

High Country

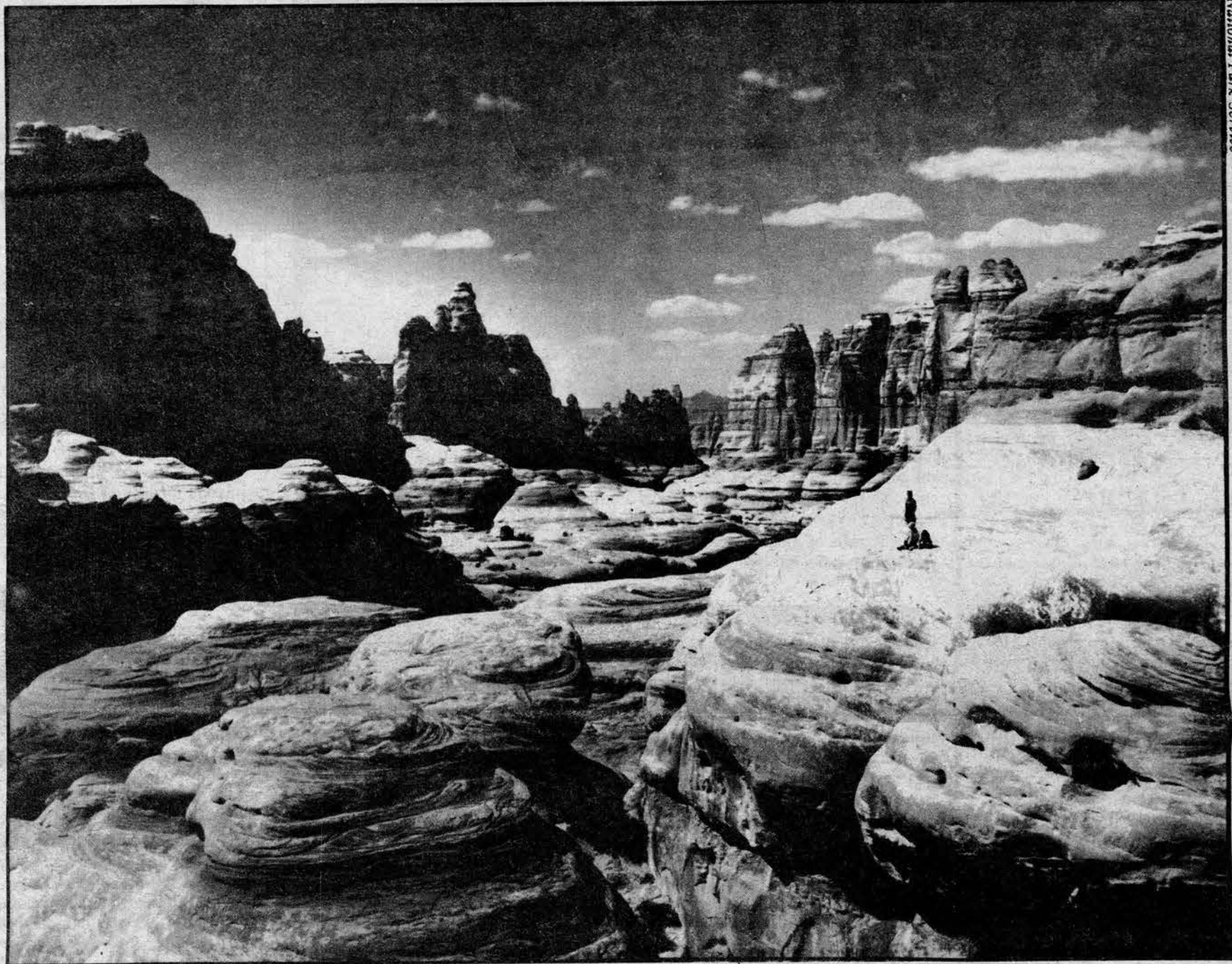
news

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National Park Service

Utah Governor declares war on a Canyonlands nuclear dump

by Christopher McLeod

Long-simmering tension between the state of Utah and the Department of Energy finally erupted in early May. The cause was the possible burial of high-level nuclear wastes in salt deposits just outside Canyonlands National Park and the eruption came from Utah Governor Scott Matheson. He said flatly that a nuclear dump near Canyonlands would never be acceptable.

Matheson's announcement came a day before DOE's scheduled "public information exchange" in Salt Lake City. The eight-hour meeting was attended by about 100 people who joined representatives from Matheson's office in hammering away at DOE. The tone as the hours slipped by ranged from concerned to frustrated as questions were asked about the impacts on Canyonlands from exten-

sive construction and possible long-term effects from plutonium contamination of the Colorado River watershed. Only two at the meeting supported DOE.

Despite Matheson's opposition, some people at the meeting said they thought the Canyonlands site would still be nominated by DOE in 1985 as one of three which will undergo an extensive drilling program called "site characterization" before final site selection in 1991. (See accompanying story). DOE is zeroing in on Canyonlands, they predicted, because of its remoteness, sparse population, the handful of outspoken local politicians who favor the nuclear industry, and because politically Utah seems to offer the path of least resistance.

Gov. Matheson tried to put an end to that last perception at his press conference May 4. He called the Canyonlands site "inherently unsuit-

able" because it is less than a mile from Canyonlands National Park and close to the Colorado River and because of its archaeological treasures. "Those factors should now preclude DOE from further expenditure of taxpayer dollars on additional investigation of a site that can never be acceptable," he said.

Recalling Utah's past experiences with radioactive fallout from government testing of atomic bombs, Matheson said the result was "frighteningly real cases of nuclear contamination. The state must demand the highest degree of thoroughness and care at all stages of any program that relates to the presence of nuclear materials in our state."

Matheson also released a letter he had sent to Energy Secretary Donald Hodel. In it

[Continued on page 10]

Citizens oppose Canyonlands dump

Judging from a survey taken by the National Park Service and the state of Utah, a nuclear waste repository near Canyonlands would affect the park's one million visitors. In response to a questionnaire at park headquarters at Canyonlands, 88 percent said they would be less likely to visit the park if a nuclear waste dump were built nearby. And when DOE drilled their one test bore hole in 1980, some campers inside the park more than ten miles away complained to rangers about the noise. A recent poll by the Salt Lake City *Tribune* found that 72 percent of Utahns questioned opposed a repository near Canyonlands.

WESTERN ROUNDUP

Dam construction decimates bighorn herd



High Country News

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As the first in several planned water projects along Colorado's Front Range, the Strontia Springs Dam and Reservoir in Waterton Canyon highlights what can happen to wildlife when major construction occurs.

The canyon's bighorn sheep herd has been reduced 85 percent so that now only 13 animals remain alive. The canyon, which was closed to visitors from 1978 until last month for construction of the Strontia Springs Dam, is located 25 miles southwest of Denver where the South Platte River leaves the mountains.

What killed the bighorn was stress-induced bronchopneumonia, according to the EPA-required Denver Water Department study which monitored the effects of construction on the herd. Probable stresses were "limited range, high social density, natural burdens of low pathogenic microorganisms and lungworms. The acute stressor was dust from construction traffic.

The study blamed the absence of natural forest fires in the canyon for the dense cover of Gambel oaks on the canyon's lower slopes and Douglas firs higher up. This vegetation cut down on the amount of available forage and since the open habitat that sheep



Waterton Canyon

Philip Carson

prefer was lacking, they were forced to remain near the canyon's only road.

Dust raised by construction traffic caused lung abrasions which led to bronchopneumonia, the study concluded.

Recommendations resulting from the study include as the highest

priority controlled burning to clear the dense oak brush. Besides providing open habitat, the burning would return the area to grasslands, on which bighorns thrive. If habitat improvements are successful, the Colorado Division of Wildlife plans to augment the remaining Waterton herd -- three rams and ten ewes -- with "transplants" from another low-elevation herd.

Jim Huckabee of the Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Society says that the Forest Service habitat management plan will require "perhaps several thousand dollars" over the next few years.

The experience in Waterton Canyon and the future results of the management plan there may provide lessons for managing sheep herds in other areas slated for water projects. One is Poudre Canyon west of Fort Collins where the Forest Service recently scheduled controlled burning.

Another area, Tarryall Creek 40 miles northwest of Colorado Springs, faces a different problem: a proposed reservoir would inundate lambing grounds for one of the state's largest herds.

--Philip Carson

Dear friends,

We spent Saturday, May 19, at the fourth annual meeting of the Western Colorado Congress, a Montrose, Colorado citizen group that has built relationships among electric power users, ranchers and other land owners, retired people and environmentalists. Along the way, it has become part of a larger coalition, the Western Organization of Resource Councils, made up of Wyoming and Montana Great Plains organizations with similar constituencies.

The WCC annual meeting, held in Cedaredge, Colorado had its nuts and bolts aspects -- the Forest Service's aspen-cutting program, reports on rural electric co-ops and utility deregulation, and the introduction of a speakers bureau specializing in fighting land condemnation by power and gas line projects.

But the meeting also had its inspiring moments -- especially a talk by Jessica Fernandez-White. This native of the Phillipines did grassroots organizing first in the Phillipines, until she was deported by the Marcos regime, and then in India.

At first glance, her talk was irrelevant to the West. She organized residents of tin and cardboard cities, where several hundred thousand people are crammed into a few square miles. And the battles she described were in defense of 10-foot by 10-foot plots that squatters wanted to hold onto in the face of military attempts to evict them for development schemes. Another organizing issue was a push to build public toilets in a part of India. Until the mass movement succeeded, Indian males kept wives and daughters home so they wouldn't behave immodestly by squatting in public.

The issues couldn't seem more different than those here. But Ms. Fernandez-White argued that underneath they were the same. "A farmer who is forced to give up productive farmland to a utility feels the same as

a squatter evicted by the military. The farmer feels just as violated. The attachment to the land is the basic issue. All else is secondary. The land issue is a symbol of control over their destiny."

The squatters, of course, are fighting to control land they do not own. That is related to the Westerners' attachment to the "so spacious" public lands. In our attempts to exercise control over that land, Westerners and their allies across America come into "conflict with industry and commercial interests, and into conflict between the governing and the governed."

Ms. Fernandez-White was in Cedaredge to tell WCC about the strategy of community organizing. And she advised the audience on the importance of timing, of accurately counting supporters and getting them to the action, and on methods of intimidating officials. But she also provided an overview:

"Your responsibility is to hold on to a way of life today." The corporate and government forces may not be beaten this year, or next. But, she said, this is no cause for despair.

"Do not deny your children the opportunity to struggle." If you struggle, and your children struggle, "then your children's children will wave them (the interlopers) off into the sunset." Those who continue to struggle, she said, will eventually win because while corporations have money, they do not have time; eventually they will move on to where money can be made more quickly, and with less turmoil.

One apparently striking difference between a squatter's village and the West has to do with allies. Those in the sparsely settled West who care about communities and natural values are joined by those elsewhere in the nation who also care about the region. But Ms. Fernandez-White said that national networks are not unique; that

there is no such thing as a local issue. "Effective organizing, no matter how locally based, will move on to regional and national issues."

The cumulative effect of her talk was one major point: that to save communities and the natural values around them we must be peasants. Not peasants who walk behind a plow. But peasants in the sense of having a total, unthinking, permanent commitment to our place and land.

We bid farewell this week to intern Paul Larmer, who has done yeoman writing work for High Country News over the past three months. In this issue, for example, Paul has an article on Wyoming's Little Granite Creek decision. Two months ago, Paul wrote about the plight of Western hospitals, as bed occupancy declines in response to economic forces. That story has been underlined several times recently by stories in the Western press. For example, St. Mary's Hospital in Grand Junction, which serves both eastern Utah and western Colorado, laid off 200 employees earlier this month, even as it is in the midst of a \$16 million expansion conceived in boom times.

Paul goes on to the University of Michigan to study natural resource management. We wish him the best, even as we look forward to the coming of two summer interns. The interns are an important part of HCN; without them, the paper would be a much more difficult, much less pleasant task.

--the staff

BARBS

Why not their kneecaps? Carl Bagge, head of the National Coal Association, has had it up to here with acid rain. No sooner had his industry helped kill the Waxman acid rain bill than -- Hydra-like -- new bills appear. Disgusted, Bagge told Coal Week:

"No more Mr. Nice Guy stuff... we have to get up there (Capitol Hill) and start breaking arms."

April's storm devastated livestock

The late April blizzard that brought twelve-foot drifts to Wyoming was devastating to ranchers in the West. At least 350,000 sheep were smothered or froze to death, reports the American Sheep Producers Council, with the loss estimated at more than \$30 million. Thousands of cattle and new-born calves also died in the heavy snows that hit northeastern Wyoming, Montana and the Dakotas. Early in May the Farmers Home Administration declared eight Wyoming counties natural disaster areas, which enables ranchers to apply for low-interest loans to restock their herds. Some Wyoming ranchers, who lost 40% of their flock, said this year's losses were the worst they could recall.

As melting snow reveals more and more livestock carcasses on northeastern Wyoming ranches, the big question ranchers here are asking is, "What do we do now?"

The Esponda family has lived in Johnson County for generations. They were among the first Basque families to settle in and take up sheep ranching in the county 100 years ago. Grayce Miller, daughter of John Esponda, has been running her 36,000-acre ranch on Crazy Woman Creek since 1940. The country there is dry and rough.

"They didn't name the creek after me," she said, "but you've got to be crazy to be in this business, especially after something like this."

Miller estimates that she lost one-third of her 5,000 sheep in late April's brutal snowstorm and possibly a larger percentage of her 400 cattle. In one draw alone, Miller has found over 300 dead sheep.

Most area ranchers had sheared their sheep before the storm and were in the middle of lambing and calving when the storm hit, so their livestock was especially vulnerable to the storm.

Miller said her sheep "didn't have a chance" in the storm, which dropped up to 4 feet of snow in the county and piled up to 12-foot drifts in draws where the livestock sought shelter. All over the county, along the fencelines and in the draws, piles of carcasses can be seen.

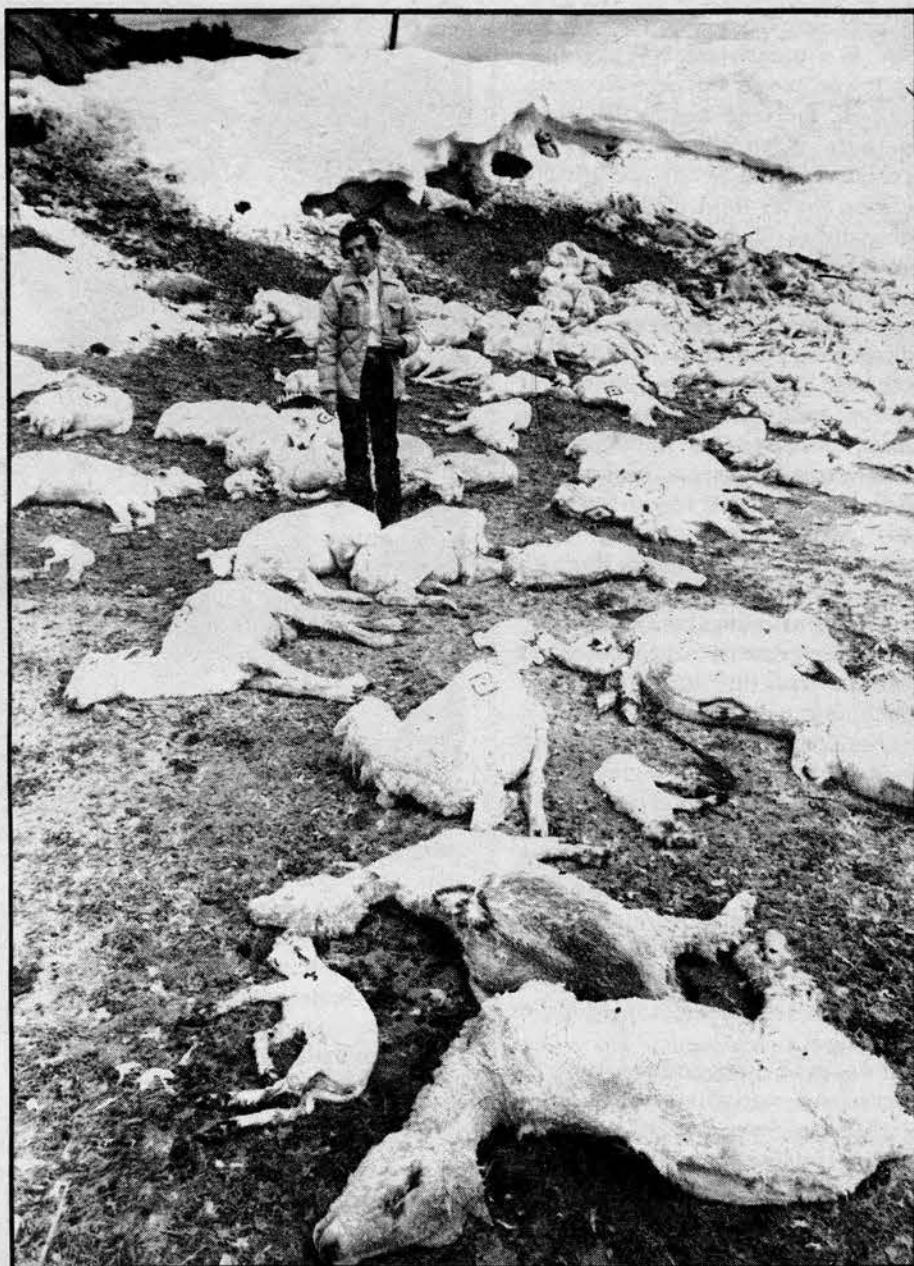
A hot, dry summer burned off a lot of hay, weakened stock and forced many ranchers, like Miller, to haul water to their herds, she said. Bitter cold this winter, combined with a lack of hay supplies, further weakened the animals.

Ranchers were just starting to relax and hope they could start paying off the accumulated bills with this year's lamb and calf crops when the blizzard hit.

Mitch Esponda, Miller's nephew and Gladys Esponda's son, estimated his mother's ranch lost 225 of its 500 cattle and suffered a 95 percent loss of its 7,200 head of sheep.

He added that the ranch was out of hay when the storm hit, but doubted he could have got any to the stock anyway in the vicious cross-winds and heavy snowfall of the storm.

Some cattle were sheltered in closed sheds, but up to 2 feet of snow managed to get in, he said, and cattle apparently died from snow inhalation and from jostling each other, causing suffocation. Other animals will die from pneumonia brought on by inhaled snow and wet, cold weather conditions, ranchers predict.



When the snow melted, this is what rancher Grayce Miller discovered.

Following the shock of their heavy losses, ranchers here are now facing the grim task of burying thousands of carcasses. Area officials are concerned about health hazards created by decomposing livestock, which piled up in streams as well as draws. Esponda said he hopes to get financial help to hire earth movers to dig trenches for the burial.

Miller says she is still in a state of shock over her losses. She is encouraged, however, by sheep that have been straggling in "out of nowhere" since the storm ended. She'll have a better idea of where she stands after roundup at the end of the month, she said.

Miller said it is ironic that, because of the storm, ranchers will probably be

well supplied in hay and water this year, but will have little stock to feed it to.

She said Buffalo townspeople were "remarkable" during and following the storm, coming out on snowmobiles to help rescue stock and do anything else they could.

"I made \$300,000 last year and don't have a penny to show for it," Miller said.

However, she said she has no intention of quitting, since ranching is the only life she knows and she loves it.

"I'm looking forward to trailing my sheep to the mountains again this summer," she said.

--Pamela Owen
Casper Star Tribune

Ohio defeats Waxman's bill

When California Congressman Henry Waxman (D) proposed his acid rain bill, it was seen as a way to protect coal mining jobs and electric rates in such Midwestern states as Ohio by requiring the use of scrubbers and by levying a national utility tax to pay for them. (HCN, 9/19/83). Despite that, on May 2, an Ohio Congressman with an excellent environmental voting record provided the key committee vote to shoot down Waxman's bill.

Dennis E. Eckart, a Democrat from Mentor, Ohio, said that even the Waxman bill put too heavy an economic burden on the devastated Ohio economy. Eckart, a liberal who fought utilities while in the Ohio Legislature, didn't hide behind a purported need for more study. He told the *New York Times*, "I do not come to the debate with the perception that the world is flat." Waxman is

bitter against his young colleague: "You do everything you can do for Ohio and that's not enough."

Western utilities and state governments had opposed Waxman's bill, saying it rewarded the polluting Midwest by taxing clean western utilities. Defeat of the Waxman bill may lead to bills which don't spread the pain of a Midwestern cleanup and which also send some Midwestern dollars the West's way. The Mo Udall (D-AZ) - Dick Cheney (R-WY) approach would require Midwestern utilities to roll back emissions by 11 million tons per year (Waxman required 10 million tons) without specifying scrubbers or a national tax. The natural result of the Udall-Cheney approach would be at least some switching from high-sulfur Midwestern coal to low-sulfur Appalachian and Rocky Mountain coal.

--the staff

HOTLINE

The NRA wants

National Park bunts

The volatile issue of hunting in National Parks may become more explosive with the filing of a recent lawsuit by the National Rifle Association. The National Park Service and conservationists say that if the lawsuit is successful, it could open many National Parks to hunting for the first time. NRA's lawsuit is in response to new Interior regulations which would close hunting and trapping activities in 11 units of the park system on January 1, 1985, including national recreation areas, rivers and lakeshores where these activities have been allowed, although not authorized. An NRA spokesman was reported to say that the NRA would like to overturn the new regulations "to protect rights historically reserved for hunters and trappers which are now being taken away." Conservationists fear that overturning the new regulations might allow hunters and trappers access to 25 National Parks where there is no specific statutory prohibition against hunting and trapping, including the Grand Canyon, Redwoods, Sequoia, Bryce Canyon and Acadia National Parks.

BLM's grazing policy is challenged



A coalition of environmental groups led by the Natural Resources Defense Council brought suit May 9 against the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of Land Management for allowing private livestock owners to regulate their own grazing activities on the nation's public rangelands.

The legal action seeks to overturn new national regulations which give private ranchers control of their federal allotments through long-term "cooperative management agreements."

The lawsuit charges that the new policy violates the government's obligation to regulate grazing of private livestock on 170 million acres of public lands. It also claims that past abuses from excessive and improper grazing practices, with resulting destruction of wildlife habitat, soil erosion, declining water quality and deteriorating range conditions, will be promoted by the Cooperative Management policy.

NRDC's David Edelson, attorney for the plaintiffs, said, "Having been rebuffed in its attempt to sell the lands outright, the (Reagan) Administration now seeks the same end by handing over management control to the industry it is required by law to regulate." Other plaintiffs in the case include the Sierra Club, the Wilderness Society, Defenders of Wildlife and the Animal Defense Council.

HOTLINE

Coal suit coming



The Environmental Policy Institute and seven other conservation organizations have filed a Notice of Intent to sue Interior Secretary William Clark. EPI says Interior has failed to pass regulations preventing conflict of interest on state boards that regulate mining. Although Congress established the Office of Surface Mining as a "federal watchdog" to outlaw political influence in overseeing surface mining, says EPI attorney Mark Squillance, the Reagan Administration has allowed "persons with direct and indirect financial interests in the coal companies to sit on state boards and commissions." Seven states are named in the Intent; Colorado is the only one represented from the West. Organizations joining the suit include the National Wildlife Federation and Colorado Open Space Council.

Synfuels Corp is hit again, and again

The Synthetic Fuels Corporation, an \$88 billion venture born in the last days of the Carter Administration, may meet its demise in the last days of this Reagan Administration.

The quasi-independent body, which for three years moved slowly but which recently hastened to commit its first \$14 billion dollop, has now run into serious political and legal problems. Over half the nation's representatives are sponsoring a bill to delay the commitment of the \$14 billion. Separately, five of the seven board members have resigned, several under fire for alleged conflicts of interest. Neither Reagan nor the Congress appear in a hurry to relieve the SFC's paralysis by appointing new members.

In fact, the Reagan Administration -- never a strong synfuels fan -- has asked Congress to take back at least \$8 billion of the SFC's \$14 billion. In an unrelated action, the Senate transferred \$2 billion from the Synfuels Corp to social and environmental spending.

Runoff starts running

The runoff season -- still in its early stages -- has begun with a vengeance. Flooding forced the evacuation of the small town of Baggs in south-central Wyoming in mid-May as the Little Snake River overflowed its banks. High water also closed Highway 798 south to Craig, Colorado because three feet of water covered the road on the south end of Baggs. Near Evanston to the northwest, three bridges washed out and five county roads were closed because of high water.

Gulf Oil contributes to eagle habitat fund

The Nature Conservancy is \$25,000 richer. In a presentation before more than 100 people in Casper, Wyoming, May 14th, the land acquisition group was given a check from Gulf Oil Corporation to aid in the preservation of critical winter bald eagle habitat in and around a once infamous canyon west of Casper.

The canyon, named "Jackson's Canyon" in 1870 for photographer William Henry Jackson, is the winter home for bald eagles from the northern tier states and central Canada. The eagles roost in the heavily timbered, steep-sided canyon, and feed along a stretch of the North Platte River kept open by warm springs, then return north in early spring to nest. Casper, the hub of Wyoming's oil and gas industry, has expanded westward along the Platte River and now threatens the eagle's habitat.

Local conservationists feel strongly about the welfare of eagles in the canyon. Thirteen years ago this month two adolescent boys hiking in the canyon came across the decaying bodies of seven eagles, both golden and bald. They alerted members of Casper's Murie Audubon Society who accompanied the boys the next day to find the dead eagles. Six more bodies were found.

It was to be an eventful summer for Casper conservationists for in all, 22 poisoned eagles were found in Jackson Canyon. Half were balds. Autopsies showed that they had been poisoned



One of the poisoned eagles found in 1971.

by thallium sulfate, used to bait carcasses on surrounding ranches by ranchers anxious to save their sheep from hungry predators.

The news of the poisoned eagles soon resulted in state and federal investigations revealing evidence of



Murie Audubon Society members at the site dead eagles were discovered in 1971.

indiscriminate poisoning and shooting of Wyoming wildlife without regard to species. An investigation by a county attorney found seven baited antelope carcasses on nearby ranches with "enough thallium to kill every animal in the state." There were other reports of poisoned and shot eagles in and around Casper.

Early in August of that year, James Vogan, a helicopter pilot, testified before a Wyoming Senate subcommittee that between 500 and 800 eagles on Wyoming ranches had been shot from the air during the past year. Vogan reported that ranchers paid \$25 per head for eagles, golden or bald, and named one Casper rancher, Herman Werner, as being involved in the slaughter. Two days after Vogan's testimony, 60 partially decomposed eagles were found in a mass grave on Werner's ranch near Rawlins, Wyoming.

Several convictions eventually resulted, but fines were light. Although eagle populations now seem less directly threatened by poisoning, a debate between ranchers and conservationists over use of pesticides goes on.

The killings attracted national press coverage and gave Jackson Canyon a notoriety its protectors have worked hard to dispel. Several members of the Murie Audubon

Society have acquired much of the private land in and around the canyon in an attempt to insulate the eagles. One land-owner and past Murie Audubon president, Dr. Oliver Scott, has granted the Nature Conservancy a conservation easement which Nature Conservancy spokesman Bob Kiesling calls "the centerpiece in the bald eagle habitat bank."

Kiesling accepted Gulf's check for the Nature Conservancy and termed it the "cornerstone of a perpetual stewardship endowment for the Conservancy." He said it would help patch together private and public lands in the area under a Jackson Canyon Project to save one of America's greatest natural resources. Stressing the Conservancy's non-legislative approach to setting aside critical habitat, Kiesling called the Jackson Canyon Project "voluntary conservation."

Bill Moffett, Gulf vice president for public affairs, said that "the petroleum industry owes this earth a great debt and projects like Jackson Canyon give us a chance to do something in return." Conservation isn't just a moral responsibility, he added. "It makes good business sense."

--Staci Hobbet

Congress hopes to kill \$100 million lottery

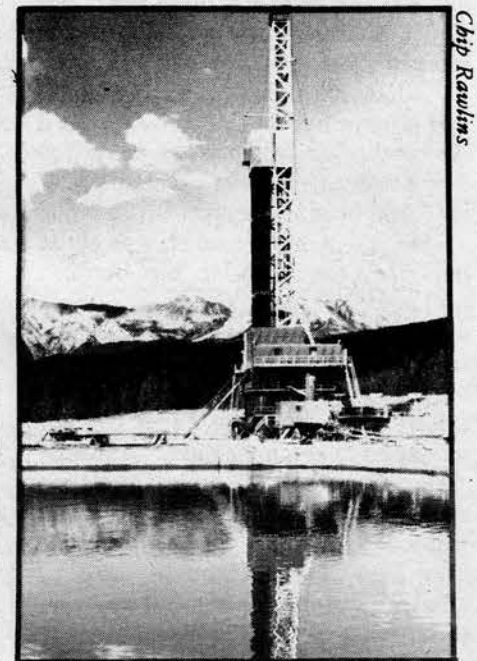
Bills have been introduced in Congress to eliminate non-competitive federal oil and gas leases. Sponsored by Senator Dale Bumpers (D-AR) and Rep. George Miller (D-CA), the bills would force all federal contracts to be leased competitively. So far, Senate Energy Committee Chairman James McClure (R-ID) has refused to hold hearings on Bumpers' bill.

The lottery lease system was first attacked by Congress and then suspended by the Bureau of Land Management last October after the press revealed that a dozen leases obtained in the Wyoming lottery were resold for close to \$100 million. In January the BLM announced that it planned to resume the lottery with new procedures involving better identification of known productive lands, which are required to be leased

competitively. Teri Stevens of the Wyoming BLM says that the Wyoming staff handling geological determinations has jumped from one to 22, and that lotteries will start up again in August.

The Casper Star-Tribune reports that small oil companies and independents doubt the ability of the BLM to make firm geologic identifications and fear the procedure changes will cut back lottery lease acreage. On the other hand, congressional critics as well as western governors, the National Association of Attorneys General and even the U.S. Office of Management and Budget charge that the new procedural changes won't stop speculation and want the lottery cancelled.

--Mary Moran



Chip Rawlins

Foresters deplore Forest Service trends

According to the nation's premier forestry organization, the U.S. Forest Service is beset by trouble from without and within.

From without, the Reagan Administration is attempting to impose a budget that threatens the renewable resources the National Forests produce. From within, the planning process that was to reduce controversy over resource management isn't doing its job. That, the foresters imply, is partly due to the agency's inability or unwillingness to provide leadership and to plan in a way the public can understand and support.

The criticism, along with some praise, comes from the 21,000-member Society of American Foresters. SAF is an 84-year-old group dedicated to the principles of multiple use and sustained yield. Its membership is one-third private sector employees; one-third state, BLM and Forest Service employees; and one-third academics.

The SAF's concern centers on the 191 million acres of National Forest land. But the SAF is also concerned about the effect the agency's budgets for research and cooperative programs have on the private land which makes up half of the nation's forest and range land.

Over the last few months, SAF's Resource Policy Director James Lyons has testified before Congress on the proposed 1985 Forest Service budget. In addition, a task force of foresters from industry, government, and academe has commented on the agency's implementation of the Resources Planning Act of 1974.

On the budget, Lyons told the House Committee on Appropriations: "Consistently, the President has sought to implement substantial changes in federal forest management policy through the budget process. We believe that this is inappropriate."

And then, "Recent trends in funding for the programs of the USDA Forest Service reflect steadily declining investments in the nation's renewable resources." Since 1980, the Forest Service budget has declined \$620 million in constant dollars. "This is a 29 percent reduction in agency funding in only five years."

The cuts have not been uniform: "Support for minerals area management and timber sales administration and management has increased by 40.3 and 16.1 percent, respectively, from 1981 to 1984, in current dollars." Meanwhile, support for recreation management, wildlife and fish management, range management and soil and water conservation are all down.

Lyons continued, "The president proposes to invest \$2 billion for the maintenance of the nation's forest lands. That is two-tenths of one percent of the total proposed federal budget."

In his testimony, Lyons supported the Forest Service against a budget-cutting administration. But in a report last month on the agency's planning, an SAF task force was extremely critical of its implementation of the Resources Planning Act. RPA was passed by Congress in 1974 to provide a long-term process by which to settle the many wars that broke out in the early 1970s over clear-cutting and other forest controversies.

RPA requires the Forest Service to collect data about the forests' ability to provide water, timber, recreation, wildlife habitat, and other forest products. This ability to produce is then to be matched against the

nation's needs in an overall plan. The point of the plan is to direct the National Forests to produce what is within their capacity and what the nation needs, with a focus on making sure the renewable resources will be sustained.

That's the theory. But now, ten years after passage, the foresters say RPA is in trouble because of "the slight interest it has generated in Congress, among decision-makers or groups historically concerned about the allocation of forest and range resources, and among the general public."

Why is there little interest in RPA? The task force, which commented on the Environmental Impact Statement which analyzes the 1985 RPA program, speculates:

"It is sometimes alleged that the Forest Service has purposely made the process and documents more complex and lengthy than need be, so that the agency can produce the results it wants, particularly the budget results. However incorrect this accusation may be, the Forest Service must confront it." Also, "The agency must take prompt steps to dispel the notion that RPA is a 'black box' process designed to support its activities and policies."

The task force aimed specific fire at the nine RPA alternatives the Forest Service lays out in its draft EIS. It is especially critical of the agency for not saying in the EIS which of the nine alternatives it prefers as its approach to managing the nation's forest resources, and why it prefers that approach.

"The public looks to the Forest Service for leadership in forestry. The requirement in RPA that the agency develop a program provides it not only with the opportunity, but also the responsibility for presenting to the people of the United States a vision of how forest and range resources can contribute to the future well-being of the country."

"In laying out an array of alternatives without presenting its vision of the future, the Forest Service is foregoing an important opportunity."

Riley Ridge appears home free

Exxon's proposed Riley Ridge gas processing plant in Wyoming is edging closer to final approval.

After receiving its siting permit last month (HCN, 4/2/84), Exxon has only one more hurdle to clear before it can begin building the half-billion dollar plant. The hurdle is an air quality permit from the state's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

Despite persistent efforts by the Wyoming Outdoor Council to raise the issue of acid rain threats to the nearby Bridger-Teton Wilderness of the Wind River Range, conservationists say that final hurdle won't be more than a molehill. They point to pressure from job-hungry local communities which are eager to expedite the project and want no delays from a study of potential acid rain problems. Exxon estimates it will need 2000 construction workers by 1985 and will keep 300 employees on-site after completion of the plant.

The air quality issue first gained public attention when the Forest Service recommended to the state that a "retroactive" stipulation be attach-

Effectively, the agency is not asserting its leadership in forestry."

The agency chooses its "preferred alternative" in a Decision Document issued after the EIS. The task force says the draft EIS doesn't indicate which standards the agency will use in choosing a preferred alternative.

In other comments, the foresters suggested that outside experts review the agency's computer models, data bases, and its techniques to increase confidence in the assessment; that it generate its alternatives in a systematic rather than the presently arbitrary way; that alternatives be presented in ways that are "more comprehensible to a wider public," that research not focus narrowly on National Forest programs; and that the needs of private and industry forest land and its interaction with National Forest management be considered.

SAF also recognized -- as in its budget testimony -- that some problems are beyond the agency's control. For example, cutbacks by the federal government have reduced the data available on water and recreation, making planning more difficult.

It also found things to praise. It called the update to the 1979 RPA assessment "commendable," said that the timber resource information rests on firmer ground than in the past, and that data on wildlife and wilderness are improved.

But it also finds that in the key area -- that of choosing among alternative ways to manage the nation's 154 forests -- "there is no basis on which to judge their validity." Can the Forest Service produce 15.2 billion board-feet of timber, 10.7 million animal unit months of grazing, and 240 million recreation visitor days in 1990 at a cost of \$2.7 billion?

"No one outside the Forest Service can either substantiate or repudiate these numbers. They become literally a matter of faith."

The SAF can be reached at: 5400 Grosvesnor Ln., Bethesda, MD 20815.

--Ed Marston

ed to Exxon's permit. The stipulation would force the company to alter its operations if acid rain problems begin to show up in the Wind River Range.

An Exxon official said that a retroactive permit condition would "raise a serious cloud of doubt over the project and how well Wyoming will be able to compete for economic growth."

Debbie Beck of the Wyoming Outdoor Council said the group doubts that a retroactive stipulation will be included in the air quality permit because of its tenuous legality and the demand for Exxon's jobs.

"The jobs issue holds a lot of water in this state," she said. Because the Council doesn't expect the acid rain problem to be dealt with adequately in the air quality permit, Beck said that the group is looking into the possibility of regional controls on acid rain.

"This is a problem that is not going to disappear," she said. The state is expected to make its permit decision in late May.

--Paul Larmer

HOTLINE

A radiation death



A precedent-setting Colorado ruling has raised questions about federal radiation standards for workers and could initiate a flood of lawsuits. The Colorado Industrial Commission ruled April 19 that LeRoy Krumbach, a former Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant employee, died of cancer caused by on-the-job radiation. His widow was awarded more than \$40,000 in workman's compensation. Dow Chemical Company, which operated the plant when Krumbach worked there, has appealed the decision. It was apparently the first case in which radiation levels permitted by federal standards were proven to have caused cancer, says Bruce DeBoskey, the Denver lawyer representing Krumbach. DeBoskey says that tens or hundreds of thousands of workers have been exposed to the current radiation levels. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission and Environmental Protection Agency now allow exposures of five rems per year, a level set 25 years ago.

Thistle mudslide is not a dam

Utah's Thistle Lake, formed behind one of last spring's landslides, has been drained but studies continue to determine if the slide mass would make a good permanent dam. Last month's report from a team of engineers and geologists to Utah's state engineer concluded that the mass of rock and soil that slid down the side of Spanish Fork Canyon would not make a suitable dam. The report recommends studies to determine the feasibility of stabilizing the natural dam. The Thistle landslide formed a several-mile long, two-armed reservoir, closing U.S. highway 6 through the canyon.

ETSI trickles on

Energy Transportation Systems Inc. has beat out two railroads in submitting a low bid for hauling coal to San Antonio, Texas. But the bid may be moot if other customers are not found. ETSI has had trouble finding customers for their slurry pipeline proposal to transport Wyoming coal to the southwest. After the recent winning bid, ETSI said the company still intends to make a final decision this summer on whether the project goes ahead based chiefly on whether other contracts are forthcoming. The San Antonio utility that received the bid has not yet committed itself to ETSI. The company said it needed to know about ETSI's other contracts, litigation involving state water rights, and an incomplete right-of-way for the pipeline.

HOTLINE

A tale of two pits

Solving one problem can create another, as demonstrated by the Vitro Chemical Company tailings situation. The 2.5 million cubic yards of radioactive material will probably be trucked 90 miles from Salt Lake City to Clive in Tooele County, raising worries about possible road damage. If trucks are used, they will be loaded coming and going. The removal of the tailings from the Salt Lake City site will leave a large pit, which will be filled with 1.2 million cubic yards dug out of the burial pit at Clive. One contractor preparing to bid on the \$16 million, 250-job project will ask permission to run over-sized trucks in order to save \$6 million, according to *Utah Waterline*.

Envirosafe redux

A union official has filed a complaint against Idaho's Envirosafe, the company that handles hazardous wastes. The complaint, filed with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration two weeks ago, charges that Envirosafe is discriminating against workers who stopped work for a day and a half because of concern about safety conditions at the site. The work halt came after two employees working near drums containing toxic chemicals were taken to a hospital complaining of dizziness, numbness and trembling.

BARBS

A subdivision is as pretty as a tree. Writing from the Brown Cloud capital of the western world, *Rocky Mountain News* editorial writer Vincent Carroll laments environmentalists' unlimited appetite for wilderness, which he calls "ecological museums." Carroll calls on Congress to cap the movement before America wakes up someday to find itself 100 percent wild and scenic. The resident of the rapidly sprawling Colorado Springs to Fort Collins Front Range corridor especially deplors "the notion that land is sacred to the degree it escapes human touch."

Getty is set back at Little Granite Creek

Although Getty Oil may be only temporarily delayed in gaining permission from the Bureau of Land Management to drill within the Bridger-Teton National Forest, many in the community of Jackson, Wyoming are claiming a major victory.

On May 2 the Interior Department's Board of Land Appeals declared that Getty could not use its lease until the BLM rewrote their Environmental Impact Statement to include a no-action alternative, an alternative that could block Getty.

Although opposition to Getty began with conservationists in Jackson, gateway to Yellowstone National Park, the drilling issue eventually gathered broad political support from county commissioners, state legislators, the city council, state game and fish department and even the governor's office. Attorney Bob Schuster, who represents the Jackson Hole Alliance for Responsible Planning, said opposition came from "conservative folk -- not environmental crazies or hippies. (They're) people who vote Republican, run ranches and businesses; people who have lived in the area for generations."

For some, Getty's intent to drill a well in the Little Granite Creek basin was one well too many. There are already some 150 oil and gas wells in the heavily-used national forest near Yellowstone and the boom of seismic testing is heard each summer as company crews map the forest.

The Little Granite Creek area is also rich in wildlife, with every major species in the greater Yellowstone ecosystem present. The area is also known as a prime elk calving ground and a migration route for both elk and bighorn sheep. In addition, the rugged terrain of the region makes road building associated with oil and gas development a shaky proposition at best.

Paul Gilroy, a local hunting outfitter, said that Getty's proposal would build "seven miles of road on the most unstable soils in the country. The ground slumps annually and it would be very difficult for a road to last one year," he said.

But the major factor that unified Jackson was economic. Tourists,

whether they come armed with guns or cameras, are the major support for the region's economy and Getty was seen as a threat to that base. State Senator John Turner said, "The entire community became aware that the tourist-based economy which supports local jobs and provides local tax dollars derives from the resources of the wild lands. The people decided that the risks were not worth it." Story Clark, director of the Jackson Hole Alliance, said community sentiment finally boiled down to: "There are some places where you need to say no."

Another factor that may have unified the opposition was the legal struggle itself. After Getty received its drilling permit in May of 1982, local opponents, led by the Jackson Hole Alliance, appealed the decision to Interior's Board of Land Appeals. When IBLA later concluded in a brief statement that Getty could retain its drilling rights, three separate lawsuits got underway from the Jackson Hole Alliance, Sierra Club and Wilderness Society, and the Governor's office. Later they were consolidated into one case in district court. In February of this year, the judge returned the ball to IBLA in its ruling that BLM had not properly reviewed the original appeal. That set up the IBLA decision on May 2 that vacated Getty's drilling permit and ordered a rewritten EIS.

Opponents to Getty said all along that the BLM refused to abide by its own rules when its EIS failed to include the no-drilling option. The issue began back in 1969 when Getty was issued a ten-year lease in the Little Granite Creek basin. By late 1979, with its lease about to expire, Getty found itself in a tight spot -- it had to drill or lose the lease.

As a last ditch effort, Getty went to the United States Geological Survey (whose leasing role has subsequently been transferred to the BLM) and asked to be suspended from the terms of the contract. The USGS agreed, but only on condition that it could deny Getty's drilling permit if "such operations would result in unacceptable impacts on the wilderness characteristics of the area." That is the no drilling option.

But for some reason BLM failed to

consider the stipulation when writing its EIS, assuming that Getty had an inviolable right to drill by virtue of holding the lease. The IBLA decision puts into question Getty's right.

For its part, Getty has not given up the fight. The company said it is confident that it will be allowed to drill in the Little Granite Creek and also reclaim the area back to its wilderness condition. Although Interior's decision delays the issuance of their drilling permit as the BLM supplements the existing EIS, Getty said it does not expect BLM to select a no-action alternative and deny their drilling rights. Getty said it takes heart in a statement in the decision which found the EIS "an adequate, viable, even commendable work" -- with the exception of the missing no-action alternative.

Opponents to the well say Getty's assurances of reclamation aren't believable. Attorney Bob Schuster, who volunteered thousands of hours to the case, said, "It takes only a tenth of a second after seeing the lease area to realize that Getty can't say it would not impact wilderness values."

State Senator John Turner has similar doubts. "My opinion is that yes, Getty can continue, but if the EIS is good the impacts on the fragile soils, the wildlife, and the dispersed recreation along with the questionable rehabilitation of the site will make development of the lease unacceptable."

With Getty unwilling to back down, some opponents to the well propose a new solution: include the lease, which is located in the Gros Ventre Wilderness Area, in the pending Wyoming Wilderness Bill. "It's the best answer," said Sierra Club Attorney Karin Sheldon. "Now is the perfect time to have a look at including this place in the wilderness bill."

So far, the Wyoming delegation has expressed reluctance to include the area because the case is in litigation and Getty may have rights that need compensating. Sheldon said she hopes the recent IBLA decision will convince them that Getty doesn't have any rights.

--Paul Larmer

Congress tries to shield the national parks from A-76

Opposition to the Reagan Administration's privatization plan, dubbed Circular A-76 by the Office of Management and Budget, is growing. Promoted as an efficiency measure, A-76 mandates the study of many government services for possible release to private enterprise.

Because criticism of the program continues to focus on the nation's national parks (*HCN*, 4/16/84), Rep. John Seiberling's Public Lands and National Parks subcommittee scheduled hearings for May 22 and June 8. Seiberling (D-OH) is expected to take a detailed look at the Interior Department's efforts to speed up the program.

Interior's plan to have an initial 62 Park Service studies completed by March 31 failed when not one of the parks completed their feasibility studies on time. Private bids were to have been received and contracts for services such as road, trail and campground maintenance were to be issued for fiscal year 1985. The Park Service has spent more than \$3.7 million preparing these initial studies,

nearly seven times what had been anticipated, according to agency officials.

The A-76 program has created havoc with park superintendents nationwide as they struggle to meet Interior's deadlines, and some park employees have waged quiet battle against the program while trying to hold onto their jobs.

"Why push ahead with such great speed?" says one park manager who asked not to be named. "If saving money is the great concern, why not take the time to do it right?"

A spokesman for Rep. Pat Williams (D-MT) says that Seiberling's panel and two other House committees hope to conduct additional field hearings on A-76 this summer. At least one hearing would focus on Glacier National Park where privatization has been met with staunch opposition from park employees.

Letters signed by Democratic and Republican members of Congress have been sent to the House Appropriations Interior subcommittee

asking it to strengthen a Senate amendment which was passed on April 5. House members requested that wildlife refuges be added to the Senate language which would put park privatization under congressional review. Subcommittee Chairman Sid Yates (D-IL) is expected to act favorably upon the request.

Meanwhile, the results of a General Accounting Office study requested by Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) on the effects of A-76 are expected in time for field hearings in July. The GAO is auditing a number of parks and some Bureau of Reclamation facilities.

During congressional hearings in February, Park Service director Russell Dickenson, who has served under several administrations, said of A-76: "I must admit that I have some deep concerns... simply because we have had some instances in which contracted services did not prove to be the equal of activities provided by career civil servants." Dickenson later related the pressure he is receiving from department officials. He told

congressmen: "I don't think in my career or my experience I have been whipsawed quite like I have over this issue. I catch it from above and I catch it from below."

In a recent letter to President Reagan, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Jr., son of the former president, implored Reagan to exempt the Park Service from the A-76 program. Roosevelt said it "may well result in higher costs and far less service to the public and probable serious damage" to the resource. Roosevelt expressed particular concern that contracting would endanger the three parks honoring his family at Hyde Park, New York.

Interior department officials, under the leadership of Secretary William Clark, remain confident that contracting will prove to be cost-effective. In its 1985 budget request for the Park Service, Interior has already asked that 180 full-time employees be cut from the agency, a move department insiders say is directly related to A-76. Congressional committees are working to restore those positions.

--Ron Selden

BULLETIN BOARD

CUP STUDIES RUNNETH OVER

The Central Utah Project, intended to bring water via trans-mountain diversion from the Colorado River basin into Salt Lake City and other presently water-logged areas, is being intensely re-examined. The major review of the 1964 proposal is being done by the Utah Department of Natural Resources at the request of Governor Scott Matheson. Public hearings were held in early May; a draft report will be issued in September. Comments and requests for the report can be sent to the Department at 1636 West North Temple, SLC, UT 84116.

A second re-examination is being done by the Central Utah Water Conservancy District. This steward of CUP is under increasing governmental and citizen pressure to put the project to a vote of the citizens it taxes. In public meetings, the conservancy district has argued that such a vote is legally not necessary and would be very expensive. The National Wildlife Federation has taken the lead among national environmental groups questioning the project.

DIESEL WOES

If you care about yourself or your neighbors, don't buy a diesel auto. That is the implication of testimony given by Bob Yuhnke of the Environmental Defense Fund to the House Subcommittee on Health and the Environment. Yuhnke said a Detroit study showed that diesel truck drivers got 11.9 times more urinary tract cancer than a control group. They got 7.2 times more cancer than drivers of gasoline-powered trucks. Railroad workers exposed to diesel fumes got 42 percent more respiratory cancer than a control group.

At present diesel autos are only 1 to 2 percent of the auto fleet. But diesels emit 80 to 100 times more particulates than gas-powered cars. Yuhnke predicted, "If driven in sufficient numbers, diesel vehicle emissions could soon rival cigarettes and drunk drivers as one of the nation's most serious threats to public health."

SAWTOOTH FOREST PROJECTS

The Forest Service will produce 49 environmental analyses for 49 proposed projects within south-central Idaho's Sawtooth National Forest this year. The projects range from timber sales to grazing allotment plans. A project list can be obtained from any Forest Service office or by writing to the Sawtooth National Forest, 1525 Addison Ave. E., Twin Falls, ID 83301.

LEARNING TO TEACH

The Forest Service and three Idaho universities will sponsor three week-long summer workshops designed for teachers and others interested in learning about natural resources teaching methods. Workshop emphases range from general conservation studies to public involvement techniques to field-oriented wildlife study methods. The dates are June 10-15 near Alpine, Wyoming; June 24-29 in the Sawtooth Mountains near Ketchum, Idaho and July 22-28 at Payette Lake near McCall, Idaho. For more information contact the Forest Service Intermountain Region, 324 25th Street, Ogden, UT 84401.

YELLOWSTONE CONTINUES BACKCOUNTRY RESTRICTIONS

The National Park Service is continuing its "Bear Management Human Use Adjustment Program" in Yellowstone National Park's backcountry to reduce human impact in high-density grizzly bear habitat. Adjustments include area and trail closures (permanent, temporary, or on a seasonal basis) and no off-trail travel.

The areas will be monitored for compliance and also as part of a research program to determine if there are benefits to the grizzly bear population. Visitors planning to camp overnight in Yellowstone's backcountry must obtain a backcountry use permit from one of the park ranger stations. Any visitors planning day trips into the backcountry are also asked to stop at a ranger station to get current trail information. Visitors are also reminded that any sightings of bears or bear activities should be reported to the nearest ranger station or visitor center immediately. For more information, call park headquarters at 307/344-7381.

OFFSHORE RESOURCES

A new Interior Department report on developing offshore mineral and energy resources is out. The report summarizes proposals and recommendations of over 200 industry, academic and government people who gathered at an Interior Department-sponsored symposium held last November. The symposium stemmed from a Presidential proclamation a year ago that established the Exclusive Economic Zone and opened up almost four billion offshore acres for resource assessment and possible development. The U.S. Geological Survey, Minerals Management Service and U.S. Bureau of Mines will review the report and join with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the National Science Foundation to develop a national program for sea-floor resources.

The 308-page report, entitled *Symposium Proceedings: A National Program for the Assessment and Development of the Mineral Resources of the United States Exclusive Economic Zone* (USGS Circular 929) is available from the Text Products Section, Distribution Branch, U.S. Geological Survey, 604 South Pickett Street, Alexandria, VA 22304.

HELENA TRAVEL PLAN

The Helena National Forest has a proposed new travel plan outlining restrictions on foot, snowmobile and automobile travel. The public hearing dates have already slipped by, but written comments will be taken until June 6. You can review the plan at any of the area's Forest Service offices or at Helena's public library. Send comments to the Helena National Forest, 301 S. Park, Drawer 10014, Helena, MT 59601.

RADIOACTIVE REPOSITORY REPORT

The Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management has published its first annual report since its creation by the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. The Office within the Department of Energy was designed to find and operate a permanent geological repository for high-level radioactive wastes. The report covers the period from the January 7, 1983 signing of the act until September 30, 1983 and covers costs and progress made toward finding a site. Copies are available from DOE's Office of Public Affairs, Room 1E-206, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Ave., SW, Washington, D.C. 20585. (202/252-1252).

FAMILY FIELD SESSION

A four-day summer program near Oracle, Arizona will teach kids and their parents or grandparents about relationships between plants, animals and the land. The seventh annual Audubon Family Institute will be held August 14-17 at Camp O'Wood in Peppersauce Canyon. Fees, which include housing and meals, are \$135 for persons twelve years and older and \$99 for younger children. Attendance is open to all but limited in numbers, so write soon to Cheryl Lazaroff, Director, Audubon Family Institute, Tucson Audubon Society, 30-A North Tucson Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85716 (602/323-9673).

OLD WEST FESTIVAL

The Buffalo Bill Historical Center will host a western weekend of frontier arts, crafts, cooking, demonstrations, games and entertainment on June 16 and 17 in Cody, Wyoming. For more information about the 3rd Annual Frontier Festival, call 307/587-4771.



PAONIA RESERVATION

A college course for high school students places Paonia and Fruita, Colorado and the Black Canyon of the Gunnison in the middle of an imaginary Indian reservation. This year's Colorado College Summer Institute for Indian high school students will invite students to argue the views of various special interest groups before a mock tribal council. To learn more about the program contact Woody Corbine, Educational Program Specialist, Council of Energy Resource Tribes, 5660 S. Syracuse Circle, Suite 206, Englewood, CO 80111 (303/779-4760).

FATE OF THE EARTH II

The second Conference on the Fate of the Earth will be held in Washington, D.C. from June 6-10. The theme is "Conservation and Security in a Sustainable Society" and sponsors are peace, environmental, labor, religious, and educational organizations across the country. For further information contact: On the Fate of the Earth, 1045 Sansome Street #402, San Francisco, CA 94111, (415/788-0383.)

LOW-LEVEL WASTE STORAGE

The Sierra Club's Radioactive Waste Campaign has issued a fact sheet on the methods for storage of "low-level" nuclear waste. The 8-page sheet discusses the feasibility of source separation and its storage in above-ground facilities. The fact sheet argues that landfills are not needed.

"Low-Level Nuclear Waste: Options for Storage" can be obtained from Sierra Club Radioactive Waste Campaign, 78 Elmwood Ave., Buffalo, NY 14201 (\$1 for one copy; \$.25 each for 25 or more copies).

WORLD BIOENERGY

Sweden is the site of the *Bioenergy '84* exhibition and world conference. Presentations at the conference will cover all aspects of producing energy from organic sources, and a post-conference tour will visit a Swedish community that has replaced 90 percent of its oil with bioenergy. The dates are June 15-24. Write to Gothenburg Convention Bureau, Kungsporsplatsen 2, S-411 10 Gothenburg, Sweden.

THE BIOREGIONAL APPROACH

The Aspen Center for Environmental Studies will hold a bioregional conference May 29 at 7:30 P.M. at Hallam Lake in cooperation with San Francisco's Planet Drum foundation. A film will be shown called *Not for Tourists* and natural ecosystems that span political boundaries will be discussed. For more information call Seth Zuckerman at ACES at 927-3851.

BACKCOUNTRY TRAINING

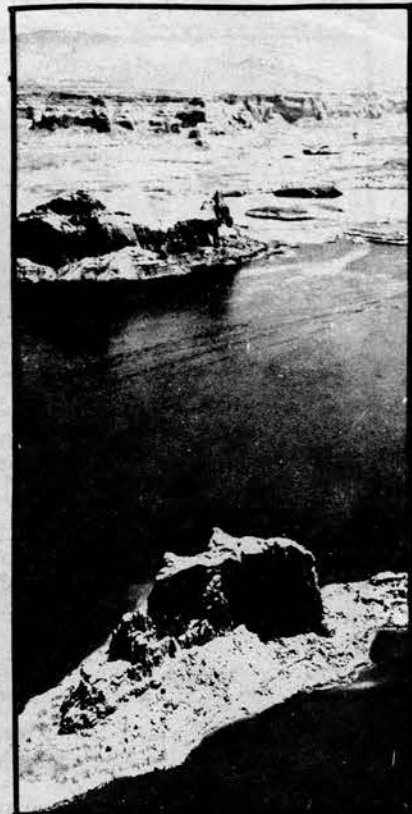
Colorado Mountain College and the U.S. Forest Service will offer a Wilderness Management course to meet in Thursday evening classroom sessions and Friday field sessions this summer. The course will provide training as backcountry rangers. College credit is available and students will be registered as Forest Service volunteers. The dates are June 28 to September 6 and registration must be in by June 22. For more information contact Colorado Mountain College, P.O. Box 2208, Breckenridge, CO 80424 (303/453-6757).

WILDERNESS PERMIT REQUIRED

Unregulated use of the 74,000 acre Indian Peaks Wilderness west of Boulder is a thing of the past as Forest Service permits for overnight use will be required this summer from June to September. Indian Peaks now has more visitors per year than any wilderness area in the Rockies and excessive crowding at popular campsites has already impaired wilderness qualities. But day use permits for heavily used trails won't go into effect until after 1986. Questions about the permit system and requests for applications should be directed to either the Boulder Ranger District, 2995 Baseline Road -- Room 16, Boulder, CO 80303 or the Sulphur Ranger District, 100 U.S. Highway 34, Granby, CO 80446.

GREATER YELLOWSTONE COALITION

The Greater Yellowstone Coalition, which has 24 member groups, holds its second annual convention June 14-16 at the Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel in Montana. Executive director Bob Anderson, who took on his job April 1, says, "recovery of the threatened Yellowstone grizzly bear population is a top priority of the coalition." Other issues are forest management practices, human overuse, oil and gas exploration and development and geothermal testing. The coalition was founded in May 1983 to promote the concept of a greater Yellowstone ecosystem and to create a national awareness of threats to the area, which includes the National Park and surrounding National Forests. Planned for the convention in June are scientific and policy meetings, a board of directors election, and banquet. For more information call Bob Anderson at 406/443-3880 or write GYC, Box 657, Helena MT 59624.



A RIVER NO MORE

A River No More, Philip Fradkin's comprehensive book about the political, geographical and historical roots of the Colorado River (HCN review, 6/26/81) is now out in paperback. The book is required reading for anyone interested in water in the west. Fradkin travelled over 75,000 miles and talked to more than 250 people before telling this complex story. The 350-page illustrated book is available for \$10.95 at bookstores or from the University of Arizona Press, 1615 East Speedway, Tucson, AZ 85719.

NATIONAL FORESTS COMBINE MAPS

The National Forest Northern Region is combining Forest Travel Plan maps and Forest Visitor Series maps. The first combined maps were available for \$1 January 1, 1984 and most of the Northern Region National Forests will have the maps by 1986. Forest Travel Plan maps now show travel opportunities and restrictions, while Visitor maps provide detailed information at a scale of 1/4 inch to a mile on land ownership, recreation sites, roads, trails, principal lakes, streams, peaks and towns. Northern Regional Forester Tom Coston said that combining the two maps will permit more frequent updating. Current maps are available at National Forest headquarters and local Ranger Stations throughout the Region as well as at the Region Headquarters: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northern Region, Federal Building, Missoula, MT 59807.

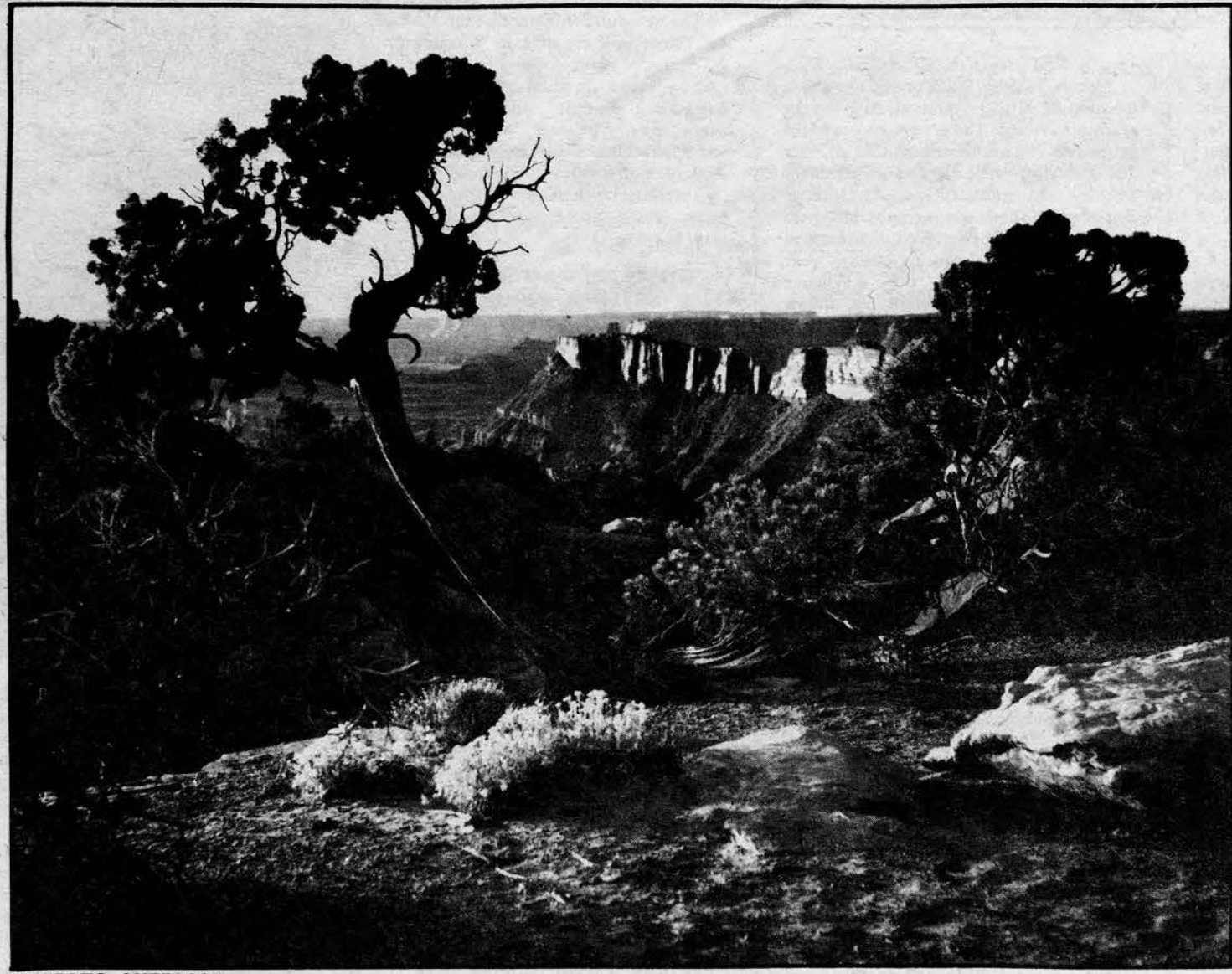
OIL AND GAS LEASING IN IDAHO'S PANHANDLE

A recent Forest Service Environmental Assessment for oil and gas leasing on nonwilderness lands in the Idaho Panhandle National Forests, including Kaniku, Coeur d'Alene, and St. Joe National Forests of northern Idaho, recommends the leasing of over one million acres by the BLM. The EA concludes that development of oil and gas leases does not pose a serious threat to the environment and that a more extensive EIS is not necessary. Critical leases on grizzly bear and caribou habitat will be deferred as will leases in five proposed wilderness areas. The BLM has leasing authority on all public lands and must now make a decision based in part on the recommendations of the Forest Service. Copies of the EA are available from: Idaho Panhandle National Forests, 1201 Ironwood Drive Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814, (208/7

UTAH REVIEW'S LAND LAWS

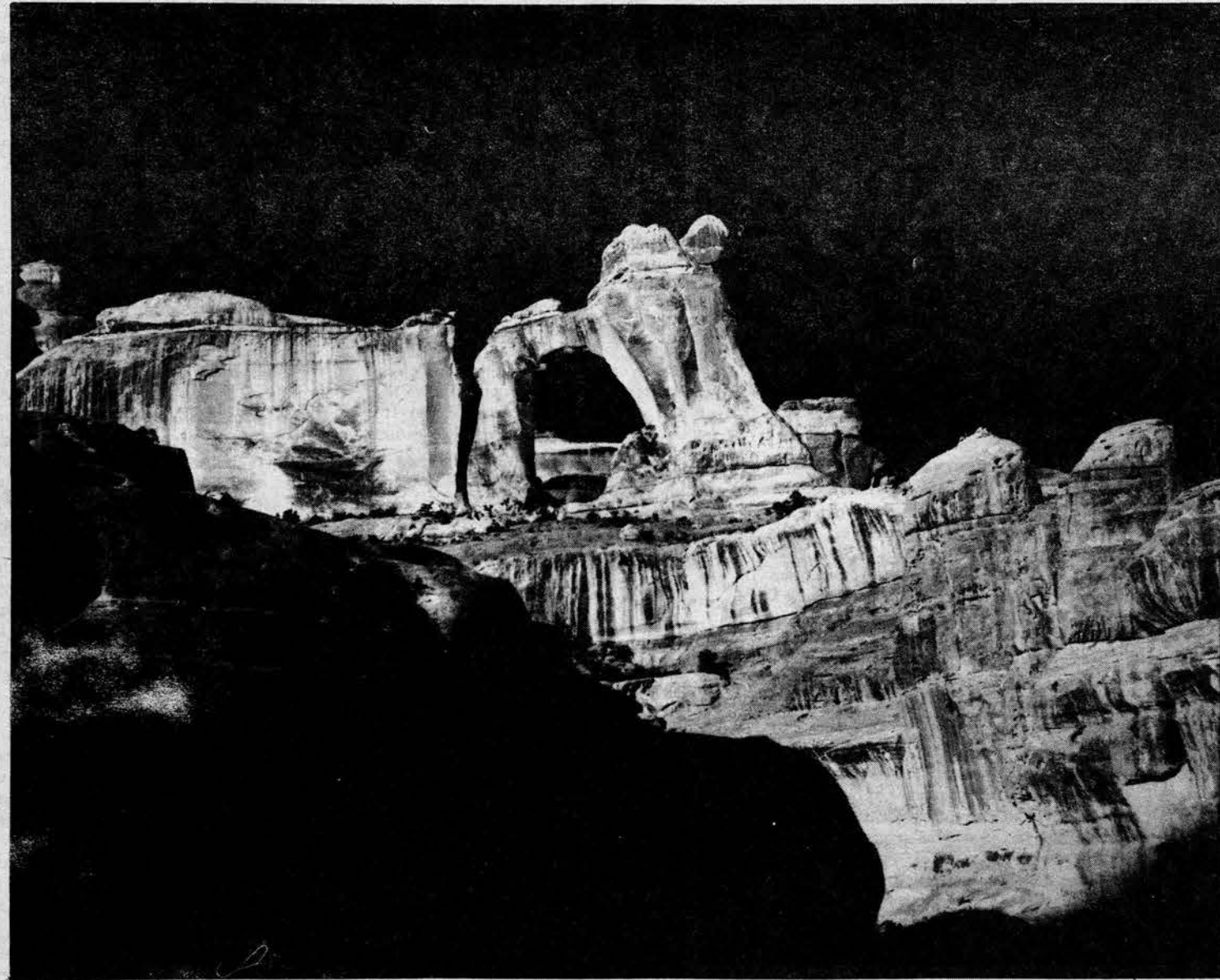
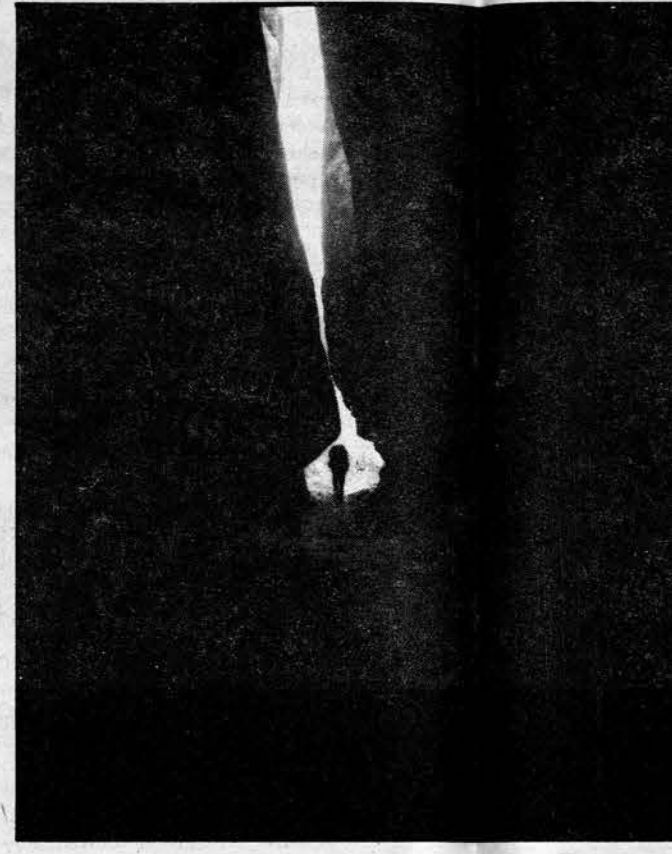
Utah's new Land Law Review Commission is looking for public comment on the management and use of state-owned lands and forests. Governor Scott Matheson appointed the commission in March as the initial step toward amending the state land laws. The laws have been essentially unchanged since they were adopted at statehood in 1896. The commission's review will be completed by this fall and presented to next year's session of the Utah State Legislature.

Send comments to Paul Pratt, Division of State Lands and Forestry, 3100 State Office Building, Salt Lake City, UT 84114.



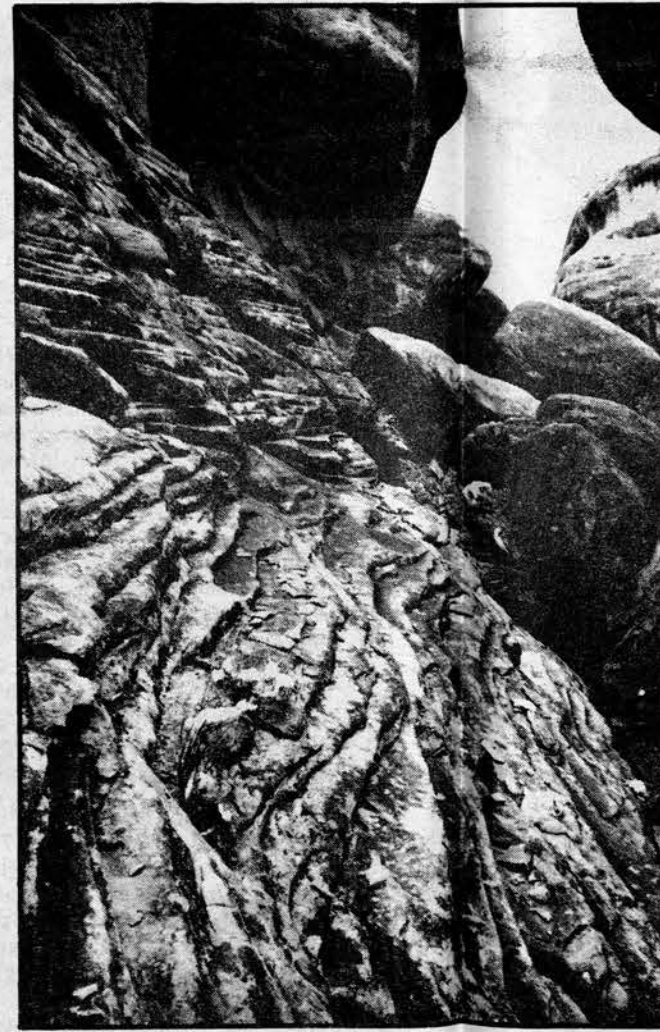
Jack McEllan

NEEDLES OVERLOOK

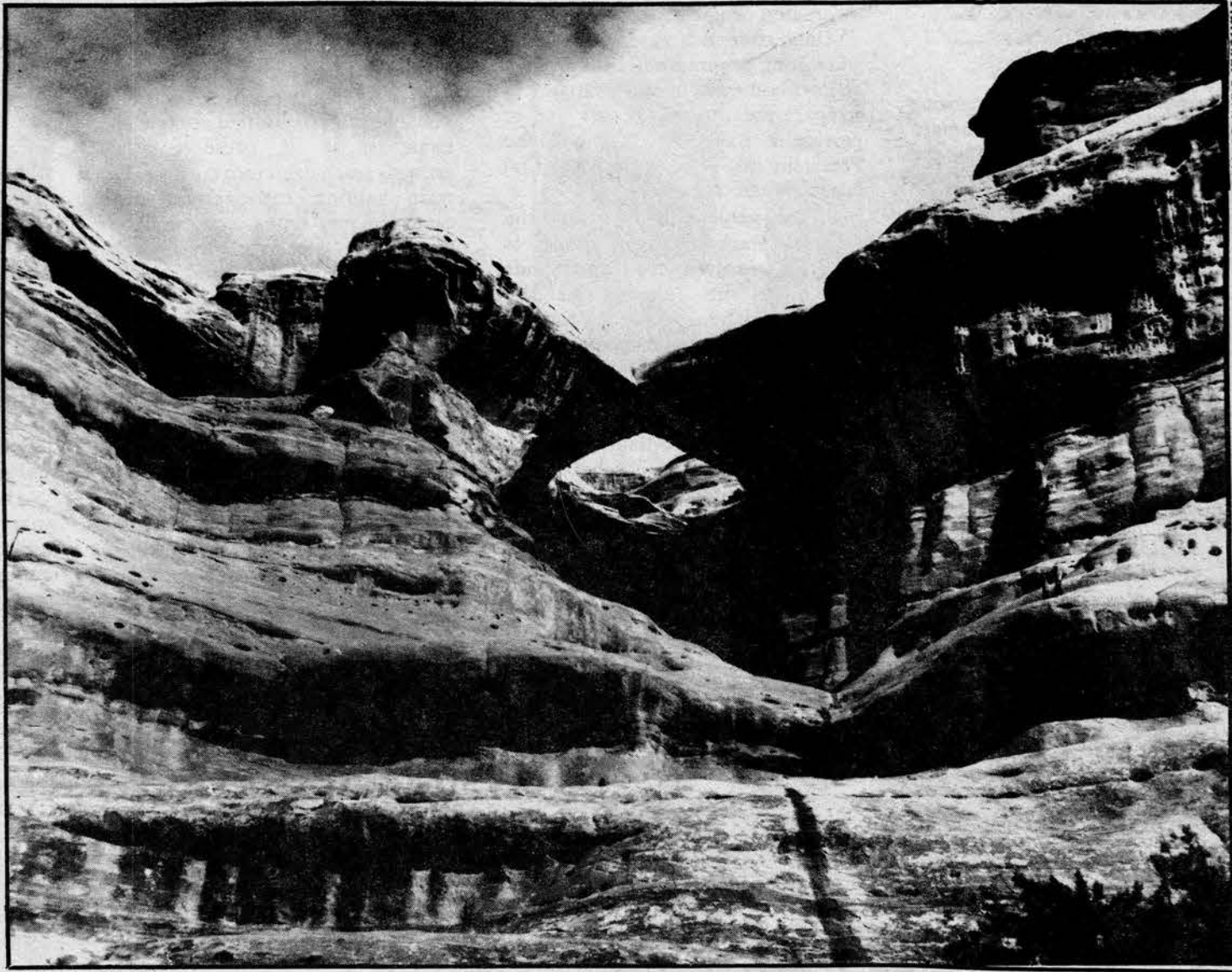


National Park Service

ANGEL ARCH



NEEDLES DISTRICT



National Park Service

Bob Anderson

HORSE CANYON



Martos Hoffman

CANYONLANDS

Canyonlands National Park in southeastern Utah takes in over 400 square miles of sandstone monoliths and meandering slickrock canyons. At its center, the Colorado and the Green rivers join, and their deep canyons divide the park into three districts with image-inspiring names: the Maze, the Needles and Island in the Sky.

Canyonlands...

[Continued from page 1]

he charged that DOE "remains unresponsive to the legitimate concerns repeatedly expressed by the state of Utah." He spelled out those concerns as DOE's failure to collect basic comprehensive data on geology and hydrology and archaeological sites, and failure to address potential impacts of a waste repository on Canyonlands National Park. He said DOE should also address the environmental impacts of planned drilling and testing activities which will occur if the Canyonlands site is nominated for characterization. Finally, Matheson wrote that DOE's data collection process has produced information "far too scarce to provide a legitimate basis for decision-making."

The Governor announced that he would:

- request a Congressional amendment to the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982 to preclude location of a waste repository close to a National Park,
- direct the state Attorney General to prepare a lawsuit against DOE over its site selection process,
- and extend a statewide moratorium on issuing permits DOE needs for data collection so as to protect against environmental impacts.

Matheson's move is a last-ditch effort to head off a long, drawn-out process during which the Canyonlands Basin would be transformed. For whether or not the Canyonlands site is actually chosen for the repository, the characterization process for the three finalists would profoundly affect the fragile, pristine, high desert terrain.

In opposing a high level nuclear burial grounds near Canyonlands, Matheson joins the governors of three other states with sites under consideration by DOE. Gov. Bill Allain of Mississippi, Gov. Edwin Edwards of Louisiana, and Gov. Richard Bryan of Nevada have all gone on record as opposing a repository in their states. However, Gov. Mark White of Texas and Gov. John Spellman of Washington say they neither support nor oppose a nuclear repository. Instead, they are observing the site selection process with "caution and concern."

Governor Matheson's concerns about the characterization process were illustrated during the May 5 meeting at Salt Lake's South High School. A DOE official and sub-contractors from Bechtel, Sandia Labs, Battelle's Office of Nuclear Waste Isolation, and Woodward-Clyde Consultants painted the following picture of the process that may lead to the disposal of nuclear waste in southeast Utah.

If the Canyonlands site is selected for further characterization, DOE would blast and drill a \$110 million steel-lined exploratory shaft. It will be 15-foot wide and 3000-foot deep and lead to a 75-foot-long underground test chamber. Workers will also drill 45 deep boreholes in the vicinity of the site to test deep geology and hydrology, as well as over 1000 shallow boreholes of 5 to 50 feet in depth to test surface characteristics for the future construction of buildings and railroad tracks. Backhoe test pits and a 300-foot-long trench will be dug.

DOE would also construct four meteorological towers and twelve tiltmeter stations to measure earth movement. Seven seismic reflection lines will be laid over 50 miles of terrain to determine subsurface

structure. Miles of roadways will be constructed or substantially upgraded.

Only after this extensive drilling and testing program will DOE prepare an Environmental Impact Statement to compare the three final sites and to provide a basis for DOE and the President to select America's first nuclear waste repository.

If the geology is right and the National Park proximity issue is somehow resolved, the Canyonlands site could be selected for the repository. Then, after the Nuclear Regulatory Commission grants DOE a construction license, 1800 workers would begin to build a \$3-4 billion nuclear facility.

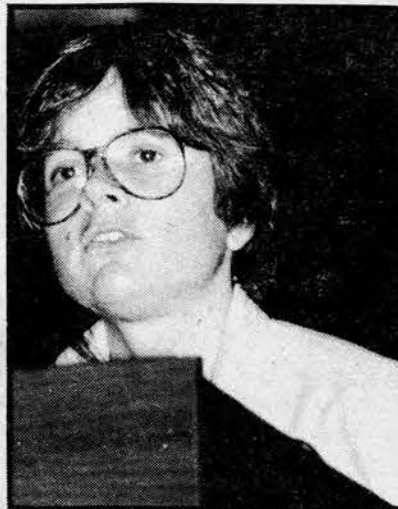
Either a waste-haul railroad, highway or both would be carved across the wild, scenic benchlands along the eastern edge of Canyonlands National Park, or blasted down Indian Canyon along the park entrance road. DOE predicts this repository construction phase would provide 200-300 local jobs and bring a total of 5000 newcomers to Grand and San Juan Counties. The water requirement during construction is estimated at 2.5 million gallons per day.

After the repository is built it would cover a square-mile just to the

east of Canyonlands National Park beneath South Six-Shooter Peak. Though the repository itself would not be visible from within the Park, the 640 acre high-security compound would be brightly lighted at night and awareness of its presence would certainly reach deep into the Park. The train hauling radioactive waste canisters four times a day would be visible from major overlooks along the eastern edge of the Park: Needles Overlook, Anticline Overlook, Canyonlands Overlook and Dead Horse Point. No studies have been done to estimate the effects of noise from trains as they rumble through the otherwise silent Canyonlands Basin.

Though the final transportation routes would probably not be selected until 1990, the trains might well have to travel along and cross over the Colorado River, the prime water source for the Southwest.

Starting in 1998, waste would be shipped to Utah from all over the United States, with most of it coming from the East Coast by truck along I-70 through Colorado's Rocky Mountains, or by train along the Denver-Rio Grande Line. Both routes pass through Denver. DOE estimates a total of 34,000 waste shipments



Loretta Pickerell

during the 20-30 year life of the repository, an average of seven a day.

During the life of the facility the waste dump would consume one million acre feet of water, with the supply probably purchased from the San Juan Water Conservancy District and piped to the site from the Colorado River. Once in operation, the repository would need one million gallons a day.

Three million tons of salt covering 50 acres in a 35-foot-high pile would sit on the ground at the site until 2025. That is the approximate year for

The feds push to find a nuclear waste site

High-level radioactive nuclear wastes now have no permanent burial ground.

Spent fuel from America's 78 nuclear power plants is temporarily stored in large cooling ponds at reactor sites, but storage space is rapidly running out for these 8,800 tons of highly radioactive wastes.

High-level military waste is currently stored at Hanford, Washington, Savannah River, South Carolina and at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory. Roughly 10.5 million cubic feet of military wastes await permanent disposal. Some of these wastes will be buried at the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) in southeast New Mexico. The rest may go to DOE's repositories.

The Reagan Administration has given a high priority to the creation of a permanent waste site. Besides finding a safe disposal area, the president also hopes to rekindle investor interest in nuclear power and defuse a key argument of the anti-nuclear movement, namely, that neither the government nor the nuclear industry knows what to do with radioactive waste.

In November 1981, Deputy Energy Secretary Kenneth Davis said in a memo: "We don't need a perfect solution, just an adequate one. We must stop studying and begin to build a facility."

After years of debate but no action, Congress arrived at its solution to the waste problem by passing the Nuclear Waste Policy Act of 1982. It was signed into law by President Reagan in January 1983. That law determined that permanent disposal of commercial spent fuel should be in one or two geologic repositories several thousand feet beneath the surface of the earth. (The waste would not be shot at the sun or dropped into the deep ocean.) The Act established the following site selection process and deadlines for locating America's first two nuclear waste repositories.

First, DOE was to identify areas

suitable for study as possible repository sites. Nine were identified: volcanic tuff beneath the Nevada Nuclear Test Site, basalt beneath the Hanford Nuclear Reservation in Washington, and salt deposits in Texas, Mississippi, Louisiana and Utah. There are actually two sites under study in the Canyonlands Basin at Davis Canyon and adjacent Lavender Canyon. DOE is currently preparing Environmental Assessments of all of these sites, drafts of which will be available for public review this August. These documents will provide a basis for DOE to narrow the field to five sites by December 1984.

By January 1, 1985, the Secretary of Energy plans to select and recommend to the president three sites for detailed "characterization." Characterization means sinking exploratory shafts, extensive drilling and surface-testing, detailed on-site study, and eventually, the preparation of draft Environmental Impact Statements. Public hearings and state involvement are required during site characterization.

In 1991 (this date was recently moved back from 1987), DOE will

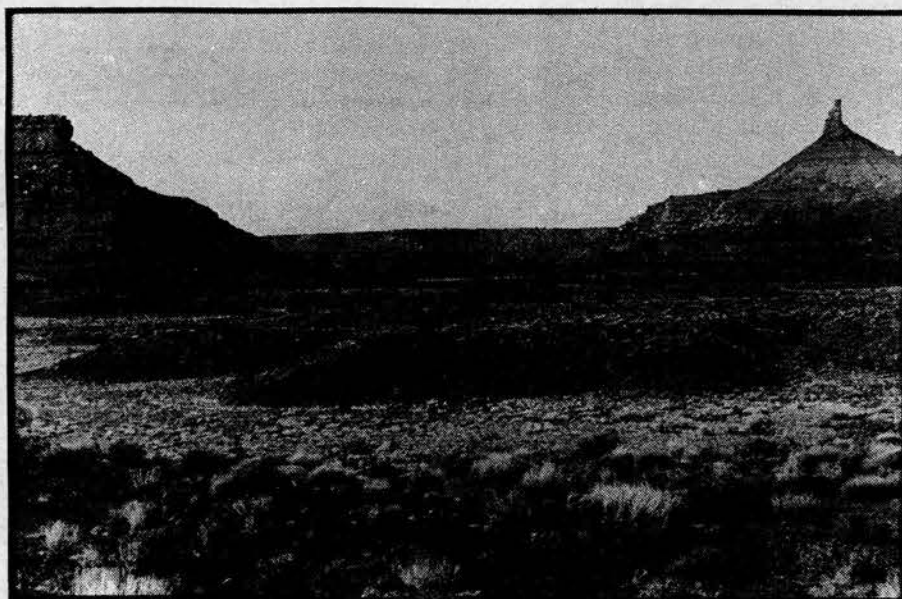
choose one repository site for recommendation to the President and Congress. A final EIS will be released. The affected state may veto DOE's site recommendation, but Congress can override the state veto by a joint Congressional resolution.

In the early 1990s the NRC must license DOE's construction blueprints, and after 4-7 years of construction, the repository will be open for waste disposal. DOE says the original opening date of 1998 will be met. The repository will remain open for 20-30 years and then be permanently sealed.

The same process will be used to locate a second repository, beginning with five states nominated in 1989 and final recommendation of the second site in 1990. The two sites that are characterized but not chosen for the first repository are eligible to be nominated for the second site, though the law stipulates that the second site must be located in a different region of the country than the first site.

If the Canyonlands site is recommended for characterization and found to be geologically suitable, its chances of hosting one of the two repositories are high.

--T.M.



Proposed nuclear waste repository would be at base of Six Shooter Peak on right. View is up Davis Canyon toward Canyonlands National Park.

covering the waste canisters underground with salt and permanently sealing the repository. Ten million tons of salt would have to be hauled from the repository by train for disposal elsewhere.

After the repository is full and sealed, geological time then comes into play. DOE said it hopes to design waste canisters that will contain their intensely hot radioactive contents for a minimum of 300 years. Should water enter the repository or be released from within salt molecules due to the heat of the waste packages, it would eventually begin the slow process of dissolving and transporting waste materials, probably in the direction of the Colorado River.

Geologist Terry Grant of Woodward-Clyde told the audience that an "extremely conservative" estimate of travel time to the Colorado River would be 79,000 years. Though many of the radioactive elements in the waste would have decayed to a harmless state by that time, a quarter of the plutonium and all of the uranium 235 and 238 would still remain in toxic, radioactive form.

Environmentalists at the meeting challenged Grant's 79,000 year figure as being based on extremely limited testing. That is the position taken by Utah's state geologist, who has said he has little confidence in DOE's hydrological data.

The question repeatedly asked at the DOE meeting was: "What will the impact of all of this be on the Park?" For although the repository site technically lies outside the Park boundary, it is still in the Canyonlands Basin just off the road that leads into the popular Needles District of the park.

Terri Martin of the National Parks and Conservation Association said, "After three years of meetings we have no answers to the critical questions: Where will the transportation route go? How will the repository impact the archaeological sites in the area? How will it affect the visitor experience at the Park? How will it affect tourism? The fact is that these questions have not been answered. The key studies have not been done."

Ted Taylor is DOE's Chief of Socioeconomics, Environmental and Institutional Relations for DOE's Salt Repository Project. He told Martin that DOE has established draft guidelines about effects on the park which stipulate that the repository "must not irreconcilably conflict" with the National Park. "Our guidelines don't say there can be no impacts," he added.

Owen Thomas is a retired vice-president of Phillips Petroleum who was in charge of exploration. At the meeting he questioned DOE's reliance on old oil company drilling data and a single test borehole as a basis for determining that the geohydrology of

Canyonlands will safely contain radioactive wastes and prevent contamination of the Colorado River.

"We're staking an awful lot here on a quick environmental study," said Thomas. "I can tell you from a lot of experience that when you drill a hole, all you know is what's going on for about ten feet around that one borehole. Who's to say that differential pressure won't cause movement in the salt? Who's to say that canisters that have been tested for 20 years will hold up? I say it's a gamble. And if it doesn't work, who's going to suffer? The people of Utah. Not the guys who did these studies."

Geologist Terry Grant of Woodward-Clyde replied that the salt beneath the Canyonlands site has been stable for hundreds of millions of years. "It is extremely unlikely that those conditions will change in the next 10,000 years," he said. Hydrologic results from Gibson Dome Hole Number One and petroleum drilling data "indicate a favorable groundwater system for isolating the waste," he added.

Grant later complained privately that "our critics want data, but they don't want us to drill near the Park. They get us in a Catch-22." Meanwhile, he said, "everybody fails to realize the preliminary nature of this stage in the process. The NRC (Nuclear Regulatory Commission) has to license the site. That's when the data sufficiency test will come."

Lorretta Pickerell, Nuclear Waste Project Coordinator for the state of Utah, repeatedly challenged DOE's data-gathering process.

"Additional information is required now before final decisions are made," she said. "DOE says they'll do those studies later -- during site characterization -- after the impacts are incurred. This is unacceptable." Pickerell said DOE has promised the state data to use for scientifically credible decisions as to whether the site is suitable, but "DOE has essentially conducted no studies since those promises were made."

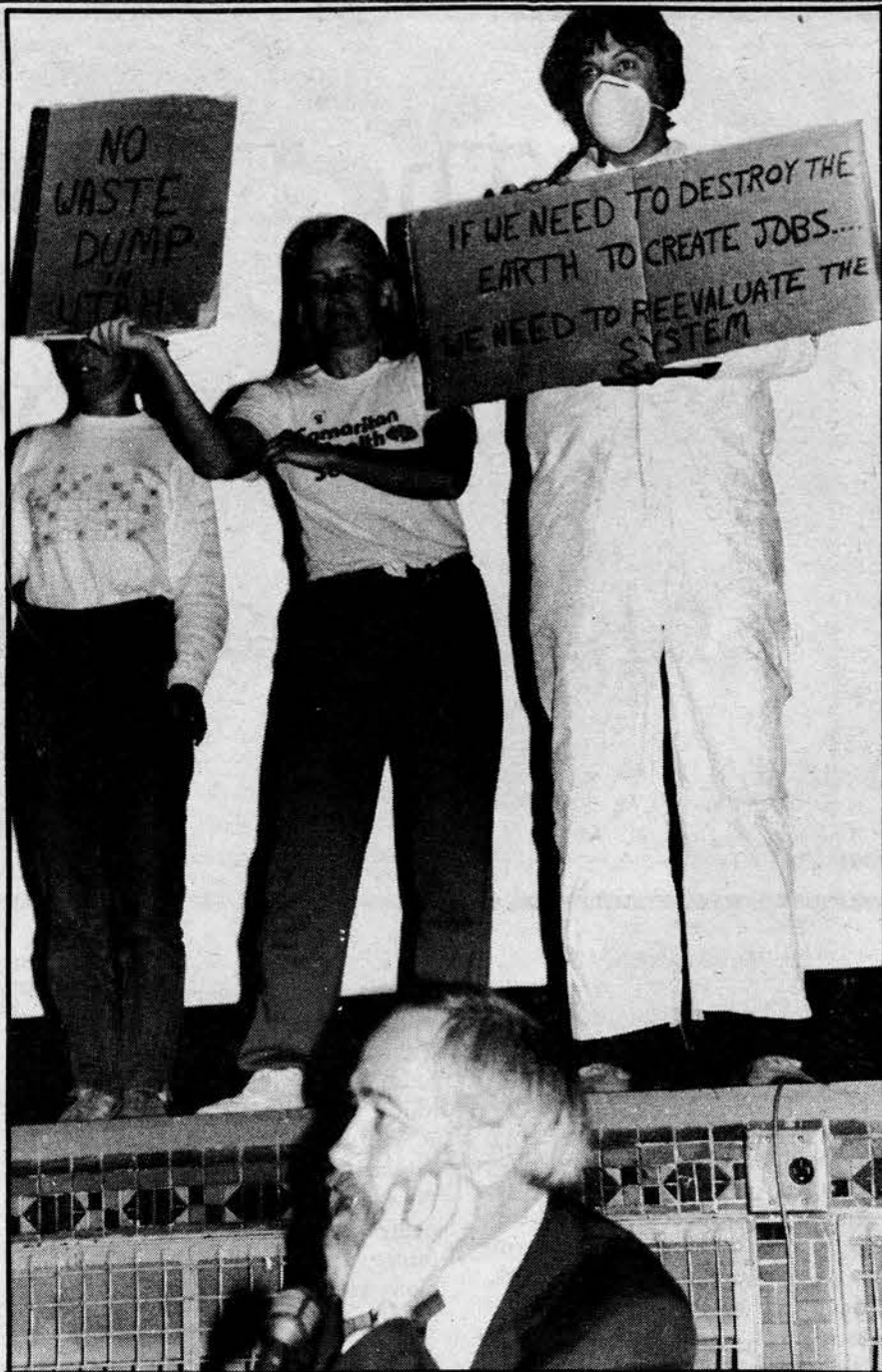
Pickerell demanded that the state's concerns be addressed before other sites are eliminated and impacts to Canyonlands Basin intensify during site characterization. "The state is not convinced that DOE will ever abandon the site after investing over a hundred million dollars during the characterization phase," she concluded.

DOE spokesmen made it clear, however, that they were under deadline pressure and financial constraints, which means an Environmental Assessment will be prepared and sites nominated on the basis of "available data." Said DOE's Taylor, "We're not trying to make the state happy. We're trying to consult with the state as required by law."

Another state concern raised at the meeting involved the possibility of drilling within Canyonlands National Park during site characterization. Geologist Terry Grant said, "We don't see any absolute need to drill in the Park. The data we develop should be sufficient by drilling close to the Park. But we can't categorically rule out that work in the Park may have to be done."

Back in May 1983, then-Secretary of the Interior James Watt said that he would encourage test drilling within the boundaries of the Park if DOE thought it necessary. "I've never flinched from being exposed to the truth or science or fact," said Watt, "and if we can drill a well to help us understand (the underlying geology), we ought to."

More recently, however, Energy



Earth First! demonstrators at DOE's public information meeting; the DOE's Ted Taylor, foreground.

Secretary Hodel, under close questioning by Senator Charles Percy (R-IL) during a Senate hearing, said "we will not undertake any activity within the boundaries of the park... I would say that automatically would exclude the site if it involves that."

Another concern voiced at the meeting involved the apparent politicization of DOE's site-selection process. Presidents Carter and Reagan both promised officials of the state of Louisiana that if Louisiana accepts the Strategic Petroleum Reserve, which it has, "DOE will not construct any nuclear waste repository in Louisiana if the state objects." DOE confirmed that promise to Louisiana governor Edwin Edwards on Nov. 8, 1983.

That agreement prompted William Lockhart, a law professor at the University of Utah College of Law, to ask DOE at the meeting, "How can you expect us to have faith in the impartiality, fairness and legality of this process, if we discover that deals have secretly been cut with other states?"

When pressed to answer Lockhart's question, DOE's Taylor said that DOE's arrangement with Louisiana is "subject to interpretation." Its "validity and current status is a subject of debate," he added.

Late in the afternoon as the crowd began to thin out and tire out, the audience was treated to a bit of guerilla theatre courtesy of the environmental group Earth First! Seven silent protestors dressed in

white radiation protection suits and face masks walked through the auditorium and mounted the stage behind the panel of DOE experts, who were discussing socio-economic impacts. The protestors held up posters for the assembled TV cameras and photographers. "NO WAY. NEVER!" read one poster. "If we need to desecrate the earth to create jobs, we need to reevaluate the system," said another.

Jim Taylor, dressed in white, stepped to the microphone. "What is the socio-economic impact of this repository for those of us who hold the Canyonlands sacred?" he asked poker-faced DOE officials. "For those of us who love the grandeur and silence of those lands, can you put an economic value on what we are going to lose?"

Linda Ulland, Bechtel's socio-economic expert, replied, "The value of that experience can't be quantified. It is very difficult to quantify what the impact on quality of life may or may not be."

Taylor responded, "There are many people, who for deeply spiritual reasons, will defend Canyonlands far beyond the legal process." Taylor was applauded by the fifty or so people who remained in the audience.

Christopher "Toby" McLeod recently wrote and directed the film *The Four Corners: A National Sacrifice Area?* He is currently producing a film called *Canyonlands Nuclear Park*.



Terry Grant

'The quality of the experience at Canyonlands is at stake.'

Terri Martin

The Forest Service's backcountry workers demand higher pay, better treatment

by John McCarthy

Lolo, Montana -- A group of seasonal government employees from Idaho, Utah and Montana came out of their winter camps at the end of April to form a Backcountry Workers Association. The usually independent and solitary people met at Lolo to grapple with their common problems of hard work, low pay, little recognition and no job security.

The complaints and concerns are not new to the field workers, who in the summer are scattered across the wilderness and backcountry. What is new is their decision to unite as an association to improve their lot.

The backcountry workers have long been dissatisfied by the fact that they are on the ground, doing the actual work and dealing with the public, while their status and job security within the Forest Service is low to non-existent.

"There's no incentive, there's no benefits, there's no raises, and yet they want to have us come back year after year," said Gordon Ash, a wilderness ranger in the Bob Marshall Wilderness in Montana.

Ash's frustration was shared by many of the 50 men and women who attended the two-day meeting from 11 of the 13 National Forests in the Northern Region. Also on hand were a handful of backcountry workers for the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service and forests in other regions.

Typical of the complaints was the one voiced by Don Baty, a wilderness ranger in Montana's Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness: "I'm in my fifth year as a wilderness ranger, and their answer is to offer me a short season spraying weeds." Baty said he wants more:

"I'm looking for a career as a wilderness ranger. I recognize it's a field job. I'm happy with a field job. I recognize it's a seasonal job. I like the idea of some time off. But what I want is commitment ... I want to be part of the organization that I've been working for for 10 years."

Baty's desires were shared by the group, whose median age appeared to be about 30. Many said they have worked ten seasons or more for the government, and several have more than 20 seasons in the backcountry. Baty said that to retain the experienced backcountry workers who know the trails, the outfitters and the answers to the questions visitors ask, a career ladder is needed.

But the Forest Service is reluctant to start a new career classification of wilderness managers, said Richard Hildner, who resigned last year from a full-time job as fire management officer on Idaho's Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. He said that until seasonal jobs are made permanent, the gap between the full-time forestry professionals and the seasonal forestry technicians will continue, along with the accompanying unhappiness.

Pat Burke added a different dimension to the discussion. He said career seasonals should bring their practical knowledge to the land management planning process. It would benefit both the agency and individuals, said Burke, a trail crew foreman on the Anaconda-Pintlar.

Baty called for training. He said that the responsibility to care for and monitor the resources is on the field workers. But agency training programs are generally limited to full-time employees.

Representatives from the Forest Service and the BLM who were present assured the group that contributions of the seasonal employees were valued. But they had few answers to the questions raised.

"The backbone of the Forest Service is you people here," said James M. Dolan, special areas forester for the Region 1 office at Missoula. "I've always felt, especially at the ranger district level, that without you people here in this room and a few more like you, we wouldn't get anything done."

Wendell Beardsley, a forester for recreation planning and programming in the regional office in Missoula, said, "There's no more dedicated group of workers in the Forest Service, as far as I'm concerned, than the wilderness rangers and trail workers." This recognition of dedication includes all those up to Forest Service Chief Max Peterson.

"Dedication is great, but that doesn't pay the bills," responded Tom Crnich, a trail foreman in Anaconda-Pintlar with 23 years of seasonal experience. Crnich, who is also a school teacher, said times have changed and that the Forest Service will have to meet the new demands if it is to keep qualified people.

But the Forest Service's Dolan couldn't see how that could be done. The agency, he said, can't offer long-term job commitments to seasonal employees. District rangers, he

said, find out in the fall how much they will have to spend in the following summer. But they can't plan beyond that.

Beardsley said that while the money allotted for recreation and wilderness has remained relatively constant in the region, it has not kept pace with inflation. And the likelihood of more money is not great.

"It's very likely Reagan will be reelected, and he isn't a great supporter of our kinds of programs," Beardsley said. And according to Dolan, the Forest Service is under pressure to reduce its permanent staff. With employees with 20 years of full-time experience being cut, the prospect of establishing career seasonals is not good.

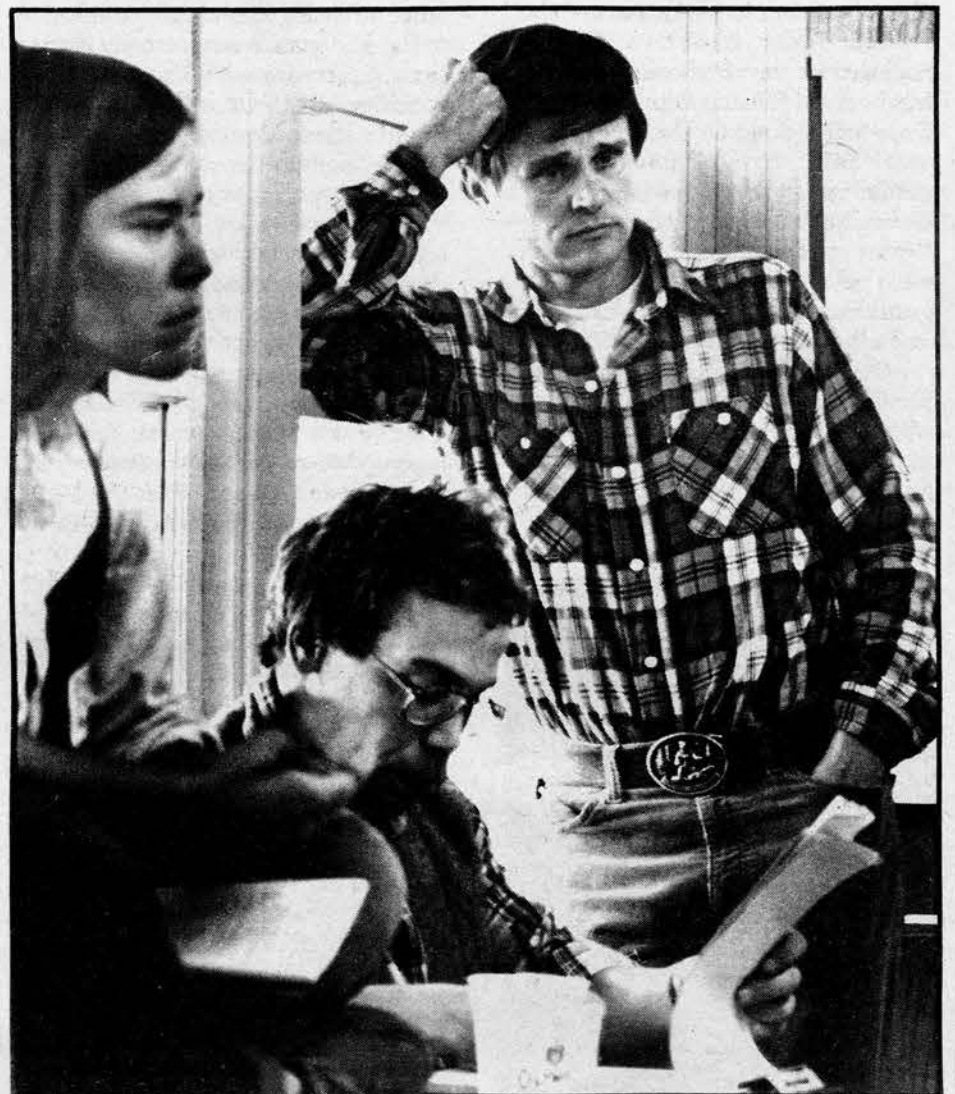
Despite the roadblocks, the association intends to push to improve personnel policies and application procedures, according to Bruce Farling, who was elected vice-chairman. Farling is a wilderness ranger on the Selway-Bitterroot. A

career ladder and training programs for seasonals are other goals, he said.

The association is open to all who share its goals, according to the bylaws. It is directed toward seasonal employees who work in non-commodity resources. This includes biologists, archaeologists, landscape architects and historians, as well as wilderness workers. The group's address is Box 2106, Missoula, MT 59806.

Andrea Peterson, a former trail worker and a resource assistant at the Wilderness Institute in Missoula, was elected chairman. A 15-member board with a representative from each forest was selected, along with two at-large members. The next meeting will be in September, following the group's busy season.

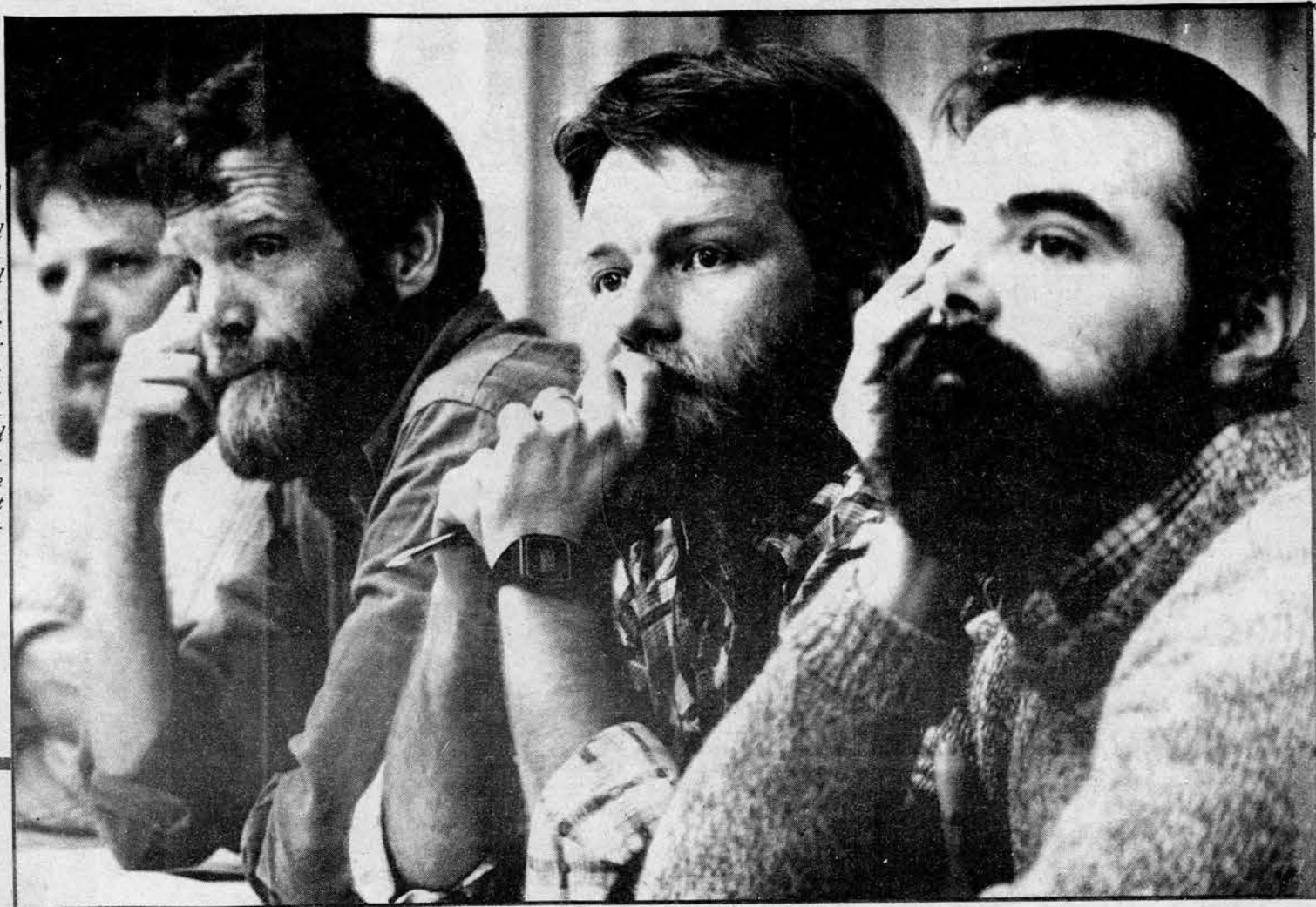
John McCarthy is a reporter at the Lewiston (Idaho) *Morning Tribune*. This article was paid for by the High Country News Research Fund.



Bob Oset, right, listens to a point from the audience at the founding meeting... Oset is a wilderness ranger in the

Selway-Bitterroot. At left is Andrea Peterson, elected association chairman; middle is Bruce Farling, vice-chairman.

From right: Randy Boring, trail worker in the proposed Great Burn Wilderness in Idaho and Montana; Pat Burke, trail worker in the Anaconda - Pintlar Wilderness in Montana; Don Baty, wilderness ranger, Anaconda - Pintlar; and Mike Wilson, wilderness ranger in the Selway - Bitterroot in Idaho and Montana.



John McCarthy

Forest, park volunteers squeeze out seasonal workers

Volunteers willing to work in National Forests and Parks for nothing, or next to nothing, are squeezing experienced seasonal employees out of their jobs, according to those whose jobs are threatened.

This use of volunteers was a major topic of discussion at the founding meeting of the Backcountry Workers Association.

Few favorable things were said by the men and women who have worked in the backcountry for years but now find themselves competing with greenhorns who volunteer to do the same job.

People with ten and more years experience who have done horse packing, trail work and fire fighting are losing their jobs to "somebody who just got off the bus from New Jersey," said Don Baty, a wilderness ranger in the Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness.

The romance of being a forest ranger draws people to summer volunteer jobs in the wild lands, Baty said. But, he continued, both the ground level workers and the resource are being hurt by the inexperienced volunteers.

The number of workers affected is significant and could become more significant. The Forest Service had 45,000 volunteers last year, in comparison to 33,000 full-time employees, John Twiss, Selway district ranger in the Nez Perce National Forest, told the meeting.

Twiss said that internal Forest Service incentives to use volunteers include budget cuts and an agency push to reduce full-time employees by 5 percent this year and 5 percent next year. "We try not to replace employees on the rolls with volunteers, but it's happening."

The pressure appears to be all in one direction. "As far as I know, no (administrator) has been punished for replacing a paid employee with a volunteer... in fact, they have been rewarded."

Twiss recently represented the Northern Region National Forests at a meeting on the use of volunteers. The meeting's conclusion was that forest managers were to do the job as efficiently as possible, he said. But there were no guidelines issued on how many volunteers could or should be used to maximize efficiency, he added.

Tom Crnich, a trail foreman on the Anaconda-Pintlar Wilderness, suggested to the Lolo meeting that there are unofficial agency guidelines. He said the volunteer program has been used as a "feather in the hat" by district rangers who bring in a dozen volunteers and then produce a report on how much money was saved by not hiring seasonal employees.

Crnich said he had first-hand experience with the situation. He was preparing to hit the trail for his 23rd season this year when he was told he and his crew had been replaced by a pair of volunteers from Scandinavia. Pressure from other Forest Service employees regained Crnich his job. A trail crew member, Cal Entinger, was not so lucky. Entinger, who has six years' experience, is out of a job.

Others at the meeting told about fire lookouts, wilderness guides and rangers whose paid positions had been eliminated by volunteers.

In answer to a question about

the possibility of a district ranger being bumped by a volunteer, Twiss replied, "I don't know of any job out there in this agency that can't be done by a volunteer." He also said the original intent of the volunteer program has changed. "We've gone from (having volunteers) do the extra work to meeting targets."

The situation in the Bureau of Land Management may be more severe, according to Darrell McDaniel, recreation planner on the Butte BLM District in Montana. "We're relying on volunteers to do our field work." He said there wasn't much choice. "I think it depends on the budget. The last few years -- that's the only way to go, is to rely on volunteers."

Recreation has been especially hard hit by budget cuts, he said. "This administration is really big on these development things -- timber, minerals."

The Forest Service's Twiss said, "The bottom line of this administration is getting the job done cheaper." He didn't argue with statements from the seasonal employees that their lower-echelon positions in recreation and in wilderness were most affected by budget cuts and volunteers.

He said, "We can live for years without getting the trails cut out. We can let the wilderness go for years without hearing about it. But

if we don't get the timber cut, we'll hear about it the next day."

Volunteers are a way to cope with the situation. Twiss said that while budgets have been reduced, the Forest Service has continued to get the job done, although the quality of the work has not been addressed.

The seasonal backcountry workers had some differences of opinion when assessing the volunteers. Bruce Farling, a wilderness ranger on the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, said the problems aren't with the volunteers as people. It's with "the program."

Baty took a very different approach. "Somebody that is undercutting your job, undercutting your wages, is a scab."

Farling agreed that the seasonal employee, working as a supervisor of volunteers, was being put in a difficult position. "The success of the volunteer program is because of the hours put in by supervisors; the success is because of us."

Baty said last year he was responsible for 11 volunteers who "didn't know which end of a horse was which." His off time, he said, was spent caring for the volunteers. But this year will be different. "I'm not going to be packer, cook, nurse and work supervisor for 11 dudes at once."

--John McCarthy

People are losing their jobs
to someone who just got
off the bus from New Jersey

Instead of a lawn, we have a pine forest to tend

by Catherine Lazars Bauer

With me, it's trees. Trees have always been special.

Perhaps my grandfather, in planting two boxelders in the side yard the day I was born, also implanted my love for trees. I guess a depression baby rated depression trees; the box elder is known as the dandelion of the tree world. It grows too easily and too well. It never learned to play hard to get. Nevertheless, my birthday trees set a worthy example. Simple, sturdy, and unpretentious, they grew into fine shade trees that didn't believe in putting on airs.

Old drawing books bulge with trees that have filled all our windows. As a campus war bride, I crept under the slanted eaves of our tiny apartment, peeked through a wavy glass pane that touched the floor, and immortalized a backyard elm. A wild cherry in Indianapolis, I sketched in full summer regalia, and *sans* leaves in autumn. I made watercolor sketches of Wisconsin evergreens in winter, the white-barked birches at our summer cottage, and the crimson maple at our Illinois farm.

I've written essays and stories and journal entries about trees. I can really get corny and carried away. The music the wind made in the pines lining our driveway at the farm set my pen spinning.

Most of all I loved the pine grove that grew beyond the corn and bean fields. A casual observer might have insisted there was no wind. But when I sat on the forest floor, my back against a trunk, I felt that tree move to an unseen rhythm.

There was the locust tree in Ohio my husband almost killed when he mistook weed killer for an antidote for the tree's disease. Ralph sprayed it top to bottom before discovering his error. Then he walked toward my garden where I was weeding squash and beans. "Katy, c'mere and tell me you love me," he said.

Now we've moved to Colorado, a land of scenic wonder compared to the gray industrial flatlands of Ohio. We chose to live in the mountains. Turkey Creek rushes past our door. Doubleheader, a very modest mountain, peeks in every window and monitors our lives.

Everywhere there are Ponderosa pines. One harbors a tree house, one balances a swing. Beautiful, tall proud pines. Small, skinny, scraggly pines. Twisted or stately, they fill our six acres to the east, south, north, and when we came, also to the west.

Our good neighbor, a forester, reminded us soon after we arrived that there were many beetle-infested pines on the south slope to the west of the house. "They'll have to come down," he said. "The beetles start flying in late July."

He marked the trees, tying scarlet ribbons in their hair (ugly ones made of plastic), and gave us the name of a fellow who would cut the trees for a reasonable fee. Three days it took to fell 25 trees that took 80 years and more to inch their way toward the Colorado sky.



David Sumner

From the house I heard the roar of the chain saw, the loud cracking of splitting wood, the crashing thud of tall trees hitting ground.

On the weekend, my husband, our neighbor, and I pitched into the task so there were four of us cutting wood and stacking the piles of grayed cross-sections which got sprayed with insecticide. The battlefield became thick with felled trunks, severed limbs, and brown needles.

There's something sacrilegious about replacing what was once a forest with plastic-shrouded mounds. One is tempted to place a wreath of prolific Rocky Mountain wild flowers (columbine, penstemon, cutleaf daisy, and Indian paintbrush) atop the brittle, black burial mounds, except that too, would be a kind of added desecration.

Some say it's nature's way. Only man wants trees to live forever. There is a ruthless unconcern to the scheme of things, as well as a sustaining universal calm. Rather than contemplate, I chose to fill my wheelbarrow with small young pines that grew in the leach bed. "They'll need transplanting," the former owner had said, pointing to the thick new growth, "or the roots will cause trouble."

I hauled the saplings to the barren slope with gallon jugs of water -- the hose would never reach that far. I wheeled my barrow across a narrow footbridge, but couldn't push it up the other side. Back and forth I went, emptying my vehicle of its

contents, slinging young pines and a spade over my shoulder, carrying jugs of water in my free hand. I laughed aloud comparing myself to pioneers who'd met mountains and emptied their Conestoga wagons before the beasts could haul them up sharp inclines.

That's not all I laughed at. I remembered how smug we were. "No yard work!" we boasted to incredulous friends in Ohio. "In the mountains, the terrain is *as is*... trees, wildflowers, rock outcroppings, and natural ground cover. No grass cutting!"

"None at all?" There was envy in our neighbor's eyes.

"No sir! Not in the mountains," Ralph echoed. And to a hallelujah chorus, we sold two motorized lawn mowers, a rider and a push model Toro.

But in the mountains of Colorado, my husband has been sleeping with a heating pad beneath his back and pillows stuffed under his knees.

Lying in the stillness, I heard Ralph groan as he shifted position. "Your Majesty," he said, "these peons have no grass to cut." Then in a falsetto, he paraphrased the insensitive Marie Antoinette, "Aha! Then let them cut *trees!*"

I smiled... but only a little.

□

Catherine Lazars Bauer is a much-published writer who lives in Morrison, Colorado.

OFF THE WALL

Stapleton Penitentiary

A team of academic researchers says Colorado can save millions by using Denver's Stapleton Airport as a jail. High state officials are enthusiastic:

"It has all the elements -- stark institutional architecture, awful food, plus something indefinable -- something that makes you feel punished after an hour there. Can you imagine what an indeterminate sentence would do to an offender?"

An indeterminate sentence would be tough. A recent study reveals that 80 percent of those trapped in Stapleton during 1982's blizzard are still unable to function normally. Many fear being caught on the ground, and have bankrupted themselves flying from place to place. Psychologists say many lives will be warped by people striving to internalize what they call the Stapleton Syndrome.

Prison officials, who have returned to the old 'eye for an eye' philosophy, were also pleased: "With the way that place is laid out, the prisoners will have to walk ten miles a day just to go to the toilet, get their food, and watch TV.

"Also, there's no chance of escape. You can't find your way out now. And given the surroundings, there's nowhere to escape to. After staring at the hotels around the airport, prisoners will figure they're better off inside."

Officials are considering hiring the airport's solicitors as guards. "Look at the way they bug people now who are free citizens. Can you imagine how they'll behave when we unleash them on prisoners?"

A prison official who specializes in food said Stapleton inspired him to design a cafeteria shaped like a plane. "It's hard to imagine anything worse than sitting three abreast with hostile strangers eating awful food off tiny trays." To add verisimilitude, the official said, the sound of screaming babies will be piped in, and the cafeteria will be made to shake at unpredictable times during meals.

Wyoming Governor Herschler expressed interest in sharing Stapleton. The Governor said Stapleton is already an important part of Wyoming's consciousness. An old joke holds that a Wyomingite can go to heaven when he dies, but first must change at Stapleton.

Herschler said many Wyomingites resent Coloradoans moving to their state, with their big money and bigger talk. "Wyoming could redress the balance by sending some of our citizens to Stapleton."

The only sour note came from the Rocky Mountain American Civil Liberties Union. A spokesman said the ACLU had been planning a class action suit on behalf of all passengers, claiming that the food, decor, choice of magazines, and P.A. system requests that they 'please go to a white paging telephone' deprived travellers of their civil rights.

But now, he said, "We're going to change the suit to one charging that incarceration in Stapleton would represent 'cruel and unusual punishment.'"

--Ed Marston

OPINION

Kootenai Falls decision is different

In America, resource development projects are generally innocent until proven guilty. Whether we are talking of timber cutting, a mine in a National Forest, or a ten-mile access road through a wilderness study area, the presumption is that proceeding with the development is in the greatest interest of the greatest number.

There is a growing conservation ethic which is accepted by the entire society. But that ethic finds expression as 'impact mitigation' -- a bandaid slapped on the wound: the road must be closed after 20 years, the coal silo painted an earth color, a few cubic feet per second left in the stream.

This almost inevitable finding for development is most frustrating because it is always based on subjective reasoning. The decision-makers, whether writing an EIS record of decision or issuing a state permit, never satisfy even open-minded opponents of a particular project. Such satisfaction is impossible because the decision, at bottom, is based on the judgment that the mine, or the well, or the timber cut will better serve society than the wildlife, or the undisturbed forest, or the intact community.

That long, subjective tradition of decision-making is continued in an April 23 opinion affecting Kootenai Falls in northwestern Montana. The decision came from an administrative law judge for the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Kootenai Falls is a spectacular waterfall venerated by fishermen, wildlife lovers, hikers and conservationists for its trout and white sturgeon, big game, and beauty. In addition, it is literally venerated by the Kootenai Indians as a religious shrine.

But the falls have another value -- the potential to generate 144 megawatts of peak hydropower at low cost. To develop that power, a dam would have to be built just above the falls, a reservoir created behind the dam, and the water diverted around the falls to create electricity.

Such a project has been proposed by a consortium of eight publicly owned utilities headed by Northern Lights, Inc., of Sandpoint, Idaho. The utilities have spent a reported \$6 million over the past several years on studies and an application to FERC. They were opposed by eleven intervenors, including the Native American Rights Fund on behalf of the Kootenai Indians.

The FERC judge, David Miller, listened to 53 witnesses during 67 days of hearings. In his 121-page decision, Miller rejected the testimony of witnesses who said the utilities' power forecasts were too high. Miller said the power would be needed. And he said the fisheries in the Kootenai would not be damaged. He also said flooding of land used by a herd of bighorn sheep could be mitigated.

Having said all that, Miller went on to reject the application for a hydroelectric project. "The Kootenai Falls should be preserved in their

present state absent a sound reason to do otherwise; on balance, the projected need for energy in the Northwest when compared to the amount of energy the Kootenai Falls Project would produce and the possibilities of other energy resources being developed does not present a sound reason to permit physical changes at Kootenai Falls."

The decision is startling. Five years ago, we would bet the farm, Judge Miller would have written: "On balance, the projected need for power outweighs the loss of scenery." The decision is even more startling because it does not come out of a theoretically multi-use agency like the Forest Service, which is supposed to weigh conflicting needs. It comes from FERC, whose mission is to turn water flows into water power. Steve Moore, an attorney on the case for the Native American Rights Fund, says:

"There is almost an irrefutable presumption that a license will be granted by FERC. Great deference is given to the applicant. In the past 40 years, only three or four applications have been denied in contested hearings, out of thousands."

Even a casual reading of the opinion shows that the denial is squishy soft. (The part of the opinion dealing with the Kootenai's religious case was sealed to protect their practices.) And the eight would-be dam builders, having already spent millions, will spend another chunk of money appealing the case to the full FERC board. They are encouraged by the fact that the judge found a need for the power, an absence of unmitigable impacts, and that the hydropower would be cheaper than other sources.

The project's opponents are pleased with Judge Miller's decision but not with his reasoning. They believe the utilities' power forecasts are much too high; that impacts can't be mitigated; that the recreational and scenic values are incredibly high. They undoubtedly wish they were moving up to the FERC board with a stronger opinion, rather than one based on a judge's subjective weighing of pros and cons.

Nevertheless, there may be more long-term hope in Miller's decision than there would be in one which reached its decision in a more objective way. Miller's decision can be seen as the erosion of a mountain, or the retreat of a glacier. For in his decision, development is guilty until proven innocent. He has shifted the burden of proof from those who oppose to those who propose. Suddenly, or so it seems, the magic, all-purpose "on balance" phrase is interpreted to mean no-go rather than go. Suddenly, the always subjective, value-laden decision in a resource development project fell out in a different way.

Why did this happen? We do not know Miller, and perhaps it is unfair to make him an indicator of society's shifting perception of the world. But judging from his opinion, this Washington, D.C.

official is not an environmentalist, or even a believer in Soft Energy Paths. He accepts the expert testimony of the utilities' consultant and rejects that of consultants who argue that conservation can do in the 1980s what it did in the late 1970s. But he also writes:

"There is a real likelihood that if the Kootenai Project were built, it would result in a surplus of power and this surplus would have been achieved by the sacrifice of unique values associated with the Falls."

Miller doesn't dwell on this possible surplus. It is the only reference we found. But he mentions in his opinion the large overestimates the eight utilities made of power demand in the late 1970s. And he is surely aware of the WPPSS disaster, in which the same breed of publicly owned Northwest utilities made multi-billion-dollar miscalculations.

WPPSS is not an isolated example. Just as Miller was preparing his decision, Montana Power was being dragged around the state of Montana so that residents of far-flung hamlets could spit on the company for having built the unneeded Colstrip 3 and 4. The Public Service Commission hearings center on whether Montana consumers or Montana Power shareholders will have to pay for the utility's mistake.

Miller is based in Washington, D.C., and these events in the hinterland may weigh less on him than the power plant building that took place throughout America in the late 1970s and early 1980s -- building that has put the utilities into precarious financial shape. Their peril was pointed out by *Business Week* in its May 21, 1984 issue, several years after a raft of conservation groups had made the same point.

We don't wish to be Pollyannas about the Kootenai Falls decision, or the Little Granite Creek decision, or the move to gut the Synthetic Fuels Corporation. Nevertheless, nothing impresses like failure. And those who lead this nation have led it into crushing failures -- failures which in war would have brought the enemy to the Golden Gate Bridge and into New York Harbor.

Whether he acknowledges it or not, an awareness of the failure of that leadership and its policies has crept into Judge Miller's consciousness and shaped his decision. He gives lip service to the utility consultants' numbers. But in the end he rejects their magic projections by falling back on the all-purpose "on balance."

What lesson is there in the Kootenai Falls decision? That America is still reformable. But reform is achieved only by giving those in power enough rope to hang themselves. They have unfortunately hung themselves with very valuable rope; the comfort is that we may save some of the rope they haven't yet gotten to.

--E.M.

LETTERS

PARK SERVICE PRAISED...

Dear HCN,

Gene Kovenig, facilities manager at Mount Rushmore National Park, targeted, perhaps, the one result that the A-76 program will produce which will have enormous long range effects: lowered morale. Of all the federal land management agencies I have worked with over the years, I have the most admiration for the National Park Service. The intensity of dedication in their occupational responsibilities is impressive. It is this dedication that has produced the finest national park system in the world.

If the A-76 program is implemented in what appears to be a hasty fashion without fully exploring the ramifications, then we will see the deterioration of a proud and proven system. With user pressures increasing each year, we can ill afford to

implement a program that appears to have more negative entries in the ledger than positive ones.

The Department of the Interior feels that if the program works reasonably well elsewhere in the government, then, extending the logic, it surely will work well in the National Park Service. However, not all federal agencies can be viewed through the same pair of glasses. The A-76 program should not be broadly installed. There is some inefficiency in the agency; however, it would seem wiser to ferret out the problem areas through internal analyses than embark on a path that is likely to have devastating results. Contrary to National Parks and Conservation Association's Laura Beaty and her perception of the A-76 threat, the large western national parks will suffer as much as her cultural parks. Our western park units are predominantly of wilderness character and are without question very sensitive to wide swings in managerial programs

and philosophies. These wide swings destroy the strong cohesive nature that exists amongst Service personnel and to which Bill Dakin of Glacier National Park attaches high importance.

If ever there was a time for caution, it is now. America's national parks cannot afford a miscalculation. The penalty for poor judgment will last forever.

Martin Sorensen
Golden, CO

(The writer is chairman of the wilderness committee of the Sierra Club's Rocky Mountain Chapter.)

... AND DAMNED

Dear HCN,

The delay by the Park Service in phasing out camping facilities at Yellowstone's Fishing Bridge (HCN, 4/16/84) is an example of a failure by the Park Service to adhere to its stated philosophy of natural management. In this particular case, as a result of

political pressure, RV owners will continue to have parking places awaiting them at the end of their summer migration to Yellowstone, while the grizzly bear, a magnificent, wilderness-dependent animal, is driven back yet again -- this time in the very park it has come to symbolize. Let us hope that the day will come when the grizzly will no longer be "elbowed out" by a vocal, special-interest group determined to "get theirs," and that that day comes before it is too late for the great bear.

The issue, it seems, is one of priorities. Yes, Yellowstone National Park needs campsites. I would argue, however, that it needs the grizzly bear much, much more. And should the bear disappear forever from the Yellowstone Ecosystem -- a very real possibility, if things continue as they have -- we all will have paid a terrible price for those campsites.

Michael L. Smith
Boulder, CO

16-High Country News -- May 28, 1984

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Mike McClure

Ansel Adams remembered

When Ansel Adams died April 22, America lost one of its greatest nature photographers and conservationists. He was an active member of the Sierra Club, serving on its board of directors from 1934-1971, and an outspoken opponent of former Interior Secretary James Watt. During a meeting with President Reagan -- a get-together arranged by Reagan several months ago -- Adams told the President his environmental policies were "terrible."

Michael McCloskey, the Sierra Club's Executive Director, said of Adams that he symbolized as much as his photographs did "the spirit of the American wilderness."

Michael McClure, the Casper Star-Tribune's photo chief, attended Adams' last workshop in California and wrote this retrospective May 1.

by Mike McClure

"A photograph is made, not taken."

In that statement, Ansel Adams justified his lifelong pursuit of excellence in photography, his awareness of its expressive nature, his study and teaching of its techniques, his development of the zone system for photographic exposure and visualization of the final image, and his determined crusade that photography be thought of as fine art.

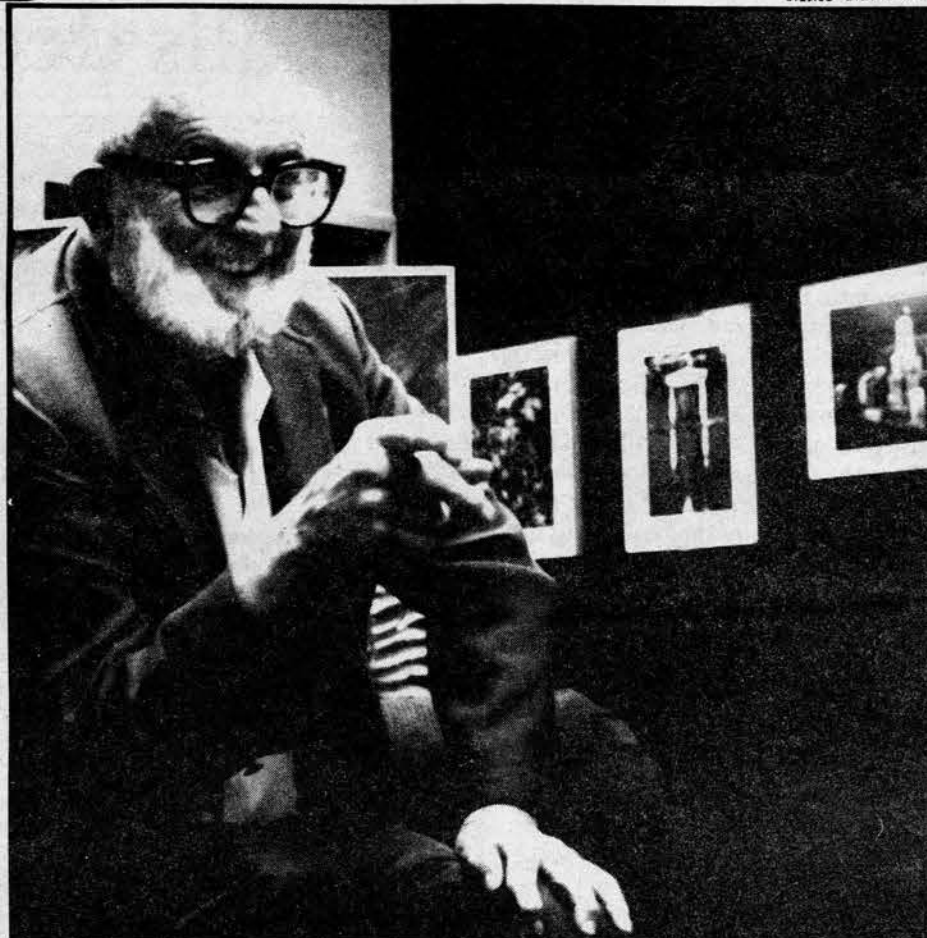
To the flock of photographic followers in search of "eloquent light" and mastery of the zone system, Ansel Adams was the acknowledged guru. At an Ansel Adams Workshop last August, a workshop that turned out to be his last, friends and students would joke: "God raised his hand and said 'Let there be light' and then Ansel raised up and said, 'Put his hand on zone six.'"

Today, photography is truly ubiquitous. We are the surrounded consumers of the product, but essentially outflanked and unaware of the creative importance of this medium. And as it seems unlikely that but a few will find the time to read the books of Ansel Adams, let alone the works about the man, I would like to provide a form of synopsis on photography in Adams' own words.

"Photography is an analytic medium. Painting is a synthetic medium (in the best sense of the term). Photography is primarily an act of discovery and recognition (based on intention, experience, function and ego). The photographer cannot escape the world around him. The image of the lens is the dominant factor. His viewpoint, his visualization of the final image (print or transparency) and the particular technical procedures necessary to make this visualization valid and effective -- these are the elements of photography.

"The painter, on the other hand, more freely creates his own world and the world which exists on the surface of his wall, canvas or paper. While he may be stimulated by the world around him and receive cues, clues and excitements therefrom, he is a creature of great liberty and freedom. Or so thinks the photographer! The truth is a simple one: any art, to be a good art, demands the most of the artist.

"As a photographer can change the aspect of the world only by changing his point of view, his distance and the focal length of his lens (not counting at this point the control of values, contrasts and textures which are peculiar to photography), he must accept the limitations, as well as the satisfactions, of his medium. Within these



Ansel Adams

limitations he can build great art -- but he cannot accomplish this by imitating other forms of art. In the past photography has been plagued by imitation, apology and pompous defensiveness. The "salonist" continues the sham of the turn of the century. The photojournalist (some, not all!) are non-art people, turning to the factual experiences of life as their anchor to reality. The advanced subjectivists reject the world and develop inner awareness -- of their inner beings. Some even pursue photography as a form of therapy -- directed to themselves and to others as well. And there are thousands of photographers who happily claim to be "nuts and bolts" practitioners and revel in their opacity.

"But there are, fortunately, a growing number of men and women who practice photography at a fully adult level. Their world is important, and the external world is important; they relate to humanity and to the goals and problems of a creative society."

Adams' dedication to the black and white photographic medium along with his reverence for nature has given the world a chance to look at nature differently, if not for the first time. He mastered the study of light and photographic materials so as to allow us to realize that in the deep of shadow there are half-perceived forms. In the white of pure driven snow or the cumulus cloud are textured studies of shadow and light play.

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