and critical areas. Local governments are formally involved at all steps.

BROAD SCOPE

The proposed Wyoming legislation has a comparatively broad scope. Only the Vermont and Florida options cover more concerns and more com-

pletely involve all levels of government.

One option not used by the Study Commission, however, is the regulation of large scale developments such as power plants. Industrial siting legislation will appear separately before the 1975 legislature. It may be desirable to combine plant siting into a broader conception of land use planning. This would prevent the proliferation of agencies and would place plant siting in an overall framework of policies guiding development in Wyoming. Some means of coordination would have to be devised if the two remain separate, just as means of coordinating a land use agency and the Department of Environmental Quality will surely have to be provided. Citizens must weigh the strategic value of separating these concepts against the problems of coordination bound to arise.

SO, WHAT DO WE HAVE?

Effective land use planning is the key to allowing Wyoming people to shape Wyoming's future.

Does the legislation proposed by the Conservation and Land Use Study Commission actually provide for effective land use planning?

On the plus side, it does:

— provide a workable administrative mechanism for land use planning at the state level.

— call for the formulation of state development goals, policies and guidelines.

— allow for the designation and management of critical areas.

— require all localities to begin planning at their level.

On the minus side, it does not:

— allow for extensive citizen participation in the formative stages of the planning process.

— include provisions for dealing with major impacts such as power plant siting or large subdivisions.

— contain specific definitions of the concerns covered or any specific guidelines for the proposed commission in performing its duties.

TIMING

While the comparison points out that different approaches could be used, the citizen must be aware of the time consumed in formulating land use legislation and debating alternative proposals. Is there time to spare?

The legislation proposed by the Study Commission can be worked with and amended to produce an effective mechanism for land use planning at the state level. But even then the job is only half done. Local planning must, also, be evaluated.

Montana advisors list local land use controls

Municipalities and counties would be given broad powers to guide land use decisions — even to review proposals of state government — under an innovative Montana approach to land use problems. The plan was proposed by the Montana legislature's environmental advisory arm.

Emphasis in the new land use program, contained in a 200-page report by the Environmental Quality Council (EQC), is on the revitalization of local government's responsibility and authority to make and be accountable for the decisions that most affect citizens.

The EQC Montana Land Use Policy Study rejects any concept of statewide zoning (as is done in Hawaii) as inconsistent with the rural, sparsely settled nature of Montana life and unworkable in

guiding land use in the nation's fourth largest state (147,000 square miles).

The study also concludes that statewide zoning would conflict with the state's strong local government traditions. Montana drew national attention recently with the election of local government study commissions. The commissions must propose alternative forms of local government for a mandatory election in 1976, forms that could be designed to mesh with a land use program.

The local government periodic review process stipulated by the 1972 Montana Constitution is unique in the nation.

The EQC study proposes a flexible review and designation process for two categories of land and land development: areas of state concern and developments of greater than local impact.

Areas of state concern would include education institutions, civic complexes, airports, mineral and land reserves, essential ecosystems and areas where hazards to human communities would exist, as in earthquake zones.

Development of greater than local impact would include major shopping centers, large subdivisions, industrial complexes, and public works projects — any development which would have significant effects beyond the boundaries of the local government having jurisdiction over the development site.

Under the two categories of land and land development regulation, local government would hold primary review authority. Areas of state concern would be managed by local government under development regulations drawn with state technical assistance.

Developments of greater than local impact would be reviewed by local government with an eye toward the development's forecasted effects on adjacent property, costs of public services and environmental impact. The benefits and detriments would have to be assessed for the region as well as the local area and examined to assure that benefits outweigh detriments.

To protect state interests in the two land and land development regulatory processes, the Montana Land Use Policy Study recommends creation of a state Land Use Commission to arbitrate conflicts arising from land management issues. An open, citizen review process is proposed to synthesize state land use goals through a Commission on Growth and Montana's Future.

Comparison of State Land Use Legislation

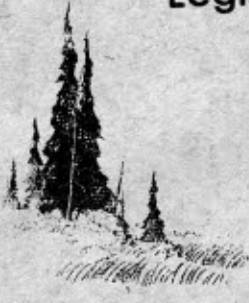
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|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|---|
| Proposed Wyoming Legislation | • | | • | • | | • | • | • | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Wisconsin Shoreland Zoning | | • | • | • | | • | • | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Vermont Environmental Board | • | | • | • | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Oregon County Zoning | | • | • | • | | • | • | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Nevada State Land Use Planning | | • | • | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Maine Siting Location Act | | • | • | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Hawaii Land Use Law | • | | • | • | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Florida Land and Water Management | • | | • | • | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Colorado Land Use Commission | • | | • | • | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

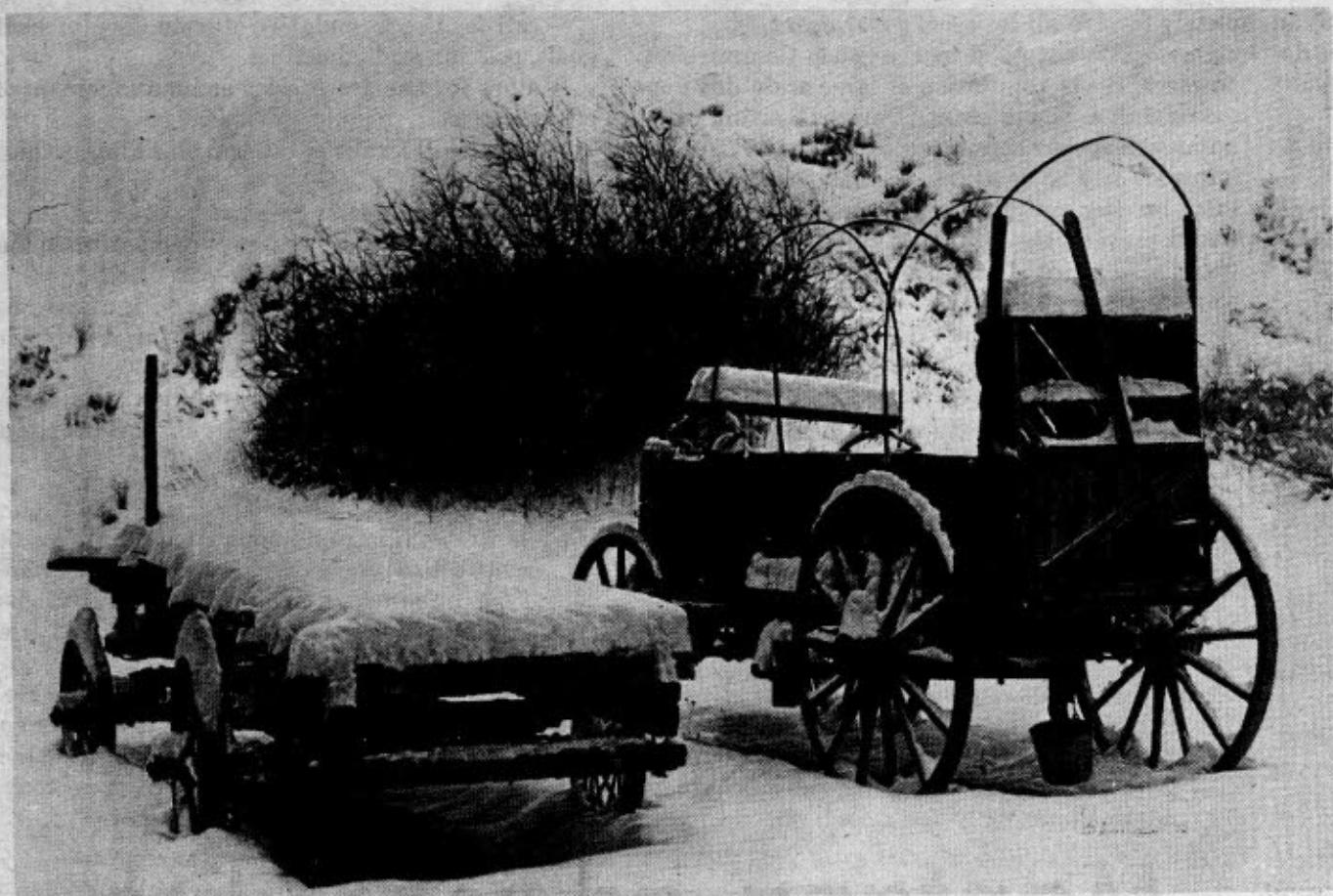
Administration
Land Use Commission and Support
Governor's Office and Support
Multi-Purpose Agency

Level of Government
State
Regional or Districts
Local

Specificity
Many Specifics
More General

Coverage and Management
Local Planning Within State Guidelines
State Management of Critical Areas
State Management of Large Scale Developments
Land Use Planning With Implementation Power
Land Use Planning Without Implementation Power
Integrated State-Local Land Use Planning and Management for Critical Areas or Large Impacts





"Wagons in Winter"

"Navajo Sheepherder in Wyoming"



High Country News-9
 Friday, Dec. 6, 1974

JIM BAMA

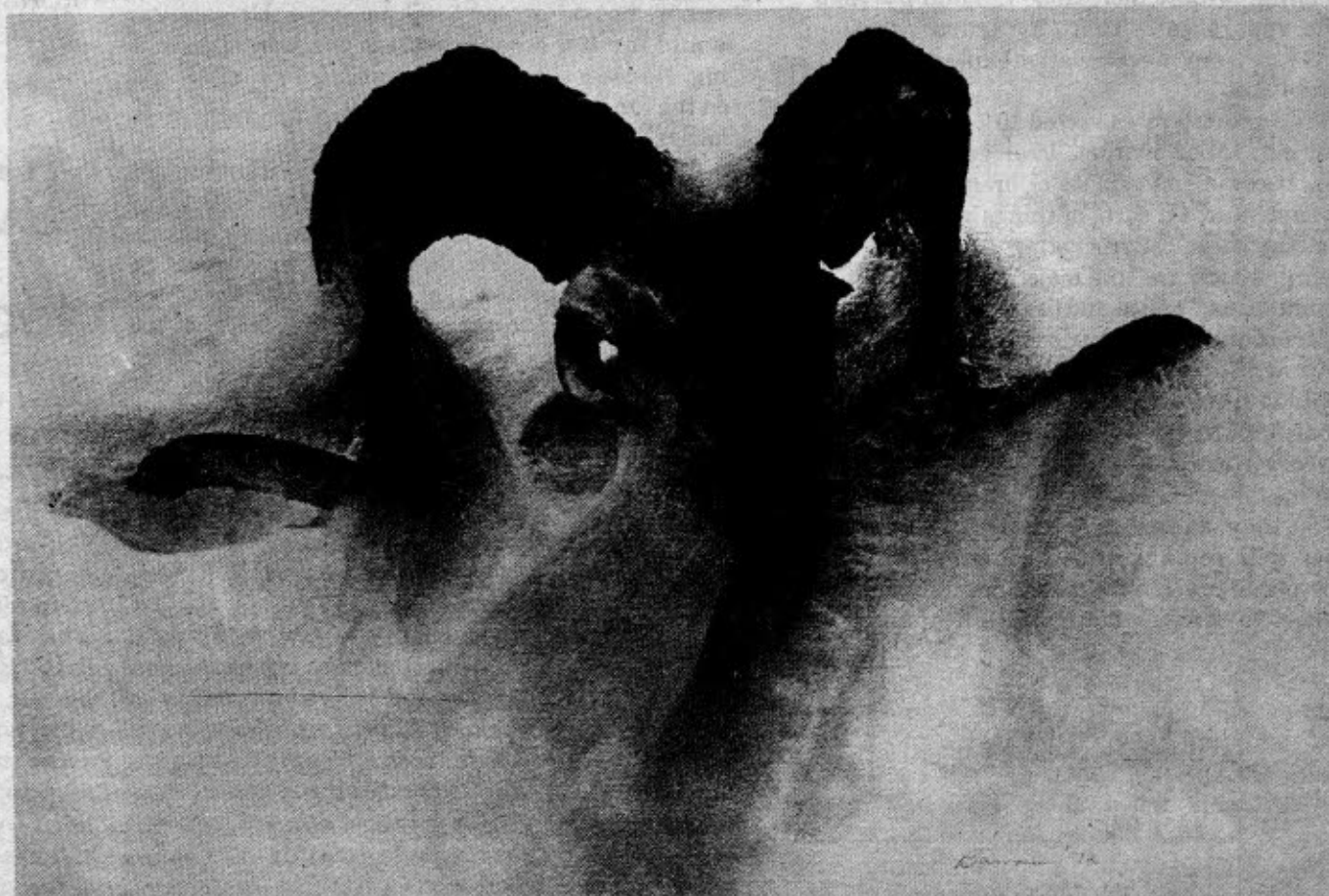
We live in a place called "the West," we have a gut feeling about what is "western," but the essence of this region is almost impossible to convey to an outsider. It takes an artist like Jim Bama to pull it together and put in down for posterity before it passes. A former commercial artist from New York, Jim denies being a western artist, but there is no doubt he has captured the country's character on his canvas. He searches out today's remaining mountain men, rodeo riders, prospectors, sheepherders and others who are slowly being engulfed by homogenized modern day America.

It's been a long road from illustrating book covers and ads in New York to earning a place for his art in the Cowboy Hall of Fame. Today Jim paints from his home studio in Wapiti, Wyo. near Cody. His wife, Lynne, is a professional photographer and a frequent contributor to **High Country News**. For Jim a photo may mean the beginning of many months spent at an easel. The result is a realism no photographer could hope to match.



"Lee Pinckard — Hunting Guide"

"Sheep Skull in Drift"



10-High Country News
Friday, Dec. 6, 1974

Reckoning from Washington

by Lee Catterall

The government still is eyeing future development of Wyoming's deep oil shale and natural gas reserves, but with neither excitement nor early expectations.

Industry has shown little interest in trying to tap the relatively thin seams of oil shale near Rock Springs. When the government put parts of those up for bid earlier this year, energy companies failed to respond.

Project Wagon Wheel, a proposal to shake loose natural gas deposits trapped in sandstone beneath Sublette County using nuclear explosives, gained opposition from environmentalists, area residents and Rep. Teno Roncalio, a member of the joint congressional committee on atomic energy. The proposal was shelved.

Nevertheless, authors of Project Independence, the government's massive, new proposal to encourage more domestic energy production, haven't given up hope on those two beds of resource.

El Paso Natural Gas Co., which wants to tap the Sublette County reserve, now plans to develop a new technique of hydraulic, rather than nuclear, fracturing to free natural gas from the sandstone.

But a Project Independence report says it's "yet to be demonstrated that massive hydraulic fracturing can practically or economically" work on a commercial scale by 1990, except under a more ambitious plan than the government expects.

Commercial oil shale development would be confined to Colorado over the next decade, under Project Independence. But the government hopes Wyoming will have a 50 million barrel-a-day mine in Sweetwater County by 1986 and another by 1990.

That activity would bring 6,200 new residents to the county by 1985, but they'll hardly be noticed, according to government forecasts.

That area already "has suffered the fastest-growing boom economy in the Rocky Mountain region," the Project Independence report notes. "The boom is based on trona mining, power plant construction, coal mining and major oil and gas development."

Even without oil shale development, the report predicts that area's population will continue booming from about 35,000 to 119,800 by 1985 and a whopping, almost incredible, 193,000 by 1990.

The report calls that "hyperurbanization," a fancy way of saying population explosion and plenty of problems.

"As growth rates exceed 10%, existing institutions, e.g. labor market, local government structures, become inadequate or break down," the report says, and all sorts of things go wrong.

Among them: skyrocketing prices of land and housing, which are "the major contributor to living cost increases;" police and fire departments that are "undermanned, undertrained and underequipped;" overcrowding of public facilities, ranging from schools to restaurants; poor housing; and problems of health, both mental and physical.

Sweetwater County "is already in that situation," the report says. If the population forecasts are correct — they exceed that yearly 10% rate — the county will remain in that situation, and public officials there will have more than they can handle for years to come — not a pleasant prospect.



Landowners get consent provision in strip bill

The future of the federal strip mining bill has once again switched from doomed to hopeful as the conference committee gave its final approval Tuesday. The bill will go directly to the House and the Senate. In the House, it must pass by a two-thirds margin since a challenge is expected from the House Rules Committee. If it passes Congress it will go directly to the President for his signature. There have been no recent clues of what his decision might be. If it reaches him on Monday, there would be enough time left to avoid a pocket veto.

The newest compromise on landowner consent was worked out by Sen. Henry Jackson (D-Wash.) and Rep. Patsy Mink (D-Hawaii), with a new bonus payment for surface owners suggested by Sen. Bennett Johnston (D-La.). Ironically, Jackson broke up the conference two weeks ago and nearly destroyed all hopes for a bill by proposing a new compromise even though he had not attended most of the previous conference committee meetings.

An extension of the moratorium on leasing federal coal apparently erased the objections which had prevented previous compromise. The moratorium was to expire this January, but the Jackson-Mink compromise extends it to Feb. 1, 1976. This means the new Congress will have a year to work out provisions to satisfy surface owners. If it doesn't, the bill provides the definitions of and benefits for surface owners which would then go into effect.

Sen. Clifford Hansen (R-Wyo.) voted against the new compromise, but signed the final conference report. He said he opposed what he considered to be the postponement of the decision on landowner consent. He thinks landowners will be inadequately compensated. And he thinks the procedure for defining landowners is too cumbersome.

The bill now provides for paying the surface owner fair market value for the affected land, for loss of income during strip mining, costs of relocation, and actual damages to crops and buildings. In addition, the bill provides that the surface owner retains actual title to the land and may return to the ranch or farm after the strip mined land has been reclaimed.

Johnston's bonus provides that the Secretary of Interior would be able to make an "equitable" determination of an additional payment to the surface owner, not to exceed \$100 per acre. He said this would further encourage them to allow strip mining. Hansen would have eliminated all limitations on the amount of compensation allowed to the landowner.

At first, Hansen had opposed allowing for landowner's consent. Rep. Teno Roncalio (D-Wyo.) had supported the landowners throughout the conference meetings. He thought the coal should be taken into consideration when determining the price to be paid to the surface owner. Most of the landowner consent proposals were based on an amendment by Rep. John Melcher (D-Mont.).

Rep. Morris Udall (D-Ariz.), chairman of the committee, said the bill would provide a "very modest windfall to a very modest group of people." The bill calls for stiff penalties against land owners and coal operators who attempt to make a deal for strip mining outside the provisions of the bill. Hansen also opposed these penalties.

Surface owners who qualify to give or withhold written consent are defined as being those persons who hold title to the land and 1) live on it, or 2) who personally farm or ranch it, or 3) who derive a significant portion of their income from it. The person must have fit this definition for three years before he is eligible to give or withhold consent.

The provision was inserted — mainly at the insistence of Senate Democrats — to bar speculators

from profiting under terms of the bill.

One important provision of the bill protects productive agricultural land in alluvial valley floors. Mining is not allowed there unless the applicant (the mining company) can prove to the regulatory authority that it will have no substantial adverse effect. The states will establish regulatory authorities and the Secretary of Interior would also be a regulatory authority.

The bill also encourages deep mining. Conferees agreed to impose a lower excise tax on deep mining than on strip mining. The excise tax would be used to reclaim "orphaned mines" and would be used for public services in states where there are few abandoned mines.

Conferees also authorized \$35 million for research on means of developing underground mining. This was strongly endorsed by the United Mine Workers.

The conferees took the House language making the operator responsible for successful revegetation for five years — ten in arid regions — after the last time the land is irrigated, seeded, or fertilized, with an exception when the land is used for intensive agriculture such as row crops.

The bill puts the primary responsibility for enforcement on the states, but sets up a federal enforcement program which can be used to monitor state programs or replace them if states don't enforce the law. It requires the states to set up a procedure to designate lands unsuitable for strip mining if the land cannot be reclaimed or if some other land use is preferred.

Operators are required to "restore the land affected to a condition at least fully capable of supporting the uses which it was capable of supporting prior to any mining, or higher or better uses. . . ."

Other major decisions adopted include:

—permitting strip mining on National Grasslands, but not National Forests.

—severely limiting contour mining but allowing mountain top removal.

—applying the same environmental standards to strip mining on Indian reservations that would be applied elsewhere. It would also direct the Interior Department to make a one year study of how Indian coal should be regulated in the future.

—requiring Environmental Protection Agency approval of regulations relating to air and water quality.

Editorial



Hansen responds to citizen ire

Grassroots ire at strippers demanding federal coal reached such intensity that it even reached Sen. Clifford Hansen (R-Wyo.). Hansen, who had steadfastly opposed landowner consent in the federal strip mining bill, became the hero, however tardily, who was going to rescue the bill from the flames that Sen. Henry Jackson's political shenanigans had lit.

Although Hansen's proposed compromise was not accepted by the conference committee, he did succeed in keeping the seemingly doomed bill in the headlines during the critical period. His responsiveness to the pleas of the people of Wyoming deserves our applause.

—MJA

Emphasis ENERGY

in the Rockies and Great Plains

A bomb explosion behind the Montana Power Co. (MPC) building in Billings, Mont., got company officials worried. The bomb exploded about 6 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 21, and extra patrols were assigned to guard other MPC fixtures in Yellowstone County. The following Friday and Saturday two threatening calls were received, one at the MPC complex in Colstrip and another at Decker Coal Co. There was speculation that the bomb had been planted by someone who opposed MPC's power plant construction or strip mining operations at Colstrip.

Rocky Mountain Energy Company has received permits for a right-of-way across federal lands for its **Medicine Bow, Wyoming, surface coal mine** with Arch Mineral. The mine is expected to get into production early in 1975, with annual output estimated at three million tons. Construction of the mine haulage roads, powerline and rail spur is well under way and work on the dragline is nearly 90% completed, according to a Union Pacific publication. It also said Rocky Mountain Energy has entered into a joint venture with Peter Kiewit Sons', Inc., to **develop Union Pacific's Black Butte property east of Rock Springs**. A purchase contract with a Western power company provides for delivery of 1.9 million tons of coal in 1979 and 3.3 million tons annually thereafter through the end of this century.

The Utah Division of Oil and Gas Conservation has approved an application for two exploratory **oil wells in Great Salt Lake**. Amoco Production Co. will drill the wells. Production will be conveyed ashore via a pipeline on the bed of the lake, and waste material would be taken ashore in barges. The company said its plans to provide all safeguards against blowouts and spills.

In **North Dakota** more than 300 people have signed a petition protesting a decision by Mercer County Commissioners to issue \$175 million in **industrial revenue bonds** in behalf of Michigan-Wisconsin Pipeline Company. The low interest bonds will cover the costs of anti-pollution equipment for a proposed \$700 million coal gasification plant. Michigan-Wisconsin has offered a \$25,000 administration fee to the county, but some people feel that the fee should be more.

A desire to explore oil shale development may have caused Edward Teller to sever his ties with the **Edward Teller Center for Science, Technology and Political Thought** in Boulder, Colo. California oil man Arthur Spitzer has also withdrawn his support — a pledge of \$5 million. Both men wanted the center to do oil shale research to help develop the resource in Colorado. Edward Rozek, executive director of the center, contends that the center, a nonprofit educational foundation, must stick to academic projects.

Coal-fueled power is last on Idaho voters lists as an option to supply the state's energy needs, according to a GMA research poll. Voters were asked to choose from the following list the item that best describes their choice for resolving Idaho's power needs. Responses were: nuclear-fueled plants 34.4%, hydroelectric dams 31.4%, government policy changes to conserve energy and slow growth in Idaho 22.3%, coal-fueled plants 11.9%.



Members of the Crow Indian Tribe voted approval of a new coal lease agreement with **Westmoreland Resources** by a margin of 343 to 33. The agreement provides for expanded coal mining at Sarpy Creek by 1982. The Crows had rejected Westmoreland's offer last June and had petitioned the Secretary of the Interior alleging irregularities in earlier negotiations with the company. Under the new contract, the tribe will receive 40 cents per ton instead of 17½ cents a ton under the old contract. The new contract also contains an escalator clause so the tribe will be paid more if the price of coal rises. Westmoreland Resources President Pemberton Hutchinson was quoted as saying the contract will make the Crows the highest paid coal owners in the United States. Significant differences between the new contract and the contract rejected in June include Westmoreland's agreement to develop a new mine in one tract and to increase production on a third tract. The agreement requires Westmoreland to produce 14 million tons by 1982. Tribal approval will be necessary before locating a gasification or generating plant within 50 miles of the reservation boundaries.

This picture shows a Westmoreland dragline at Sarpy Creek. Photo by Carol Harlow

A new study on coal development in the **Powder River Basin** points out that satellite industries may accompany the energy boom. The study, performed by VTN engineering, says that these secondary industries could feed on by-products of a single coal gasification plant such as tar, naphtha, phenol and ammonia. A single plant could induce secondary employment ranging from 280 to 360 workers. That would mean a secondary population increase of from 1,300 to 1,600 people. The study, "Powder River Basin Community Development Alternatives to Support Coal Mining and Gasification," was commissioned by several energy companies which will be involved in Powder River Basin development.

High Country News-11
Friday, Dec. 6, 1974

The Hot Line

energy news from across the country

Kennecott Copper Corp. has been ordered by the Federal Trade Commission to divest itself of its subsidiary — **Peabody Coal**. One of the prospective buyers is the **Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA)**, a federal power supplier that receives one third of its coal from Peabody. Sen. William Brock (R-Tenn.) says Congress should take a close look at a situation in which one agency of government forces private industry to sell off assets while another government agency offers to buy them.

Plastics waste is nearly as good as coal when burned as a fuel, according to the Battelle Memorial Institute. The institute says plastic has a 9,000 to 16,000 BTU per pound heat content. "Although use of wastes containing plastic as a fuel is just beginning to draw attention, it will become fairly prominent as a fuel in the coming years," says a Battelle spokesman.

Indian and Eskimo fishermen and trappers have settled a major northern Quebec **land-claim dispute** for \$150 million and a partnership in the development of the giant **James Bay power project**. The natives won protection for their traplines and forced the relocation of one of the main dams in the project. The dam would have destroyed **spawning grounds** for the whitefish, which the natives depend upon for food. The \$12 billion hydroelectric project will, when complete, probably become an important power source for Consolidated Edison of New York.

A million windmills spread along the 1,500 mile long **wind corridor** that bisects the Great Plains states could supply a **fourth of the nation's electrical needs**, according to an Oklahoma State University engineer. H. J. Allison said the technology already exists and experimentation at OSU shows the windmills are economically competitive. The wind corridor where he wants the turbines placed reaches from Nebraska into Texas.

Ultrafine powdered coal is the answer to **making coal a clean fuel**, according to two engineers in Atlanta, Ga. Josef Cermak and Earl Cannam say the patented process would reduce coal to an almost pure carbon dust of four microns with no residue, and remove all pyrites, ash, and all but .47% of organic sulfur. The Ilok powder technology can reduce one ton of coal to four micron coal in one hour using only 25 kilowatts of electricity per hour. In addition, this can be done without water and with even the most low grade coal. Even slag heaps, Cermak says, can be used.

A **manure-to-gas plant** being built by Calorific Recovery Anaerobic Process, Inc. (CRAP) of Oklahoma City is expected to produce 640 million cubic feet of gas a year by mid-1976. Peoples Gas Company of Chicago has signed a contract to buy the entire output of the plant for domestic use in the Chicago area.

Modern **garbage** contains so much combustible material that its heating value is about one-half the fuel value of wood.

The University of Texas, supported by Central Power & Light Co. and Texas Utilities Service, Inc., will conduct a three year study of **geothermal resources in the Gulf of Mexico**. A team will be looking at a 100 mile long geothermal belt of "geopressurized sands" under the Gulf that could produce water at temperatures of 250-300 degrees.

12-High Country News

Farm group considers land controls

by Doug Gibson
Research Director
Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation

Land use planning poses a dilemma to Wyoming ranchers and farmers.

Historically, ranchers and farmers have opposed land use regulations. They believe individuals should be responsible for the management of private lands and retain the freedom to buy and sell at their option.

A number of changes have caused a re-examination of agriculture's stake in land use planning and related control methods:

— Property taxes continue to increase. If taxes are based on speculative values, the agricultural use of such lands becomes uneconomical.

— Uncomplementary land developments damage existing as well as future land values.

— When services such as utilities, police, school, and fire protection are required, improperly planned rural development can become a tax liability to the remaining agricultural land owners.

— Environmental problems can result from noises, pesticides, dust, and odors, which are a natural product of agricultural operations. This can lead to burdensome pollution-abatement costs and legal controversies.

These are some of the reasons why ranchers and farmers are re-evaluating land use planning and its related control methods, which if carefully developed at the local level, might provide a means for preserving land values and protecting basic property rights.

Farm Bureau (FB) leaders identified land use as a critical issue in the late 1960s. In 1970 a state committee began researching Wyoming laws to see how planning and zoning could affect agriculture.

In the meantime, federal land use planning legislation was introduced in Washington, D.C. The potential effects of such legislation frightened many persons. Its impact is awesome.

In a letter to Rep. Morris Udall (the Arizona Democrat who has been the prime mover of federal land use legislation in the House), Wyoming Farm Bureau Federation (WFBF) Executive Vice President Herb Manig explained his organization's assessment of the issue and of proposed land use planning bills:

"The current energy situation has focused attention on Wyoming's potential in the areas of coal, oil shale, and petroleum reserves.

"Accordingly, we expect tremendous development and concomitant changes in population, social structure, etc. The Wyoming Farm Bureau has recognized land use planning as a tool which residents of our state could use in concert with their local government for the purposes of making adjustments where needed and for carrying on traditional agricultural activities where desired," Manig explained. He went on to emphasize that the FB prefers local and state planning to anything from the federal level.

FB policy emphasizes a belief that ranchers and farmers should have a major responsibility in determining its development. FB wants land use planning accomplished at the local or county level of government. FB opposes economic sanctions to force compliance with federal land use legislation.

The WFBF's policy also calls for coordinated and cooperative efforts in planning for private, state, and federal lands. FB policy favors any state or federal land use laws to include access to the courts should a landowner be adversely affected by land use planning and zoning. FB also wants a means provided for adequate compensation if property rights are damaged by land use decisions.

Five public hearings were scheduled the third week of May to review and receive comments on the

findings and recommendations of the Wyoming Conservation and Land Use Study Commission. This commission prepared its report after more than a year's study. Its final recommendations will be published in December and go to the 1975 legislature for consideration.

At this time, FB doesn't endorse or oppose provisions of its legislative proposal. FB does, however, encourage ranchers and farmers to become acquainted with the provisions of the proposal and to voice their opinions about it.

No matter where a person's position on the spectrum of opinion about land use planning's value, it's apparent that the pressure is mounting for land use planning at all levels of government.

WFBF President Dave Flitner, a member of the Wyoming Conservation and Land Use Study Commission, points out that land resource abuses can be seen throughout the nation. Prime agricultural lands are being consumed by urban sprawl.

"In order to restrict someone else's junkyard or commercial development from prime agricultural land, we must compromise or relinquish some of our traditional property rights, too. We can't stop a junkyard or worse across from our property without our

neighbor having some say about our plans that affect him," Flitner told FB members.

The WFBF president sees land use planning as a process of compromise, a trade-off of rights and responsibilities. He strongly favors land use planning at the county and state level rather than having the federal government direct it. He also hopes Wyoming can retain the rights that go with owning property privately while reaching a compromise in land use planning and subsequent controls.

Flitner has challenged his fellow agricultural producers to ask themselves: Are we in the business of producing agriculture commodities? Or are we developers of commercial properties?

With the increasing impact for the development of Wyoming's energy resources, ranchers and farmers will find themselves confronted with land use issues which will affect land, air, and water quality, the tax base, and eventually their lifestyle.

During the past four years, interest and understanding of the land use controversy by Wyoming ranchers and farmers have increased. It's still a dilemma, but Farm Bureau members want to be part of an equitable solution in Wyoming.

Agriculture nods to land use regs

Despite the supposed aversion of agriculturalists to land use controls, farmers and ranchers in one Wyoming county responded overwhelmingly in favor of control of subdivisions and mobile homes when questioned on the subject by the Albany County Farm Bureau and Stock Growers Association.

More than 80% of the 145 farmers and ranchers who returned the questionnaire said they favored—

—banning all subdivisions and mobile home parks within 100 yards of natural waterways in the county

—requiring that land developers be held responsible for treating sewage, collecting garbage, and maintaining roads in the land they subdivide or put trailer parks upon

—a county law to control the number of recreational homes permitted on a single parcel of land

This last item, the control of the number of recreational homes, was supported the least of all the proposals. Still, 80% favored it even though it could mean a lower profit for a landowner who wanted to sell land for development.

Report sketches industrial future

The final environmental impact statement on proposed coal development in Wyoming's Eastern Powder River Basin lists a number of unavoidable "problems." In short, the developments may change a largely untouched area into something more like the overburdened industrial communities of the East, the document states.

The six-volume Interior Department statement reports that massive strip mining of coal in the basin would create air pollution and land disturbance so severe that even the local climate could be harmed.

By 1990 the area could have produced 1.54 billion tons of coal from 14 mines. Also proposed are a new 330 megawatt power plant, a coal gasification plant, and 230 miles of new rail lines, roads, pipelines and powerlines by 1980. Five years later the region could have two more power plants, another gasification plant and 129 more miles of rights-of-way, the study says.

Of the 145 who responded, 120 said they would object to a subdivision or trailer park development next to their ranches. Results of the survey were given to the Albany County Planning and Zoning Commission when it was completed last spring.

New Congress more progressive

by Lee Catterall

Those who winced at the Democratic election tide should brace themselves for next year, when that vastly-realigned House will begin casting votes.

Take the land use bill, for example. That controversial proposal of Rep. Morris Udall (R-Ariz.) to restrict land development was defeated in June by only seven votes, on a parliamentary maneuver.

Of the 211 House members voting against it, 60 won't be back next year because of either retirement or defeat at the polls. Conversely, of the 204 congressmen who voted for it, only 26 will not return. That is a major shift that has not gone unnoticed.

Sponsors of other liberal proposals can now try to capitalize on their most sympathetic alignment since FDR, perhaps since even before him.

In all, 92 of the 435 members of the House have given up their seats to newcomers. Democrats gained a net 43.

"In terms of liberal versus conservative strength in the House," reported the liberal Democratic Study Group, of which Rep. Teno Roncalio (D-Wyo.) is a member, "the elections resulted in a gain of about 40 votes for progressive forces."

The most important moment in the life of Colorado is your land use fight. This is the most difficult battle you are going to wage, and it is one, if you lose it, that you might as well write off for future generations. If you don't have these protections, then this generation is going to use up the land. Gov. Tom McCall of Oregon speaking in Colorado Springs

Western Roundup

Kennedy named to head up ROMCOE

W. John D. Kennedy has been appointed executive director of the Rocky Mountain Center on Environment (ROMCOE). Kennedy was formerly with the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Boulder, Colo. where he worked on weather modification. ROMCOE is a Denver-based organization serving Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, Idaho, Montana, and Nevada. Kennedy says ROMCOE's role is to help commerce, industry, and business meet their environmental obligations. Simultaneously, he believes the group should provide a solid data base that will help environmental advocacy groups.

BuRec says stateline reservoir site best

The most promising site for a new reservoir to replace the scrapped China Meadows Reservoir is half a mile south of the Utah-Wyoming border, according to Bob Brewster, Bureau of Reclamation assistant regional engineer. Brewster says environmental and economic studies indicate the best area would be the "Stateline Site" on the east fork of the Smith's Fork River. The China Meadows Reservoir, planned several years ago, was rejected largely on environmental grounds. Brewster says a new environmental impact statement will be issued on the Stateline Site in February or March of 1975.

Kennecott, EPA clash over air study

An Environmental Protection Agency study released late last month indicates that living close to Kennecott Copper's smelter in Magna, Utah may be hazardous to human health. The EPA report states that the closer you live to Magna, the more likely you are to have bronchitis, croup, and acute respiratory illnesses. The percentage of respiratory problem cases was high in Magna, lower in Salt Lake City, and normal in Ogden — the city farthest from the smelter in the study. The EPA says sulfur oxides and sulfates from the smelter are the main culprits.

Kennecott has moved quickly to counter the EPA report, saying, "Our own health studies conducted by outside independent agencies do not support the EPA's conclusions." The company said their study "more or less" refutes the EPA findings. Kennecott charged that the EPA press release was "an obvious attempt . . . to interject emotionalism into the forthcoming hearing on its proposed sulfur dioxide regulation." The hearing is Dec. 11, at 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. in the Howard Johnson's, 122 W. South Temple in Salt Lake City.

Herschler, cattlemen join coyote war

Wyoming Gov.-elect Ed Herschler told the Wyoming Farm Bureau that he plans to pursue the pending predator control lawsuit against the federal government. The State of Wyoming is suing the Interior Department and seeking a relaxation of the ban on the use of predator poisons. Herschler said he would try to use his influence to restore the use of some of the previously-used predator control tools. Meanwhile, the Idaho Cattlemen's Association has called for a withdrawal of the poison ban, too. The cattlemen said all available tools are needed to cut down livestock and game losses, including trapping, aerial hunting, and expanded use of the M-44 cyanide device.

Arizona defoliation under attack

The Arizona Water Resources Committee wants to begin immediate removal of "undesirable" vegetation from 6½ million acres of land, according to Southwest Wildlands. The committee says such a clearing could yield from 600,000 to 1.2 million acre-feet of additional runoff water annually. William Hurst, the Southwest Regional Forester for the Forest Service says the plan is "too optimistic and unlikely to gain public acceptance." Arizona's Rep. John Rhodes has sponsored legislation that would authorize such a program.

Wyomingites favor local land planning

Three out of every four Wyoming residents favor land use planning, if it's done at the local level. The Wyoming Land Use Study Commission says that 72% of the persons taking part in an opinion survey called for strong local control. The commission has spent over a year compiling data, holding hearings, and drafting legislation. Their final report has been sent to all the state's legislators and Gov.-elect Ed. Herschler. "Our state is caught up in a phase of growth and development of such magnitude that if we hope to manage land use activities rather than be managed by them, there is no alternative but to have good land use planning," the report says.



Photo by Montana Department of Highways

During the past 20 years, critical big game winter range has been reduced by 89% in Pitkin County, Colo., the home of the Aspen ski resort. As a result, deer herds are down 31%, according to Ray Boyd, a researcher for the Colorado Division of Wildlife. The Division's environmental impact study of the area states that the remaining critical range "must be preserved intact for the survival of the wildlife involved. . . . All dwellings should be prohibited, and other structures should be permitted only after review and approval of the Colorado Division of Wildlife."

Briefly noted . . .

"Rarely has there been in the history of industrial development a parallel situation in which so great a concentration of investment and manpower has been directed so rapidly into a so relatively small geographical area," an Allied Chemical vice president said of the impact the trona industry had had on Green River, Wyo. Allied spokesman Dr. H. W. Schultze said the population of Green River rose by 25% last year creating a critical housing shortage. Schultze apologized for the impact saying, "Our plans moved very, very rapidly and we found ourselves in the middle of construction before anybody really knew what was going on." Schultze spoke before the Wyoming Planning Conference late last month.

A federal fish biologist says that the "catastrophic" fish losses in 1973 on the Snake River were primarily due to the passage of nearly the entire juvenile migration of steelhead and chinook salmon through dam powerhouses in that low water year. Howard Raymond of the National Marine Fisheries Service says only 250,000 of 5 million chinook and 220,000 of 5.5 million steelhead smolts escaped the dams. "If river conditions in future years are poor for survival of juveniles — and the juveniles are not given protection from losses at dams, Snake River anadromous fish runs may soon be a thing of the past," he said.

Colorado's nongame wildlife programs in the 1974-75 budget will be funded from the taxpayers' General Fund rather than from the hunters' Game Cash Fund. The budgetary shift reflects a change in the composition of people interested in wildlife. The total man-hours spent in non-consumptive wildlife pursuits (bird watching, photography, etc.) are beginning to outnumber the total man-hours spent hunting, reports the state Division of Wildlife's Nongame Advisory Council.

Nevada ranchers are urging the Public Lands Council to control the estimated 58,000 wild horses and burros in the Western states. They complain that the wild animals are increasing to a point where they compete with cattle, deer, pronghorn and bighorn sheep for food. The ranchers say overgrazing in much of Nevada is due to the 20% annual increase in wild horses and burros and want to see more thinning of the wild herds. Velma "Wild Horse Annie" Johnson says the ranchers are exaggerating.

Air pollution, invasion of forests and canyons by developers, and the conversion of farmland into housing pose the greatest threat to Utah's environment, according to a state-wide poll reported in the Salt Lake Tribune. Water pollution and overpopulation were the state's next greatest worries.

14-High Country News
Friday, Dec. 6, 1974

Thoughts from the Distaff Corner

by Marge Higley

Well, it's that time of the year again, and we are being admonished to "Shop early!" "Mail Early!" Pity the poor overworked mailman. From December 10 to December 24 he will carry on his duties in high gear, so that you and I will get all our gaily wrapped gifts in time for Christmas. By Christmas Eve, the rush will have died down and he can relax, rest his weary feet, and accept praise for a job well done. (Two weeks' service above and beyond the call of duty.)

But there is another service man who is really the unsung hero of the Yuletide season. Consider, if you will, the garbage man! Even now, at the end of November, his extra duties have begun. The alleys in back of shops and stores are piled high with empty crates and cartons which once held the merchandise now being displayed in glittering array on the shelves. The garbage man will be so busy hauling away the unsightly clutter in the alleys that he may not have time to look over the brightly lit show windows.

It's not just the stores, though. If you and I have followed the advice to shop early, mail early, we, too, are already adding to his burden. For instance, there's that cute Raggedy Ann you got for little Susie. The doll came from the store stapled to a heavy piece of cardboard, all encased in a plastic sheath. The clerk stuffed the whole thing into a flimsy paper sack. So — you take her home, discard the brown paper sack, the plastic, and the heavy cardboard. Then you wrap her in brightly colored gift paper — which also came wrapped in a piece of plastic — which you discard. And you tie it up with throw-away ribbon which comes rolled around a throw-away cardboard tube.

You'd like to take another peek at that slow-cook pot you got for Susie's mother, but when you pry open a corner of the carton you discover that it is wedged in, fore and aft, by specially cut blocks of styrofoam. So you throw away the staples and tape the box shut. Susie's mother's garbage man will get that extra load — after Christmas.

It's probable that the garbage man will stay home with his family on Christmas day, but, unlike the mailman, he can't sit back and consider his overload finished on December 25. For him, the worst is yet to come.

The thousands and thousands of packages delivered by the mailman will have been opened — and garbage cans across the country will be heaped with tons of colorful gift paper, ribbons, tape, string, excelsior, plastic, tissue paper, styrofoam, brown paper, and cardboard boxes and cartons. He'll be unusually lucky if he gets all that mess hauled away before New Year's!

And even if he's all that lucky, don't for a moment think that he can enjoy a relaxed New Year's Eve, content with the knowledge that his overload is finished for another year. Oh, no — he will now be faced with the disposal of thousands of discarded Christmas trees, with aluminum icicles and bits of faded tinsel still clinging to the withered needles. For the garbage man, the "above and beyond the call of duty" time runs well into January.

Come to think of it, it would make an interesting comparison. On a cubic yard basis (maybe even pound for pound!), I wonder who hauls the most during the Christmas season — the mailman, or the garbage man?



New fallen snow blankets black lava in Craters of the Moon National Monument in central Idaho. Photo courtesy of the National Park Service.

Christmas and things

by Colleen Kelly

The earth is groaning — here comes Christmas again! More than any other holiday, this one has become a celebration of consumerism. And Mother Earth must give up the resources — coal and dammed rivers for all the festive lighting, forests of trees for gay wrappings, metals and oil and fibers of all kinds to make gifts. Somewhere, all the love and peace we meant to bring lose meaning.

Giving is a celebration, but maybe we ought to think more deeply about what we give and its consequences. With a little thought, we could lighten the earth's burden and still celebrate the true meaning of Christmas. Here are a few ideas — we know you'll come up with a lot more!

Giving a membership in an environmental organization or making a donation in the name of a friend can be a long-lasting gift to the earth's cause. There are many fine organizations on a local, state, regional, or national level with reputations for action.

Although a great deal of tree pulp goes into their making, books can be a justified use of resources. Many excellent books on natural history, environmental problems, and outdoor activities can be found in your local bookstore. The proceeds from some books finance the activities of conservation groups: Sierra Club Books, Box 7959 Rincon Annex, San Francisco, CA 94120 and Friends of the Earth Books, 529 Commercial Street, San Francisco, CA 94111. Margaret E. Murie has directed the proceeds from Ballantine Books edition of her *Two In The Far North* to the Wyoming Outdoor Council.

For more book suggestions, the Audubon Society puts out a list of books in the Audubon Bookcase, Rt. 9A, Croton-on-Hudson, NY 10520.

And of course you won't forget *High Country News*. You might consider giving a subscription to the library of your local school.

In the expanding effort to change life-styles to attain harmony with the earth, avoiding conspicuous consumption is paramount. So giving something non-material is a major step.

Give your time. Many environmental groups are strapped for help — pledge a few hours each week to

the group or cause of your choice. Make IOU's to special people for times to spend with them.

Give your talent. Teach someone to ski or paint or sew or take pictures or play a kazoo. Everyone has a specialty — share it for Christmas and deepen a friendship.

Give good fellowship. Cook up a special dinner for all those folks you love and give them a good time together.

Give food. Cooking up cakes and breads and giving staples like honey meet an immediate need and can be a fine gift. A collection of tried and true recipes is another idea.

Give your love. Most of us have grown up in Christmases of substantial material gift-giving and gifts of such intangibles as love and peace are difficult to convey. People somehow feel that only some material object is adequate to express our intent. But deep down we know material goods cannot replace loving intentions. And love is what Christmas should be about.

Land quality job

The Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality is looking for a person to head its Land Quality Division.

The job, land quality administrator, offers the challenge of pioneering work in mined land reclamation policies. The administrator could be a vital part of state policies to protect Wyoming, a state on the brink of large scale mining development.

Salary range is \$13,860 to \$22,224, depending on experience. An engineering degree and experience in mined land reclamation are desirable, but not a requirement. For a complete job description and application write Robert E. Sundin, Director, Department of Environmental Quality, State Office Building, Cheyenne, Wyo. 82002.

Thomas manages Thomas Ranch

The Nov. 22 issue of the HCN incorrectly said that Jean Thomas manages the Pitchfork Ranch near Meeteetse. She actually manages the Thomas Ranch.

Review

Workbook

The first edition of **The Workbook** is out. It's a basic catalog of information written by a group of Southwest public-interest battle veterans. But it's no dry bibliography. **The Workbook** comes on strong.

"If you are not spending at least 10% of your waking hours working on some public problem, you are remiss, derelict, and a cop-out," the introduction proclaims with religious fervor. The group behind the booklet, the Southwest Research and Information Center, spends full time working in the public interest.

The Workbook staff believes "that war, racism, sexism, poverty, crime, and environmental destruction are all parts of the same problem. Solutions to the problem will require action on many fronts. We hope **The Workbook** can serve this vast, nameless movement for change."

The publication is aimed at researchers and activists in out-of-the-way places, where information may be hard to get. The booklet is filled with lively annotations on sources of information about agriculture, energy, nutrition, housing, land use, minorities, women, and many other subjects. **The Workbook** also offers a "How to do it" section, which in future issues will discuss how to conduct an interview, how to collect and store information, how to locate technical help, how to make the most effective use of your research, how to get community support, how to hold a press conference, and how to put out a newsletter.

If you need to know where to begin, **The Workbook** looks like a good place. If you've already begun, but you want to be more effective, have a look here, too.

It's 44 magazine-sized pages on newsprint. One dollar for the first issue. Ten dollars a year for monthly editions. Seven dollars a year for students and \$20 for institutions. Write the Southwest Research and Information Center, P.O. Box 4524, Albuquerque, N.M. 87106. —JN

Eavesdropper

environmental news from around the world

LOONEY LIMERICKS

by Zane E. Cology

If ranches are paved the West won't last
And the wide open spaces won't be so vast.
Our lives will change
Without cows on the range
And the whole dang country will be forced to fast!

Southern and Western states accounted for virtually all of the population growth in the United States last year, according to the Census Bureau. Among the four U.S geographic areas, the South and West both grew by 1.6% in the most recent year. The nation's growth rate as of last July had slowed to seven-tenths of one per cent a year, compared to a 1.1 per cent average annual growth rate for the previous three years since the 1970 census. Colorado, which had been the fourth fastest-growing state with an average annual growth rate of 3.9% in the previous three years, dropped off to a 1.1% growth rate.

A bill to subsidize mass transit became law in November. Under the measure \$11.8 billion will be available for mass transit systems over the next six years. "It represents a responsible step in our efforts to reduce energy consumption and control inflation," said President Gerald Ford.

Classified Ads

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Jay Hammond, poet, bush pilot, hunting guide, conservationist, and former state senator is the new governor-elect in Alaska. After a recount, the final tally was 45,840 for Hammond and 45,553 for Democratic incumbent Gov. William A. Egan.

Egan has been a pro-development governor. Hammond ran on a go-slow platform. The recount ended three weeks of vote-counting snarls in the close race.

Interior Secretary Rogers C.B. Morton recently approved the concept of a department-drafted land use planning bill and plans to discuss it soon with President Gerald Ford. Morton reportedly thinks a federal land use bill would help bridge the gap between state and environmentalist objections to energy production and the federal need to increase energy development, according to **Land Use Planning Reports**.

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Roundup-a-Reader Christmas Special



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Carol Snow, a noted regional wildlife artist, is helping **High Country News** by donating this original pen and ink drawing of a young pronghorn. We're offering these eight by ten inch drawings, suitable for framing free to anyone who can round

up two new subscribers to **HCN**. Carol Snow has signed each one personally. (By the way if you like Carol Snow's work, ask her to send you a free catalog of cards and prints: Carol Snow, Route 5, South Five Mile Road, Boise, Idaho 83705.)

THE CHRISTMAS GIFT



Give yourself and your friends an environmentally-sound gift this Christmas — a subscription to *Ecology Today Magazine*. Subscriptions are handled in conjunction with the University of Colorado Eco-Center on a non-profit basis. Your subscription to *Ecology Today* includes a subscription to the C. U. *Wilderness Conservation Newsletter* and various other C. U. publications — all for only \$5.00 a year.

You'll find *Ecology Today* a factual, documented magazine about what's happening today to our environment. We think it's essential for all environmentally-concerned people in the Rocky Mountain area. If you like *High Country News*, you'll like *Ecology Today*.

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Jim Connor, forest planner and communicator

Bridger-Teton's man in the middle

Reprinted from THE JACKSON HOLE GUIDE, Oct. 24, 1974.

by Jim Miller

These days, with industry screaming for more timber and environmental groups keeping a closer eye on the nation's forests, it often seems as though the National Forest Service is taking its licks from all sides. Wyoming's three-million-acre Bridger-Teton, one of the largest forests in the country, is no exception.

At the large A-frame headquarters building on North Cache, Jim Connor, Bridger-Teton planner-coordinator and public involvement officer for the past two years, softens these epistolary blows and counters with straight-shooting explanations that would cool the ire of the hottest wood chopper.

Jim's encompassing sphere of influence reaches from the upper levels of governmental and industrial bureaucracy across to the environmental big-wigs, local governmental officials, and to individuals like you and me.

COUNTY PLANNING COOPERATION

Teton County is one of Jim's major concerns. While land planning has been his forte since joining the Forest Service in 1957 in Oregon, Connor has been waiting for this movement to begin in Teton County. "We have been anticipating a serious land-planning effort at the county level for some time," Connor says, "and have been gearing up for it."

One cog on this gear is the recent approval of a mutual land-planning effort between the Bridger-Teton, Teton County officials, and Bert King, Wyoming Commissioner of Public Lands.

This agreement includes Sublette and Lincoln counties as well. The expertise and experience, which years of planning and education have provided the Forest Service, will be at the disposal of local planners. "We'll go 100% in the planning effort," pledges Connor, a graduate of the University of Massachusetts and the Duke University Graduate School of Forestry.

Keeping the public informed of Forest Service actions is one aspect of this effort. The other is to define the desires of the residents. "We have to determine what the people want to preserve, and then act in those interests," Connor says.

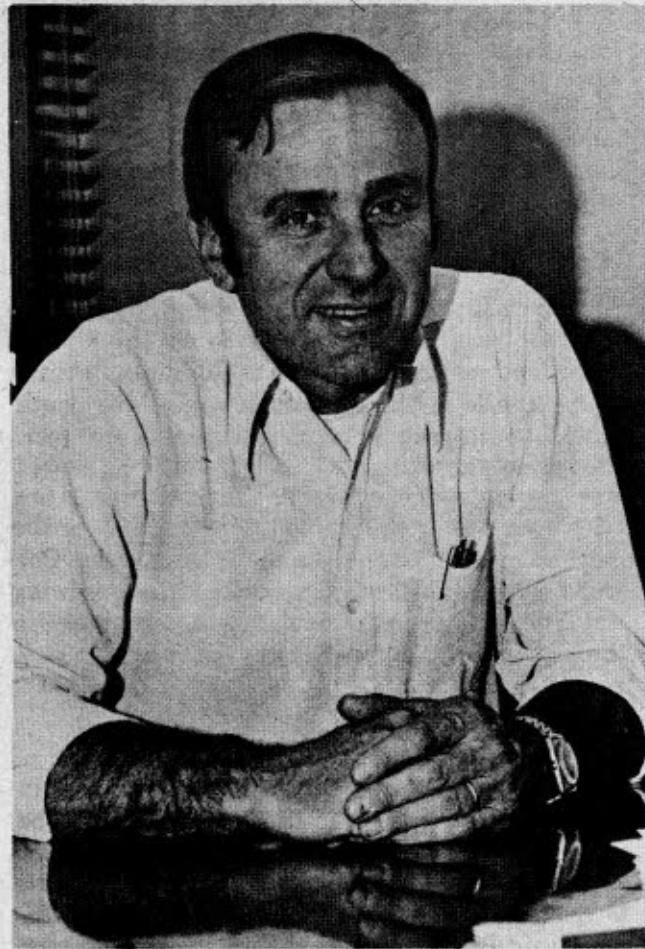
As an example, he points out that the survey attitudes toward planning in the county indicated that many, many residents were very concerned with preserving the magnificent view.

Planning Unit Nine is organized to this end. Its two sections take in lands from south of Wilson to the Teton Park boundary and the entire eastern panorama encompassing Cache Creek and the hillsides above the Elk Refuge. These lands, says Connor, are more valuable to the Forest Service as scenic areas than as salable timber.

The importance of this area was unquestionably determined several years ago when the Forest Service made several clearcuts on the hillsides near Curtis Canyon. The regular-shaped scars brought an onslaught of rebuke from Jackson residents. Forest architects then re-shaped the areas so as to minimize the visual impact of the clearcuts. While other cutting has occurred in the area, Connor points out that careful shaping of the cuts has minimized the offensive visual impact.

PUBLIC ACCESS LIMITED

But no matter how well the Forest Service may plan its lands around Jackson, problems still arise from owners of private property adjoining the National Forest.



Jim Connor

"As a result, access roads to millions of acres of public lands are being closed off. "This has us terrified," Connor worries, as he points out that public access to Cache Creek, Horse Creek, Porcupine and Mosquito Creek has been shut off. Owners of properties which straddle Forest Service access routes have been closing those roads in order to maintain some privacy.

Connor likens this problem to that in his home state of Massachusetts or in Oregon and Washington. Private landholdings along the shore have for years prevented other state residents from getting to the coast, which is considered public property.

Public involvement is one way to help alleviate these problems, according to Connor. In this way, everyone can understand and work toward the same land use goals rather than at odds with one another.

SEEKS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

"We are enthusiastic about public involvement," says Connor, "and have sought it for years." By involving more individuals in Forest Service decisions and problems, Connor feels that new ideas could more readily be aired.

"We want an educated public which will be more able to make rational decisions and suggestions concerning our proposals," the planner continues. A recent nationwide Forest Service program has been designed with public involvement specifically in mind. Called The Environmental Program For The Future (EPFF), this effort is aimed at presenting alternative trends in National Forest uses for consideration by various public and private agencies and individuals. A summary of the program is available at Forest Service offices, and comments are being accepted until Dec. 16, 1974.

Connor does point out that "many people become irate because the final Forest Service decision was not changed by their input. They don't realize what public involvement really is. Public involvement does not mean that we are going to manage the forests by citizens' committee; it does not take the place of the decision-making agency."

CHANGED MOCCASIN BASIN

The planner-coordinator stressed that "input does influence us — it is bound to." As a case in point, he brought up the contested Moccasin Basin timber sale. The Wyoming Outdoor Council, (W.O.C.), one of the plaintiffs in the successful court suit which called for an environmental impact statement on the timber sale, listed several objections.

"We responded to each and every one of these concerns," stresses Connor. "They criticized the timber sale areas' proximity to unstable lands. We corrected that so as to avoid any unstable land." He added that, following the W.O.C.'s suggestion, buffer strips will be left standing between existing meadows and the cutting areas.

The Forest Service, through Jim Connor, also has other dealings with members of such environmental groups as the Sierra Club.

During the summer months Connor conducted several tours to some of the far reaches of the Bridger-Teton National Forest in an effort to acquaint members of these groups with activities, both current and proposed, on the forest.

No effort was made to hide some rather costly (to nature and the budget) errors in judgment. Poorly cut areas, areas where regeneration had failed to occur, areas of questioned use (such as the proposed Gros Ventre wilderness) were all shown to the group.

PARTICIPATION INVITED

When discussions ensued, Connor urged the environmental advocates to participate in the planning process by submitting suggestions for inclusion in the draft plan for particular land units. Other governmental agencies, such as the Army Corps of Engineers, on the other hand, shun any public input to their draft plans.

Because of Connor's eagerness to show interested people the best way to participate in the forest planning process, he is looked upon with a great deal of respect by members of environmental groups such as the Sierra Club. The more one comes to know Jim Connor — whether he is cross country skiing, hiking along the Thoroughfare in Yellowstone, or displaying the clean and dirty linen of the Forest Service — the more one realizes that he is working for the same objectives as any nature lover.



Dear Friends of HCN

In the High Country News

When Bob Child sent us the article which begins on the front page of this issue, he warned, "At first glance this appears to belong in a trade journal for stockmen."

But we soon realized that his story was aimed smack dab at us. We realized that we land-loving pencil pushers and others in the West had better listen to those who earn their living on the land. We are all tied to ranch lands — if not for soul satisfaction, then for food. Ranchers are the stewards of much of our wide open spaces.

And ranchers, Child clearly explains, are in jeopardy. They've fought and won battles in isolation before, but this time they may need outside understanding and help. Child lays before us the groundwork for reform. Non-ranchers can help in simple ways — by showing respect for the industry, by asking permission to cross private lands, by closing private gates. They can also help through activism — by supporting ranchers in legislation of benefit to the water and the land. Reform of inheritance tax laws might be a worthwhile task to tackle for starters, Child suggests.

The wounds from battles between some environmentalists and some ranchers over predator control and overgrazing may never completely heal. But a more careful look at all alternatives might be possible, if ranchers were not surrounded by a myriad of other problems which threaten their way of life.

Some of the reforms needed fall into the realm of land use planning, Child explains. In another article in this issue, Doug

Gibson of the Wyoming Farm Bureau expands on that theme. A planner's perspective is added by Monty Grey, who describes a land use planning bill proposed for the state of Wyoming.

Also in this issue, we include another installment in the lengthy saga of the federal strip mining legislation. It looks as if there may be some slim hope of passage yet.

For the first time in several years, we have included some advertising in the High Country News. We're committed to keeping it small and consistent with our editorial stance. So while it will help us financially, we're determined not to let it interfere with getting vital information to you.

—the editors



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