



Has Washington seduced the environmental movement?

✓ See page 15

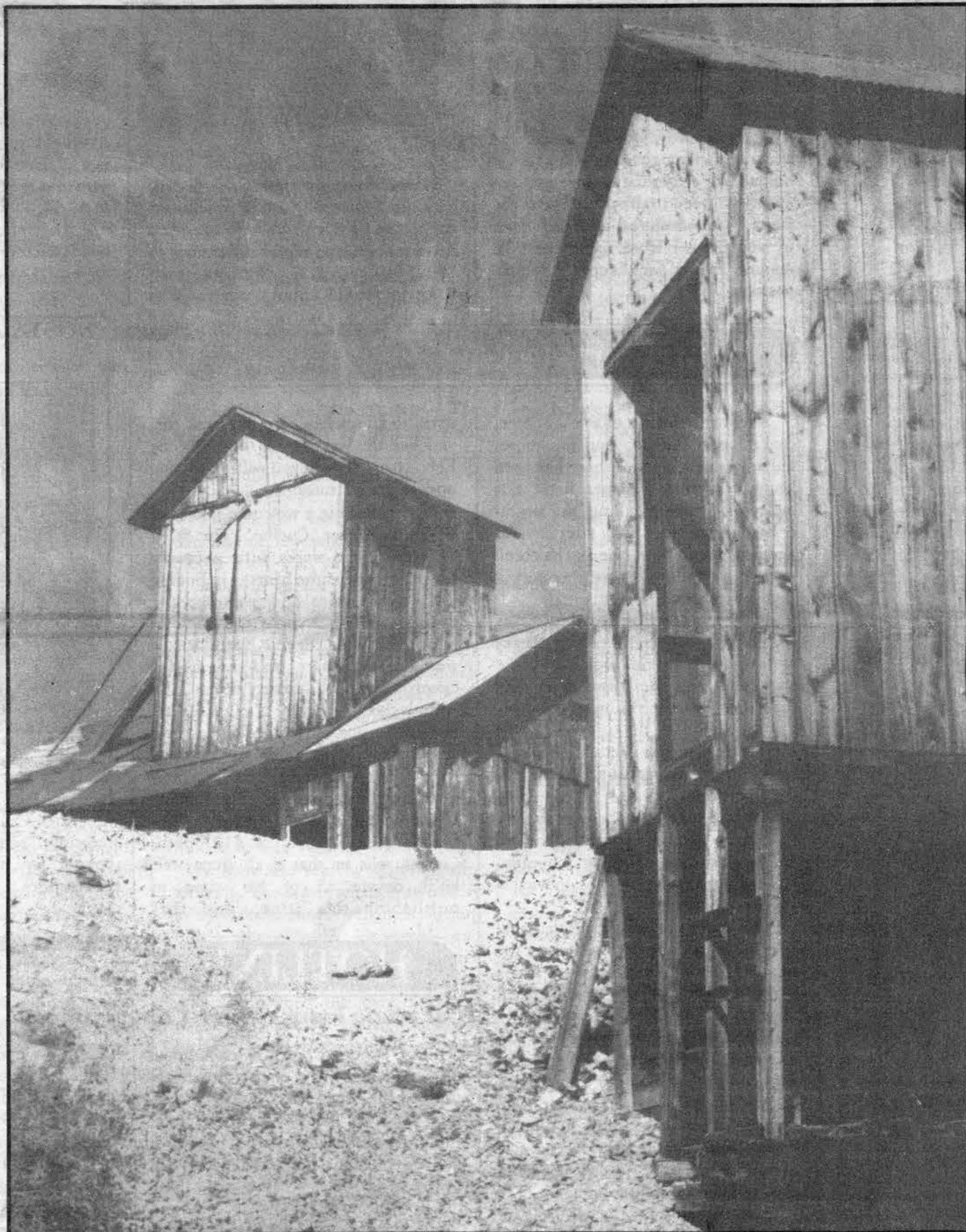
High Country News

February 3, 1986

Vol. 18 No. 2

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One Dollar



Steve Voynick

Old mine ruins near Leadville

Leadville's poisoned past...

and present ✓ See page 10

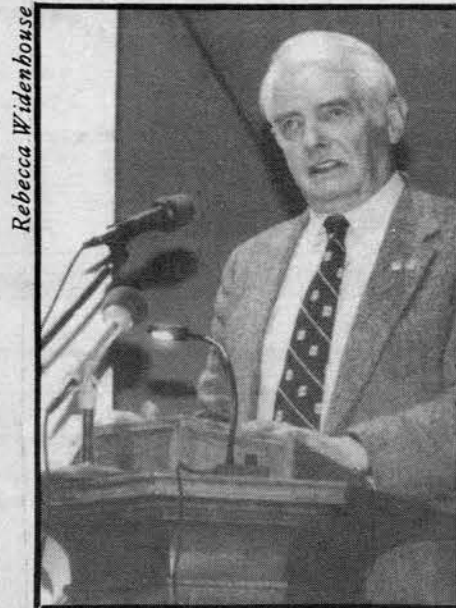
WESTERN ROUNDUP

Brower wins a round in the battle for FOE

The stage is now set for David Brower, 74, the founder of Friends of the Earth, to take complete control of the organization. Brower won his apparent victory in an out-of-court settlement reached prior to a court hearing scheduled for Jan. 16 (HCN, 1/20/86).

The settlement was between Brower and the nine majority directors who have been fighting him and his four allies on the FOE board. The majority had said that a fight to the death against Brower was necessary to save FOE from his fiscally irresponsible leadership. A key part of the fight was the majority's refusal to call the membership meeting Brower wanted.

But just before a court hearing, the majority had sought on the legality of not holding a members' meeting, the majority agreed to drop their suit. The majority also dropped its legal efforts to stop Brower from using the FOE mailing list to seek support for his position.



David Brower

Brower had objected to the plan of executive director Karl Wendelowski to close FOE's San Francisco headquarters and center operations in Washington, D.C. To overturn Wendelowski's plan, which was

backed by the nine majority directors, he sought a membership meeting.

The out-of-court settlement does not give Brower a plebiscite on the close of the San Francisco office. However, in April, FOE's 17,000 members will be able to vote on whether to recall the nine majority directors. If the recall is successful, Brower and his four board allies will control FOE.

The board majority may hope to present Brower and the membership with a fait accompli. Wendelowski has released most of FOE's San Francisco employees, moved its *Not Man Apart* newspaper to Washington, and is seeking to hire a new FOE staff based in Washington. But Gordon Anderson, one of Brower's allies on the board, said that if Brower gets control of FOE in April, "The first step will be to pack up the boxes and move the headquarters back to San Francisco."

--Ed Marston



High Country News

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Tom Bell
Editor Emeritus

Ed Marston
Publisher

Betsy Marston
Editor

Judy Moffatt
Development

Marjane Ambler
Glenn Oakley
Geoffrey O'Gara
C.L. Rawlins
Pat Ford
Contributing Editors

Mary Moran
Dianne Weaver
Editorial/Graphics

Michael Kustudia
Keith Waller
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Typesetting

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Dear friends,

Due to the closure of the U.S. Steel coal mine in Paonia, and the consequent loss of 200 jobs, there has been heavy economic weather here. But meteorologically speaking, the weather has been perfect. Day after day, for almost a month now, the sky has been marred by nothing more threatening than jet contrails.

In theory, the fine weather makes us happy, especially since heavy storms in the late fall took care of the snowpacks and their two dependent industries -- winter skiing and summer irrigation.

But despite the luxury of winter bicycle trips and noon-time sunbathing, the perfection has its unsettling side. In the cafes, fruitgrowers worry that the buds will be fooled by the sun and warmth into swelling too early, and then get frozen by the inevitable May freeze.

We don't have a horticultural worry -- no matter how seductive the weather, the tomato plants stay inside until June 1. But we have a moral worry. Winter is the coin by which we earn the spring. By surviving the snow and cold, by fighting off the leaden depression that comes with leaden skies, by chaining up a car with numbed fingers, one comes to deserve spring. Spring will always be a gift, but this year it may be an unearned gift, and that is disturbing.

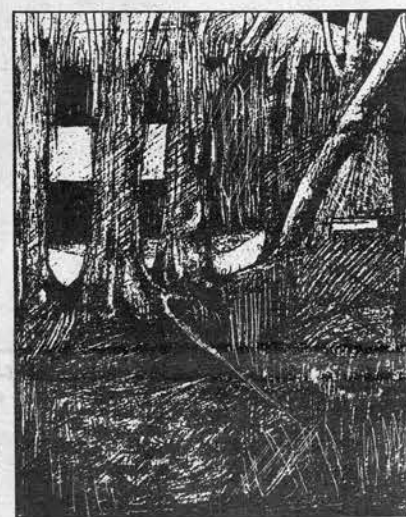
Still, it is only January 27, and we haven't completely given up on this winter. In fact, *High Country News* is about to do a storm dance by holding a meeting of its board of directors in Fort Collins. The idea of all of us converging on one town from around this vast region often provokes whatever forces it is that control the weather. In fact, the last bad weather we remember coincided with HCN's fall board meeting in Montana.

This meeting is scheduled for Sunday, Feb. 16, and will be preceded by a potluck on Saturday evening, starting at 6 p.m., at the home of Garrett and Nina Ray. Subscribers who live in Fort Collins and Cheyenne will be receiving invitations to the potluck, but it is, of course,

open to all readers. We only ask that you call the Rays at 303/484-8797 by Feb. 10 to tell them you will be coming and to get instructions.

Every once in a while we hear from Art Cuelho. He is a Montanan who works with a county road crew but whose heart is in finding distinctive regional poetry and art and then publishing it under the name of his small press, Seven Buffaloes. It was Cuelho, in fact, who sent us the excerpt from "A January Poem" by Appalachian poet Jim Wayne Miller, featured in our last issue. You can find the poem in Miller's new book, called *Nostalgia for 70*, published by Seven Buffaloes Press, Box 249, Big Timber, Montana 59011. The 60-page collection is \$6.75, paper, or \$12, cloth. Cuelho tells us that if all goes well he'll devote all of his time to publishing this June, and that

NOSTALGIA FOR 70



Jim Wayne Miller

recently, some of his books were bought by both Irish and Russian booksellers.

--the staff

HOTLINE

Oil shale loans anger Congressmen

The Synthetic Fuels Corporation may generate more energy in death than in life. The energy will come in the form of heat -- anger from Congressmen who say the agency's board violated the law when it approved \$327 million in loan guarantees to Union Oil Co. on Jan. 21. Union needs the loan guarantees to finance repair of its \$800 million oil shale facility in western Colorado. The facility, which employs 400 people, has been completed for over two years, but has yet to operate for more

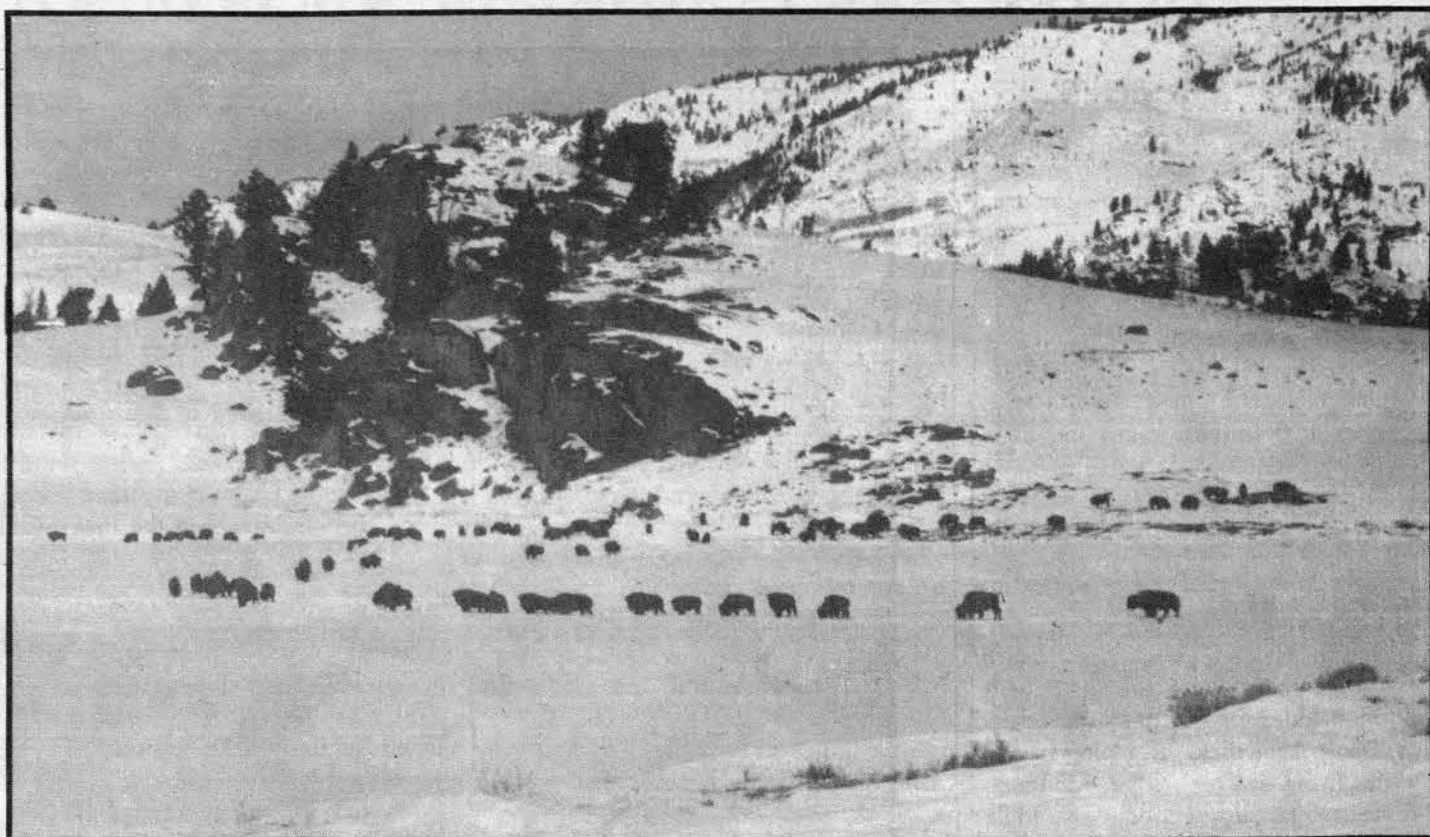
than a few hours at a time. Rep. Silvio Conte, R-Mass., who helped push through a bill in December which abolished the SFC, said the SFC board's approval of the loan guarantee is "legally and morally wrong, an insult to Congress and the American people." Sen. Howard Metzenbaum, D-Ohio, is investigating the possibility of a lawsuit. The Reagan administration helped kill the SFC, but according to *Denver Post* reporter Gary Schmitz, it promised Sen. Bill Armstrong, R-Colo., that it would not block the Union loan guarantees.

Utah begins filling in 10,000 mines

An abandoned mine where a 22-year-old man fell to his death was recently filled by the Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining. In the last seven months, three people have died and two were seriously injured in Utah's abandoned mines, which are estimated to number 10,000. The state began a reclamation program in 1983, which will take decades, and also initiated programs to educate the public on the

hazards of abandoned mine shafts. The program is funded by a tax on coal that goes to the Office of Surface Mine Reclamation and Enforcement, which returns 50 percent of the money for mine reclamation. Thus far, the program has received \$4 million, and has filled about 200 mines, including 17 shafts in Big Cottonwood and Little Cottonwood canyon ski areas.

Montana's bison hunt draws national fire



Bison migrating to winter habitat

It may well be remembered as the bison brouhaha of the 1980s. Montana's first bison hunt in 27 years began with a whirl of controversy late last December when three bison were shot just north of Yellowstone National Park.

Although the hunt is the result of a management problem, it has become part of the long-standing debate between hunters and anti-hunting advocates, and virtually everyone involved agrees that there is no easy solution to the controversy.

The 1985 Montana Legislature gave the go-ahead for the hunt in an attempt to limit the number of bison that wander across the park's northern border and onto private and Forest Service lands. The state veterinarian and area ranchers fear that bison could infect cattle herds with brucellosis, a disease that does not affect bison but can cause cows to abort. Don Ferlicka, the state veterinarian, says about 50 percent of the bison carry the disease, and that it could be spread through direct or indirect contact in areas where bison and cattle share the same range.

Park Service officials, while acknowledging the ranchers' concerns, say the threat of the disease is exaggerated -- there has never been a verified case of wildlife passing the disease to cattle. Brucellosis is passed primarily through contact with an infected placenta, fetus or reproductive organ or from range contaminated by animals' discharges. Park Service spokeswoman Amy Vanderbilt says the disease is most likely to be spread during calving, and because this occurs in the park, it is "fairly improbable" that cattle would catch the disease.

Just why the bison cross the park's border is another area of dispute. John Munding, special projects supervisor for Montana's division of wildlife, says overpopulation and hunger drive the animals out of the park, and that situation is created by the Park Service policy of "letting Mother Nature do what she will." He adds, "That works fine if you're willing to accept the consequences."

To Park Service officials, it is the bison's migratory nature, rather than overpopulation and stressed range, that causes the shaggy beasts to meander. Vanderbilt says the bison are "opportunistic" and that they will look for the easiest feed and the

mildest winters -- and for them that is found north of the park. Bison that return to herds in the park's interior bring with them knowledge of better range. Thus when these bison leave the park again they are often accompanied by new bison. "The animals are kind of telling their friends," says Vanderbilt. The hunt is a way of eradicating this knowledge, or herd memory.

The most vociferous voice in denouncing the hunt has been that of the Fund for Animals, a New York-based animal protection organization. Cleveland Amory, the group's president, calls the hunt "Mafia-type management," in that the Park Service and Montana wildlife officials have hired "contract killers" to control the herds. Late last fall the Fund sought an injunction to block the hunt but was denied. The suit, however, is still pending and may go to trial, Amory says. In the meantime, the Fund has leased the Royal Teton Ranch, where most of the 88 bison were shot last year by state wildlife officials. The ranch, which is owned by a California-based religious group called the Church Universal and Triumphant, and the Fund are working on a plan to fence a 2.5 mile stretch between the park and the ranch. The six-foot-high fence would include gates monitored by ranch employees to allow other game to pass through.

Critics are skeptical about the effectiveness of a fence and whether gates would allow for free migration of elk, deer and pronghorns. Thus far, the Park Service, Montana wildlife officials and various environmental groups oppose the fence. But Amory says critics should withhold comment until they see the plans, which should dispel any doubts they might have. Another troublesome solution offered by the Fund is the adoption or relocation of the bison. This plan, critics say, is fraught with problems. Munding says that the animals would have to be tested for brucellosis first, and that the state doesn't have the facilities to do that. "If any of them had brucellosis, we wouldn't take them anywhere," he says.

One group that has taken both the Park Service and the Fund for Animals to task is the Montana Wildlife Federation. Tony Schoonen, the federation's vice president, blames the Park Service for the problem, and

the Fund for impeding the solution, which the federation believes is the hunt. "The park has been lax in its efforts to stem overpopulation," he says, adding that the herd should have been culled or parts of it transplanted long before the problem arose. He is equally critical of the Fund. If the anti-hunters hadn't raised such a fuss, hunters would have been able to thin the herd, he says. Although the hunt isn't "what you'd call sporting," Schoonen says it is necessary. "I know that they (Fund members) don't understand the impacts of overgrazing, overpopulation, and slow death."

The Park Service is now working on a long-range management plan for the bison. It nearly had one completed, but with the Fund's proposed fence it had to be revised. The plan is due later this month. Spokeswoman Vanderbilt says the park has been willing to take a lot of flak because it is only following its preservationist mandate, which allows for little interference in nature's scheme of things. "We acknowledge our responsibility, but we strive toward a natural free-ranging herd," she says.

--Michael Kustudia

BARBS

On a clear day you can see Missoula.

A stage one air pollution alert marked the beginning of Clean Air Week in Missoula, Montana, where smoke and dust reduced visibility to less than two miles, reports the *Great Falls Tribune*.

Another multiple use that is suffering, no doubt, from lack of roads into old growth timber.

The Forest Service in the Northern Region found and destroyed only \$7 million worth of marijuana on its lands in 1985. That compares with the \$21 million seized and destroyed in 1984.

Will it make the springs any cooler?

Idaho's Salmon National Forest has announced that an environmental assessment is available for the proposed installation of a toilet and two footbridges along the Warm Springs Creek Trail. The new facilities are to improve health and safety conditions for people using the Warm Springs pools.

HOTLINE

Welcome as plague

That no state wants to be called home to a high-level nuclear waste dump is becoming increasingly evident. The Department of Energy recently selected Minnesota, Wisconsin, New Hampshire, Maine, North Carolina, Georgia and Virginia as possible candidates for a second repository, much to the dismay of state officials. The DOE has already chosen sites in Washington, Nevada and Texas as finalists for the first dump. The two underground burial sites would store 154,000 tons of highly radioactive waste for 10,000 years. All three Western states, however, have gone to court to resist the DOE's efforts. Minnesota Gov. Rudy Perpich quickly objected to his state's selection as a potential site, saying it would jeopardize the state's abundant water resources.

EPI head moves on

The 10-year-old Environmental Policy Institute is searching for a successor to its president, Louise Dunlap, who resigned Jan. 1 to form a private lobbying firm. Brent Blackwelder is serving as interim head. EPI was founded by Dunlap and several others who left Friends of the Earth. EPI concentrates on lobbying, research and litigation in areas such as water, reclamation, nuclear power and agriculture. It has a staff of 23. EPI is located at 218 D St. SE, Washington, D.C. 20003.

Dump threatens fossil monument



Tom Jenkins

Fossil Butterfly

Colorado's Teller County commissioners recently granted conditional approval to a controversial landfill on the edge of Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument. The Park Service and some local environmentalists oppose the dump because a new access road would cross the northwest portion of the monument (HCN, 12/9/85). They also say that waste water might drain into the monument from an intermittent stream that flows near the dump site. Before the landfill can be approved, the Colorado Health Department must review the plans and commissioners must give final approval. Meanwhile, a new local group is rallying opposition to the project. The Park Service has already put the county on notice that if the dump is given the go-ahead it will go to court. The county, which currently hauls its garbage 35 miles to Colorado Springs, is still looking at other areas for a landfill.

HOTLINE

Don't waste Utah



Canyonlands National Park

A group of Utahns armed with 7,800 signatures on petitions urged Gov. Norman Bangerter, R, on Jan. 20 to aggressively oppose the possible siting of a high-level nuclear waste dump in the state. The 30 citizens, from a variety of backgrounds, met with a lukewarm response. They asked Bangerter to take whatever legal or political steps necessary to block the Department of Energy from selecting a dump site near Canyonlands National Park. Terri Martin, coordinator for the Don't Waste Utah Campaign, said the governor may be reluctant to get tough because he assumes that the DOE has ruled out Utah as one of the three potential sites that will be named this spring. But Martin said a Canyonlands site could still be in the running over the long term. "Hesitancy in taking political or legal action will inevitably be seen by the DOE as an invitation to select Utah," Martin warned.

Get the lead out

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service wants to ban lead shot in portions of 44 states and 12 wildlife refuges during the 1986-87 waterfowl hunting season. Since 1963 the federal agency has documented over 100 bald eagle deaths from lead poisoning with most deaths occurring since 1980. Bald eagles contract the disease by feeding on waterfowl which have ingested spent lead shotgun pellets. For proposed regulations and the draft environmental impact statement on lead poisoning of migratory birds, write to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Room 536 Matomic Bldg., Department of the Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

Seeping dams

The federal Office of Management and Budget may be prepared to let two leaky dams constructed by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation continue to leak. The OMB recently blocked a \$12.5 million request for funds to stop the seepage out of the Navajo Dam in northern New Mexico. According to the *Casper Star-Tribune*, the OMB may have ruled that the Navajo Dam does not qualify for funds under the federal dam safety act. The *Casper* paper was interested in the story because it could bode ill for Fontenelle Dam in south central Wyoming. That dam is also seeping badly (*HCN*, 10/14/85), and will require an estimated \$52 million to repair. Without the repairs, Fontenelle will have to remain partially drained for safety reasons.

Mountain goats are up against the wall

Mountain goats, the bearded, snow-white masters of the cliffs, appear invulnerable as they clamber among the crags they call home. But roads now reach mountain goat cliffs, timbered slopes below the cliffs have been logged, mines have been developed, and oil and gas exploration is taking place.

With increased access came increased sport hunting and poaching, which biologists now realize was heavier at first than many mountain goat populations could withstand.

"The more people get to know about goats, the more they're going to appreciate their fragile nature," says Gayle Joslin, a Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks biologist, based in Helena, who has studied mountain goats along the east slopes of the Rockies for the past five years.

Doug Chadwick, a biologist and writer living at Polebridge, Montana, came to the same conclusion while living year-round with goats he studied in the Swan Range and Glacier National Park during the early 1970s.

"It's a real challenge to live in the physical environment they use," Chadwick says. "They've traded security from predators for going head-on-head with the mountainside."

During the winter, life on the mountainside is at its toughest. Goats retreat to slopes so steep and windblown that snow doesn't accumulate. After storms they may have to paw through two feet of crusted snow to find the lichens and plants on which they survive. Baby goats, or kids, feed in craters pawed out by their mothers. Only half the kids born each year survive their first winter. Their odds aren't much better the following year. But once they have become adults, they're likely to live out their 10 to 13-year lifespan unless eliminated by falls, avalanches or man.

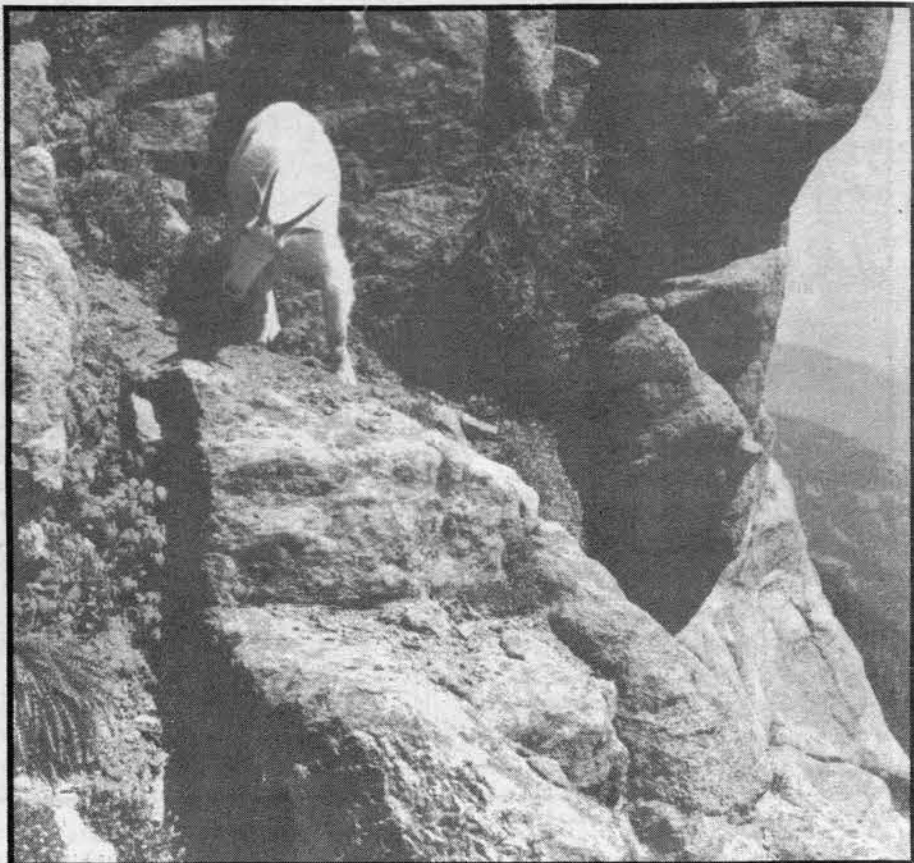
Man can intervene in many ways. In southern British Columbia, biologists found goat populations declined when inaccessible lands were opened up to logging and mineral development. One group of 163 goats was reduced to three just five years later, according to biologists quoted in Chadwick's book, *A Beast the Color of Winter*, published by Sierra Club Books. Another group of 740 goats was reduced to 260 in a decade following coal development.

Numbers aren't as easy to come by for most Montana herds, but many also declined during the 1960s and early 1970s. Some herds continue to decline and many have failed to recover from past declines. Transplanted herds have sometimes fared better than native herds -- at least over the short-term.

After 1955, when the state first began issuing goat hunting permits, these transplanted goats were also subject to sport hunting. From 1960 to 1967 between 60 and 80 permits were issued each year for the east slopes of the Rockies, and a total of 349 goats were killed. When a 1967 helicopter survey showed fewer kids than would have been expected, the department recommended increased hunting to prevent "population stagnation."

"Limited access combined with conservative hunting regulations have undoubtedly contributed to the low production ratios," the department wrote in a 1968 report. That year the season was lengthened by a month and 20 additional permits were issued.

Don Domenick



This type of management, sometimes referred to as "shoot them to save them," can increase deer or elk herds. It didn't work with mountain goats along the east slopes of the Rockies. The goats were being eliminated.

Goats function differently because they are unlike any of Montana's other big game species. Their nearest relatives are the chamois of Europe and the goral and serow of Asia, species unlikely to come up in hunting tales spun around a Montana campfire. The mountain goat isn't related to either the domestic goat or the pronghorn antelope, although its horns may appear similar. The mountain goat is found only in North America, where it is native to Montana, Washington, Idaho, Alaska and portions of western Canada. Goats have been introduced in six other states.

Goats' horns aren't exclusively male ornaments like the antlers of a bull elk or a buck deer. A nanny's dagger-like horns may be just as long as a billy's and just as dangerous. Hunters who merely look for long horns before pulling the trigger may find they have shot the lead nanny in a group of nannies and kids. "She is the most productive," Joslin says. "She is the one that should not be taken out of the group."

During the past decade, hunters have killed as many nannies as billies along the east slopes of the Rockies. In the Swan Range, hunters were taking twice as many nannies as billies, Chadwick says.

Joslin has prepared a brochure that was sent to all hunters issued mountain goat permits this fall. The brochure, titled, "Choosing a Trophy Mountain Goat," describes how hunters can tell billies from nannies.

While it's not easy to tell one from the other, that's one of the challenges of goat hunting, Joslin says. Another challenge is hunting in the mountains during late October or November when the goat's long white coat is at its prime.

The biggest challenge in mountain goat hunting has always been getting to the high country where the goats live, Chadwick says. "They stay on the cliffs in plain view," he says. "When they get shot at they don't go into the brush. They will always be on that cliff, year after year."

Biologists say mountain goats are "traditional," meaning that they rarely venture into new areas or do things differently. "They have to do it exactly the same all the time," Joslin says. "The reason is survival. New terrain is treacherous."

When a seismic line was set up in Blackleaf Canyon west of Choteau, Montana, two years ago, four radio-collared goats left the drainage even before the blasting, Joslin says. Four adult goats as well as a band of sheep all left the area of another seismic test within 24 hours of the blasting.

Such changes are temporary. Roads may bring permanent change. In fact, "proliferating road access is the primary problem which wildlife managers face when developments encroach into goat country," Joslin says.

Since goats won't leave a cliff after roads are built nearby, they are extremely vulnerable to poaching. Of the 24 goats Joslin radio-collared, she knows of six that have died. Two were killed by falls or avalanches. Two were killed legally by hunters. She believes two others may have been poached, since both were found near roads or trails during the summer, when few adult goats die naturally.

Development could also isolate small goat herds, such as those found in the Badger-Two Medicine drainages south of Glacier National Park. She believes goats in these herds may breed with goats from Glacier National Park as well as with goats farther south, allowing genetic interchange. "We can't cut off these island populations," she says.

Joslin has prepared guidelines to protect mountain goats as development proceeds along the east slopes of the Rockies. She doesn't want to see hunters penalized by more restrictive seasons due to development that could be modified to reduce its impact.

"Reducing hunting seasons is not an equitable or acceptable method of compensating for impacts created by other human activities," she says. "If the management guidelines developed for the Rocky Mountain Front are rigorously followed and mountain goat herds still decline, then both the guidelines and the hunting seasons must be re-evaluated."

-- Bert Lindler

Idaho gears up for the 1986 election

Idaho's 1986 election campaign is already well underway. By election day next November, the dollars spent and propaganda published will dwarf anything the state has seen. There is grass-roots excitement within both parties, considerable interest from out-of-state and more than a little dread among the general citizenry.

The general backlash to liberalism, the Reagan phenomenon and the breakdown of Democratic groupings all moved Idaho's traditionally conservative politics even further to the right in the 1980s. But Idaho Democrats see a chance to arrest that movement in 1986 with the strongest state-wide ticket they have fielded in a decade. Republicans see a chance to cement their dominance for the rest of the century.

The most expensive race will be for the U.S. Senate seat now held by first-term Republican Steve Symms, who rode the Reagan landslide to an upset over the late Frank Church, D, six years ago. Idaho's two-term Democratic Gov. John Evans is running against Symms. The race is a key one for control of the Senate, so it is attracting national money and help for both candidates -- particularly Symms. President Reagan visited Boise for a few hours Oct. 15, for a \$10 per person Symms rally and a \$1,000 per person reception. The visit raised \$50,000 for Symms and increased his early polling lead over Evans by several percentage points.

Major issues will likely be the depressed timber economy in northern Idaho, the depressed agricultural economy statewide and "economic development." Evans will try to link Symms to Reagan fiscal and foreign trade policies that are hitting Idaho hard (the budget deficit is the major villain Idahoans identify), while emphasizing his own agricultural experience and record of economic development while governor. Symms will take out after foreign trade competition, try to shore up his weak agricultural flank and link Evans to the spendthrift Democrats who could take the Senate if Symms loses.

Wilderness will be an issue in north Idaho, where Potlatch Corporation recently laid off 1200 sawmill workers (HCN, 8/19/85). Symms will claim wilderness costs jobs and try to link Evans to conservationists seeking further "lock-ups." Evans' strategists have concluded wilderness is a negative issue for them, and so far his strategy seems to be avoidance. Evans will seek to capitalize on his opposition to the unpopular Priest Lake land exchange, which makes possible a Sun Valley-scale resort on that northern Idaho lake.

So far, Symms' campaign is the better organized and financed. He will probably spend \$2 to \$3 million before it is over, while Evans is expected to spend \$1 to \$2 million. The amount of out-of-state funds both candidates will receive -- Symms from energy, chemical, insurance and real estate interests; Evans from labor, education and environmental PACs -- may become an issue in itself.

At least five Republicans are vying to oppose first-term Rep. Richard Stallings, D, in Idaho's Second Congressional District. Stallings broke a 20-year Republican hold on the seat by defeating George Hansen in 1984. Though Hansen was a convicted felon at the time, resulting from his failure

to make financial disclosures, Stallings won by only 150 votes out of 200,000 cast. Republicans consider the seat theirs and will work hard to oust Stallings.

Stallings, a history professor at Ricks College in Rexburg, has spent most of his first nine months working on the new farm bill, and will probably lead with that issue. On economic and social issues he has voted against other House Democrats as often as with them. His quiet seriousness has been a stark contrast after 16 years of the florid Hansen. Stallings is not a conservationist, but he has generally pleased those who are by encouraging a Wild and Scenic River study of Henrys Fork of the Snake River. He has remained neutral in the wilderness war-of-words.

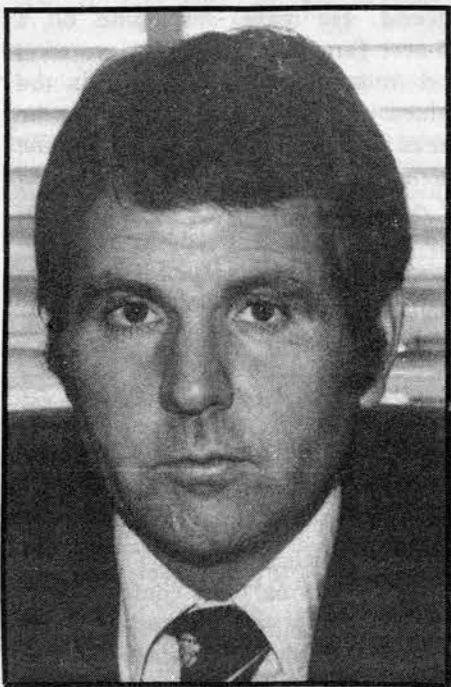
One of the Republican hopefuls, Chad Chadband of Idaho Falls, has gained some notoriety with his first fund-raising mailing. It contained a cropped photograph of Stallings with "Hanoi Jane" Fonda. The full photo showed eight farm state congressmen standing behind Fonda, Sissy Spacek and Jessica Lange at a hearing on the farm crisis.

Another hopeful, Jerome attorney Dan Adamson, keeps in the public eye by representing home scholars in conflict with local school boards. A third state senator, Dane Watkins, is best known for hijacking the official copy of a bill he opposed home with him to Idaho Falls several years ago so it could not be acted on at the Legislature.

Idaho Democrats are most excited by the governor's race, where former governor and Interior Secretary Cecil Andrus is opposing Republican Lt. Gov. Dave Leroy. Andrus' last campaign in Idaho was in 1974, when he won a second term as governor with over 70 percent of the vote. Early polls show Andrus leading Leroy by 10 or more points.

Andrus is Idaho's best politician, in either party. He has not yet formally announced, but his campaign is already rich in volunteers and well-organized. Leftover bumperstickers from his 1974 campaign are ubiquitous around Boise. A sought-after speaker, director of several Idaho corporations and one college, and a national figure, Andrus makes news without seeming to be running for anything. His announcement and earnest campaigning will begin in January, his supporters say.

Lt. Gov. Leroy is a smooth and skillful politician whose rise to the top



Steve Symms



John Evans

of Idaho politics occurred before he turned 40. His major drawback is a lack of non-political substance; he has no visible commitment to anything except winning elections. As the underdog, Leroy announced early and is campaigning hard. He is painting Andrus as an outsider, out of touch with Idaho after his years in Washington. He also links Andrus to Jimmy Carter at every opportunity.

Leroy hopes to make wilderness a major issue. When Potlatch announced its layoffs, he said he would support no new wilderness in Idaho because it costs jobs. He will link Andrus to "eastern" environmental groups (Andrus has been a consultant to The Wilderness Society and a director of the National Wildlife Federation) and to expected appeals of Idaho National Forest Plans by state conservation groups. Andrus is emphasizing his unique ability to broker an early resolution of Idaho wilderness disputes, without committing himself to any specific proposals. Leroy is gambling that public identification as a conservationist is a political liability in Idaho today; Andrus believes it will be a plus for him, as it was in the 1970s.

The economy is again the major issue. One difference is that Andrus, unlike other Democrats, will receive substantial support from Idaho businessmen and corporations.

In the First Congressional District, two-term incumbent Republican Larry Craig appears safe. The only announced Democratic candidate, Pete Busch of Lewiston, will be in difficult competition with Andrus, Evans and Stallings for money and volunteers.

So far, just one initiative will be on the 1986 ballot -- whether to ratify the Idaho Legislature's 1985 passage of a right-to-work law. Idaho unions have already gathered the necessary signatures to put it up for a vote. It is unclear whether and how this will affect the races for office.

The 1986 election will be Idaho's full initiation into modern American campaigns, with independent political action committees forming on both sides. National PACs and the national parties are already sending in political operatives and money. The candidates who win may well be those who convince enough Idahoans that they are running for Idaho, rather than for themselves or the special interest lineups descending on the state.

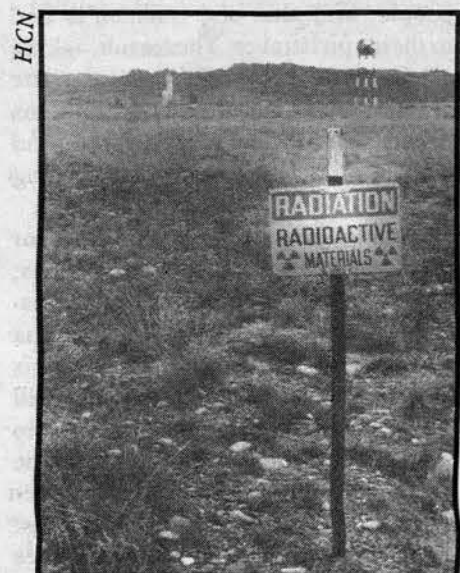
--Pat Ford

HOTLINE

Park Service counterattacks

The Park Service has issued a 27-page rebuttal to an article in *Outside* magazine that blasts grizzly bear policies at Yellowstone National Park. The article, by Livingston, Montana, writer Alston Chase, accuses park managers of hastening the bears' extinction by wrongheaded policies. In late January, Yellowstone superintendent Robert Barbee issued line by line corrections under the title, "A Detailed Response from the National Park Service." Written with four other Park Service officials and a writer, the rebuttal is available free by writing Yellowstone Superintendent, Yellowstone, WY 82190. Park Service spokesman Jim Harpster said it was prepared for distribution by request after *Outside* magazine said it would publish only a brief letter to the editor.

Passing the buck



Gunnison County in Western Colorado is concerned that it will lose federal money to clean up a uranium mill tailings dump if the state won't pay its 10 percent share. Legislators from the east side of the state say they want the county and not the state to come up with \$1.5 million to bury the tailings mound. Gunnison County Manager Mike Rock says that's unrealistic. "It's virtually impossible to come up with that kind of money, especially with constraints which limit our budget-raising ability to 7 percent per year." An additional conflict centers on where the tailings, which emit radioactive radon gas, should be buried. The Department of Energy recommends burying the tailings where they are, but because of a high water table the tailings would have to be piled on top of a clay liner and covered with dirt, creating a mound 45 feet high. Because the new hill would be next to the airport and a major highway, most residents want the tailings buried somewhere else. DOE studies also show that the tailings are polluting two aquifers that will eventually reach the Gunnison River. The agency says there is no immediate health risk but over time the uranium concentrations could reach harmful levels.

BARBS

Where there's a will, there's a way.

The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, blocked at home from flooding the Grand Canyon, is helping China plan the giant Yangtze Dam. The dam would flood a spectacular 100-mile-long canyon, as well as displace up to one million people.

Our economy runs on 'boundless dissatisfaction'

by Bruce Farling

Neither single digit temperatures nor an air pollution alert deterred more than 200 people from attending a conference on wilderness and agriculture held in Missoula, Montana, in early December.

Called *On Common Ground*, and sponsored by the University of Montana's Wilderness Institute, the gathering brought together academics, farmers, politicians and writers for a three-day dialogue on what Wendell Berry called "the crisis question of our time: How to make human enterprise relate with nature."

The first real spark at the conference was struck by Flathead Indians Johnny Arlee and Ron Theareault, who talked about traditions that bind Native Americans to the land. Arlee explained that nature is part of the cultural fabric of his people, and that oral tradition is tied to their spirituality. Theareault, taking a pragmatic approach, detailed some of Western culture's contributions toward corruption of that fabric and blamed the press for stereotyping Indians.

Complimenting both men for speaking so well without using notes, fellow panel member Roger Dunsmore, a University of Montana humanities professor, said, "This illustrates that the oral tradition is still strong in native peoples." Turning to his notes, Dunsmore identified one metaphor for commonality between white and Native American cultures: "The common ground between us lies precisely with the recognition that we are all just dirt ... If we spit on the ground, we spit on ourselves."

Helen Waller, an eastern Montana rancher and representative of the Northern Plains Resource Council, an organization largely formed to prevent coal mining from destroying ranching in Montana, offered a different

parallel. She asked the audience to consider the connection between today's exodus of bankrupt farmers from their land and the forced migration of Native Americans to reservations.

The conference's second day was highlighted by two farmers. Fourth generation Bitterroot Valley farmer Jack Iman took a dim view of the value of commonality between wilderness and agriculture. He said people's desire to live near wilderness creates a high demand for living space on adjoining farmland, and thus farmers, as in the Bitterroot, are often pushed out by subdivisions.

Another Bitterroot farmer, Jim Barngrover, an advocate of organic agriculture, suggested that more low-interest loans is one of the worst ways to help strapped farmers. He called for greater diversification of the farm economy, developing new markets and producing more near home.

The audience peaked at 240 by the third day in anticipation of major talks by authors Wendell Berry and Gary Snyder. In a 90-minute prepared address, Berry, a poet and author of *The Unsettling of America* and *The Memory of Old Jack*, examined the role of culture in preserving wildness.

Berry said the common ground between wildland and agriculture is the practical application of what he called a "loving economy" based on quality goods, wise use of natural resources and tender care for the land. Over-extractive farming and forestry based on a throw-away society will lead to the demise of all wilderness, Berry pointed out. The writer called our economy abstract rather than materialistic, "because it is impossible to value anything that one has."

What spurs our economy, he added, is "boundless dissatisfaction." Berry said the "worst disease of



Wendell Berry

the world now is probably the ideology of technological heroism." What humans really needed to do in the search to be "fully human," he added, is "less." In order to have the world, he said, "we must share it, both with each other and with other creatures..." That challenge requires work, Berry concluded, but at least "there is work to do that can be done."

Next to speak was Pulitzer Prize-winning poet Gary Snyder, long known as an advocate for wilderness and small-scale sustainable agriculture. He told the group to look in its own backyard for better ways to coexist with nature, and also outlined his philosophy behind maintaining the "commons."

The loss of the commons -- democratically shared areas for grazing or tilling -- in 18th century

Europe forced farmers into urban areas to work in industry, thus impoverishing them. Snyder said our public lands represent a commons that may be lost because they are managed by distant, insensitive bureaucrats. The poet added that since wilderness and humans have been linked for one million years, "we might as well be comfortable with it." He defined the link by saying humans are wild because "we haven't been domesticated yet," and because the human imagination is in itself "a great wild area beyond our current thought."

Much like Berry, Snyder said there is no defense of wilderness without proper, sustainable agriculture and forestry. To accomplish this, he told the audience to "become a person of place. Don't move." People may pay an economic price for staying put, he said, but the reward is found in becoming part of a community, part of a "culture of place," and therefore a part of the land around you.

Earlier, the group heard from Allen Bjergo, a community development specialist with the Montana state extension office, who suggested that ranchers might do better economically if they reserved some land for big game and fee hunting. Tom Power, a University of Montana economist, attacked those who simplify the development versus wildland question. A consumer advocate, Power said, "the language of economics was stolen 100 years ago by a narrow minority -- the business community." He said clean air, aesthetics and wildlife are all qualities that should be considered in an economic analysis of wildland.

Proceedings of the conference will be published this spring. Contact The Wilderness Institute, School of Forestry, University of Montana, Missoula, MT 59801 (406/243-5361).

Snyder and Berry speak for roots, community, small farms

One word to you, to
you and your children:
stay together
learn the flowers
go light

On a ridge in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, Gary Snyder follows advice offered in his poem "For the Children." With his wife, two sons and friends he is part of a small community based on communal bonds and living lightly with the land. Now 55, the Pulitzer Prize-winning poet tends a garden, splits firewood, builds fences and pounds a few nails when need be.

Snyder's poetry and prose incorporate a personal history, which includes a role in the San Francisco renaissance of the 1950s led by poets Michael McClure, Allen Ginsberg and Philip Whalen. He shows up, in fact, in Jack Kerouac's work as Japhy Ryder in *The Dharma Bums*. He worked as a Forest Service lookout, Park Service trail crewman, logger and crewed on an oil tanker. He spent 10 years in Japan as a student in a Buddhist monastery, an experience that profoundly influenced his life. He

speaks with the disciplined cadence of a practitioner of Zen meditation, an oral style that is countered with a sparkling wit. He often introduces his poems with anecdotes and wisecracks. In public he plays to the audience and is very successful at it.

Snyder is a proponent of bioregionalism, the philosophy that humans should live according to ecological margins such as watersheds, instead of by political boundaries. In an interview some years back, he said, "People have to learn a sense of region, and what is possible within a region, rather than indefinitely assuming that a kind of promiscuous distribution of goods and transportation is always going to be possible."

In urging the Missoula audience to root itself and center its energy on improving its own community, Snyder revealed his favorite topic: In order to live with the land, indefinitely and in harmony, we must concentrate on our own backyards first. In his book, *The Real Work*, Snyder said of Kentuckian Wendell Berry: He is "a man who does very high-quality work and is also a working farmer and a working

thinker, who draws on the best of American roots and traditional mindfulness, like his Kentucky forebears..."

Wendell Berry is undeniably this country's most eloquent spokesman for the family farm. Listening to him speak, one suspects Berry considers himself a farmer first and writer second. He makes his home on a 75-acre farm in Port Royal, Kentucky, and in many of his essays it is the values of this type of farm that he seeks to preserve. His concern, as he points out in his book, *The Unsettling of America*, is that our technological economy "has deprived the mass of consumers of any independent access to the staples of life: clothing, shelter, food, and even water."

Berry is neither a card-carrying wilderness nut nor an apologist for agriculture gone awry. He reserves his sharpest criticism for big-is-beautiful, chemically supported agribusiness. But he is not afraid to scold environmentalists.

At an informal press conference at the University of Montana, Berry jumped to the defense of the stockman in response to a question involving

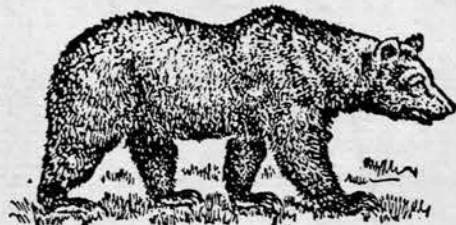
grizzly/sheep predation near Yellowstone National Park. Berry said the solution to the problem is not to tell the stockman to get out, for you then condemn the man and his way of life. Berry said the issue is more like "a family feud" and "conservationists have a lot to answer for." To settle it, you "should stay on both sides. Much like in a family fight, which you don't settle by shooting your sister, do you?"

He said livestock/predator disputes will only be settled when both sides avoid polarization with hard-line stances. One approach he tried to bridge the gap between environmentalists and stockmen was in asking the Sierra Club some years back to print in its magazine the entreaty "Buy American Wool." He was turned down, he said.

Berry's essays are carefully constructed treatments on the importance of integrating food production, community, family and hard work within our culture. His novel, *The Memory of Old Jack*, is an eloquent expression of the disappearance of the American agrarian culture.

--Bruce Farling

BULLETIN BOARD



A GRIZZLY CONFERENCE

The University of Colorado Environmental Center is sponsoring an ambitious grizzly bear conference in Boulder on April 4 and 5, bringing together most of the key experts on the threatened species. Speakers include Frank Craighead, Alston Chase, Tony Povilis, Jasper Carlton, Tom McNamee and Larry Roop. Registration fees are: conference \$8, reception \$3, luncheon \$7 and dinner \$13. Call Rosalind McClellan at 303/492-8307 for more information, or write CU Environmental Center, Campus Box 207, Boulder, CO 80309.

TIMBER SALES TO BE DISCUSSED

Deficit timber sales on national forests will be the topic of discussion at a conference in Spokane, Washington on Feb. 17-19. The conference is co-sponsored by The Wilderness Society, the department of forestry and range management at Washington State University and the College of Forestry, Wildlife and Range Sciences at the University of Idaho. For registration information, write Barry Flamm, TWS, 1400 Eye St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20005 or call 202/842-3400.

CLUB 20 ANNUAL MEETING

Western Colorado's coalition of local governments, chambers of commerce, business and individuals will hold its 33rd annual meeting Sat., Feb. 8, at Grand Junction's Holiday Inn starting at 8 A.M. The agenda includes talks on highways, water projects and tourism; a panel of state legislators, an address by state Agriculture Commissioner Tim Schultz; a talk on air quality by Dr. Robert Arnott of the Health Dept. For information, contact Club 20 at 303/242-3264, or write: P.O. Box 550, Grand Junction, CO 81502.

YELLOWSTONE GEOLOGY

This latest in the roadside geology series focuses on Yellowstone National Park and the roads that lead to each of the four park entrances. William J. Fritz says he wrote *Roadside Geology of the Yellowstone Country* for the non-geologist, and he provides a helpful glossary and suggestions for further reading.

Mountain Press Publishing Company, Box 2399, Missoula, MT 59806. Paperback: \$8.95. 143 pages. Illustrated with photos, maps, diagrams.

DESERT FRIENDS

A new organization has been formed in Wyoming to protect cold desert wildlands. Called Friends of Wild Wyoming Deserts, the group is focusing on wilderness study areas currently under review by the Bureau of Land Management to make sure grasslands, buttes and badlands are included in wilderness designations. Advisors to the group are naturalist Mardy Murie and writers Tom Bell and Michael Frome; its director is Lynn Kinter and for \$2 you can become a member and receive the *New Sage* newsletter. Write the desert friends at Box 843, Lovell, WY 82431.

SKILARK

Western Colorado Congress' second Annual Grand Mesa Ski Lark is set for Saturday, March 8. The day will include 5 and 10 km races for adults and a 1 km race for kids, as well as free beginner ski workshops and touring. Race entry fees vary depending on age class, but the maximum family rate is \$15. The races will start at noon, with the registration deadline one-half hour earlier. The site is the south edge of the mesa, known for its deep snow and long cross-country skiing season, across from Grand Mesa Lodge on state Highway 65. All proceeds will go to WCC, a coalition of environmental, consumer and agriculture interests. WCC is also planning benefit river trips down southwestern Colorado's Dolores River in early June. For more information on the ski lark or the river trips, call WCC at 303/249-1978.

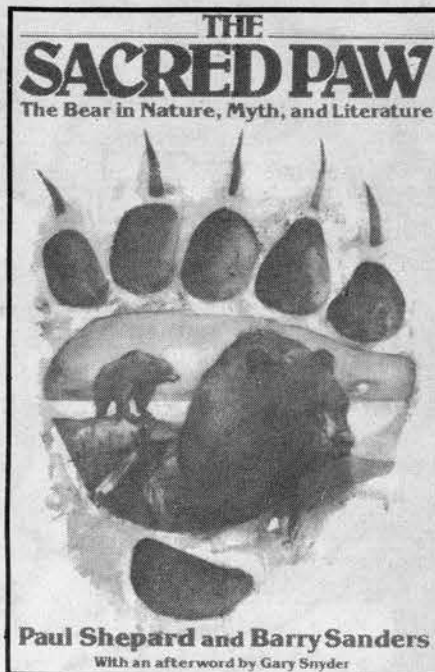


MONTANA WILDLIFE AWARDS

The Montana Wildlife Federation is accepting nominations for its 1986 Conservation Achievement Awards. The program recognizes outstanding individuals and organizations that have made significant contributions to the conservation of Montana's natural resources. Any Montana citizen or organization is eligible. Awards will be presented for the following categories: Conservationist of the Year, Sportsman of the Year, Conservation Professional, Youth Conservationist, Conservation Educator (General), Conservation Educator (Classroom), Conservation Communicator, Conservation Organization, and Conservation Legislator. Nominations will close March 1, 1986. For more information and nomination forms contact Emily Swanson, Montana Wildlife Federation, Box 3526, Bozeman, MT 59715.

AQUIFER REPORT

The first in a series of reports describing the hydrology and geology of the High Plains aquifer has been published by the U.S. Geological Survey. The aquifer underlies parts of Texas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Wyoming and South Dakota and is a major water source. "Geohydrology of the High Plains Aquifer" is available for \$5 from the Text Products Section, Eastern Distribution Branch, U.S. Geological Survey, 604 South Pickett St., Alexandria, VA 22304. Include the report number (PP 1400-B).



SACRED BEARS

The Sacred Paw, The Bear in Nature Myth, and Literature looks at our close relationship with the bear through recorded history. Authors Paul Shepard, a human ecologist, and Barry Sanders, an English professor, see the bear in all its resonant power.

Viking, 40 West 23 St., New York, NY 10010. Cloth: 244 pages, \$17.95. Illustrations, drawings, bibliography.

A COLORADO LEGISLATIVE BULLETIN

The standing joke in all 50 state capital cities is that no one is safe while the legislature is in session. In an attempt to make Colorado's environment a bit safer during the state's 55th General Assembly, the Colorado Environmental Lobby is publishing its *Legislative Bulletin* for the second year. The first issue of 1986 contains a preview of the coming session, discussions of bills to finance water projects and control hazardous materials, an account of Sen. Tom Glass', D-Frisco, second attempt to encourage conservation of agricultural water, and a list of key telephone numbers for those wishing to lobby state government. The CEL lobbyist is Jo Evans. CEL can be reached at 1724 Gilpin St., Denver, CO 80218 (303/320-0329).

UTAH ALTERNATIVES

Utahns looking for alternative energy products may find help in the *Utah Alternative Energy Products Directory*. Put out by the state Energy Office, the guide gives descriptions of solar, wind and hydropower products available, and lists prices and the locations of dealers. For a copy, call the Utah Energy office at 538-5410 or 1-800-662-3633.

PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION ON OUTDOORS

The President's Commission on Americans Outdoors has been meeting around the country and hearing testimony in preparation for a report that could be significant. Recommendations from a similar commission established in 1958 during the Eisenhower administration helped lead to the establishment of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the national wilderness system, national trails system and the wild and scenic rivers system. The National Parks and Conservation Association is now printing an "Americans Outdoors" newsletter, which monitors commission activities and details where and when public hearings will be held. To receive it write: NPCA, 1701 18th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20009 (209/265-2717).

PUBLIC INTEREST LAW CONFERENCE

The fourth annual Western Public Interest Law Conference in Eugene, Oregon, from March 13-15 will feature former Secretary of the Interior Stewart Udall as the keynote speaker. The conference for environmental lawyers, law students and citizens involved in Forest Service, BLM and EPA appeals or other processes includes seminars on administrative appeals, toxic substances, getting attorney fees from the government, forestry issues, Freedom of Information Act requests, mining, range issues and endangered species. The registration fee is \$20 for lawyers, but free for everyone else. Pre-registration forms are available from Western Natural Resources Law Clinic -- L.A.W., School of Law, University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon 97403 (503/686-3823).

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Write: Ruth Hutchins, 1574 L Road, Fruita, CO 81521.

ACCESS

WORK

ORGANIZER JOB POSITION: The Western Colorado Congress is an organization of rural citizens and citizen groups working on utility, agriculture, clearcutting, air quality, and other consumer/natural resource issues. **DUTIES:** Organize and maintain local citizen organizations in Western Colorado, working with members in planning, implementing and evaluating programs, leadership development, grass-roots fundraising and research. **REQUIREMENTS:** Commitment to social change, justice and ecological integrity, desire and skill to work well with diverse types of people, ability to communicate clearly, willingness to work according to the needs of the organization. **SALARY:** \$800 per month, health insurance, one month vacation. **TO APPLY:** Send resume to the Western Colorado Congress, c/o Teresa Erickson, P.O. Box 472, Montrose, CO 81402. **DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION:** Feb. 15, 1986. (1x)

CONSERVATION

POLLUTANTS IN YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS? High quality, low cost do-it-yourself tests for over 40 water and air pollutants. For details and prices, write: Canary Testing, 2216 Race St., Denver, CO 80205. (1x)

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NAVAJO TEXTILE RESTORATION. Meticulous restoration of damaged Navajo rugs and blankets. Restoration fibers hand-spun and hand-dyed to match original. Free estimates. Rita Murphy, 4142 O Rd., Paonia, CO 81428 (303/527-4613). (2x)

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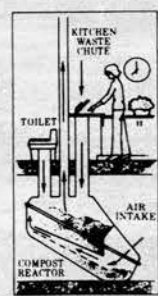
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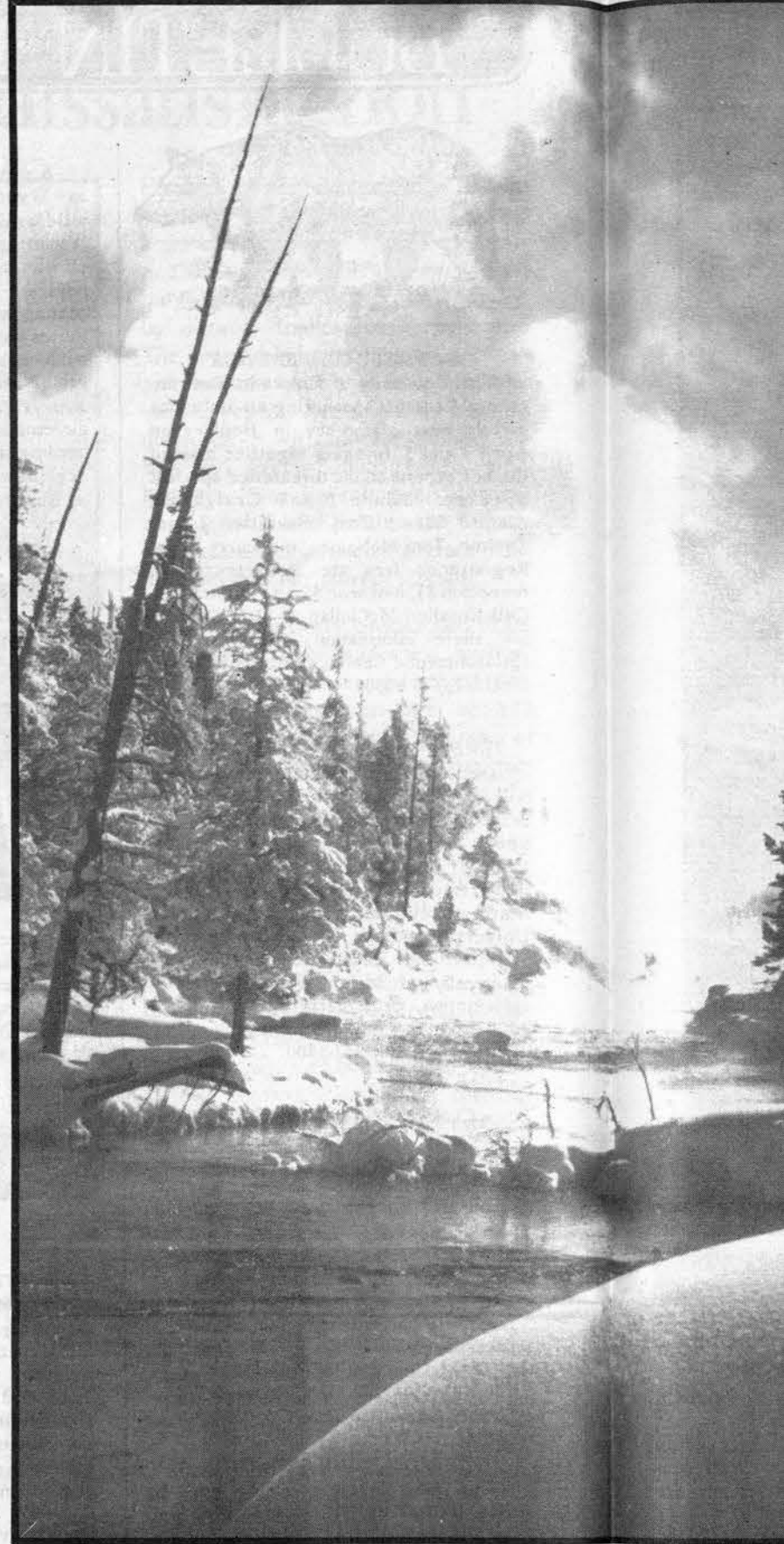
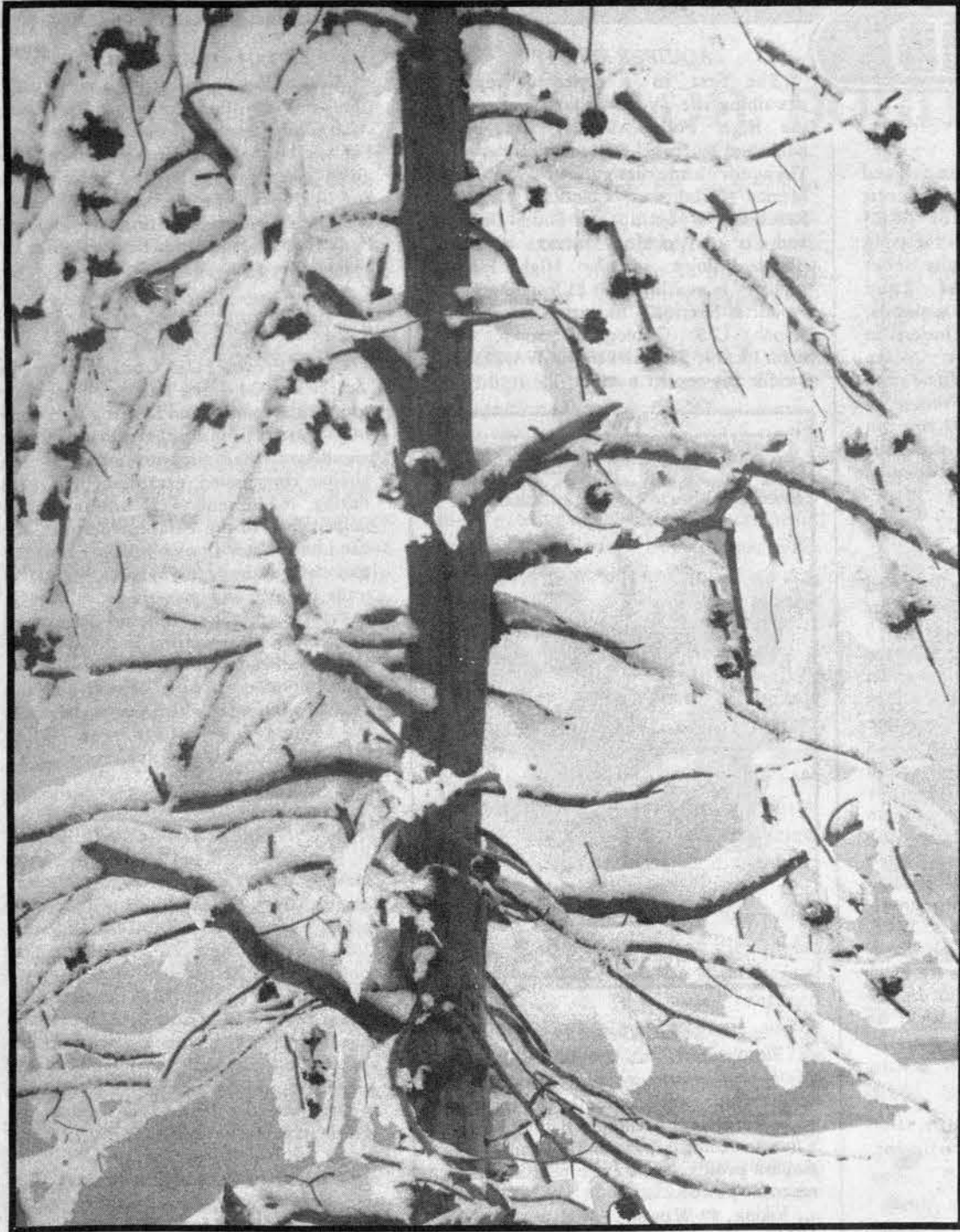
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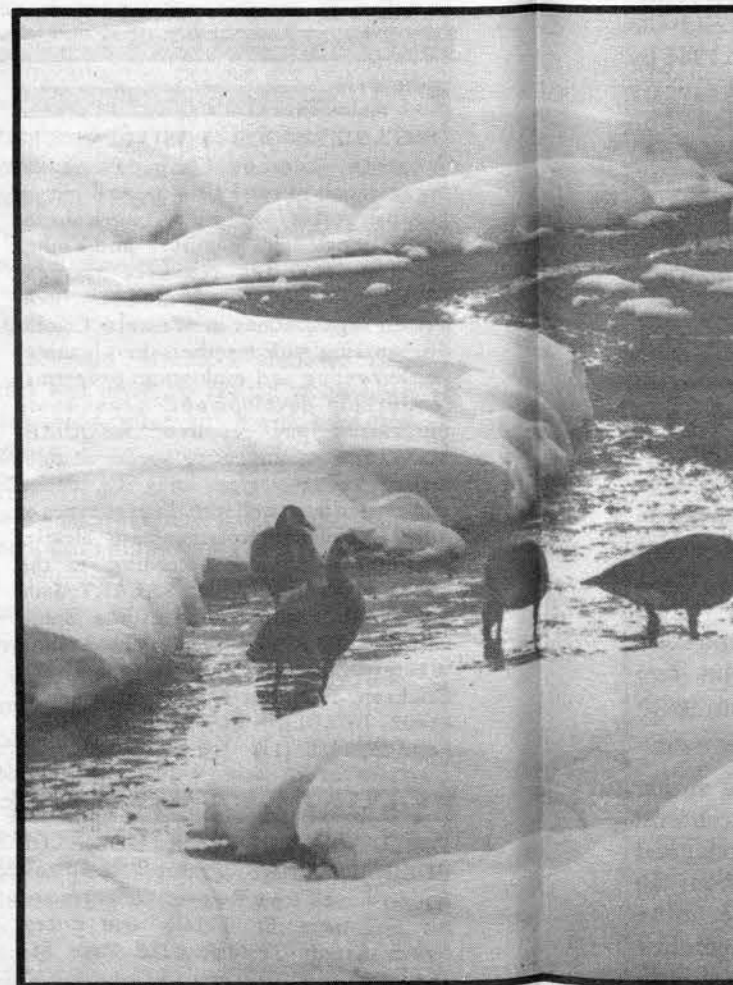


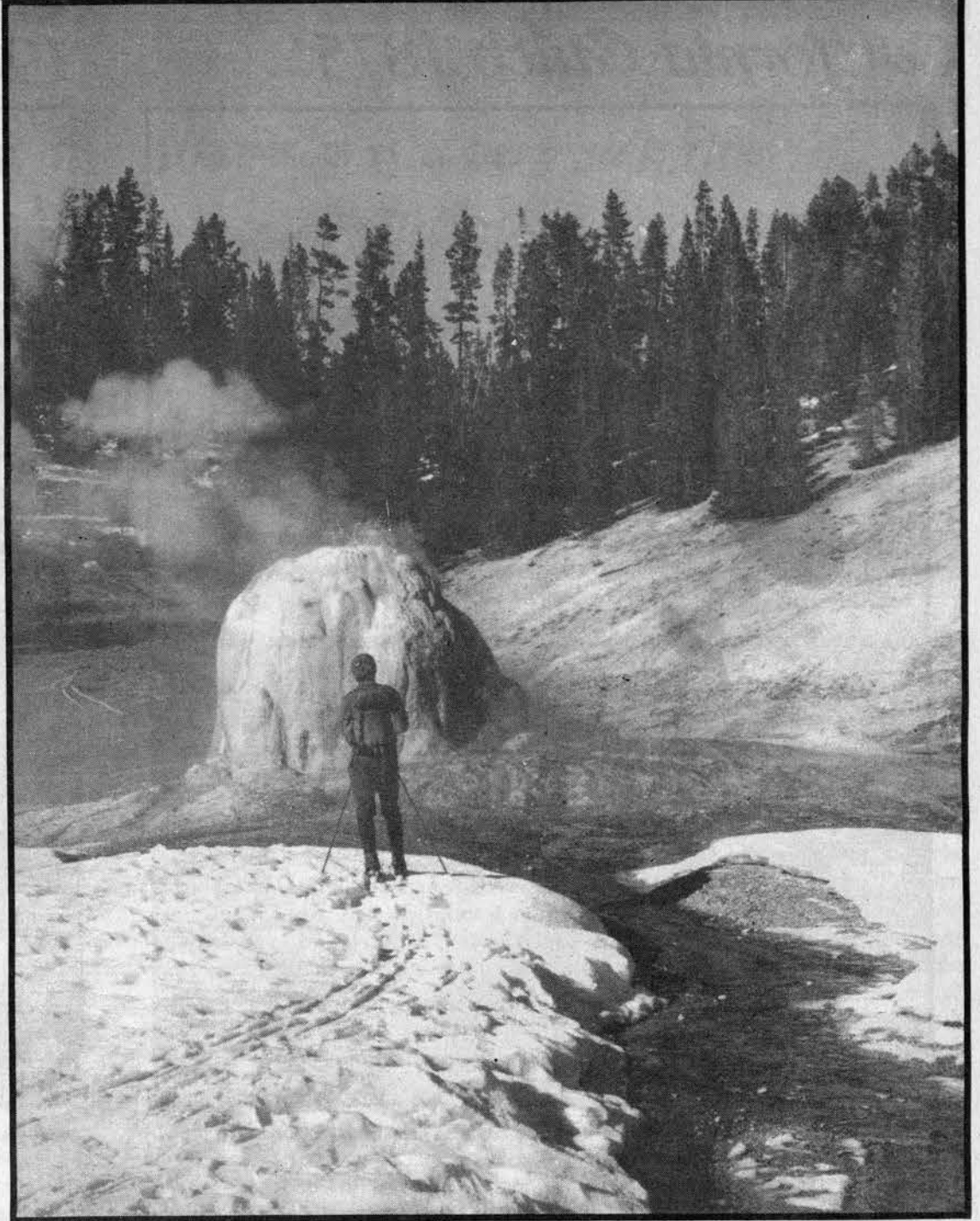
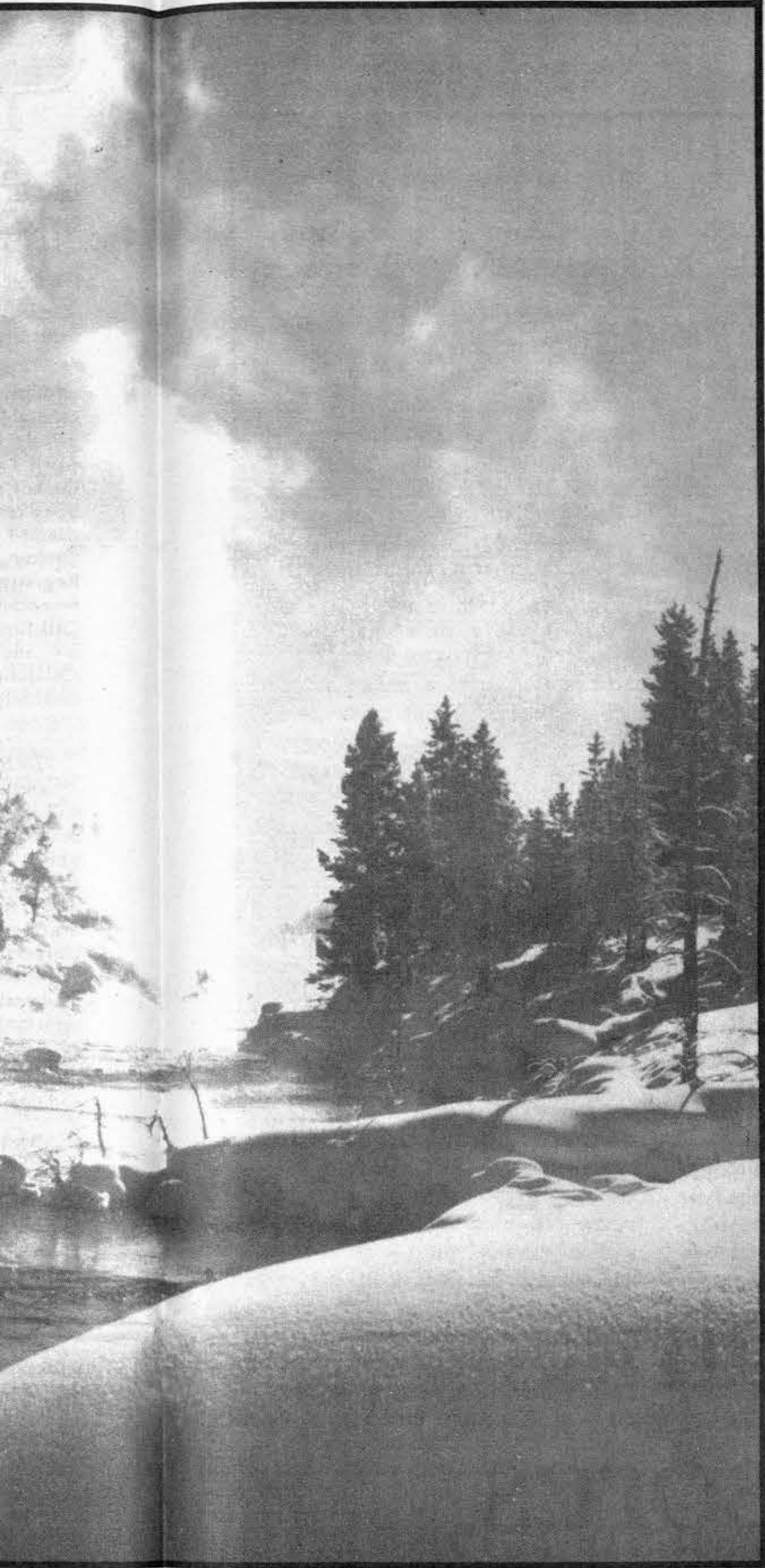
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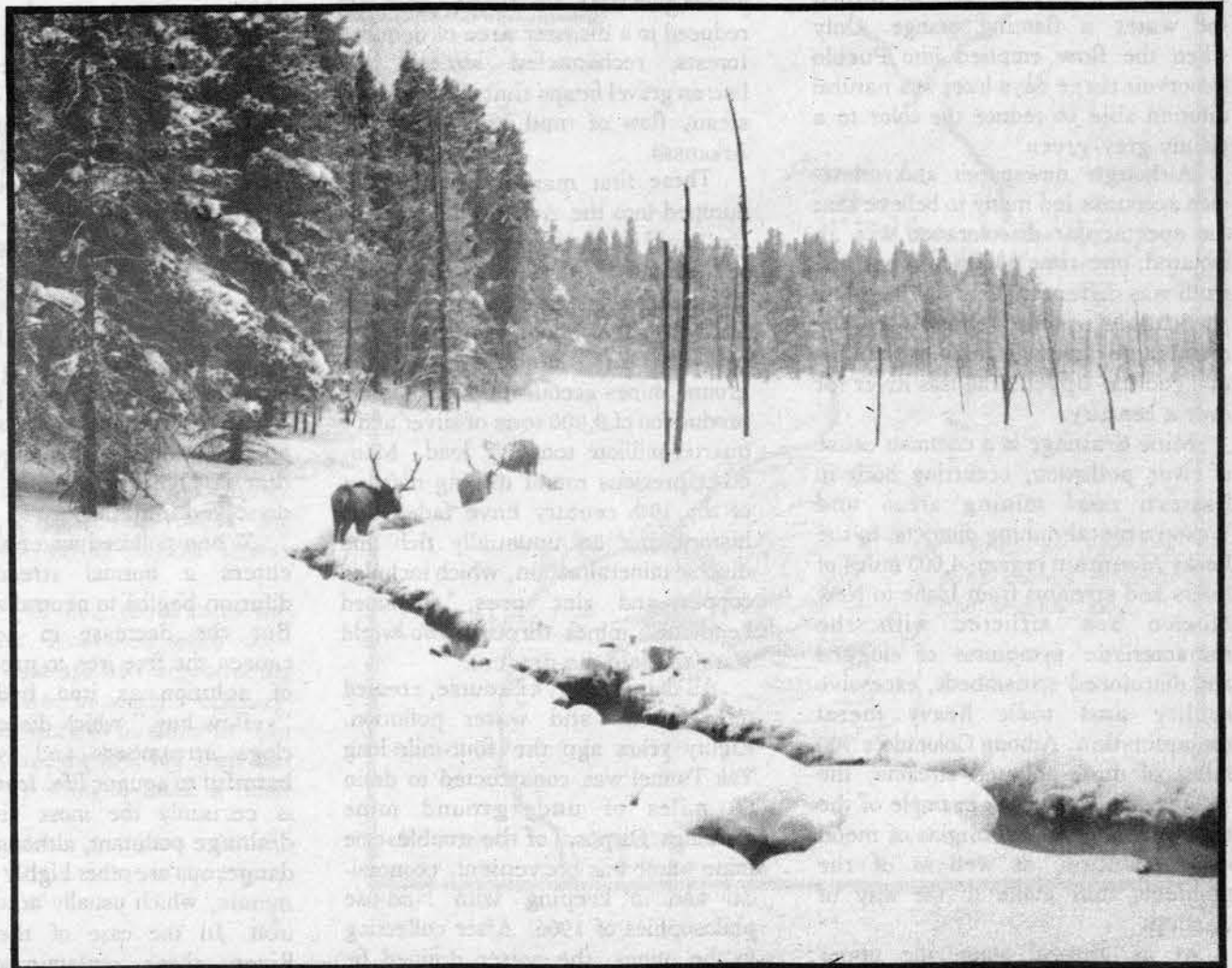
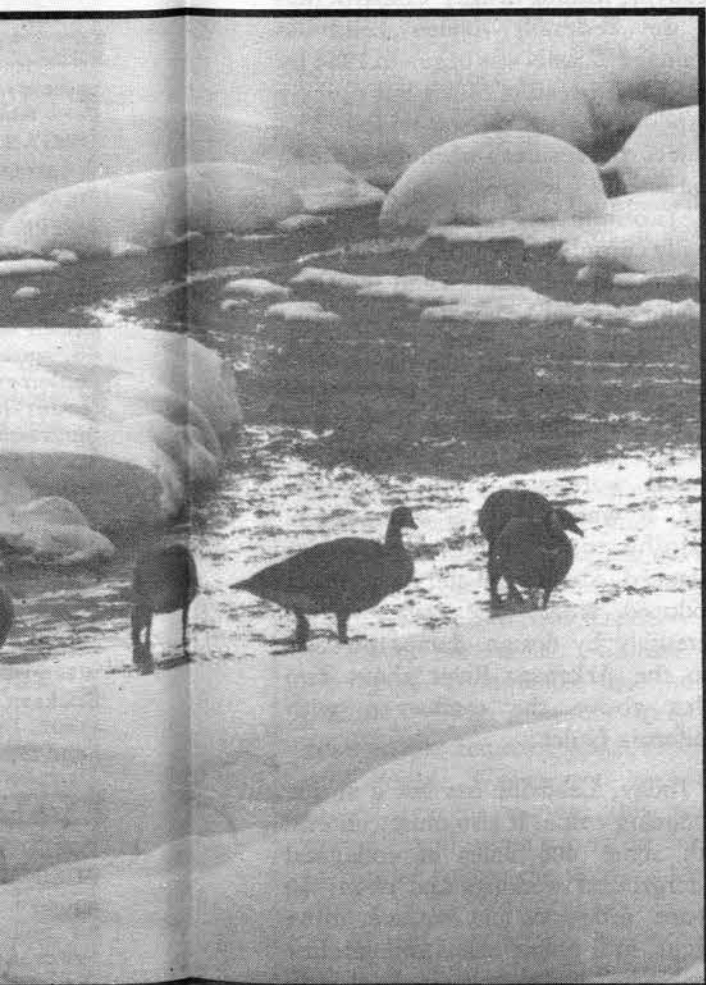


Yellowstone in Winter





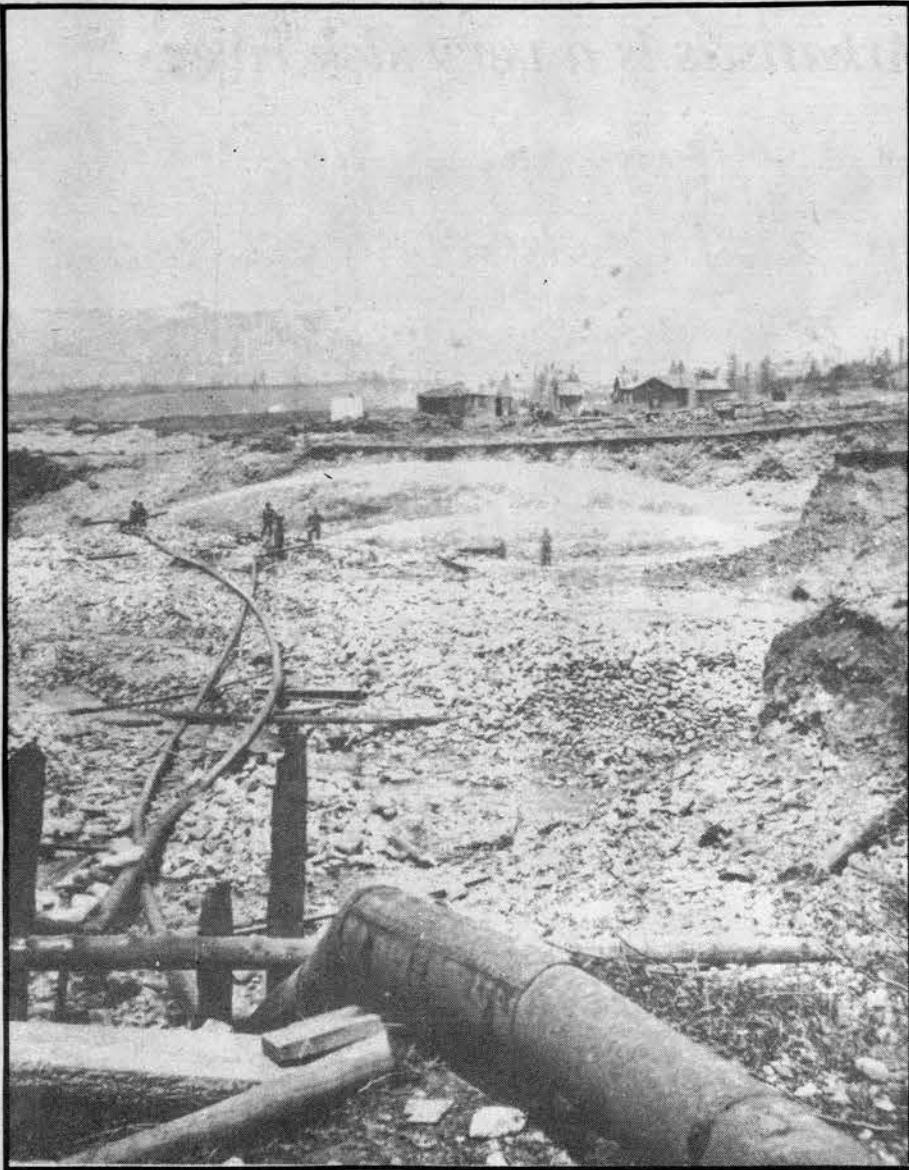
Photographs by Janet Robertson



10-High Country News -- February 3, 1986

California Gulch 1875...

Luke & Wheeler



Hydraulic mining in California Gulch, from a 1875 stereo card

1986

Steve Voynick



Biologically dead California Gulch

Leadville's old mines are suppurating sores

by Steve Voynick

Five months ago, 100 miles of central Colorado's upper Arkansas River became a media event after a surge of pollution turned the water a flaming orange. Only when the flow emptied into Pueblo Reservoir three days later was natural dilution able to reduce the color to a cloudy gray-green.

Although newspaper and television accounts led many to believe that the spectacular discoloration was an isolated, one-time pollution event, the truth was different. This was simply a particularly visible reminder of the metal mine drainage pollution that has ravaged the upper Arkansas River for over a century.

Mine drainage is a common cause of river pollution, occurring both in Eastern coal mining areas and Western metal mining districts. In the Rocky Mountain region, 4,000 miles of rivers and streams from Idaho to New Mexico are afflicted with the characteristic symptoms of clogged and discolored streambeds, excessive acidity and toxic heavy metal contamination. Among Colorado's 500 miles of mine-polluted streams, the Arkansas is a textbook example of the history and chemical origins of metal mine pollution, as well as of the problems that stand in the way of cleanup.

In its natural state, the upper

Arkansas survived only until 1860, when placer gold was discovered in California Gulch, a tributary near the present two-mile-high town of Leadville. Five years and \$5 million in placer gold later, California Gulch was reduced to a disaster area of denuded forests, rechanneled streams and barren gravel heaps that contributed a steady flow of mud and silt to the Arkansas.

These first man-made pollutants dumped into the Arkansas were mild compared to those that followed the 1877 discovery of rich lead-silver ores. That strike triggered the famed Leadville silver boom, and during the next 15 years, hundreds of underground mines accounted for a district production of 6,000 tons of silver and a quarter-million tons of lead. Many other precious metal mining districts of the 19th century have faded into history, but an unusually rich and diverse mineralization, which included copper and zinc ores, sustained Leadville's mines through two world wars and into the present.

All that mining, of course, created mine wastes and water pollution. Eighty years ago the four-mile-long Yak Tunnel was constructed to drain 60 miles of underground mine workings. Disposal of the troublesome mine water was convenient, economical and in keeping with land-use philosophies of 1906. After collecting in the mines, the water drained by

gravity into the Yak Tunnel, then into the already mine-ravaged confines of California Gulch. Two-and-one-half miles later, the mine water emptied directly into the Arkansas River.

Sulfide minerals are the leading chemical cause of metal mine drainage pollution. To reach metal sulfide deposits underground, mining penetrates the protective oxidized surface ground, and once exposed to the atmosphere, the metal sulfides react with water and oxygen to produce sulfuric acid and soluble metal salts. Most troublesome is pyrite, or iron sulfide, a common mineral that occurs with metal ores. Pyrite oxidizes easily into sulfuric acid and iron ions to produce mine water that is highly acidic and laden with dissolved iron.

When polluted water such as this enters a normal stream, natural dilution begins to neutralize the acid. But the decrease in acidity soon causes the free iron to precipitate out of solution as iron hydroxide, or "yellow boy," which discolors water, clogs streambeds and is generally harmful to aquatic life. Iron hydroxide is certainly the most visible mine drainage pollutant, although far more dangerous are other highly toxic heavy metals, which usually accompany the iron. In the case of the Arkansas River, these contaminants include

copper, cadmium, lead, zinc, manganese and arsenic.

During World War II, soaring demand for lead and zinc inspired the construction of a second drainage tunnel to dewater another sector of the Leadville mining district. Construction of the federally funded Leadville Drainage Tunnel was begun in 1944 by the U.S. Bureau of Mines but quickly suspended when the war ended. The project was resumed when the Korean conflict again spurred metal demands. The two-mile-long Leadville Drain was finally completed in 1953, just in time for the end of hostilities and the final closing of most Leadville mines.

Technically, the Leadville Drain was a great success, removing great quantities of acidic, metal-laden mine water from many miles of underground workings. Practically, however, it was a federal boondoggle, draining only mines that were collapsed, abandoned and have never produced since. The mine water, incredibly by design, dumps directly into the Arkansas River about two miles above the confluence with California Gulch.

Today, Leadville has but a single producing mine. It also must contend with some 400 miles of collapsed underground workings and about 40 square miles of old surface mine dumps, mill tailing heaps and smelter slag heaps. And draining it all, quietly

and faithfully, are the Yak Tunnel and Leadville Drainage Tunnel.

Metal contamination is conventionally expressed in micrograms (one millionth of a gram) per liter. As an example, the U.S. Public Health Service's standard for drinking water is not more than 300 micrograms of iron per liter. An iron content of 700 micrograms per liter is known to be detrimental to fish and other aquatic life. The California Gulch flow, according to a 1975 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation survey, contains an astounding 45,000 micrograms of iron per liter -- along with 60,000 micrograms of zinc, 30,000 micrograms of manganese, and similarly high levels of cadmium, copper and lead.

Such technically obscure microgram/liter levels become stark, however, when they are computed against mean flow rates. Since the average daily combined flow rate of the Yak and Leadville Drainage tunnels is 3 million gallons, the Arkansas River receives a one ton dose of toxic heavy metal contaminants every day. From the time the Leadville Drain was completed in 1953, the two tunnels have dumped some 12,000 tons of heavy metal contaminants into the upper Arkansas River.

The disastrous effect upon the Arkansas has been known for decades. As a comparison, one needs only to look at the 14-mile stretch above Leadville, where the river is a prime fishery with a breeding population of brook and brown trout. At Leadville, the fish count falls abruptly to zero. A short distance below California Gulch, an iron level 15 times the Public Health Service drinking standard has ad-

'As a fishery, the Arkansas is a very sick river, perhaps even dying. Colorado Division of Wildlife biologists cannot for all their electronic searching turn up a fish more than three years old.'

versely affected both livestock health and hay production. Below Leadville, the aquatic insect life, the cornerstone of any viable river fishery, has been decimated. Upstream or downstream movement of fish past Leadville is utterly impossible. Although most of the heavy metal content seems to precipitate out of solution and into the riverbed within 20 miles of Leadville, the river is impacted much further downstream.

Charlie Meyers, outdoor writer for the *Denver Post* and one of Colorado's most avid fishermen, says, "The brutal truth is that, as a fishery, the upper Arkansas is a very sick river, perhaps even dying... These tons of effluents (the Leadville mine drainage) have settled into the streambed, often compacting into a cement-like layer which precludes any fish reproduction. There is growing evidence that it poisons the fish themselves. Colorado Division of Wildlife biologists cannot for all their

electronic searching turn up a fish more than three years old. Fourteen-inch trout are rare; 16 inches are no more than rumor."

In a 1984 survey, Colorado's Division of Wildlife tested 146 wild brown trout in the Salida area, 60 miles below Leadville. Results showed unusually high concentrations of copper and cadmium in the livers and kidneys of the trout, metals which may be traced directly to the Leadville drainage tunnels.

There seems to be little public awareness of the continual pollution of the upper Arkansas. Only pollution surges, such as that in late October, 1985, draw attention. In that event, a partial collapse of the no longer maintained Yak Tunnel created a dam which eventually accumulated 700,000 gallons of mine water. When the dam broke, the rushing water scoured sediments from the tunnel that discolored the Arkansas for 100 miles.

Although the surges introduce

vast quantities of metal contaminants into the river, they do little to generate public concern or outrage. This apathy is best understood in Leadville, whose best economic times came from smoke-belching smelters, sprawling mine dumps and drainage tunnels, and where metal mining still means jobs. It is least understood among the Arkansas River water users downstream -- the agricultural users, the fishermen, the 70 commercial white-water rafting outfitters and, most of all, the half-million Colordans in Aurora, Colorado Springs and Pueblo who eventually drink the water. Even the wildlife and conservation groups that are so quick to focus attention on most industrial pollution, voice little if any apparent concern for the mine-polluted Arkansas.

The Environmental Protection Agency, however, has formally acknowledged what many had suspected for decades -- that California

(Continued on page 13)

High-tech treatment plant brings creek back from dead

Fremont Pass, near Leadville, is the source of two rivers: the Arkansas, which flows east; and Ten Mile Creek, which descends the western slope of the Continental Divide to eventually join the Colorado River.

Like the Arkansas, Ten Mile Creek suffered severe metal mine drainage pollution, thanks to the century-old gold, silver, lead and zinc mines and mills at the old mining camps of Kokomo and Robinson. When the Climax Molybdenum Company was established on top of Fremont Pass in 1924, Ten Mile Creek was written off as a mining sewer. Climax is still an important source of molybdenum, tin, tungsten and industrial pyrite. So voluminous are the mill tailings that they fill over three miles of Ten Mile Canyon to a depth of several hundred feet. Given the enormous quantities of oxidizing sulfides and mill waste water, it is hardly surprising that the old-timers can't remember a single trout in lower Ten Mile Creek.

Since the 1930s, Climax has attempted to minimize the stream pollution with a water recycling system that returned wastewater for mill reuse. Wastewater was contained, except during the annual spring runoff, when it was discharged to further pollute the already lifeless waters of Ten Mile Creek.

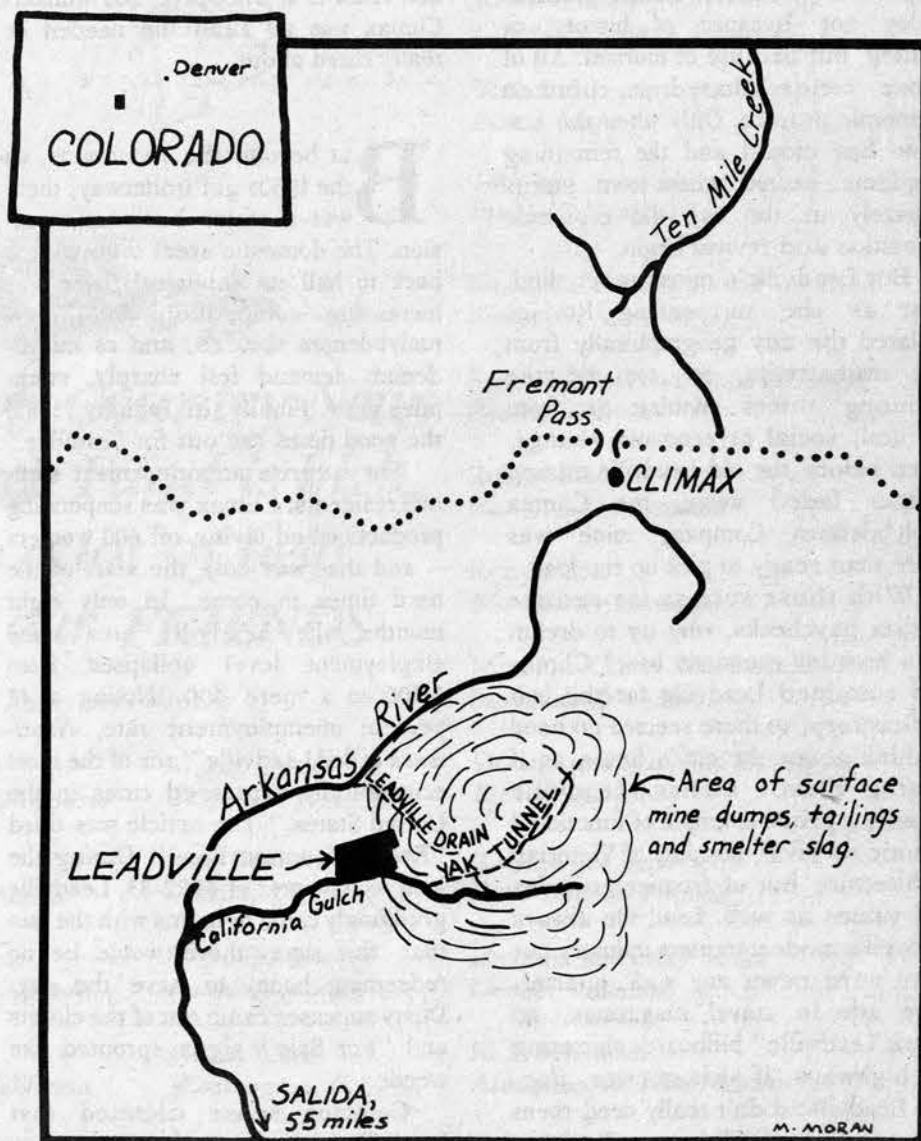
In the early 1970s, seeking

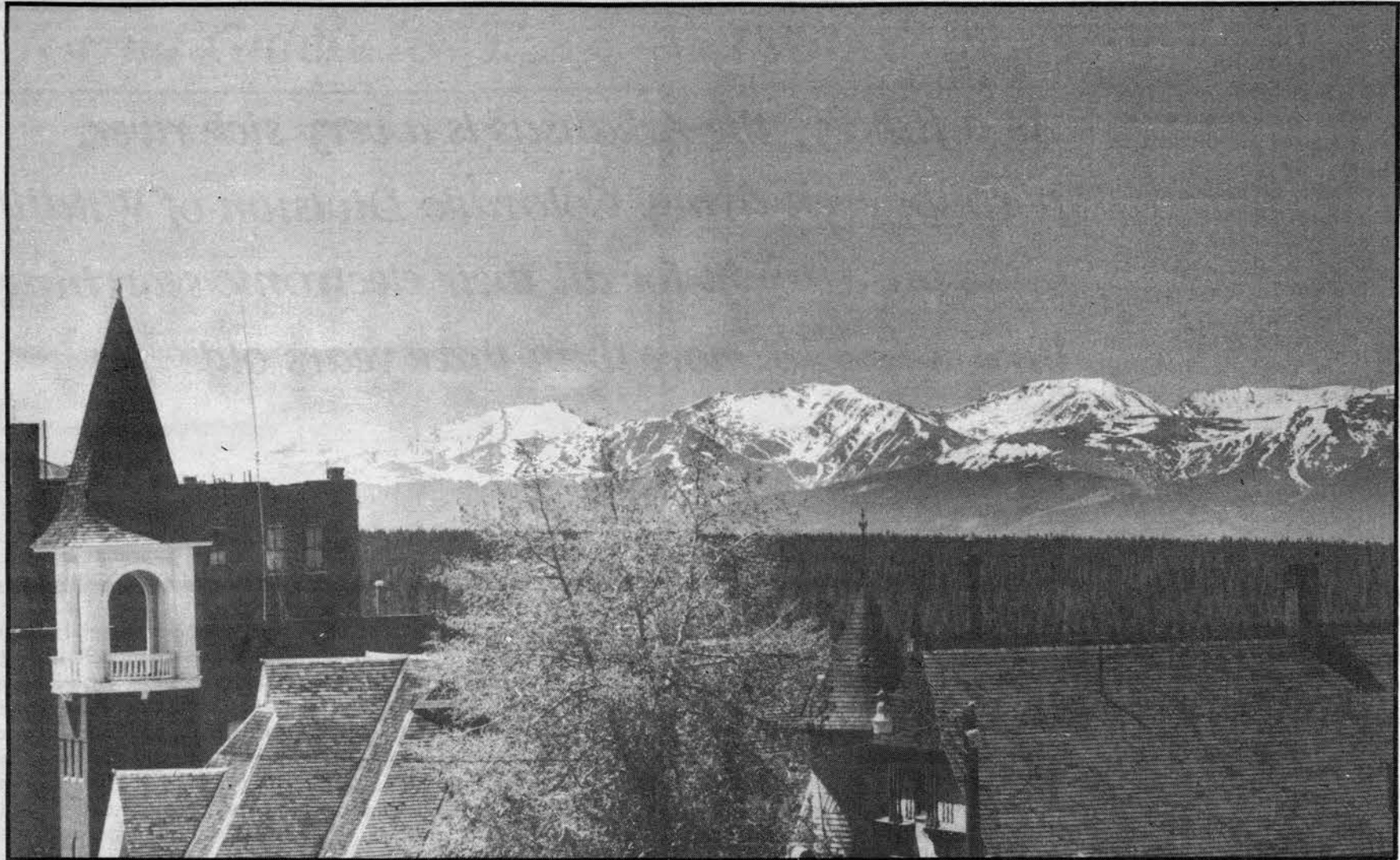
year-round water discharge as well as compliance with its discharge permit, Climax developed an effective technology to treat waste water prior to discharge. Climax designed its system to treat not only its own mine and mill waters, but also the heavily polluted drainage of the Robinson and Kokomo abandoned mines. Molybdenum ions were removed by ion exchange, while the heavy metals, which included iron, manganese, copper and zinc, were removed by a complex electrocoagulation/electroflotation process. Sodium hypochlorite was employed as an oxidant to destroy the mill-introduced cyanides. Finally, lime was used to neutralize any remaining acidity and precipitate residual metals before discharge.

The \$8 million plant went into operation in 1978 with continual technological refinement. A Climax spokesman declined to reveal the operating cost, saying only that it was "plenty."

"Plenty" or not, the results are now apparent. Trout were reintroduced in 1981 and are now reproducing for the first time in nearly a century. There is still work to be done in Ten Mile Creek, but the first big step has been made in bringing back a dead river.

--S.V.





Ken and Donna Dannen

Leadville, Colorado

Busted Leadville still thinks, and acts, like a mining town

by Steve Voynick

Silver brought Leadville its fame and fortune. In the 1880s, Leadville was the best and worst of the mining frontier, a bustling, booming city of opera and warehouses, grand hotels and dismal slums. Above all, Leadville was a city of mines.

The West had many similar if lesser mining towns: Deadwood, South Dakota; Tombstone, Arizona; and Virginia City, Montana; and in Colorado alone there were Cripple Creek, Central City, Aspen, Breckenridge and Telluride, names familiar today not because of history or mining, but because of tourism. All of those cities shared a common economic pattern. Only when the last mine had closed and the remaining residents stared ghost-town status squarely in the eye did economic transition and revival begin.

But Leadville's mines never died. Just as the surrounding Rockies isolated the city geographically from the mainstream, so too did the enduring mines insulate it from cultural, social or economic change. Even before the old Leadville mining district faded away, the Climax Molybdenum Company mine was more than ready to pick up the load.

With those sure-as-the-sunrise Climax paychecks, why try to dream up a broader economic base? Climax had sustained Leadville for the last half-century, so there seemed no need to think about the city's future as if mining didn't matter. Leadville became a prime example of functional historic survival, not only of Victorian architecture but of frontier attitudes and values as well. Leadville always enjoyed a modest tourism industry but there were never any slick, quarter-page ads in travel magazines, no "Visit Leadville" billboards cluttering the highways. If visitors came, fine. But Leadville didn't really need them -- not with those Climax paychecks.

Leadville had survived more mining booms and busts than even the

old-timers could count. In 1981, it was riding the crest of yet another decade-long boom. Climax alone employed 3,100 workers to mine and mill the molybdenum used to harden modern steels. With two other silver-lead mines, ASARCO's Black Cloud and Hecla's Sherman mine, Leadville-area mine employment was 3,400 workers.

At Climax, even the lowliest miner's helper was bringing home nearly \$12 per hour. Climax accounted for 80 percent of the Lake County (Leadville is Lake County's only city) tax base and the Climax annual payroll had risen to a whopping \$65 million. Climax was all Leadville needed or really cared about.

But beyond the mountains, as the 1980s got underway, there was a major business recession. The domestic steel industry cut back to half its capacity, there was increasing competition from new molybdenum sources, and as molybdenum demand fell sharply, stockpiles grew. Finally, in January 1982, the good times ran out for Leadville.

The surprise announcement stunned residents: Climax was suspending production and laying off 600 workers -- and that was only the start of the hard times to come. In only eight months, the Leadville area mine employment level collapsed from 3,400 to a mere 400. Noting a 42 percent unemployment rate, *Newsweek* called Leadville "one of the most economically depressed cities in the United States." The article was titled "Rocky Mountain Low." During the long, cold winter of 1982-83, Leadville grudgingly came to terms with the fact that this time there would be no redeeming boom to save the day. Dusty suitcases came out of the closets and "For Sale" signs sprouted like weeds.

Common sense dictated that Leadville immediately begin development of an alternate economic base, one not dependent upon mining. With

its spectacular mountain location, authentic Victorian architecture, rollicking history and distinction of being the highest city (elevation 10,152 feet) in North America, the alternative was both logical and obvious -- tourism. Just follow the well-travelled path of the Tellurides and Aspens to find salvation. In March 1983, Leadville announced "Operation Bootstrap," a plan to revitalize itself through development of its considerable tourism potential.

Three years have passed since Bootstrap began. The Sherman mine has been closed for the last four years. ASARCO is operating with about 100 workers. Most importantly, the situation at Climax has stabilized; the mine has operated continuously for the last nine months, but only with 550 employees, a number not likely to increase ever. The city-county population has been cut nearly in half, and Montgomery Ward's, the big Skaggs drugstore and the 50-year-old J.C. Penney's store, among many other businesses, are all gone. And what of tourism? Well, tourism has increased, but only in line with the increasing level statewide.

Leadville seems to have made its choice, and the choice, as always, was mining. Two of the three county commissioners are still Climax employees. Leadville hasn't really begun its economic transition; it has merely adjusted to a dramatically reduced level of mining.

The local frontier attitudes are apparent on mine-polluted California Gulch. Consider the reaction if California Gulch were, for a single day, allowed to dump its load of acidity and toxic heavy metals into the Roaring Fork at Aspen. The uproar of outrage would echo all the way to Washington. In Leadville, however, the only serious concern is voiced by a handful of ranchers whose livestock and hay suffer directly from the contamination. No one seems to equate cleaning up California Gulch and bringing the brown trout back to the Arkansas River with tourism

development. Ask a Leadville old-timer about California Gulch and he'll probably laugh. "Hell, that's nothin' -- you should've seen this place when the smelters were here."

Even more revealing is the Leadville attitude toward the proposed Quail Mountain Ski Area, a major project which would provide a big tourism draw as well as hundreds of jobs. Granted, Quail Mountain would tear up a lot of prime elk forest, but that's an interesting concern for a city that could care less about the Arkansas, and where mining has already torn up more mountains, forests, streams and valleys than most wars. Many other mountain towns hanging on an economic shoestring would do anything for a Quail Mountain. Not so in Leadville. All the support the promoters have been able to muster locally has come from a relatively small core of real estate agents, merchants and motel owners, all of whom would gain immediate and direct financial benefit from the project. There is a lot of open resistance to Quail Mountain. You can see it on the yellow bumper stickers plastered on the pickup trucks: *Ski Vail, Not Quail*. Odd behavior for a town purportedly bent on tourism development.

When will Leadville make its inevitable economic transition? "I'll tell you when," says one angry Leadville merchant. "Not just when they close Climax for good, but when they take it apart, every board and every brick, and haul it away so people know it's never coming back. That's when this place will change and start moving."

Steve Voynick, whose fifth book, *The Great American Sapphire*, was published in September, is a freelance writer in Leadville, Colorado. These articles were paid for by the High Country News Research Fund.

Leadville...

(Continued from page 11)

Gulch is a serious threat to public health and the environment. In 1982, the EPA added California Gulch to its National Priorities List in accordance with Superfund legislation. The EPA also drew up a four-part work plan for California Gulch that included remedial investigation, feasibility study, a search for and negotiations with responsible parties; and implementation of remedial action. Backed by a \$683,000 budget, EPA officials and contractors began their investigation in the summer of 1983 to determine the amount of contamination. The battery of tests, which was completed in the fall of 1985, included sampling and monitoring surface water, groundwater, soils and air, geologic definition of underground formations, hydrogeologic studies to characterize the aquifers and determination of possible contamination migration into the aquifers. A final plan for a course of remedial action may be announced by fall of this year, at which time nearly \$1 million will have been spent on California Gulch.

Unlike many Superfund sites where a single corporation can be clearly established as the culprit, individual sources of the California Gulch contamination are both numerous and complex. California Gulch and the Yak Tunnel drain a large area of the Leadville mining district, one of the West's most intensively mined districts. In 1968, the U.S. Bureau of Mines counted no less than 155 tunnels, 1,300 shafts and 1,600 prospect holes, virtually all collapsed, flooded or abandoned, and virtually all contributing in varying

Steve Voynick



Yak Tunnel portal, with EPA monitor at entrance

degrees to the collective contaminated district drainage. The owner of any of those properties could technically be cited as a responsible party, even the old-timer whose father staked a small claim in 1880, dug a shallow shaft, then left the property to his son. "The search for responsible parties is not going to be a witch hunt," said Jane Russo of the EPA's

external affairs office in Denver. "We're not going after the 'mom and pop' claim owners. We'll be identifying a very limited number of responsible parties who are clearly major contributors to the problem." One of those certain to receive close EPA scrutiny is ASARCO, Inc., the current owner of the Yak Tunnel and associated properties. Since an

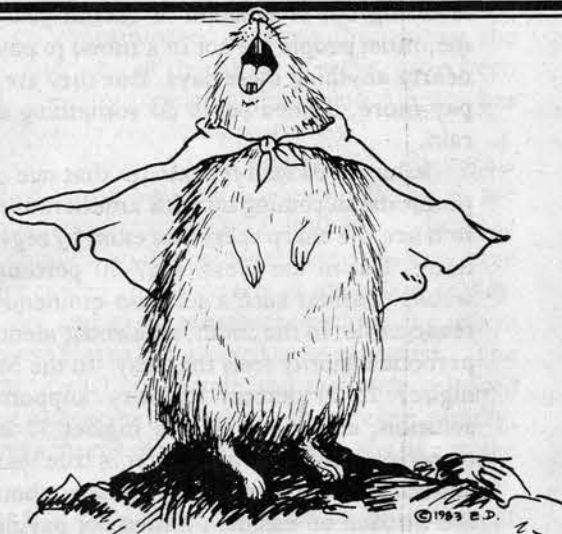
earlier tunnel surge which turned the Arkansas River orange in 1983, ASARCO ceased all maintenance of the Yak, which led the Colorado Department of Health to file a natural resources damage suit in 1983 against the corporation.

Although the current EPA investigation has been limited to the California Gulch drainage, there is another area to consider before the Arkansas River will ever be saved, and that is the Leadville Drainage Tunnel, whose discharge is not quite as acidic as that of the Yak, but still heavily laden with toxic heavy metals. The Leadville Drain is federally owned and controlled by the Bureau of Reclamation and thus is not eligible for Superfund studies or funding. But the EPA has cited the Bureau for violating its discharge permit and has been investigating the Leadville Drain on its own to determine an appropriate solution.

Two major questions remain if the upper Arkansas is to be saved. First, of course, is whether \$10.6 billion will be appropriated for Superfund, a question that should be answered in the next few months. Second is whether the Bureau of Reclamation and EPA will work together to clean up the Leadville Drain. To clean up California Gulch without cleaning up the Leadville Drain will not clean up the Arkansas.

What might be expected if the Leadville mine drainage pollution were cleaned up? Tom Martin, a state wildlife manager for the Leadville area, expects a lot. "The upper Arkansas has the potential to be a spectacular brown trout fishery. In time, it could, and should, be among the best in Colorado."

And if the Arkansas is not cleaned up? "It won't be anything," said Martin. "Ever."



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14-High Country News -- February 3, 1986

GUEST ESSAY

The public wants a healthy environment, now!

by Louis Harris

Perhaps the most remarkable fact about environmental issues is that the establishment consistently underestimates both the seriousness of pollution problems and the depth of feeling of the public about cleaning up the mess. Somehow, the establishment in this country is convinced that maybe environmental problems will become less severe or will somehow get better and go away, and most of the leadership spend 20 years clawing their way to the top -- only to be 20 years out of date.

When we updated our 1985 research on basic public attitudes toward environmental matters we found, first, that the common assumption is that the top priority of the country is to stimulate economic growth. Indeed, keeping the economy growing and prosperous is a top priority. Another assumption is that when environmental matters come up, a cleanup should take place only when in consonance with economic growth, but if the choice is between growth or a cleanup, then the cleanup must take a back seat. Well, I can report to you categorically that by 63-33 percent, a solid majority of the American people reject that view.

Indeed, over the past year, we asked samples of over 10,000 individuals how they feel about strict enforcement of the clean air and clean water acts. By 85-8 percent it is no contest: over an 8-1 majority favors strict enforcement of the existing statutes. And, I might add, want them reenacted again, with a substantial 66 percent who favor making the renewal of those acts even tougher and more strict than the originals passed over 10 years ago.

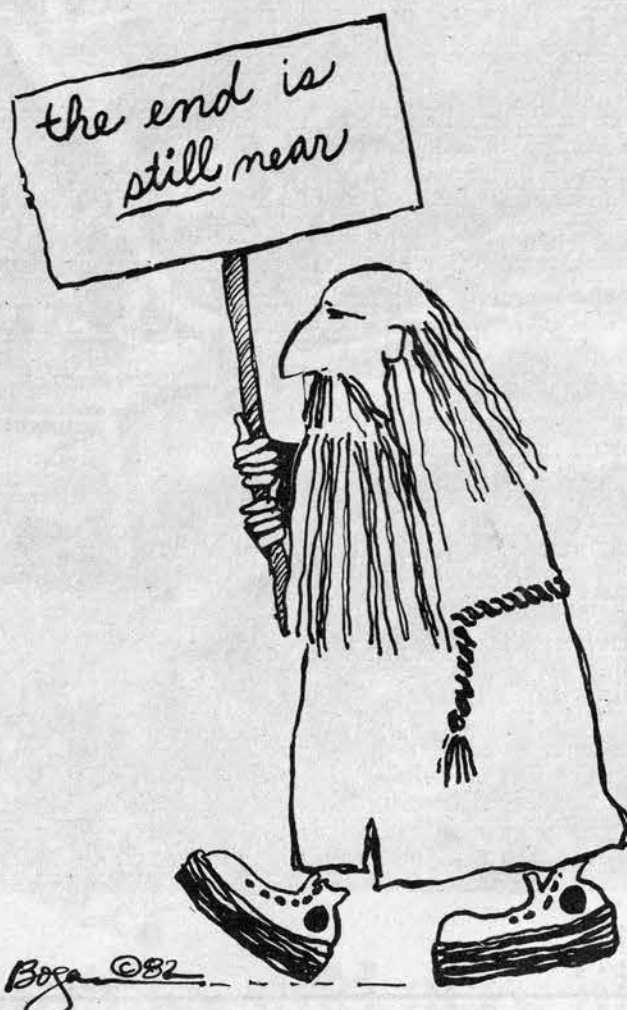
Again, when we asked about just how serious a whole spate of environmental problems are today, in field work concluded in March of 1985, here is what we found. Air pollution by coal-burning electric power plants: a serious problem by 70-26 percent. Acid rain pollution: a serious problem by 76-18 percent, up sharply from a comparable 60-18 percent who felt the same back in 1981. Incidentally, the number aware of acid rain has gone up from 30 percent in 1980 to a nearly unanimous 94 percent today. A substantial 88-11 percent majority nationwide is convinced that the problem of contaminated drinking water is a serious problem. And, finally, a nearly unanimous 93-5 percent majority believes that the problem of disposal of hazardous wastes is a serious problem.

These are staggering numbers by any standards. In a society where the victor of an election needs no more than one vote over the 50 percent mark to achieve power, these percentages indicate a virtual no contest. Environmental concerns win hands down.

On acid rain, over eight in every 10 people are convinced that the sources of acid rain are emissions from plants and factories that burn coal, plants and factories that burn oil, chemical plants, and emissions from cars and trucks that burn gasoline and diesel fuel. What is more, sizable majorities are also convinced by now that acid rain is rapidly increasing the toxic content of lakes and rivers, crippling wildlife, threatening water supplies, and endangering agriculture and the raising of livestock. What is more, there is now a sense that acid rain is affecting every section of the country, with the South now coming up rapidly as a prime affected area equal to the Northeast.

The question that seems to have been debated interminably about acid rain is just who should shoulder the substantial costs of cleaning it up. Over six in 10 are prepared to put the burden on all those individuals and corporations who use fuels that contribute to the acid rain problem, including oil, natural gas, and gasoline. This means, in effect, anyone who burns such fuel that results in acid rain should participate in the cost of cleaning it up.

But there is a more specific focus: A big 72-22 percent majority of the American people single out the shareowners of investor-owned electric utilities as the proper target for bearing most of the costs of cleaning up acid rain. Indeed, close to



three in every four Americans today would like to see Congress pass legislation that places the responsibility and liability clearly on the shoulders of such generators of acid rain.

The question, of course, is immediately asked if people who are so willing to see companies, such as electric utilities, socked with much of the cost of cleaning up acid rain, would also be willing to see their own bills raised? Indeed, we have asked that and people on average are willing to pay close to \$70 a year, if the costs of cleaning up acid rain are passed on to them at least in part. And, despite the levelling out of inflation in recent years, believe me, most people are not in a mood to pay more for nearly anything these days. But they are willing to pay more, if need be, to do something about acid rain.

It has been said repeatedly that one of the real problems in coming up with amelioratives for acid rain are the sharp splits that exist by region on this issue. But in the West, a 67-30 percent majority would consider such a solution eminently fair and reasonable. In the South, an almost identical 68-26 percent majority feels that way. In the Midwest, a higher 75-20 percent majority supports such a solution, and in the East a higher 77-20 percent majority feels that way. Now it is true that a higher majority in the East feels strongly about putting the burden on electric utilities for paying for acid rain than is the case in the West. But in the West, over a two-to-one majority supports exactly what a three-to-one majority in the East advocates. So those who would claim that acid rain is a regional issue, dividing the country sharply, conjuring up a nation divided within itself, as in the case of slavery in the mid-19th century, simply do not appear to have a leg to stand on.

Even in Congress, where we have repeatedly polled members on acid rain, a 7-to-1 majority wants to tighten sulfur dioxide standards for new plants, a 6-to-1 majority wants laws passed requiring existing plants to meet stricter sulfur dioxide emissions standards and by 6-to-1 to require scrubbers for existing plants.

Yet the public itself is also of the view that precious little has been getting done. The president is given marks of 61-33 percent negative on his handling of environmental cleanup matters. One in every two people are prepared to say the Reagan record in environmental matters has been an outright failure, though a substantial 41 percent are hopeful that the second term Reagan will be better than the first.

But the ratings given other major parts of the establishment on how they have handled environmental matters have been scarcely better.

Congress comes up with marks of no better than 58-40 percent negative, state and local governments with negative marks of 63-32 percent negative, and industry with a rating that is 68-27 percent negative.

Our polling on environmental matters has been almost a strange and even eerie experience over the past several years. We find, for example, on racial matters that the pendulum tends to swing back and forth between those who are conscience stricken over the country not having done enough and a sense that change is moving too rapidly. Or we have found that the entire question of economic growth can go up or down by as much as 30 points depending on the period we ask about it as a national priority. We have found that support for increasing defense spending has dropped from 71 percent in 1980 to no more than 9 percent today. In many areas, we have found that change can take place with some rapidity.

But in the environmental area, the dynamic of change in recent years has always been in one direction: the American people get tougher and tougher and more adamant and more shocked about the state of environmental cleanup, and they are literally furious that there has been so much perceived foot-dragging on the part of those with the power to get things done. Thus, the majorities in any sound poll conducted on this subject are simply huge and staggering. They parallel nothing less than belief in free elections, in the right to free speech, the right to worship, and the right to private ownership of property. If any of these were believed to be in dire peril, you would hear about it in a hurry.

Yet, somehow, the cries and demand of the populace to their leaders on environmental matters fall on relatively deaf ears. The word somehow does not quite get through.

Well, let me say it is my view that the critical mass has been reached on this subject in terms of public opinion and the day of reckoning is about to be at hand. I would not be at all surprised to see environmental matters become a critical balance of power issue in the 1986 elections. We are a post-industrial society now, which is just coming to the point of calculating the sizable costs of putting our house in order as a consequence of a long period of straight-out industrial growth. To put it bluntly, we are unwilling to tolerate a silicon valley, for example, to be victimized by toxic wastes as a cost of developing a high technology industry. We are demanding right now by big margins to require industry to develop high tech, but to do it in a pollution-free setting.

Basically, what people are asking and pleading and demanding out there is that there be a new wave of commitment by those who purport to speak for the people, who speak the words that they care about the quality of the human experience. The challenge for leaders is to catch up with the governed.

□

New York-based pollster Louis Harris gave this talk on Mar. 18, 1985, to the Wildlife Management Institute's 50th annual conference on wildlife and natural resources, held in Washington, D.C. A spokesman for Louis Harris and Associates said on Jan. 24 that there have been no new environmental polls since March.

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OPINION

Environmental leaders stand up for orthodoxy

by Ed Marston

“Early in 1981, we, the chief executives of 10 major environmental and conservation organizations, began meeting informally to enhance our effectiveness in helping to protect the nation's environmental quality.”

Thus begins *An Environmental Agenda for the Future* by the CEOs of 10 major environmental groups. The slim paperback is an attempt to turn the movement from a reactive one responding to others to one which sets and carries out its own program.

Although the book contains a disclaimer on its cover -- “Names of organizations for identification purposes only” -- *Agenda* is as close as you can get to an official statement of collective policy by the nation's environmental movement.

In addition to the 10 CEOs, 11 task forces helped formulate the issues and recommendations. The members were drawn from a wide array of groups and locales; however, all but one task force was chaired by a CEO.

Given the large number of people who worked on *Agenda*, the paperback is amazingly brief. The 23-page introduction consists of a history of the conservation/environmental movement; the economic and ideological approach the 10 see underlying today's movement; and an overview of the problems which face the nation and the globe -- nuclear war, polluted air and water, toxics, public land use, population, etc. -- as well as a list of solutions. The introduction is followed by 11 sections describing the problems and proposing solutions.

The book is workmanlike, to the point, and well organized. It would be useful as a legislative program directed at a thousand or so activists. But the document claims far more than the setting of a political, top-down wish list. The introduction talks of stepping back and thinking “about where the environmental movement should be going and what goals it should be pursuing... We need to look beyond the current legislative docket and budget battles, to problems and opportunities...”

Given the intended scope and the credentials of the authors, the reader comes to *Agenda* expecting a play of ideas, alternative visions of the future, explorations of ideologies and a frank look at past successes and failures.

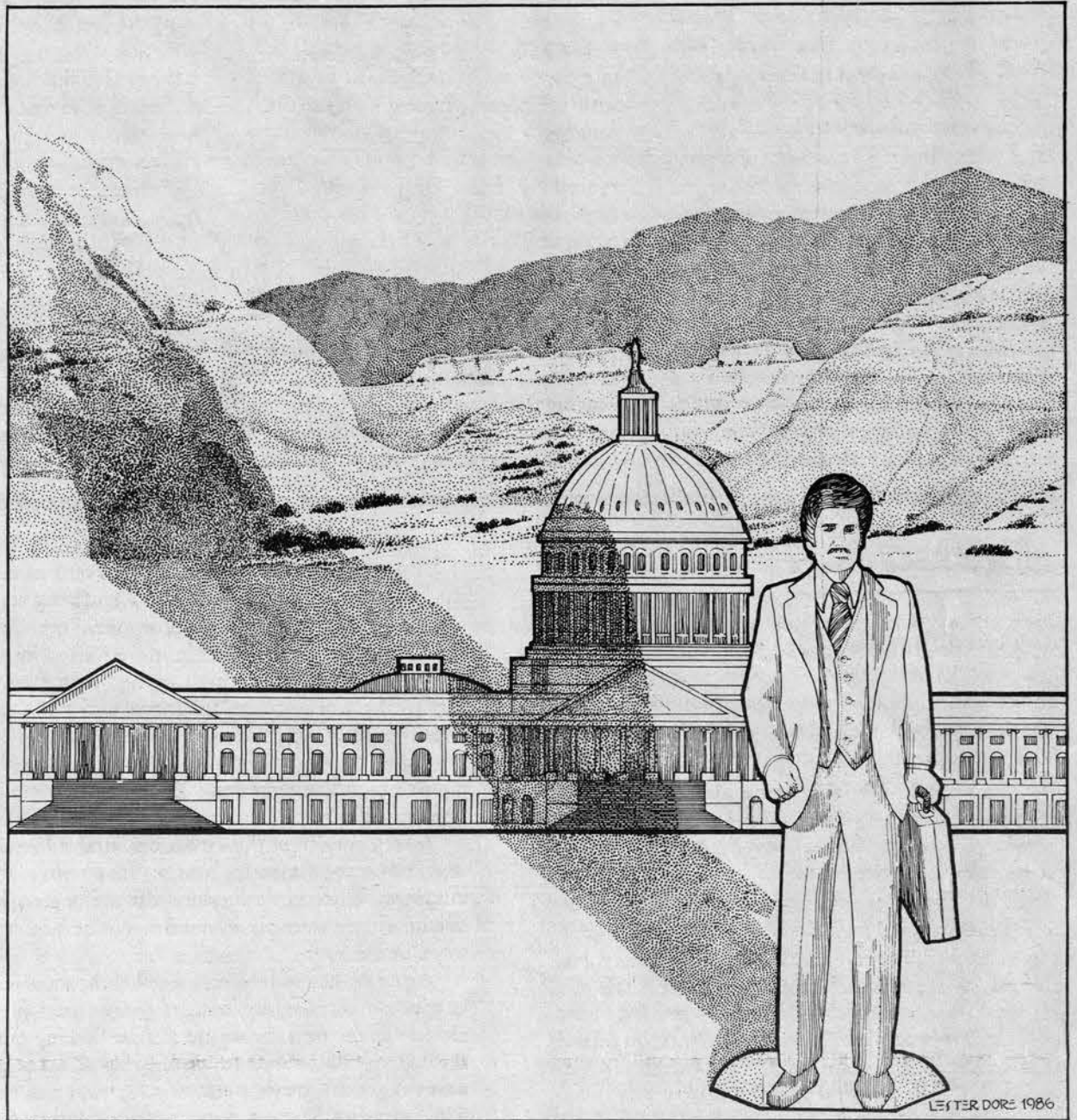
None of that is here. Instead of new ideas and fresh looks, *Agenda* is a reaffirmation of orthodoxy. Its total ideological content is contained in a one-page section titled “Benefits of Regulation.”

Yet the 1980s, especially, are a time of clashing ideologies. Coming seemingly from nowhere, free market proponents have taken centerstage in the theater of ideas. Environmentalists have made use of those ideas. An environmental-fiscal conservative coalition helped stop the Clinch River Breeder Reactor and stymied new water starts by insisting that local government contribute to dams and irrigation projects.

The Synfuels Corporation is an especially interesting example of such cooperation. The \$88 billion SFC was a Carter administration monster which could have wiped out the West. Had Carter been re-elected, it is possible the Rockies would now be drowning in murky air whose only grace would be the hiding of enormous pits and tailings piles. But instead of Carter, we got Stockman-Reagan, who (even as James Watt was trying to give away the West) first crippled the SFC and then, this December, helped destroy it.

The attraction of free market economics and the challenge it presents to a regulatory approach seem at least worthy of mention. But *Agenda* determinedly ignores any thought that regulation isn't the way to go. In the “Toxics and Pollution Control” section, the CEOs write:

“Eight years after Congress passed legislation to control... hazardous waste, less than 10 percent of the facilities currently handling wastes have been licensed. Five years after passage of the 1980 Superfund legislation... less than 1 percent of the



known dumps have been cleaned up. Groundwater has been contaminated in areas throughout the nation, and tens of thousands of wells have been closed. The Environmental Protection Agency has not adequately regulated pesticides.

“More than 65,000 commercial chemicals identified by the National Academy of Sciences are currently being marketed, yet little or no data has been compiled on the potential many of them have to cause cancer, birth defects or chronic diseases. Pesticides and toxic substances banned for use in the United States are allowed to be exported... The amount of carbon dioxide and methane released into the atmosphere continues to increase rapidly, creating a threat of profound climate change in the future.”

The first paragraph reads like an indictment of a regulatory approach. The second portrays an economy which appears out of control, gone berserk in its production of goods and bads. Taken together, they might lead the CEOs to question both regulation and the logic of our economy. Such doubts never surface. After citing the eight-year-long failure of hazardous waste legislation, they write:

“Among high priorities for needed action by Congress are: passage of an effective safe drinking water law; extension and strengthening of Superfund and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act; amendment of the Clean Water Act to control non-point sources of surface water pollution...”

In their reflexive adherence to legislative solutions, they sound like chemical companies responding to the increased resistance of pests to pesticides by prescribing ever larger doses of ever more potent poisons. Moreover, although they cite the 65,000 chemicals, a possible greenhouse effect, and other systemic problems with our system, they also write:

“Continued economic growth is essential. Past environmental gains will be maintained and new ones made more easily in a healthy economy than

in a stagnant one with continued high unemployment.”

Agenda's Fortune 500, business-as-usual approach to the environment is uninspiring and gray. But the book has a more serious problem -- a refusal to engage in self-examination. For example, they failed to ask why, despite immense public support for environmental goals (see Louis Harris' speech on page 14), the movement appears bogged down.

The 10 also failed to look at that which they control -- the structure and behavior of the national environmental movement. In fact, in its adherence to top-down legislative solutions, *Agenda* often reads like a spoof of major environmental groups that Earth First!er Dave Foreman could have written.

Were the CEOs serious in their search for new directions, they might have put Foreman on one of their task forces, both for the Earth First! “fundamentalist” approach to the earth and for Foreman's analysis of the major groups' problems.

Foreman provides one possible explanation of *Agenda's* failure to discuss free market economics and political alliances that would extend beyond the Democratic party. In the Aug. 1, 1984, issue of *Earth First!*, Foreman wrote:

“Too many (environmental organization staffers) see their job with a conservation group as being a stepping stone to one with a prominent politician or to a high position in the administration. Too many take care not to ruffle feathers in order to preserve their opportunity to be considered later for director of the National Park Service or Assistant Secretary of Agriculture.”

Agenda's failure to discuss that which the CEOs know best -- national politics -- indicates that the environmental pros aren't about to even discuss the advantages of distancing themselves from the Dems. It may also explain why

(Continued on page 16)

BOOK NOTES

Watt tells as little as possible

The Courage of a Conservative

James G. Watt with Doug Wead. Simon & Schuster, New York, New York, 1985, 221 pages. \$15.95, cloth.

Review by Betsy Marston

To paraphrase Dorothy Parker, the affair between James Watt and James Watt will endure as one of the prettiest love stories in all American politics. In Watt's new book, *The Courage of a Conservative*, the former Secretary of the Interior displays all the glitter and depth of a worn dime. This is a disappointing book for anyone curious about Watt, the

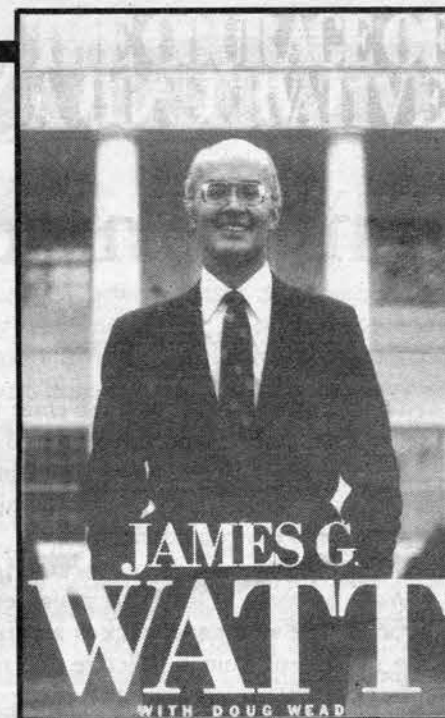
person, or Watt, the Reagan appointee. And even though he tells us the book "is not an attack on the media and their lack of professional integrity," he manages to find fault with the press wherever he can. It is true Watt was hounded by the press for his forthright opinions about everything from God to the Beach Boys, but particularly for his decisions while at Interior to eliminate millions of acres of public lands from consideration as wilderness and to allow easier access for industry.

But you won't find a reexamination of those tumultuous three and a half years in this book; you won't even find a revisionist history. Instead, this is a tract. Watt asks his readers to do away

with labels, to recall the revolutionary pluralistic history of this country and support the following: an end to legal abortion, return to the death penalty, support for the President's Star Wars defense, school prayer and the family, and opposition to government subsidies such as milk price supports. "Welfare for business must stop," he adds. Unfortunately, no other examples are offered.

Only three pages in the index refer to Watt's tenure at the Interior Department, a job he was forced to leave after a final verbal gaffe about achieving the right ethnic and racial balance on a committee.

The question then is why he wrote this book. It is certainly disheartening



to read it; James Watt seems to be a man of strong will and strong convictions who has never thought very deeply about anything.

Agenda...

(Continued from page 15)

environmental staffers are almost always political liberals even though this makes alliances with conservatives more difficult.

What would a wide-ranging and open agenda read like? It might begin by asking whether the present concentration on Congress and the courts is the only path to the future.

In the 1970s, the nation turned to Washington for environmental legislation. With the passage of those laws, however, environmental activity has shifted to state legislatures, state agencies and regional federal agencies. If the laws passed in the 1970s are to work, they must be implemented, and that cannot be done from Washington. The regulatory failures cited by *Agenda* won't be cured by better laws -- they will be cured by action at the grassroots.

This shift to the states and local level is no secret. But the CEOs didn't discuss it, just as they didn't ask whether they are over-committed in the Washington-to-New York corridor. Rather than ask those questions, the CEOs appear to be looking ever higher, beyond the Congress and President to a global hierarchy.

There is, of course, no discussion in *Agenda* of economic development, aside from the need for growth. That is sad because in the West the time is ideal for a major economic shift. The decline of mining, of ranching, of oil and gas drilling, and of power plant building has created a partial economic vacuum. It is at least conceivable that extractive economies which destroy the land could be replaced by economies which maintain or enhance the land.

Recognition of such an opening might lead the CEOs to hire people who understand economic change. They might send them into the "field" to work with local communities. The political effect of a Sierra Club or FOE staffer helping a busted mining or logging town develop new economic paths is unimaginable.

Right now, the environmental movement takes the path of most resistance by concentrating on the Congress and the courts to accomplish its ends, or to block other's ends. If its leaders looked instead for ways to pull on strings, rather than push on them, the world might appear a different, more hopeful place. But *Agenda* holds out no hope, provides no inspiration. It simply cites massive environmental threats and prescribes conventional legislative cures.

It is a conceit of the environmental movement that it is more far-seeing, more imaginative, than industry. When environmentalists are beaten, it is because they were out-gunned -- not because they were out-thought.

Agenda, however, indicates that the movement is often outclassed by industry. One example is found in a new book by Jack Doyle of the Environmental Policy Institute (his boss helped write *Agenda*). Doyle's *Alien Harvest* describes how America's major firms, often prompted by imaginative entrepreneurs, are integrating genetic engineering and the legal power to patent seeds into conventional agricultural activities.

Doyle says that could lead to a corporate stranglehold on agriculture and result in expensive, low-quality food. Ownership of the land is nice, his book indicates, but ownership of genetic material is far more powerful. Doyle doesn't approve of industry's strategy. But he and the reader can't help but admire the foresight, patience and skill with which business is moving to colonize food production.

A second example is contained in Dan Schiller's *Telematics and Government*. This academic study is also an expose. Schiller describes how the oil and gas companies, the large retailers, the major shippers and the computer companies spent the last 30 years in a step by step process which finally broke AT&T's monopoly on telecommunications. As a result of their work, those firms have obtained lower rates for themselves, advanced communication and data processing technology, and imminent freedom from paying their fair share toward maintaining universal telephone service.

The coup has environmental implications because the present reasonably priced rural telephone service could rise to \$75 a month. In the Rockies, the hope for grass-roots political and economic reform lies with new ways of making a living, many of which depend on telecommunications. If the Rockies are priced out of telephone service, the region will remain dependent on extractive, polluting, unstable industries.

Despite the obvious environmental implications of the changes in agriculture and telecommunications, there is no mention of them in *Agenda*. The CEOs don't think in terms of a dynamic society. They are conservative, gearing up to fight last decade's battles with last decade's weapons, on last decade's battlefield.

If you identify the vigor of the environmental movement with the major groups, things are grim. But they are not the movement. In the Rockies, the movement is made up of thousands of local groups, some of which are branches or chapters of the national organizations, and all of which care about their local issues and the larger forces which influence them. The need is to bring that understanding and energy into the national groups. It is a pressing need. As *Agenda* demonstrates, the national groups appear unable to look in any direction but straight back.

□

An Environmental Agenda for the Future by John H. Adams, Natural Resources Defense Council; Louise C. Dunlap, Environmental Policy Institute; Jay D. Hair, National Wildlife Federation; Frederick D. Krupp, Environmental Defense Fund; Jack Lorenz, The Izaak Walton League of America; J. Michael McCloskey, Sierra Club; Russell W. Peterson, National Audubon Society; Paul C. Pritchard, National Parks and Conservation Association; William A. Turnage, The Wilderness Society; and Karl Wendelowski, Friends of the Earth. (Names of organizations are for identification purposes only.) Island Press, P.O. Box 53406, Washington, D.C. 20009, 1985. \$6.95, paper.

Organization	Top Dog	Membership	Organization	Top Dog	Membership
Natural Resources Defense Council	John H. Adams, Executive Director	55,000	Sierra Club	Douglas Wheeler, Executive Director	365,000
Environmental Policy Institute	Brent Blackwelder, President	Not applicable	National Audubon Society	Peter A.A. Berle, President	445,000
National Wildlife Federation	Jay D. Hair, Executive Vice President	4,500,000	National Parks and Conservation Association	Paul C. Pritchard, President	45,000
Environmental Defense Fund	Frederic D. Krupp, Executive Director	50,000	The Wilderness Society	George Frampton, President	150,000
Izaak Walton League	Dale Brentnall, President	45,000	Friends of the Earth	Karl Wendelowski, Chief Executive Officer	17,000