

# High Country News

June 19, 1989

Vol. 21 No. 12

A Paper for People who Care about the West

One dollar

## FBI charges four with attack on power line

by Jim Robbins

On May 30, a flare broke the darkness of an Arizona desert evening, a signal for some 30 FBI agents and a helicopter to move in to arrest two men and a woman authorities claim were attempting to fell a tower that carries high voltage lines to a water pump for the Central Arizona Project, a mammoth irrigation system in the desert.

A fourth man, Dave Foreman, who is a co-founder of the radical environmental group Earth First!, was arrested at his home in Tucson on May 31.

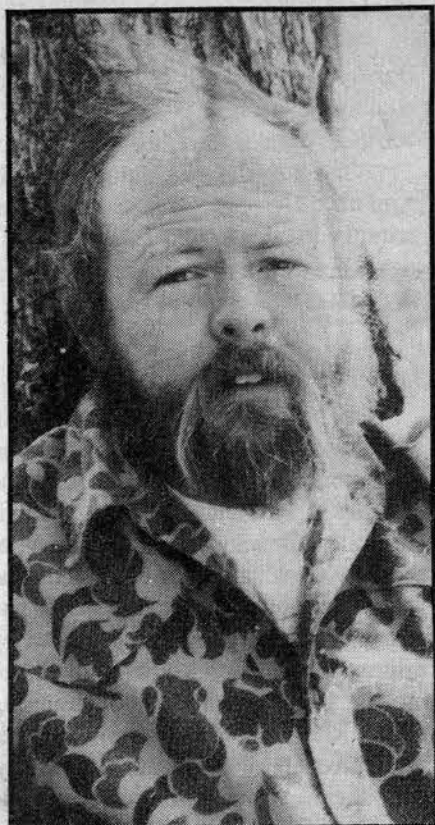
The FBI claims the attempted toppling of the CAP tower was a dress rehearsal for an attack on three other power lines that carry energy to the Palo Verde nuclear power plant in Arizona, the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant in California, and the Department of Energy's Rocky Flats plant near Denver, which manufactures plutonium triggers for nuclear weapons.

The FBI team which arrested the three is specially trained in anti-terrorist tactics.

Gerry Spence, the noted Jackson, Wyo., attorney, is representing Foreman pro bono. He claims the FBI has greatly exaggerated what took place.

While Foreman has been released on \$50,000 bail, the other three people — Margaret Millett, 35, Mark Davis, 39, and Marc Andre Baker, 37, all of Prescott, Ariz. — are being held in a Phoenix jail without bond.

According to the FBI, an undercover agent spent 18 months with Foreman and the other three people. The agent claims the three were operating — apparently facetiously — as the Evan Mecham Eco-Terrorist International Conspiracy, or EMETIC. The latter is a term for a substance used to induce vomiting. Evan Mecham is the former right-



Dave Foreman

wing governor of Arizona who was impeached last year.

According to authorities, the undercover agent said Foreman gave the three \$580 for the attack, and promised to provide another \$200.

Baker, Millett and Davis have been charged with destruction of an energy facility, destruction of property for interstate commerce, destruction of government property and conspiracy. Foreman has been charged with conspiracy to destroy an energy facility, a felony which carries a penalty of 10 years in jail and a \$50,000 fine.

Foreman, who was arrested early in the morning at his Tucson home soon after the attack, feels the FBI overreacted.

"It's real exciting to wake up and see three big, beefy guys with body armor on, looking right into their guns," Foreman said. The 42-year-old Foreman said he was asleep in bed and wearing ear plugs because of barking dogs when they came in and yanked off the sheet. "I hear that FBI agents take great pride in filing down their firing pins so you can blow on them and they'll go off. They wanted to get their cowboy thrills."

"He's a former bean farmer, a peace-loving man," said Spence. "All they had to do was call him and say, 'Dave, come on down.'"

In order to keep the tower from being destroyed, according to John Loughney, a spokesman for the FBI in Phoenix, the undercover agent informed his superiors of the attack and the investigation was cut short. As the FBI moved in, backed up by local authorities on horseback and a helicopter, the woman fled. The men were captured; the woman later turned herself in.

The FBI has also accused Millett and Davis of cutting down pylons that support ski lifts at Flagstaff Fairfield Snowbowl in Arizona, and of knocking over 29 electrical power transmission poles serving the Canyon, Hermit and Pine Nut uranium mines near the Grand Canyon.

There have been no further arrests, but an unknown number of people have been subpoenaed to testify before a Phoenix grand jury.

According to the FBI scenario, the three alleged saboteurs were planning to drop power lines that feed the three nuclear facilities. There has been conjecture that by dropping the lines the nuclear plants would have to turn to a back-up system, which has been known to fail.

Foreman will not comment on the case.

Foreman, a former professional farrrier, has made a name for himself as an anti-technology war chief. He wrote a book called *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching* which details tactics for disabling heavy machinery, toppling billboards, destroying helicopters and "miscellaneous devilry."

"It's not terrorism, it's not vandalism," Foreman said of eco-sabotage in an interview last year. "It's something very deliberate, very thoughtful, that is undertaken as a last resort with full appreciation of the consequences. It's a

form of worship toward the Earth. It's really a very spiritual thing to go out and do."

Earth First! is one of a number of increasingly confrontational environmental groups who believe the consensus process is moving too slowly to stem rapidly disintegrating natural systems. Some groups, such as Greenpeace USA, believe in non-violent direct actions such as hanging protest banners and climbing smokestacks. Some Earth First!ers take that a step further and believe in dismantling and destroying the technology that makes development possible.

Incidents of eco-sabotage have increased in recent years. In fall 1987, someone poured a silicone grinding compound into the engines of four bulldozers widening the Burr Trail, which caused \$87,000 in damage. A number of logging sales throughout the West have been spiked. And in the Selway Bitterroot wilderness a dirt landing strip had salt buried in it. Moose, deer and elk dug holes in the strip to get the salt and ruined the strip.

The movement seems to be fueled by recent revelations about ozone depletion, global warming and ocean pollution. "People all over the world realize we have our planet in a serious environmental crisis," said Howie Wolke, a Montana wilderness guide and co-founder of Earth First!, who himself spent six months in the Sublette County, Wyo., jail for yanking survey stakes that marked a planned oil exploration road. "They're frustrated by going to meetings and negotiating sessions ad nauseum and not seeing any results."

Wolke says the recent arrests will only galvanize the resistance. "When the dust settles it will inspire more people to defend the Earth," Wolke said. "It's a call to arms. People will be outraged."

Spence, who is known for his flamboyance and his success with a jury, says he is looking forward to the case. "It is a luxury to a lawyer to get a good and honest case," Spence said. "When I find a case I can believe in and the cause is right and just, I consider it a gift to me."

□

Jim Robbins is a freelance writer in Helena, Montana.

## Rocky Flats is a fortress

Officials at the Rocky Flats nuclear plant in Denver say their plant is relatively safe from external attack by eco-saboteurs or others.

Pat Etchart, a spokesman for Rockwell International, which operates the plant for the Department of Energy, said "the largest private security force in Colorado" does a vigorous job of protecting Rocky Flats.

Security includes armored personnel carriers, anti-aircraft capability, barbed wire fences and the thorough searching of all vehicles entering the compound. "There has never been an instance where our security was breached," Etchart said.

The Environmental Defense Fund's Melinda Kassen, who is knowledgeable about the plant, said it would be "difficult for an outsider to come in. It's like the Israel-Jordan border, with barbed wire fences. To get into the plant and do damage is next to impossible. That's why these people (allegedly) were trying to cut the power from the outside."

Even that plan had little chance of success, according to Etchart. "We have redundant power supply lines which come into the plant. In addition to that, we have back-up generators."

Etchart said there has never been an incident of attempted sabotage at Rocky Flats. All of the damage over the years was done inadvertently, by Rockwell employees.

Plutonium burning out of control in 1969 caused \$26 million in damage; another fire in 1957 cost \$800,000. Meanwhile, there have been repeated unauthorized leaks of radiation and the plant now faces a substantial clean-up job involving nuclear wastes dumped on-site, which have contaminated the groundwater.

Asked how difficult it would be for someone to enter the plant and intentionally do the kind of damage Rockwell workers have done accidentally, Etchart said: "It would not be easy at all."

— Barry Noreen

## Feds raid Rocky Flats plant

Seventy-five federal agents raided the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant June 6. Agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Environmental Protection Agency started a 10-day search, looking through records and collecting water, air and soil samples from the 6,500-acre reservation located 16 miles northwest of Denver.

The agents are investigating allegations that Rockwell International Corp., which operates the plant for the U.S. Department of Energy, illegally dumped, stored and burned radioactive and haz-

ardous waste and falsified documents to show paper compliance with EPA regulations.

The two-year-long secret FBI probe is the first criminal investigation of a nuclear facility in the country. The EPA calls the effort the largest criminal environmental investigation in history. Colorado Gov. Roy Romer says, "If you have bad operators there, then those people should be fired and go to jail."

In addition to the federal probe, the Colorado Department of Health charged

(Continued on page 7)

## Dear friends,



HIGH COUNTRY NEWS (ISSN/0191/5657) is published biweekly, except for one issue during July and one issue during January, by the High Country Foundation, 124 Grand Avenue, Paonia, Colorado 81428. Second-class postage paid at Paonia, Colorado.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to HIGH COUNTRY NEWS, Box 1090, Paonia, CO 81428.

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## Free samples

Fred Rasmussen of Salida, Colo., was good enough to send us the names of 10 friends who may be interested in subscribing to *High Country News*. They will receive two samples of the paper. If you know people who might enjoy the paper, please send us their names and addresses.

## Making a mark

*High Country News* alumni continue to make their mark on the world of publishing. Michael Moss, who wrote for the paper when it was in Lander, has just had a book published, *Palace Coup*, about the Helmsley real estate empire. Doubleday is the publisher. Michael is also a reporter for *Newsday*.

Kevin Lee Lopez, who was an intern here earlier this year, has edited the first edition of the *Ya-Ka-Ama Native News*. The newsletter of the Ya'Ka'Ama Native Nursery contains articles on native seeds, the recent Sinkyone Gathering, the planned 1992 "commemoration" of Columbus' disastrous arrival in 1492, Big Mountain and other topics. The address is: 6215 East-side Road, Forestville, CA. 95436.

## New old news

Although dozens of newspapers and publications come to our office, there are hundreds more that we never see. So we are grateful to readers who send us articles or let us know about stories we may have missed. Marcy Neilson of Rupert, Idaho, for example, just sent us a clipping from the *Twin Falls Times-News* on secret releases of radiation by the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory.

She writes, "The local TV stations here played it down as 'old news,' but it's sure new news to me." It's new news to us, also, and we are writing a Hotline on it which should appear in the next issue.

## Visitors

Julie Steinbach of Cambria, CA, came through a few weeks ago, leaving envious staff members in her wake. The teacher has taken a six-month leave of absence to travel the United States with her dog. Her goal is to write a travel book — a la John Steinbeck's *Travels with Charlie*.

She might also have the material for a book in her work-a-day life: she teaches the third to sixth grade in the California state prison at San Luis de Obispo. With its 6,000 inmates, she says, the institution used to call itself the "largest prison in the free world." According to Julie, she has a large pool of students to draw from: more than half of the men have less than a sixth grade education.

Other recent visitors include white-water rafters Jim and Debbie Edgcomb, who stopped by after a vacation followed by a hunt for "retirement land" in Paonia. The couple own the *Blue Mound Leader Weekly* in Blue Mound, IN., where 100 years ago, says Jim, there once was a mound of blue flowers just out of town.

Another couple stopped by who have already settled on their future vacation home in Paonia. They were Bill and Lynda Zediker, both teachers, who live near Castle Rock, Colo.

Penny Elder, an Outward Bound teacher based in Jensen, Utah, dropped in after completing a 226-mile trip down the Colorado River. She was part of a group that included current and former *HCN* staffers. They travelled 226 miles in five kayaks and five rafts.

Stanley and Ruth Hutchisson of Canon City, Colo., dropped by to say hello. They know the paper from the Lander days.

## The writer wins

Freelance writers and artists should learn about the June 5, 1989, decision by the U.S. Supreme Court, which gives writers, rather than publishers, the right to copyright what they write. The June 6 *New York Times* has a story on the decision. If you can't get the *Times*, we'll be glad to send you a copy of the article.

## Zen computer

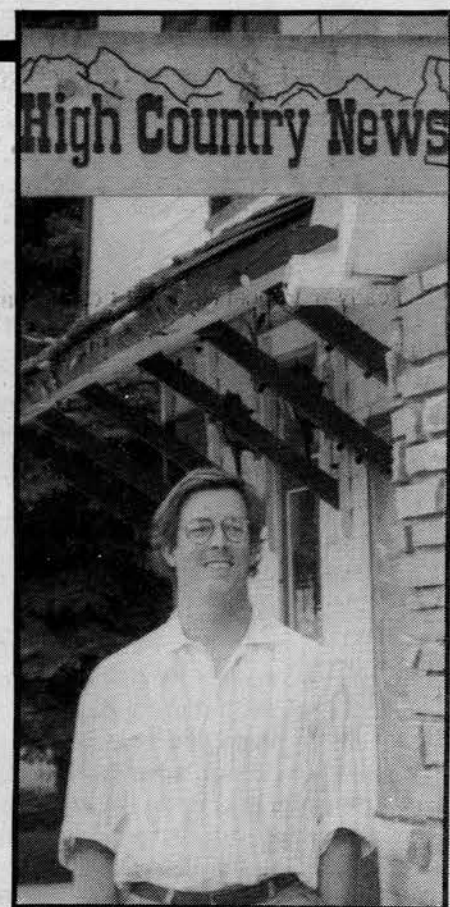
When it comes to computers, Peggy Daniel of New York City is a person after our own heart. At the bottom of a computer-printed letter, she handwrites:

"The printer seems gung ho on the bold face Helvetica. But it would only print the font I wanted if I agreed to let it put a big crease in the page. Who is to say who is right and who is wrong?"

## The newest intern

Our newest intern, Don Mitchell, was raised in suburban California an hour from San Francisco. The town he grew up in, Pleasanton, was a small agricultural community before the sprawl of the Bay Area started to encroach. The town's walnut orchards, hop fields and grazing land are gone now, replaced by upper-middle class housing developments, business parks and shopping malls. After leaving Pleasanton to go to the University of California at Berkeley, Don says he vowed never to return to the suburbs.

At Berkeley, Don majored in biology with a specialization in ecology. He spent six years on the campus trying to squeeze every natural history course he could into his curriculum. After he graduated, he spent the next few years working as a bicycle mechanic for REI Co-op in Berkeley and Seattle, and squeezed in



Don Mitchell

one summer in Idaho working as a back-country ranger for the Forest Service.

After another move to Minnesota to intern with The Nature Conservancy, Don came to Boulder, Colo., to study environmental law at the University of Colorado School of Law. He has survived his first year of studies and says he is looking forward to the change of pace that working for *HCN* in Paonia will provide.

## Condolences

The staff of *High Country News* extends its condolences to Gingy Andersen and her family on the death of her brother, Richard, in a commercial fishing boat accident off the coast of Alaska. Gingy, an Outward Bound instructor, was an intern here until a month ago.

—Ed Marston for the staff

## LETTERS

## MORE ON WYOMING GOV. STAN HATHAWAY

Dear *HCN*,

Concerning David D. Dominick's letter in the May 8, 1989, issue of *HCN* about former Wyoming Gov. Stan Hathaway, I have a different reality: Hathaway did indeed push for clean air legislation in Wyoming in the late 1960s, but he did so only when he was forced to by the federal Clean Air Act that essentially forced states to comply.

I attended a public hearing on air quality in Wyoming (spring, 1969) at which Hathaway defended Torrington's air pollution, saying, "I don't mind that smell. That's the smell of progress. That's the smell of 300 jobs," referring to the beet pulp mill there and to the "smell pollution" a resident of Torrington resented.

Yes, it was before EPA existed but only after federal legislation, that Hathaway opposed, had passed. Far from leading the enactment of environmental legislation, Hathaway fought it all the way. Only when it was inevitable did he encourage the Legislature to enact a state law that would keep the federal government from imposing more stringent regulations.

His record on water policy was even worse. At one point he tried to ramrod a bill through the Legislature that would have authorized three dams on the upper Green River and its tributaries. Ostensibly it was a feasibility bill to study such

dams, but in fact it would have authorized the governor to give them the go-ahead, no matter what the feasibility study found. The bill passed the Senate in a matter of days but was held up in the House by then-freshman legislator John Turner (now president of the Senate).

It finally passed the House in a version that made it in fact merely a feasibility study bill, and when it went to conference committee, the House bill prevailed as the senators realized they were about to give the governor carte blanche to spend a lot of state money. The governor's bill was beaten strictly on economic and accountability grounds, and those dams were never built: the Green River still runs free and natural.

Verne Huser  
Albuquerque, New Mexico

## FRESH AIR

Dear *HCN*,

To this 95-year-old your article by Michael Frome was like a breath of fresh air, bringing back happy memories on the Colorado River before the dam and trips by raft through Glen and Grand canyons. What a crime that dam was and is for a long time ahead.

Sylvia Tone  
Junction City, Oregon

# WESTERN ROUNDUP

## MacDonald's allies keep pressing his cause

WINDOW ROCK, Ariz. — After nearly four months of political upheaval on the Navajo Reservation, the tribe's new interim government appears to be taking control.

Its foundation is a month-old tribal court ruling, which found that the 49-member majority of the Navajo Tribal Council acted properly in February when it voted to place Navajo Tribal Chairman Peter MacDonald on paid leave in order to clear his name.

In January, witnesses before a Senate investigating committee accused MacDonald of accepting payments and bribes he called "gifts" from building contractors. He was also accused of conspiring to profit from the tribe's \$33.4 million purchase of Arizona's largest ranch, the Big Boquillas Ranch, which borders the Grand Canyon (HCN, 5/22/89).

The fledgling administration of interim chairman Leonard Haskie, who was selected in March from among the council majority, is now attempting to stabilize the government and get on with the business of running the 20,000-member tribe, the country's largest.

But keeping up a high degree of political agitation, and expected to continue doing so until the 1990 tribal elections, are those ardent backers of the ousted leader known simply across the reservation as "MacDonald supporters."

These are MacDonald's most loyal followers who say they will support him even to jail. Counted among them are some 34 council delegates who, despite the court's ruling, still believe the majority acted illegally to remove MacDonald. Like the chairman himself, his supporters appear willing to say or do anything to keep MacDonald in power. Sylvia Cambridge, a vocal 67-year-old MacDonald stalwart, has repeatedly told reporters that her group will never leave the council alone until the wishes of the minority are granted — namely, to return their leader to office.

"The chairman has done no wrong and he loves his people," she says.

Haskie's administration maintains it is these same people fighting on MacDonald's behalf who are keeping the tribe in turmoil, costing it thousands of dollars for police protection and legal expenses, and making Navajos appear silly to the outside world.

At one recent gathering, for instance, 147 MacDonald supporters voted to elect Donald Benally "temporarily people's chairman," to stand in for MacDonald. Benally, a council delegate from the large reservation town of Shiprock, N.M., and one of MacDonald's closest associates, was sworn in by a rodeo announcer May 23.

His community later passed a resolution officially declaring him an "embarrassment" for his role in the turmoil.

The latest lawsuit, filed by the tribal council's staunchest backers of the tribe's 1987 Big Boquillas Ranch purchase, asks a federal court to step in to undo the sale. The 19 plaintiffs, who form the core of MacDonald's council support, allege in the suit that Bureau of Indian Affairs officials, tribal attorneys and several corporations conspired with Haskie as far back as 1987. They allegedly set up a "racketeering enterprise" to use as a "vehicle for the takeover of the tribal government, bypassing the Navajo voters."

Other councilmen were amazed by the lawsuit, calling it frivolous. It was



Paul Natonahah

Christine Lansing, a MacDonald supporter, was charged with resisting arrest after a demonstration at Navajo tribal headquarters

these same MacDonald supporters on the council, they say, who pushed the 491,000-acre ranch sale through before complete information could be presented. Now the MacDonald supporters are saying the councilmen who questioned the purchase most were the ones who set it up.

For weeks, as the battle for control wound its way through the tribal courts, as many as 150 MacDonald supporters would demonstrate outside of tribal buildings. They jeered Haskie, the council, the tribal courts, the police and reporters, whom they accuse of telling lies and slanting stories.

Two weeks ago, 12 Tarahumara Indians in traditional dress from Chihuahua, Mexico, stopped by Window Rock on their way to a cultural exchange in Canada. MacDonald supporters, not knowing who they were, accused them of being Hopis brought in by the Haskie faction to "witch" them.

MacDonald's supporters had grown used to planning their strategy in comfort and style by using the chairman's \$650,000 renovated suite of offices, dubbed the Mahogany Palace by detractors. Even though MacDonald was no longer in control of the tribe, his supporters were in control of his executive office.

In early May, even after the Window Rock District Court issued a permanent injunction to stop MacDonald from using his offices or exercising authority, his supporters refused to vacate the building. Instead, they kept it locked and had elderly women and children stay inside to stave off a siege by police.

Although Navajo police scheduled several early morning raids on the office, plans were aborted when it was learned that MacDonald supporters inside knew of the raids. Each time, it was discovered, leaks came from the police themselves.

After one pre-dawn eviction, when seven sleeping people were removed without any arrests, the group managed to embarrass the new administration. They obtained keys to the offices and simply let themselves back in the next day.

Three days later, some 40 tribal police officers rushed the office at noon, breaking doorjambes to force their way in. Among the five people arrested for disorderly conduct and resisting an officer in that fracas were three council members still loyal to MacDonald, and his sister, Hannah Howard, of Teec Nos Pos, Ariz.

Since the end of May, a police presence around Window Rock has been highly visible. Tribal officers from across the reservation have been dispatched to the tribal capital to provide additional security, thus depleting other reservation areas of already sparse patrols.

Police now set up barricades to the tribal offices every day, and all drivers heading into Window Rock must pass through a roadblock.

As the MacDonald core group enjoys a respite and continues to hold strategy sessions in a nearby home, MacDonald himself remains in seclusion. Since visiting his sister at the Window Rock Jail recently and denouncing "police brutality," he has neither attended any rallies nor issued any statements.

Although both the tribe and federal authorities are investigating his business dealings, no charges have been filed and he officially remains chairman.

One widely held but unconfirmed assumption is that MacDonald is trying to negotiate a deal with federal prosecutors so that he might be allowed to pay a fine if convicted of wrongdoing rather than be sent to jail.

— George Hardeen

## HOTLINE

### NO SWEAT!

It's been a scorching spring in Phoenix, Ariz., with temperatures as high as 110 degrees. But the record heat hasn't stopped the local visitors bureau from announcing its latest promotional effort. The same group that pushed the "Cowntown to WOWtown" campaign, featuring poolside black-and-white cows donning Hawaiian shirts, has a new effort baking. It plans to convince tourists that Phoenix summers aren't as hot as they seem, reports the *Arizona Republic*. To promote the "Summer is No Sweat" campaign, the bureau plans to distribute "No Sweat" posters, T-shirts, sweatbands and 10,000 buttons to tourism employees. But a bureau spokesperson said that the first step is to convince locals "to complain less about the heat and encourage a more tolerable attitude throughout the summer."



### Homesteading plan flops

A homesteading program in Minnesota may be abandoned (HCN, 2/13/89). Hopes were high that Koochinging County would attract thousands of new residents and help revive the area's floundering economy. But in the two years since the program's conception and after more than 10,000 people expressed interest, only two families gained land, reports the *Minnesota Star Tribune*. The county's plan has been paralyzed by state laws forbidding the giveaway of much of the 50,000 acres thought to be available, while an overwhelming public response caught officials unprepared. Homesteaders have also had trouble getting home loans. Bank collateral rules require outright ownership of the land if it is to be used for loan security, but participants won't own the 40-acre plots until the 10th year of occupancy and tax payment. While these problems are frustrating county officials, many of the county's 15,700 residents have expressed their fears of "freeloading" outsiders invading the area. "We're getting tremendous pressure to shut down the program," said Bruce Biggins, who heads the homestead authority.

## BARBS

Bureaucrats' tunnel vision proves faulty.

City and state officials in Chicago don't always play straight with one another. An underground walkway connecting their offices is skewed by eight inches, at a cost of \$309,000, reports the *Chicago Sun-Times*.

This is hard for us to believe.

Former Interior Secretary James Watt, who chastised Americans for being "lured by the crumbs of subsidies and entitlements and giveaways," earned \$300,000 in 1986 by helping developers gain access to a federal program that subsidizes low-income housing projects.

## HOTLINE

### Researchers cool on heating trend

The nation may be getting cooler, not warmer, say two Arizona State University climatologists. Their study in the *Journal of Geophysical Research* disputes the assumption that temperatures during the past decade have increased due to the "greenhouse effect." "The earth may be heating but we haven't seen any evidence that the United States

is heating," says Robert Balling, director of the university's climatology lab. Balling, colleague Sherwood Idso, and the U.S. Water Conservation Laboratory in Phoenix studied weather records collected at 1,200 stations in small towns around the nation. Their data revealed that most places in the United States are actually cooling. Researchers who found evidence of a significant heating have been using weather records badly warped by the "urban heat island effect," Balling says. For a copy of the article, or for more information, Robert Balling can be reached at 602/965-6265.

## HOTLINE

### A question of image

Wal-Mart, one of the nation's largest chains of discount stores, wants to move into Jackson, Wyo., but some residents are fuming. Only two of the 35 people who spoke at a recent hearing favored the store, reports the *Jackson Hole Guide*. Jackson resident Cile Lamb said, "Personality has a face. Jackson has one, and Wal-Mart doesn't." Others against the proposal cited threats to established businesses, the lack of sufficient employee housing and the need to complete the town's master plan. Resident Carol Richardson, on the other hand, said, "There are a lot of people who want a Wal-Mart. I just wish that instead of being hypocrites and all showing up (at Wal-Mart) on the day it opens, we'd try to make this a win-win situation." Wal-Mart architects say their design for the proposed store, using materials indigenous to the area, will fit the town's image. Nonetheless, the Jackson Planning Commission voted in a hearing to recommend denial of the plan until the town's annexation study of the South Park area is complete.

### Proposed plutonium plant challenged

The Energy Department's plan to produce weapons-grade plutonium for nuclear warheads in Idaho is under attack. The Snake River Alliance and two other citizens' groups recently filed suit in federal district court against the department, saying it failed to adequately address environmental and safety considerations for its proposed special isotope separation plant. The plant would be built at the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory near Idaho Falls. The suit claims the DOE's environmental impact statement fails to consider other alternatives, denies the public "meaningful comment" and lacks essential information. Liz Paul, director of the Snake River Alliance, says the agency's document fails to address such issues as the economic impacts of an accident and alternate waste disposal plans. Joining in the suit with the Snake River Alliance were the Natural Resources Defense Council and Palouse-Clearwater Hanford Watch.

## BARBS

A new approach to solid waste disposal.

Although the *Guinness Book of World Records* is shelving its gluttony section, an entry will remain for Michel Lotito, whose diet since 1966 has included 10 bicycles, a supermarket cart, seven television sets, six chandeliers, a coffin and a Cessna light aircraft, reports the *Arizona Republic*.

Part of the truth and nothing but ...

"I put in what I wanted to. I paid for it," said John Hossack, after running an advertisement deliberately understating Forest Service contributions to local governments, while overstating what the timber industry pays. Hossack is a spokesman for Friends of the Northwest Log Haul, a pro-timber group based in California, AP reports.

Sitting down ranked third.

Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan said in a press release that "43 percent of Americans identified driving for pleasure as a favorite leisure activity." He said walking was second.

## Endangered fish threatened by oil spill

An Amoco pipeline near Craig, Colo., ruptured June 2, leaking an unknown quantity of crude oil into the Yampa River and sending local and federal emergency response teams scrambling to protect Dinosaur National Monument and three endangered fish species downstream.

The spill, from an underwater pipeline, formed a bank-to-bank oil slick which raced downstream into the Yampa's remote sandstone canyons and class IV and V whitewater rapids. Federal officials say spring flood conditions, long distances and sparse river access made it difficult for cleanup crews trying to contain the disaster.

After working two days and a night, with several failed attempts, oil absorbent booms finally held just above Dinosaur. But by then the Yampa's rapids had churned up the slick. While much of the gooey residue was captured, broken-up oil slicks and puddles of emulsified oil floated into the national monument.

Although no dead fish or wildlife have been sighted, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and National Park officials remain concerned about possible long-term impacts of the oil spill, which hit just as the endangered fish entered their annual spawning season.

The oil, a light-brown crude, was first spotted south of Craig at 7 a.m. by a passing motorist, who reported it to the local sheriff's office. Two hours later the sheriff and other officials traced the leak to an Amoco Pipeline Co. pipe where it crosses underneath the Yampa just downstream of Craig. Amoco spokesperson Jack Riggs says the pipe was shut down by 9:45 a.m.

Accounts differ on how much oil leaked into the river, but all are based on visual reports and the length of time it took to locate and shut off the pipe. Amoco officials estimate that little more than 10,000 gallons — the amount that fills a large tanker truck — escaped.

Environmental Protection Agency, Fish and Wildlife and National Park officials, who all responded to the emergency, speculate that from 13,000 to 15,000 gallons could have spilled.

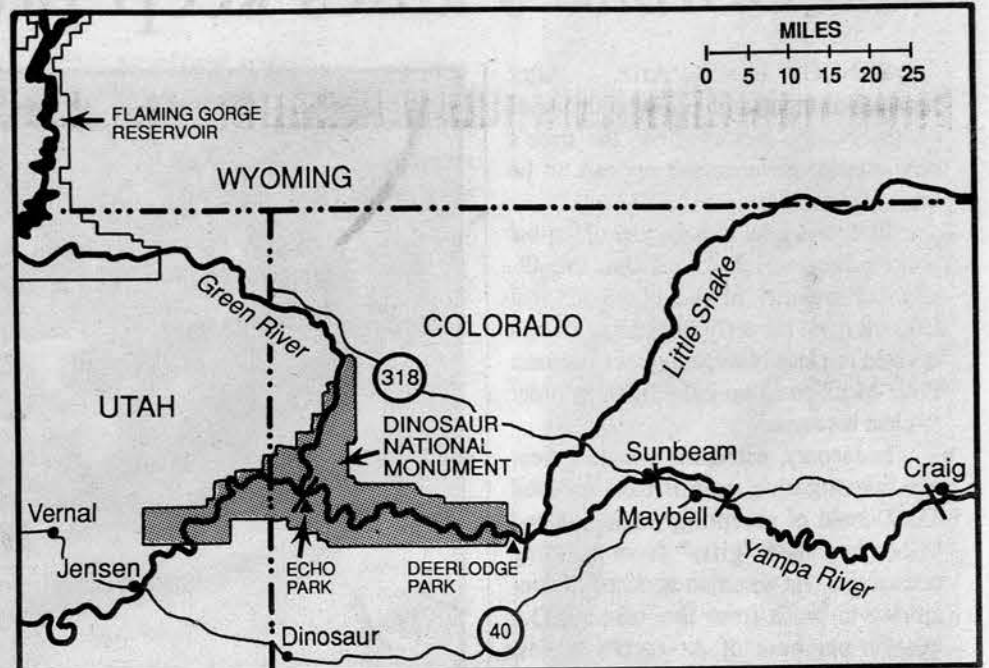
The cleanup effort, a race against time and a fast-flowing river, started in chaos, says EPA emergency response on-scene coordinator Don Shosky. The first three attempts to set oil absorbent booms across the river failed because of inexperienced crews and equipment that wasn't designed for high, fast-flowing water.

Tom Jackson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife contamination expert, says the booms couldn't stop the oil from flowing underneath or over the top and were washed back up on shore several times, letting the oil plume pass by.

After chasing the spill nearly 100 miles, rescue teams finally got ahead of it at Deerlodge Park just upstream of the Dinosaur National Monument border. Directed by Shosky, crews laid out a series of wing dams set at 45 degree angles to the current. Those redirected the current, Shosky says, and deflected oil into artificial eddies where it was scooped up by workers with oil absorbent pads.

Shosky adds that the rapids and high water that made the containment effort so difficult may have also cleaned up much of the oil naturally. "Because of the light nature of the crude oil," Shosky says, "it broke down very rapidly when it went through the rapids."

Most of the slick was broken down, evaporated by the sun or diluted before it



Bars across the river indicate booms placed to contain the oil spill

got to their booms above Dinosaur, says Shosky. "We kept setting up more booms and caught all we could catch. Not a lot got into the park compared to what was spilled originally ... We're very lucky it was a light crude and not particularly toxic compared to the very heavy oil on the Valdez or a tanker truck of leaded gasoline."

Dinosaur National Monument Superintendent Denny Huffman says the spill was not well contained and enough oil entered the park to greatly disturb him. "Dinosaur National Monument contains three endangered species that are the last remnants of the Colorado River endemic fish," Huffman says. One of those, the razorback sucker, just finished spawning last month, and the Colorado squawfish and the humpback chub will spawn very soon, he says.

Park Service overflights on Sunday spotted oil slicks 40 miles into Dinosaur. Huffman says the oil left a bathtub ring on the shoreline and pockets of oil residue in back eddies. Residues were even heavier in the first 100 miles below Craig.

Amoco also set up another series of booms at the confluence with the Green River, in the heart of Dinosaur National Monument. Those have collected a small amount of oil, reports Jackson. In addition, the Bureau of Reclamation has released more water from Flaming Gorge Reservoir to help dilute and flush away any oil that reaches the Green.

Harold Tyus, leader of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Colorado River Fishes project in Vernal, Utah, says, "We have no idea how toxic (the crude) is; no idea what effect it is going to have." Tyus walked several stretches of the river the day after the spill. He says that although not much was left on the surface, he is most worried about what he can't see.

"It's all throughout the water column now. I guarantee you it's gone all the way down river (to the Green) for 150 miles. Trying to clean that up, I don't know ..."

If the insoluble residue of the oil slick is in suspension, Tyus says, "I fear it will bond with sediments and clay particles and precipitate out when it gets to the (slow moving reaches that serve as) nursing areas for the Colorado squawfish

in the Green River. It could be locked up in the sediments for a long time."

"We don't know what effect it will have on aquatic food organisms either. People look for direct mortality, but we could have a problem here and not even know it."

Tyus also says they may not know the full impacts of the spill until next fall, when they count the young fish that survived the summer.

While Amoco continues mop-up operations, cleaning the residue out of the slack water and back eddies, EPA officials have formally told the company that it may be held liable for rescue operations and long-term impacts to the river system.

Park Service and Fish and Wildlife officials, who say they didn't know the Amoco pipeline existed, have raised questions about potential leaks from other pipelines carrying toxic materials. The 106-mile Amoco line that leaked into the Yampa collects 105,000 gallons of crude oil a day from the Iles oilfield south of Craig and pumps it north to storage tanks in Wamsutter, Wyo.

It is classified as a gathering pipeline and is one of two such Amoco pipelines that cross the Yampa and Green River drainages. Those two are part of a 1,000-mile network of gathering pipelines in Colorado that were exempted from federal safety inspections in 1985. Department of Transportation officials recently told the *Denver Post* that the Reagan administration exempted gathering pipelines from federal oversight after oil company executives said the pipes didn't pose serious threats to public health because most pass through remote terrain.

Amoco official Jerry White says the company thoroughly inspected the 45-year-old pipeline for corrosion and rust in 1985, and repaired much of it in 1986. However, the Yampa River crossing showed no defects and was not replaced, he adds. While White says the Yampa River crossing, like the rest of the line, "is inspected routinely," he could not provide a detailed maintenance record showing the last date inspected since 1985.

— Steve Hinchman

*'It's all throughout the water column now. I guarantee you it's gone all the way down river...'*



Randy Hayes, Post-Register

Charred trees surround a lake in Yellowstone National Park

## The message is: 'Nature is a good thing'

**YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo.** — Yellowstone Superintendent Robert Barbee has been lambasted, ridiculed and burned in effigy over his management of the 1988 Yellowstone fires.

But in May, Barbee received an unexpected surprise from conservationists who have often locked horns with him over management of the 2.2-million-acre national park. He got a standing ovation.

Barbee was praised by members of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, which held its annual meeting May 20 at the Old Faithful Lodge. Stung by attacks last summer on the so-called "let-burn" policy, and natural management in general, conservationists and the Park Service have found themselves allied. The annual meeting still provided a forum for debate over specific issues such as mining, wildlife habitat protection, oil and gas development and even fire management. But the more fundamental issues took center stage.

"The future of the greater Yellowstone ecosystem rests on our getting the message out that nature is a good thing," said Tom McNamee, GYC president.

He praised Barbee for standing up to politicians, Reagan administration officials and "an ill-informed and often hostile press corps," who challenged the natural-burning program in the park.

"Sometimes we do forget that with the people we fight with the hardest, we agree on 90 percent of the goals," said McNamee.

The reaction of many people to what they saw as the destruction of the park by fire worried conservation leaders about a backlash because of their support of natural burning. But the opposite happened. The GYC added 500 members since last summer, ballooning its membership to more than 3,100.

That is a far cry from 1987 when the organization's board — divided over goals and facing funding problems — fired its director. A combination of fundraising efforts and success in several key battles to protect areas around the park strengthened the coalition. So the growth since the fires has been built on a solid base, said staffer Todd Wilkinson.

"It isn't so much the fires," he said. "After the smoke cleared, everyone real-

ized how many threats to our national parks there are."

The coalition's efforts to carry the message that Yellowstone is still a special place and is actually improved ecologically have helped it grow and aided the Park Service's own public relations blitz. Park visitation was up 30 percent in May over 1988.

But not all of the speakers at the GYC meeting shared the same philosophies. Alston Chase, long a critic of the park's natural regulation policy, continued his challenge of the agency's natural management of the park.

Instead of allowing nature to run its course, often to the detriment of range, wildlife habitat and stream quality, Chase urged the park to manage its resources to "maximize species diversity."

"That's what the Indians did," said Chase, an author, columnist and former philosophy professor.

But Holmes Rolston, a philosophy professor at Colorado State University, said Chase's plan would destroy the reason for protecting national parks — preserving natural systems.

"What you would have is a system to examine the skills of the engineers who manage it," he said.

McNamee said park managers should encourage "maximum possible naturalness." But that doesn't mean there should be no management. Such efforts as reintroduction of wolves can improve the ecosystem, he said. "The trick is to recognize when a quick touch will do."

— Rocky Barker

## REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

### A burned park is not beautiful

**YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, Wyo.** — The burned cabins behind the Hamilton Store are gone. The creek at Old Faithful Village I jumped across on Sept. 7 while running from the North Fork fire is high and slightly gray. The crisp morning air is a marked improvement over the smoke-filled haze I was forced to breathe in September.

Yellowstone is almost back to normal this spring. Tourists line up around Old Faithful at about one-hour intervals, then leave when the geyser erupts.

Coyotes tear at bison and elk carcasses that litter the meadows after this particularly harsh winter. Sandhill cranes nest along the Yellowstone River. The park's hot pools and geysers still bubble and steam. Its buffalo still roam.

But it is not the same and never will be again, and that underscores the emotional reaction that I carry like a stubborn hangover from last year's fires.

It is the strength of a national park or any other striking natural area that it has an emotional as well as intellectual effect on people. The fire itself was an emotional experience that elicits new feelings each time I see an area in the park that shows some sign of fire.

Even before Yellowstone officials and the environmental community began heralding the fires as the great ecological release for the park's over-mature forests and aspen stands, I recognized the fires' positive effects. Clearly from an ecological and even economic standpoint, the benefits outweighed the costs.

And the underlying truth of the 1988 fires is that they were unstoppable and completely indifferent to what I or any other human thinks.

But I won't give in to the orchestrated public relations campaign that wants me to believe that "black is beautiful," as *Denver Post* columnist Jim Carrier wrote. The blackened canyon along the Madison River is an ugly testament to the power of fire. The denuded hills east of Norris where the North Fork fire raged through blown-down trees on Black Saturday offer little aesthetic balance.

But then, neither do the extensive clearcuts along Highway 20 in Island Park, where the Forest Service has systematically sheared the landscape at levels far above sustained yield for 20 years. The results are supposed to be the same. The bug-infested dead lodgepole

## HOTLINE

### An expensive fire

An outing in the Gallatin National Forest in southern Montana may end up costing a guide and his client millions. Outfitter Vernon Smith and Todd Wilkof each received bills of some \$2.8 million from the Forest Service for allegedly starting the Hellroaring fire in August 1988, reports the *Casper Star-Tribune*. The Forest Service estimates it cost more than \$4.5 million to suppress the blaze. Agency officials determined from a videotape of the earlier stages of the fire that it originated at Smith's campsite, most likely from a fire in a stove in Wilkof's tent. Smith denies responsibility, saying the camp was in the hands of employees when the fire started. Approximately 52,600 acres burned on the Gallatin National Forest plus 29,300 acres more after the fire spread to Yellowstone National Park.

### Colorado ranks last

Colorado is the loser in a Bureau of Land Management study that rates the quality of federally owned grazing land in the West. Public land statistics comparing range land in the 10 Western states show that 59 percent of the land the BLM leases to Colorado ranchers is in fair or poor condition. Only 18 percent of this land is in good or excellent condition. According to Kirk Koepsel of the Colorado Environmental Coalition, federal officials are at fault because they permit overgrazing. Dale Brubaker of the BLM says the figures are misleading because range conditions are compared to natural (climax) plant communities which are not necessarily ideal for certain uses of the land. A parcel of land, he says, which is only rated fair in terms of virgin conditions, could actually be valuable from a grazing standpoint. According to Brubaker, trend data are more reflective of the conditions of the land and show that 75 percent of Colorado's federally owned grazing land is either unchanging or is improving. The highest quality range land, according to statistics compiled by the BLM, is in Montana, where only 1 percent of the land is in poor condition.

pine have been removed so that a new forest can be reborn.

So I accept on an intellectual level that much of Yellowstone will be an ugly shadow of the place I knew for perhaps a decade. I also find the rebirth a fascinating process that lures me to the park the way beauty had before.

And, after all, much of its beauty is not lost. Vistas such as the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone are virtually untouched. The mosaic burns of brown, black and green have added new dimensions to formerly routine views.

But emotionally, I'm still scarred. The images of breath-taking hikes up Specimen Ridge, colorful cutthroat trout in my net at Buffalo Ford and moonlit views of Old Faithful are jumbled together with 200-foot flames, sore lungs and fear.

But fear of nature is a part of our interaction with it, or can be. The fear I felt running for the parking lot during the Old Faithful firestorm was similar to the fear I felt riding to within 50 yards of a grizzly bear while examining the fire's aftermath in October.

That fear is a reminder that man is never totally in control of nature. I hope that fear never goes away.

□

Rocky Barker is an editorial page editor at the *Idaho Falls Post-Register*.

## Will the Mexican gray wolf repopulate its former range?

by John M. Bancroft

One of the last living Mexican gray wolves sleeps with its tail half curled around its body in the shade of an overhanging artificial rock at the Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. A second wolf trots doggedly round and round a well-worn path that defines the limits of its captive range.

On the other side of an unobtrusive barrier stroll members of the human species, the predator that with its guns, steel traps and poisoned baits has pursued the Mexican gray wolf to the threshold of extinction.

Visitors pause for a brief moment or stand for minutes quietly gazing at the pair, snap photographs, clap, whistle, laugh, bark or howl. There is a lot of howling from the human side of the fence.

"It doesn't look like a wolf," declares an older man to his companions. He may not be alone in that observation. Tall tales and myths have led us to expect a hulking, snarling monster of a beast behind the plaque marked *Canis lupus*.

The truth is that this particular wolf, a subspecies named *baileyi* after the biologist and professional wolf eradicator who first described it, grows to about the size of a mid-range German shepherd. Mature males average 67 pounds and females about 56, making this the smallest of the North American wolves.

Wolves, which once flourished in all the lower 48 states, have been reduced by government-sanctioned eradication programs to remnant populations in northern Minnesota and along the Canadian border in Glacier National Park, Mont. Wild wolves still roam in Alaska and perhaps there are a few in interior Idaho. Unconfirmed sightings are reported from time to time elsewhere around the West, including southern Arizona, some in the high country not far from Tucson.

Peter Siminski, curator of birds and mammals at the Desert Museum, is a member of the Gray Wolf Recovery Team, international stud bookkeeper for the gray wolf and vice chairman of the Mexican Wolf Captive Management Committee. He gives little credence to the reports.

"Most of the reports I hear are from visitors to the museum," he says, "who say they just saw a wolf crossing Kinney Road."

Dave Brown, a writer who recently retired from the Arizona Game and Fish Department, believes the rumors of wolves in the southern Arizona wilds are just that. It is possible that a lobo will occasionally cross from Mexico into its ancestral hunting grounds in Arizona, he says, but wolf experts agree that the traditional estimate of fewer than 50 wolves surviving in Mexico is far too optimistic.

The only wolves known to exist in Arizona are five at the Desert Museum and a handful at the Navajo Nation Zoo at Window Rock, the latter being genetically suspect, possibly not true to the species.

It is in the captive breeding program, of which the Desert Museum is a mainstay, that hope lies for the Mexican gray wolf's survival. The program is successful, but unless a breeding population of wolves can be established in the wild through controlled reintroduction

into some fraction of their former range, the program may prove to be an exercise in futility. Space in zoos is limited, and the genetic diversity essential to a healthy species is declining among inbred captive animals.

For some people, reintroducing wolves into an ecosystem that has been systematically stripped of them is a touchy, emotionally charged issue. Most stockmen hate wolves since they have been known to cut into ranchers' profits by cutting out a few choice animals for themselves.

Hunters in Wyoming, site of a protracted controversy over reintroducing the subspecies of gray wolf native to Yellowstone into the nation's first national park, say wolves will decimate elk herds, leaving fewer elk for hunters to kill. Ironically, other opponents of reintroduction say that restoring wolves to their native range will not help to reduce elk and bison populations within the park.

For several reasons, Dave Brown believes wolves will make a comeback in the West. First, land use patterns in southern Arizona are changing, he says. Those who actually make a living at cattle ranching are being displaced by hobby ranchers who make their money elsewhere and who are less tied to the economy of the open range. Second, a tracking collar is being perfected that will allow troublesome wolves to be monitored and removed from any sensitive areas into which they might stray.

The Desert Museum's Peter Siminski believes stockmen's fears of wolf depredations are overstated. He says a fund to reimburse ranchers for any confirmed losses to wolves, such as the one established by Defenders of Wildlife in the Yellowstone region, should help to ease their worries.

Public opinion, too, is swinging to the wolf's favor.

Last July, in the first half of a two-part Arizona Game and Fish survey designed to assess public attitudes toward and knowledge of wolves, pollsters talked to 726 heads of households, 78 percent of them from metropolitan Tucson and Phoenix and the rest from rural areas statewide. The balance accurately reflects the distribution of population in a rapidly urbanizing state.

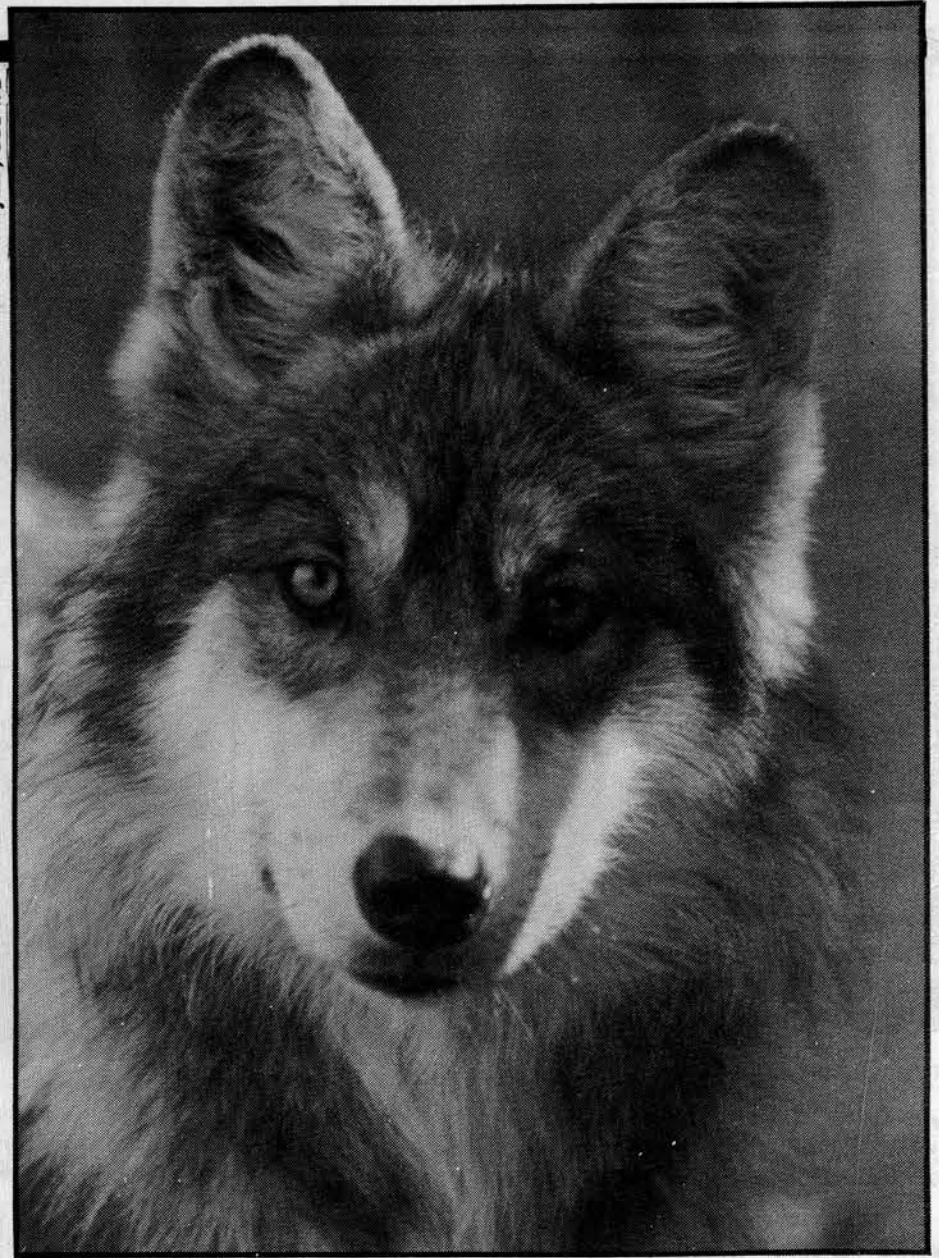
The poll showed 61 percent of those interviewed favor the idea of reintroducing the Mexican gray wolf into its historic range. Only 18 percent oppose the idea. Similarly, polls in both Montana and Wyoming, where wolves either live now or may be reintroduced, show a majority of each state's citizens in favor of reintroduction. A visitor survey at Yellowstone National Park showed three-to-one support for the idea.

Later this summer, Arizona Game and Fish will conduct the second part of its survey. They will follow their initial random sampling with a stratified sampling designed to gather the opinions of both identified opponents and supporters of reintroduction, as well as those of a more widely dispersed random sample of Arizonans.

"Our object," says Barry Spicer, nongame mammalogist with the department, "is to get all the cards on the table, to sample all points of view. Until the results are in, the department is neutral on the subject."

Carol Cochran, the Desert Museum (Continued on page 7)

Tom Smylie, USFWS



Mexican gray wolf

## Faithful and predictable

Wolves mate for life. For the Mexican gray wolf, a lifetime spans 10 to 12 years on average, 16 years at most. Their extraordinary loyalty to their partners sometimes inadvertently doubled a wolfer's bounty: The mate of a trapped wolf often would stick close by, making it easy prey for the trapper.

Most of what we know about wolves comes from the accounts of those charged with exterminating them.

Given that, we know quite a lot. Lobo's primary prey is the Coues white-tailed deer, supplemented by mule deer, javelina and pronghorn. The Mexican gray can subsist for a time on jackrabbits and mice, but without large, hooved mammals a wilderness will not support wolves.

Because the wolf's preferred prey in Arizona and Sonora, Mexico, is smaller than the elk and caribou its northern cousins hunt, the Mexican wolf is smaller and hunts in smaller packs, often consisting only of a mated pair and, for a time, its offspring.

Wolves are social animals. They howl to find one another in the wild, especially in the late fall and early winter mating season. When their mating is successful, four to eight pups are born in March or early April of alternate years after a pregnancy of about two months.

The male of the pair hunts to feed his mate for the six to eight weeks she nurses their litter, then both hunt to feed the young. When the pups are three months old they begin to accompany their parents on hunting rounds at night, and in this way learn how to survive. The pups stay with their parents through the first winter. They will be full-grown in nine to 11 months and come of breeding age in their third winter — if they live that long.

Wolves den on high ground overlooking the open woodlands and grass-

lands above 4,000 feet where they hunt. Unlike the mountain lion, which seeks out broken, rocky terrain, wolves are runners and need open ground.

Wolves are methodical. In southern Arizona, not far from Tucson, a wolf "circuit" extended some 70 miles in a rough circle from Sonora up along the west side of the Huachuca Mountains, east across the Canelo Hills and south again into Mexico. For years a wolf pair in certain seasons patrolled this hunting territory every nine days like clockwork.

They were still at it as late as 1940. This strategy worked fine until the wolfers showed up, then lobo's predictability worked against him.

The Mexican wolf's historic high country range covers all of southeastern Arizona below the Mogollon Rim, nicks a corner of southwestern New Mexico and extends south well into Mexico, the southernmost sighting having been reported from Oaxaca. Two other subspecies, *mogollonensis* and *monstrabilis*, lived north of the rim. Both have been extinct for years, as has the intermountain wolf that once roamed the Kaibab Plateau north of Grand Canyon.

Given that lobo is about the size of a medium German shepherd, that makes an adult male about twice as heavy as the average coyote — if there is such a thing as an average coyote. Wolves have fuller manes, fluffier tails and longer muzzles than dogs, and their footprints are longer and narrower. Like a dog's, only four of lobo's five toes touch the ground; the fifth is a dewclaw.

Lobo's summer coat is reddish gray with a little black on its sides and face, set off by a pale mane and a patch of white on its throat and between its forelegs. Its winter coat is heavier and lighter in color, varying from mottled grays and silvers to almost white.

— John M. Bancroft

# Agency calls for a revised 1872 Mining Law

The patenting provisions of federal mining law have outlived their usefulness and should be reformed, says Congress' research arm, the General Accounting Office.

The GAO says provisions in the 1872 Mining Law allowing patenting of claims — the deeding of federal land to private owners — have created a bonanza for non-mining speculators by enabling them to buy public land at bargain-basement prices. The report also recommends elimination of the law's "diligence" provision. It requires miners to perform minimal amounts of work on unpatented claims each year, which encourages miners to perform unnecessary work, thus causing environmental damage.

Since 1872, 3.2 million acres of federal land, an area the size of Connecticut, have been patented. For a miner to patent a claim, the Bureau of Land Management must determine that the site has an economically extractable mineral. Once the determination is made and the patent applicant pays \$2.50 an acre for placer properties and \$5 an acre for lode claims, the deed is transferred. The new owner can then subdivide, sell or lease the land. It is private property and mining is not required.

The patenting provision was created in the 1870s to encourage settlement and development of the West's resources. The GAO says it is now an "attractive means of acquiring title to valuable land for non-mining purposes."

The report cites some great bargains. A property patented for \$775 in 1983 in Nevada was appraised in 1988 by the BLM at \$1.2 million. The site is surrounded by a wilderness study area

and is close to a ski area and a resort. It is not being mined.

A 160-acre parcel in Keystone, Colo., patented for \$400 in 1983, is located near a ski resort. It has not been mined and is being subdivided for \$11,000 an acre, a price that could eventually gain the owner about \$1.8 million.

The GAO examined 20 properties patented since 1970, and it says they are now worth between \$14.4 million and \$47.1 million. The government sold them for less than \$4,500. The report recommends changing the mining law to eliminate patenting of hardrock minerals and the land where they are found. This, it says, would keep land under federal ownership and allow the government to collect royalties on minerals now given away for free.

The GAO also recommends that miners no longer be required to perform \$100 worth of work on unpatented claims each year. This provision allows miners to retain exclusive rights to claims by proving they are diligently "developing" them. The GAO found that much of this work does not bring the claim closer to mineral development and that some claim holders scar land unnecessarily with bulldozers just to comply with the requirement. The GAO recommends replacing the diligence provision with an annual holding fee that doesn't require development.

The GAO investigation was requested by Rep. Nick Rahall of West Virginia, chairman of the House Subcommittee on Mining and Natural Resources. It is the latest in a number of GAO reports in recent years on mining, and it indicates a growing interest in Congress to reform the 1872 law.

In April 1988, the GAO released a report on unreclaimed hardrock mining lands in 11 Western states. The investigation found that more than 280,000 acres of federal land need reclamation, a task that could cost \$240 million. The GAO says it may have underestimated the scope of the problem because it only looked at claims active since 1976. It also found that 50,000 acres of the unreclaimed lands have been disturbed after the BLM and Forest Service issued reclamation regulations in the 1970s. The GAO has also found shortcomings in those rules.

In a statement made to Rahall's committee in March, James Duffus III, a GAO staff director, said the Forest Service's regulations were generally effective when reclamation bonds are required, but that the BLM's "cannot ensure that reclamation will occur."

Duffus said the BLM doesn't request reclamation bonds from most of

the miners operating on its lands. Thus, when an operator is done mining, there is little incentive to reclaim and correct damages. The agency is left with damaged land.

"The cost of posting a financial guarantee so that public lands will be reclaimed must be considered part of the cost of a mining operation," Duffus said. "This cost is justified by the need to ensure that mined lands are reclaimed by the operator and not at public expense."

The General Accounting Office in Washington, D.C. 20548 makes its reports available free. *The Mining Law of 1872 Needs Revision* was published March 1989 and is coded RCED-89-72. *An Assessment of Hardrock Mining Damage* was published April 1988 and is coded RCED-88-123BR. *Limited Action Taken to Reclaim Hardrock Mine Sites* was published in 1987 and is coded RCED-88-21.

—Bruce Farling

## Rocky Flats...

(Continued from page 1)

the plant with violating state hazardous waste laws 25 times in the last year alone. According to state officials, Rockwell International's violations include improper waste storage, insufficient record-keeping, poor worker training and inadequate tracking of groundwater pollution.

Six months ago, the DOE ranked Rocky Flats as the worst environmental problem in its nuclear weapons network, saying that extensive ground water pollution threatened nearby communities (HCN, 12/19/88). The department recommended the gradual phasing out of the plant, rather than abrupt closure.

The plant is the only source of plutonium triggers for nuclear warheads. In addition, it is an economic anchor for the Denver area, employing 6,000 people who earn an average of \$48,000 a year.

This January, the DOE awarded Rockwell a five-year, \$2.5-billion contract to continue operations. That contract may be imperilled by the current investigation. Among the leads the agents are following are indications that the plant discharged toxic substances into a nearby community's drinking water.

Rockwell International formerly operated the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, where it also had a history of safety and regulatory violations. But not all fingers are pointed at the aerospace and defense conglomerate. A *Denver Post* editorial said the real culprit is the "Department of Energy, which is supposed to be in charge of monitoring Rocky Flats." Instead, the *Post* said, the DOE is "apparently wearing blinders, earmuffs and a paper bag over its head."

The charges have brought new calls for independent oversight of nuclear facilities. "There has been too cozy a relationship between contractors and agencies, and poor attitudes toward health and safety issues," Rep. Mike Synar, D-Okla., told the *Denver Post*. "Neither our agencies nor contractors are above the law."

The disposal of nuclear waste from Rocky Flats was already in a state of near paralysis due to delays in opening the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant near Carlsbad, N. M. (HCN, 2/13/89). The raid now threatens to put the nation's nuclear weapons industry into long-term gridlock.

"This kind of thing has never happened before," regional DOE manager

Jim Bickel said. "...it certainly isn't going to help our credibility."

The raid coincided with a public hearing in Denver on the WIPP plant, which is supposed to store waste produced at Rocky Flats and other nuclear plants. The DOE is struggling to open WIPP before Rocky Flats reaches its temporary storage limit.

Currently, waste generated at Rocky Flats remains on-site or is shipped by rail to the Idaho National Engineering Lab. But Gov. Cecil Andrus of Idaho has said that Idaho won't accept out-of-state waste shipments after Aug. 31, 1989. Based on Colorado Department of Health standards, Gov. Romer has limited how much waste can be stored at Rocky Flats, and his office estimates the plant could reach that point as early as October 1989.

The DOE originally predicted that WIPP would open in October 1988 as the nation's first permanent nuclear waste disposal site. Later the department said it would open in June 1989, and it next promised September 1989. Meanwhile, nuclear waste is piling up in Colorado, with Romer standing "firm in his intention to close the plant down once it reaches its storage capacity of 1,600 cubic yards," says press secretary Cindy Parmenter.

Energy Secretary James Watkins, who has been urging Congress not to grant states and other agencies more power to regulate DOE facilities, told the Senate Armed Services Committee in May that WIPP could not meet EPA standards for hazardous waste storage until February 1990, at the earliest. That date assumes the EPA will grant the DOE permission to bury hazardous waste without treating it to prevent its migration. Such permission would be a first by the EPA.

The DOE faces other hurdles before WIPP can begin accepting waste, including the certification of the shipping containers, the completion of an environmental impact statement, and the transfer by Congress of land from the Bureau of Land Management to the DOE.

What will the DOE do if WIPP does not open and Romer and Andrus stand firm? The DOE's Bickel says, "The current administration is committed to maintaining a strong nuclear deterrent. We're not going to shut Rocky Flats down because we can't open WIPP." The DOE is looking for alternative temporary storage sites around the nation.

—Becky Rumsey

## Wolf...

(Continued from page 6)

um's curator of education, is not neutral. She says she wants the chance to hear the howl of wolves in the wild.

The first of her reasons is solidly grounded in the science of ecology: "Wolves belong here. The food chain and the ecosystem are incomplete without their top predator."

The second is more subjective: "Wolves symbolize true wilderness. They embody a nonhuman beauty and we need that."

Siminski goes further: "We have a responsibility to animals to whose near extinction we have contributed, and the wolf's decline is owing entirely to man's campaign to exterminate them. Humans and wolves go back a long way together. They're part of our history and heritage."

Cochran, who under contract to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has created a slide show to help get the facts about wolves before the public, believes that many of those who oppose reintroduction are in thrall to misconceptions:

- **Wolves are a danger to humans.** The fact is that wolves avoid human contact. There has never been a documented case of a healthy wolf attacking a human in this country. Siminski adds that captive wolves cower when cornered in a small area, rather than displaying the aggression one might expect in such a situation.

- **Wolves are cruel.** Wolves kill in order to feed themselves and their young, just as we do. Cruelty is a human concept, not an attribute of the wolf.

- **Captive-bred wolves will not know how to hunt their natural prey**

in the wild. There is good inferential evidence that captive wolves' hunting instincts are intact. If not, there are established methods for teaching captive-bred animals how to re-enter the wild.

Siminski is encouraged on the last count by the experimental reintroduction of red wolves in Alligator National Wildlife Refuge, N.C., a situation he is following closely. The captive-bred wolves released and monitored there not only have survived on their natural prey, they have reproduced, and the first pups born in the wild seem to be flourishing, too.

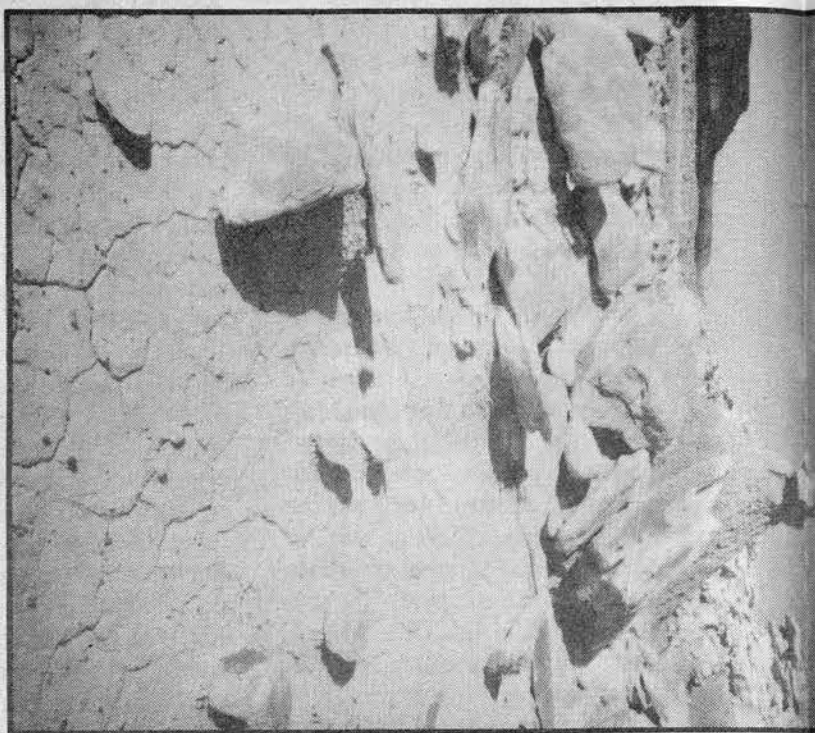
In the best of all possible worlds, Siminski says, the Gray Wolf Recovery Team would like to see the Mexican gray wolf listed as "recovered" and off the endangered species list. In order for that to happen, a self-sustaining population of at least 100 wolves will need to live in middle- to high-elevation wilderness somewhere within the 5,000 square miles of the wolf's historic range in Arizona.

Ultimately, the impetus for reintroduction will come from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, with the advice and consent of Arizona Game and Fish. As Cochran points out, Fish and Wildlife will not reintroduce the wolf into any state that doesn't want it, effectively giving the state veto power over any proposal.

Right now, one thing is certain. The Mexican gray wolf can survive only with man's initial assistance and a renewed willingness on our part to live and let live.

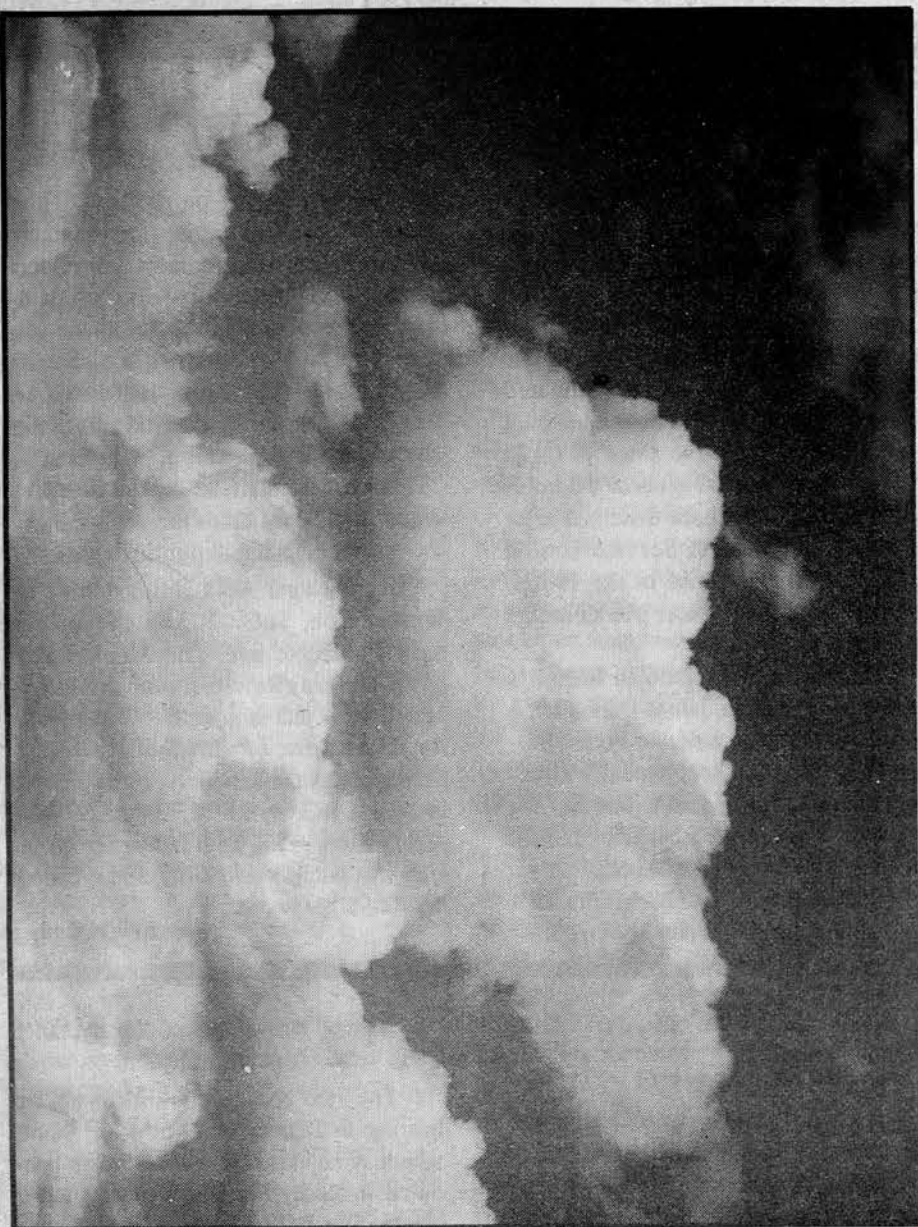
—John M. Bancroft

John M. Bancroft is a freelance writer in Tucson, Arizona.

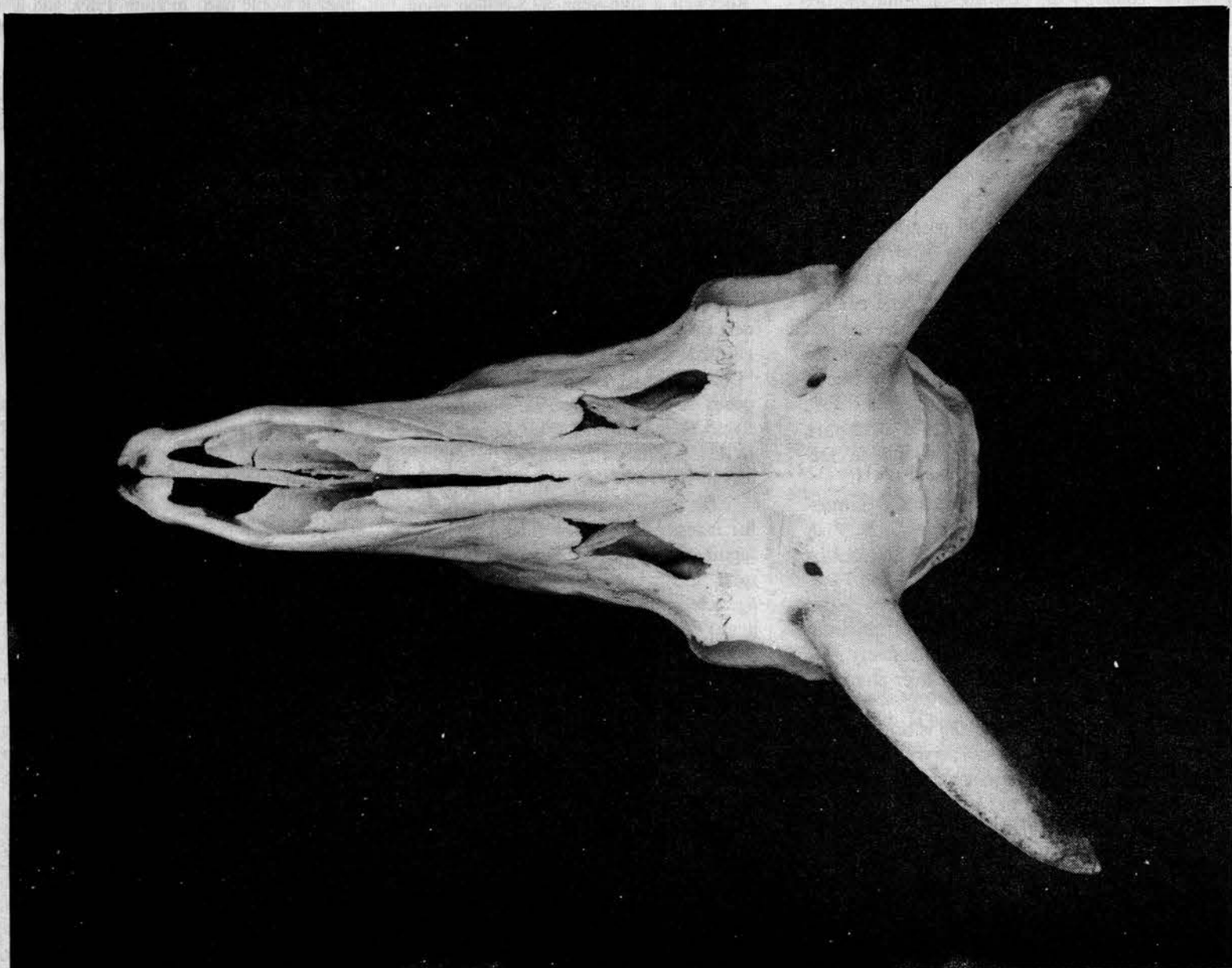


She ruined her eyes looking  
so that they turned to clay, looking  
for what remains  
after the people  
go, when the desert takes back  
its own and resists.

She stripped the sky  
to nothing but  
sky and a spray — clouds —  
the moist white scent of  
acetabulum, the shimmer  
grey shadow of silence,  
just the right  
angle of bone and blue.



Poem by Stephanie Moran of  
Silver City, New Mexico  
Photos by Dale Schickelanz of  
Show Low, Arizona





"When I started painting the pelvis bones I was most interested in the holes in the bones — what I saw through them ... They were most wonderful against the Blue — that Blue that will always be there as it is now after all man's destruction is finished."

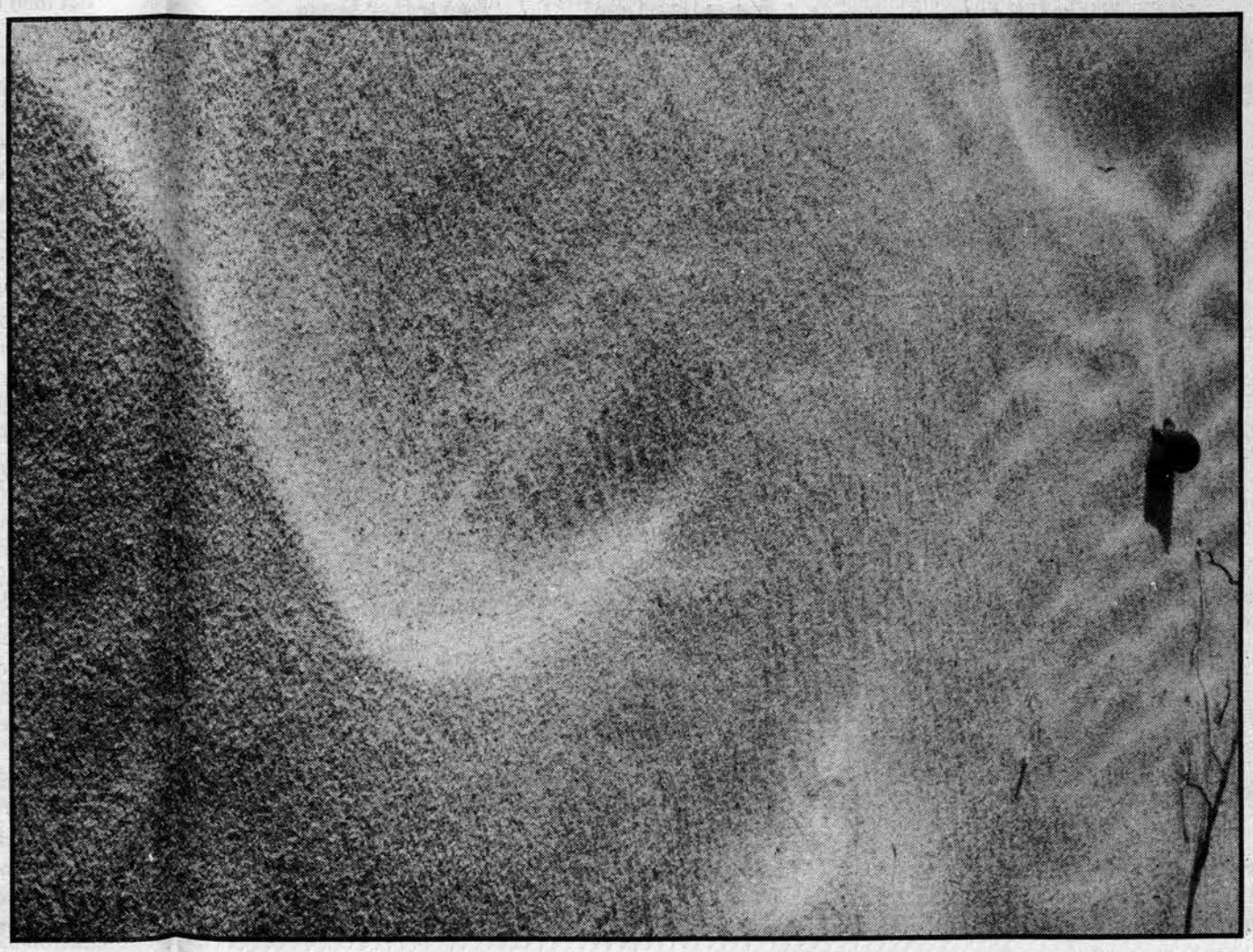
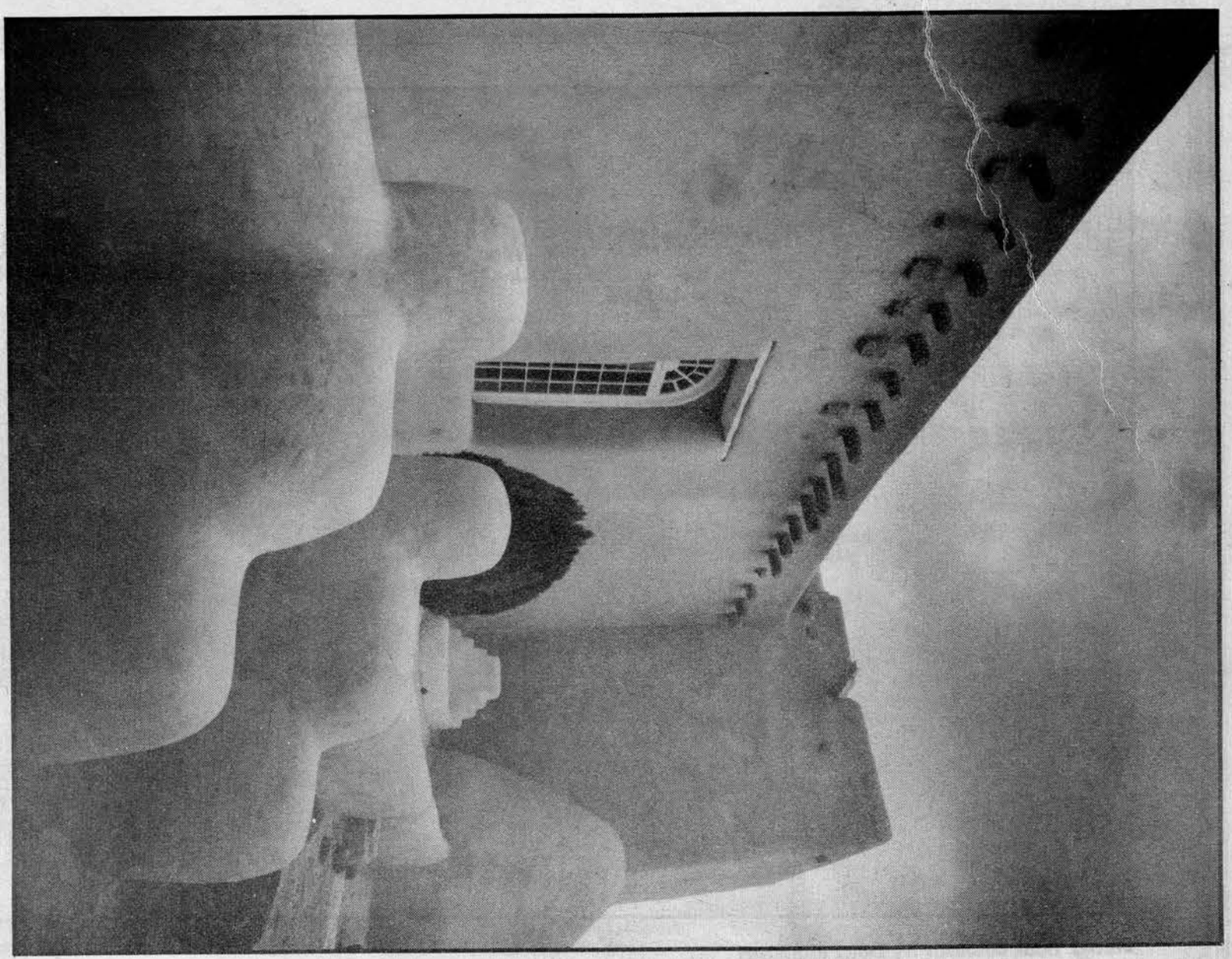
— Georgia O'Keefe

# The Sky Will Be Blue

North of her territory we drive  
the San Luis Valley.  
The Mexicans wave walking to church.  
On adobe steeples  
wait silent  
weather vanes, magpies and  
pigeons  
pointing the way,  
and we drink in the Sangre de Christos  
all morning. A community  
of dried wood and sand  
blows past the eyes of the wind,  
sleeps on the great dunes, wanders  
abandoned freight cars where  
birds have settled.

Now the hills, New Mexico the landscape  
where the woman in black  
stands as she has stood all time,  
just a slash of yellow  
breaking her line.

She made bones famous,  
curving holes through sunlight  
working to find the flower  
parched in a skull.



She ruined her eyes looking  
so that they turned to clay, looking



Vernal, Utah, dinosaur by Doug Rhinehart

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Arden, Wapiti, Coarsegold...  
for keeping HCN from extinction*

Doug Rhinehart





## Did the BLM give too much for too little?

by  
Jill Morrison and John Dougherty

**P**HOENIX, Ariz. — In the heart of the Sunbelt near this expansive city lie thousands of acres of rich Sonoran Desert whose dollar value is as elusive as the Gila monsters and coyotes that make the land their home.

Until very recently, the monetary value of the land did not matter. It was public land controlled by the Arizona office of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management. It was not for sale.

But in the last few years, hundreds of thousands of acres of lush cactus desert near Phoenix suddenly have been thrust into the harsh limelight of the private market place, where predators looking for a quick kill often make impacts that last for centuries.

In only six years, more than 2.5 million acres of public and private lands have changed hands under the direction of the Arizona BLM. It went from land suitable for wildlife and open space to prime development land for golf courses, man-made lakes and condos. Other land went from the private sector, where it had potential for development, into public hands, and in theory at least, immunity from development.

For the most part, the BLM-backed exchanges have been hailed by politicians, private developers and environmentalists.

Politicians see the exchanges as a way to free up public land near urban areas for development while placing environmentally important lands in public control.

Developers prosper by gaining control of large areas of land at bargain prices. Sometimes the land is immediately resold for prices millions of dollars more than the BLM appraisal. Other times, developers slowly sell off small parcels at greatly escalated per-acre prices.

Environmentalists are generally enthusiastic about the trades because the BLM often acquires desirable areas, such as the wildlife-rich San Pedro River valley in southern Arizona.

Yet one central element to this trilateral support is missing. In the rush to quickly complete land exchanges, the public has had no opportunity, prior to completion of a trade, to review the appraised values of the land to be acquired or given up by Arizona BLM.

The public, without access to details about the financial value of the land to be traded, is asked to comment on the merits of the swaps on a philosophical basis.

Henri Bisson, who as BLM Phoenix district manager has overseen numerous land exchanges, explains, "The opportunity for the public to comment...is based on whether the land BLM is acquiring has the kind of values that should be in public ownership and whether the land we are giving up should be placed in private ownership."

At no time do taxpayers know clearly what the land trades cost and whether BLM is getting full market value. Further clouding the picture is the BLM's policy of allowing the private party proposing the exchange to hire and pay the land appraiser. BLM officials said this should not be a concern because the appraiser must be selected from a BLM-approved list and all appraisals are reviewed by BLM staff.

**B**ut a recent BLM land trade resulted in wildly different values among appraisals

### Interior to audit BLM land trades

A federal investigation of an Arizona land swap has blossomed into a nationwide audit of public-land exchanges by the Bureau of Land Management, a high-ranking federal official told the *Arizona Republic*.

"We want to know if public lands are exchanged on a fair and accountable basis," said James R. Richards, inspector general for the Department of Interior. "We will look at the reliability and credibility of the program."

Richards said the audit, which will begin in October, will include a review of the BLM's land-exchange policies

and market value, and raised questions about the process. The example occurred last December, when the BLM approved an \$8.7 million appraisal on a piece of public land. However, according to a recent article in *The Arizona Republic*, the investors acquiring the public land had received a second appraisal of \$19.5 million. Moreover, they had an offer from a company willing to buy the property for \$22.5 million which they didn't show to the BLM.

The BLM later criticized the \$19.5 million appraisal as unrealistic because it was based on certain factors that had not yet occurred, primarily securing a 100-year water supply and annexation into the city of Casa Grande.

But trades such as this lend force to critics, who charge that the Arizona BLM's decision to keep appraisals confidential means the public has no way to formulate an opinion on the trade.

"To me, that is a Catch-22," said Steve Thompson of the Public Lands Trust, a Santa Fe-based group that acquires environmentally sensitive lands. "How can you ever challenge the valuation or raise issues about the valuation if it is a closed file?"

Andy Wiessner, of Kogovsek Associates in Denver, has worked on numerous land exchanges with the BLM's counterpart, the Forest Service. Unlike the BLM, Wiessner said many

exchanges are frequently challenged on the basis of the appraised value, which the Forest Service typically makes available for public review prior to a trade.

BLM officials in Washington said the decision to make appraisals available is left up to the state director.

With appraisals locked away until after the trades, over the past few years the Arizona BLM has embarked on the most extensive public land-trading program in the country. Its rapidity in conducting land sales is the envy of other states, where proposed swaps often take years to complete.

Arizona BLM Director Doyle Dean Bibles said his land exchange staff has accomplished in five years what they visualized might take 20 years. "I'd say we are at about year 15," he said in a recent interview.

Bibles is proud of his record. He bristles at suggestions that he may have both given up too much public land and skirted agency regulatory requirements in his zeal to close a deal.

"We have acquired most of the Hualapai Mountain, which has a habitat of endangered species. We have acquired some of the finest Joshua Tree forest in the country and saved it from destruction. We have saved areas for the desert bighorn sheep population and acquired the Black Canyon corridor with a 68-mile hiking and horse trail."

All of this has been accomplished, he said, "By trading lands ideal for disposal around Bullhead City, Phoenix and Tucson. None of this could have been done without the exchange process."

Indeed, Bibles' efforts have earned him recognition from the highest levels of government. He recently received an award from former President Ronald Reagan, in part for his work on land exchanges.

A BLM employee for 32 years, Bibles worked in Wyoming, California and Idaho before going to Washington, D.C., in 1980 as assistant director for land resources. Bibles arrived in Arizona in 1982 to manage the state's 12 million acres of BLM holdings.

(Continued on page 13)

One of his primary missions in Arizona was to facilitate a series of complicated land exchanges that were at the heart of a congressionally approved plan to solve a 100-year-old land dispute on the Navajo and Hopi Indian reservations in northeastern Arizona.

In an attempt to solve the conflict, Congress passed legislation in 1974 which divided 1.8 million contested acres between the tribes. This act left an estimated 12,000 Navajos and about 200 Hopis on the wrong side of the partition despite having lived there for generations. They would have to be moved.

The existing Navajo reservation had no room for the refugees, so in 1980 Congress amended its relocation legislation, allowing the Navajos to acquire 250,000 acres of private ranch land within 18 miles of the existing reservation.

But Congress did not empower the federal government to simply purchase land for the Navajos. Instead, the tribe first chose the ranches they wanted, and then the ranch owners were compensated with public land of their choice in Arizona and New Mexico.

It was during the completion of these swaps in the late summer of 1985 that Bibles said he and his staff realized there were many more opportunities to conduct land trades.

"With the Navajo-Hopi relocation exchanges, we discovered we could aggressively go after entire tracts of land we wanted to acquire through private land exchanges. These successes made it possible for other successes," he said.

According to Bibles, the BLM discovered a strong demand for vast tracts of public lands that were barriers to growth around the boom cities of Phoenix and Tucson and more recently near Bullhead City. The latter is a rapidly growing town along the Colorado River which serves as a bedroom community to the gambling casinos across the river in Laughlin, Nev.

The Arizona real estate market was roaring in the mid-1980s and investors and developers were searching for land on which to build so-called master-planned communities. The market turned its eyes to the BLM land.

"The current economic situation we were operating under had a tremendous influence and impact over what we were doing," Bibles said. "Most of the time, the lands we don't want are the lands no one else wants. But these public lands that we didn't want, someone else did. It was a rare mix." A rare mix indeed.

The Navajo-Hopi swaps showed just how desirable and valuable these public lands were. After the official appraisals determined that the private and public lands to be traded were of equal value, the public lands in Arizona were immediately resold for \$33 million over the BLM appraised value.

In sharp contrast to the escalating value of the public land was the discovery that some of the private lands acquired for the Navajos had water contaminated by radioactive wastes from a uranium tailings spill in the Puerco River.

The majority of the public lands acquired were located near regional parks on the outskirts of Phoenix and Tucson. The savvy traders had buyers lined up and ready to purchase these isolated tracts of desert land just as soon as the trades were completed with the BLM.

It was the beginning of the Arizona Land-Swapping Rush.

Big plans and big development pro-

jects were quickly announced on most of the former public lands for self-contained communities in a desert paradise. One of the largest of these communities was dubbed Sun Valley.

The Sun Valley development site expanded from an original 14,819 acres picked up in one of the Navajo-Hopi exchanges in August 1985 to more than 76,000 acres when two more land swaps were orchestrated in 1986 and 1988 with the BLM. The private proponent in both exchanges was a former Canadian professional hockey player turned land speculator named Herbert "Huddy" Bell.

Bell, who operates under a myriad of corporate names, had already arranged buyers for the land he was acquiring from the BLM before the trades were consummated. Maricopa County real estate records show a flurry of transactions involving Bell's companies immediately after the trades.

In each trade, Bell immediately sold former public lands for prices tens of millions of dollars above the BLM accepted appraised values.

In the first trade, which closed in March 1986, Bell sent 43,000 acres in the environmentally prized San Pedro River valley to the BLM. In return, Bell picked up from the BLM 40,900 acres of desert-grazing land 35 miles west of Phoenix. Bell's new parcel was adjacent to 14,819 acres he had purchased earlier from an Arizona rancher involved in one of the Hopi/Navajo land exchanges.

Within days of the March 1986 San Pedro exchange, Bell recorded sales of more than \$71 million on public lands that had been appraised at \$26.5 million just weeks before. The entire exchange, from initial consultations to closing, took only five months, BLM records show.

In the fall of 1987, Bell again entered into negotiations with BLM to execute another trade. This time, the trade was shrouded in secrecy. The BLM was reluctant to release Bell's name as the exchange proponent and refused to release appraisals of the public and private lands to be swapped, despite Freedom of Information Act requests to do so. BLM's reluctance to provide appraisal data apparently was related to widespread press coverage that followed the 1986 BLM trade with Bell.

Bell also declined to be interviewed and when the local press made an effort to photograph him, he ran across his office parking lot, dodging behind cement pillars, before jumping into a black BMW and speeding away.

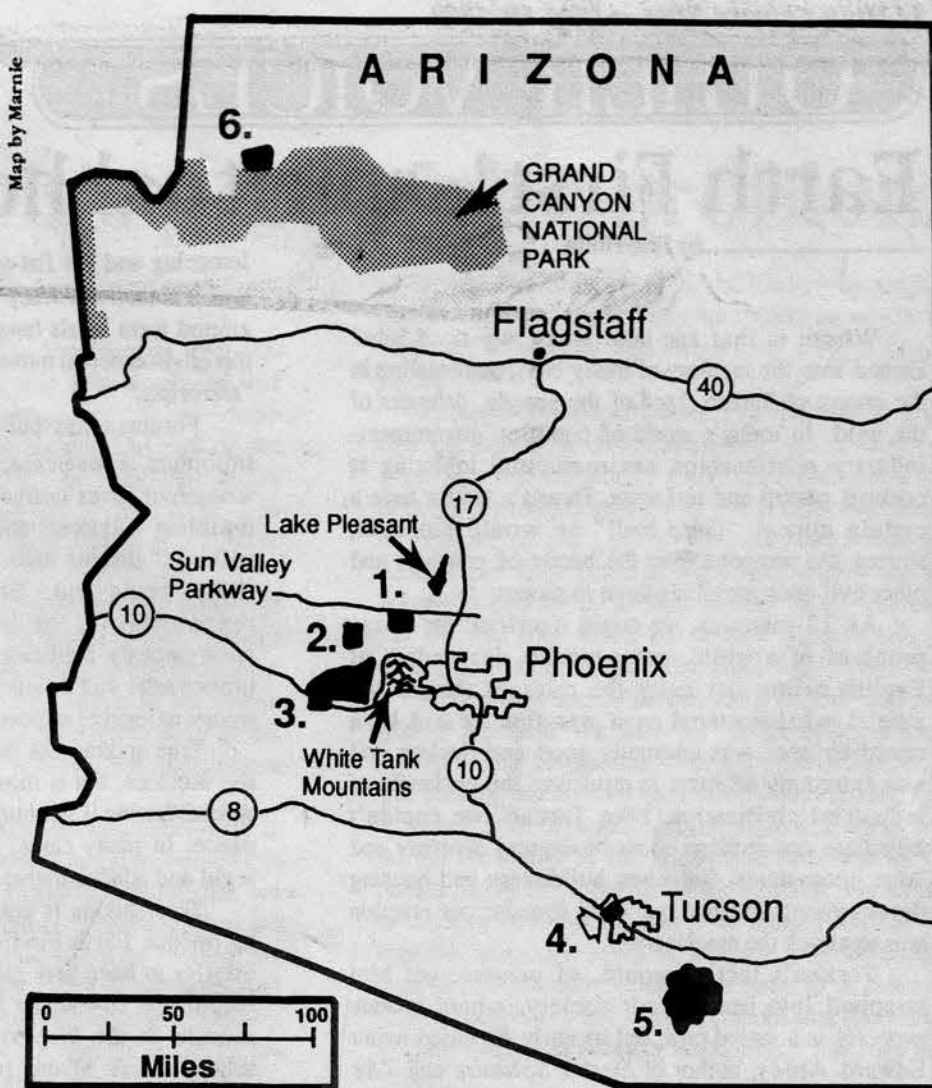
Bell declined repeated efforts to be interviewed for this story.

The June 6, 1988, swap gave the BLM the 37,500-acre Empire-Cienega ranch 40 miles southeast of Tucson and the 13,500-acre Gubler-Frei ranch adjacent to Grand Canyon National Park, along the north rim of the canyon. At the last minute, and without prior public notification as required by BLM regulations, the BLM agreed to accept the 4,100-acre Rose Tree Ranch located adjacent to the Empire-Cienega as part of the exchange.

In return, Bell received 49,482 acres of public land; 35,827 acres of that land was located just west of the Sun Valley development, which was now being linked to Phoenix by a 28-mile, privately financed, \$80-million parkway.

The BLM valued the lands equally at \$35.7 million. But within minutes of acquiring the public lands, Bell resold most of the real estate adjacent to Sun Valley for \$15 million more than the land was appraised at by BLM, county records and statements by Bell reveal.

The Sun Valley land, appraised by the BLM at \$600 an acre, was purchased from Bell by Burns International, a



In the June 1988 swap, the BLM gave up: 1. 6,854 acres on State Highway 74 near Lake Pleasant Regional Park; 2. 6,500 acres southwest of Morristown; 3. 35,827 acres west of Hassayampa River and north of Interstate 10; and 4. 80 acres suitable for commercial or industrial use in Tucson east of the Pima Air Museum and north of Interstate 10. The BLM received: 5. 37,500 acres of private land in the Empire-Cienega Ranch southeast of Tucson and 4,100-acre Rose Tree Ranch; and 6. 13,000 acres on the Arizona Strip that abuts Grand Canyon National Park.

Phoenix-based land development company, and two British real estate companies for more than \$1,000 an acre in an all-cash deal.

County records show that Burns, who is a neighbor of Bell in an exclusive Paradise Valley enclave, received at least partial financial backing for the deal from a Phoenix business partnership that included former Arizona Sen. Barry Goldwater's bother, Robert Goldwater, and members of the prominent Martori farming family.

The Empire-Cienega exchange also revealed the pressures BLM and developers faced in completing the complicated exchanges quickly. BLM district director Henri Bisson said the agency bypassed the 45-day public comment requirement when it decided, upon Bell's request, to include the Rose Tree Ranch in the exchange because it may have jeopardized the deal.

Bisson said the trade needed to be completed by August or Bell would lose his option to purchase the Empire-Cienega Ranch.

"It had to go down by then or the whole deal would go down the tubes," Bisson told the Mesa, Ariz., *Tribune*.

Bell's group had a lot of money riding on the deal.

A real estate agent close to Anamax Mining Co., which was selling the Empire-Cienega Ranch to Bell, said Bell was paying more than \$100,000 a month as a fee to keep the purchase option alive.

The monthly payments began in March 1988 and were in addition to the \$31.5 million price for the ranch, the agent said.

Bell's company, called Seven West Properties, also was making dozens of option payments to purchase mining claims on the public land he was to acquire. Public land cannot be traded unless all mining claims are removed.

"There was time pressure on all sides from the standpoint that there were options taken out on the mining claims,"

Bisson said. "Those things had to be closed."

"I think Seven West would state publicly that they were paying interest to maintain the option on the purchase of the ranch. It had to be done by August," Bisson said.

Seven West officials, including Bell, declined to comment on the exchange.

Despite tens of millions of dollars in profits earned by Bell from the trades, Bibles has steadfastly defended the land exchanges, repeatedly saying the public got a good deal.

"You have to look at the resource values that the public got out of the San Pedro, Empire-Cienega and the Gubler-Frei or any of these lands. I would not trade back any of those lands. The bottom line, in reflection, in light of what we now know, is whether you would trade back those lands," Bibles said.

Bibles says the escalating values on the public land are the result of speculators unrealistically driving up the values of property in non-cash transactions. In addition, Bibles said the profits that appear to have been made by Bell do not take into account Bell's cost of purchasing mining claims and outlays related to acquiring purchase options on property that was later traded to BLM. However, at other times Bibles has stated that public land appraisals are not to include the costs of private parties removing mining claims.

As a final backstop against criticism about undue profits, Bibles turns to the Internal Revenue Service. "If there are profits made, when you look at the overall picture, it has not been that big of a deal. The IRS got a share back of that if any profits are shown," he said.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department is one of the few agencies that actively participates in the public comment process on land exchanges. Acting

(Continued on page 16)

14-High Country News — June 19, 1989

## OTHER VOICES

# Earth First!: spiritual heir to Tarzan

by Eric Holle

Where is that ape-man when we need him? Etched into the memory of many environmentalists is the image of Tarzan, Lord of the Jungle, defender of the wild. In today's world of complex government-industry relationships, environmental lobbying at cocktail parties and turf wars, Tarzan's tactics have a certain appeal. "Guns bad!" he would proclaim, tearing the weapons from the hands of poachers and other evil ones, smashing them to pieces.

As 12-year-olds, we could overlook the image problem of a white, super-macho descendant of English aristocracy being the ruler of the African jungle; what mattered most was that he had been reared by apes, was inherently good and fearless, and was extremely effective in repulsing the onslaught of industrial civilization. Like Tarzan, we couldn't articulate our feelings about biological diversity and large ecosystems. But when bulldozers and housing developments invaded our local forests, our reaction was to attack the machinery.

Tarzan's tactics would, of course, get him strapped into irons in our society, where private property is a sacred cow. But recently deceased writer Edward Abbey, author of *Desert Solitaire* and *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, spawned a new generation of Tarzans before his passing. The hero of his novel, Vietnam vet George Hayduke, didn't like what industry was doing to his beloved Southwest, and spent his time cutting down billboards, toppling power lines, disabling bulldozers, and engaging in other forms of "monkey wrenching."

Foremost among today's monkey wrenchers is Earth First!, a loose-knit, decentralized movement of tree huggers and posey sniffers. They first gained notoriety by blockading oil company bulldozers in a wilderness area in New Mexico, and soon took those tactics to the Pacific Northwest in an attempt to save what remained of the old growth forests from logging companies. It was here that activists suspended themselves a hundred feet off the ground in Douglas firs and redwoods to prevent the trees from being cut. It was here, also, that Dave Foreman, one of the movement's founders, sustained serious injuries when he was dragged a hundred yards by a logging truck.

Such civil disobedience, combined with banner hangings, guerrilla theater, and activities like chaining themselves to machinery helped Earth First! make preservation of old growth forests and remaining wilderness a national issue. Their Biodiversity Task Force has even achieved official habitat preservation for such uncharismatic fauna as the northern bog

lemming and the flat-spined three-toothed land snail. But it is their advocacy of monkey wrenching that has gained them labels ranging from "the cutting edge of the environmental movement" to "certified loonies" to "terrorists."

Foreman has published a handbook for eco-saboteurs. *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkey-wrenching* gives instructions on, among other things, disabling bulldozers and heavy equipment, and "tree spiking," driving nails into forest giants to prevent their being cut. Stressing nonviolence and responsibility, the book urges tree spikers to anonymously publicize their actions so that spiked timber sales will be quietly dropped, and the chance of injury to loggers avoided.

Tree spiking has occurred from Ontario through the Rockies, but is most prevalent in the Northwest, where dozens if not hundreds of incidents have taken place. In many cases, trees have been saved when legal and administrative remedies have failed.

Tree spiking is not the only monkey wrenching technique Earth First!ers employ. The only Earth First!er to have been caught monkey wrenching until recently is co-founder Howie Wolke, who spent six months in the Pinedale, Wyo., jail for pulling up survey stakes. Mining projects have been hindered or rendered uneconomical by bulldozers being "lubricated" with fine abrasives. And in September, 1988, power lines going to uranium mines on the north rim of the Grand Canyon were dropped.

First-hand information on monkey wrenching is difficult to come by, for obvious reasons. The effectiveness of such tactics is debatable, but is perhaps best gauged by Sen. James McClure, R-Idaho, attaching a rider to the 1988 Drug Omnibus bill providing stiff fines and sentences for anyone caught in the woods with hammer and nails.

Perhaps the most effective monkey wrencher of all is mild-mannered Captain Paul Watson of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, the naval arm of Earth First! While other groups lobby Congress and solicit funds to save whales, Watson simply rams and sinks pirate whalers. An original member of Greenpeace, Watson was later condemned by them as "violent" when he wrestled a club from the hands of a Newfoundland sealer about to smash a baby harp seal. But it was his attack on the notorious pirate whaling ships that gained him prominence. The Sierra had been operating for years in violation of international whaling laws, and Watson could have sunk the ship on the high seas with no fear of repercussions. Fearing injury to crew members of the whaler, however, he waited until they were near port and rammed them, permanently disabling the Sierra.

Are such radical tactics necessary? The system that law-abiding citizens are encouraged to work within is one in which the fox is commonly in charge of the henhouse. Former Assistant Secretary of Agriculture John Crowell came to oversee the U.S. Forest Service directly from the offices of Louisiana-Pacific, the largest purchaser of federal timber. The Bureau of Land Management, dominated by the livestock industry, was governed until recently by Bob Burford, a former public lands rancher who simply passed his grazing permits to his sons to avoid conflict of interest.

Mining on our public lands is directed mainly by the 1872 Mining Law, of which Exxon and other multinationals are quite fond; few politicians would find reform of this law to be politically expedient. And with L. Dean Buntrock, head of the toxic polluter Waste Management, Inc., on the board at the National Wildlife Federation, we can't expect much boat-rocking from the mainstream environmentalists.

People have always resisted the abuses of the industrial revolution: The term "sabotage" comes from *sabat*, French for wooden shoe, an article that workers once "accidentally" dropped into machinery. The Luddites were English textile workers who destroyed machinery to protect their jobs. The United States has a rich history of such activity, beginning with the Boston Tea Party. John Bryant State Park in Ohio, one of the best remaining examples of Midwestern old growth forests, is named for a man who spiked his own trees to save them from the timber barons.

Hopi Indians were pulling up survey stakes a century before Ed Abbey recommended the practice. More recently, Minnesota farmers known as "Bolt Weevils" toppled the towers of an experimental electrical transmission line that produced bizarre health effects. Katya Komisaruk was even bold enough to take on the United States military by herself, quietly entering Vandenberg Air Force Base and smashing a NAVSTAR missile guidance computer.

Dave Foreman points out that monkey wrenching is only used when all other tactics have failed. The dangers inherent in individuals defining their own laws are obvious. Smashing missile guidance systems and spiking trees is clearly not to everyone's tastes, but neither is hobnobbing with three-piece suits at cocktail parties in our capital. I know which method Tarzan would prefer.

□

Eric Holle is a freelance writer and peace activist in Boulder, Colorado.

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## OPINION

# Ecotage isn't a solution, it's part of the problem

The environmental movement has had it both ways when it comes to sabotage of bulldozers, logging equipment, powerlines and other tools used to destroy and alter the natural world.

This paper has been part of the ambiguity toward ecotage. It was on display here in the April 25, 1988, issue, which had two long articles: one on the Nature Conservancy and one on Earth First!

The pairing carried an implicit message: Here are the two wings of the environmental movement. One is a pinstriped operation capable of enlisting corporate and conservative America into the environmental cause. The second at times preaches ecotage, the clandestine destruction of the tools of corporate America.

When asked, "responsible" environmentalists disown support for spiking trees and other acts of ecotage. But we usually add that such acts are understandable given the rage which the unceasing destruction of nature generates in all who care about earth and their own survival.

Until now, an ambiguous attitude toward ecotage seemed acceptable. Why spell things out when we could have it both ways. In my view, the time for ambiguity passed with the announcement of the arrests in Arizona and the allegations of a plan to attack the Rocky Flats nuclear arsenal.

It may be that these charges have been manufactured or blown out of proportion by an overzealous FBI. But faked or real, this event transforms what had been small and romantic and rhetorical into a different creature. Ambiguity, especially in our own minds, will no longer do. Environmentalists must now answer, at least to ourselves, some specific questions: Do we want to blow a hole in Glen Canyon Dam? Do we want to destroy logging equipment? Do we want to see electric transmission towers toppled?

The question can be phrased in a variety of ways. Some see it as strategy. They see the sabotaging of equipment used in the extraction of natural resources and the general destruction of nature as an effective way to protect the natural world.

Others come to ecotage out of an apocalyptic vision — they believe we have gone over the edge, into an abyss of uncontrollable toxics and a damaged atmosphere. Ecotage is their way of expressing rage and contempt for the system that has doomed us. Those who can't bring themselves to perform destructive acts cheer on those who do. The assault on the natural world by the logging, mining, oil and gas, livestock and development industries, to say nothing of the military, is so mindless, so short-sighted, so vicious and so destructive that it is natural to cheer when someone strikes a blow against this assault.

And ecotage is made for cheering. At heart, they are romantic acts in the oldest Western tradition. A group of people take upon themselves the responsibility of defending nature, the victim, against mankind, the aggressor. Implicit in this defense is the idea of a split between man and nature. Ecotage has taken root in the inland West because the split between man and nature is easiest to imagine here, where a few million people living mainly in small settlements are scattered over 1 million or so square miles. In these wide open spaces, it is possible to imagine the separation of man and nature, with a

handful of committed people defending nature from man.

But that is illusion. We — the grizzlies, the old-growth forests, the whales, and man — are in this together. The only hope for nature, and the only hope for man, is change in human society. The role of the environmental movement isn't to build barricades behind which nature can huddle. Its role is to help build a world in which man and nature form a healthy whole.

The environmental movement is many things. It contains, no doubt, as Earth First! charges, an element that sees environmentalism as simply a way to make a living. And it is possible that some in the large national environmental groups have fallen prey to the malady said to afflict those who live too long within the Washington Beltway.

But whatever its failings, environmentalism is still, and never more than today, a moral movement: It is telling humanity, with a thousand voices, that we are destroying what we should be cherishing, that we must change our ways, and that unless we change, we will make of the earth a hell for all living things. And like any moral movement, environmentalism holds out a paradise. In our paradise, the air is clear, the water pure, and the wildlife plentiful.

In the rural West, at least, we are a long way from achieving that paradise. Westerners may be no more destructive today than 100 years ago, but 100 years have taken their toll. The land has been trashed, the landscapes of thousands of valleys have been altered for the worse, and the grasses and forests are largely gone, along with the species they once sustained.

Inevitably, the West's communities mirror the land. In trashing the land, the people and communities of the West have damaged themselves.

One hundred and fifty years ago, this region was rich with natural beauty and resources. Today, in both its human and its natural aspects, it has declined, or been bludgeoned, to a low level.

But that is not an argument for conservationists to separate nature from mankind, and then appoint themselves defenders of nature. There can be no hope for the West's natural world without the rejuvenation of the human communities which make up the West. The West's natural world and human world can only come back together. We cannot save the natural world unless we can reform ourselves, our communities, our society.

So when ecotage occurs, any short time gain for nature is lost in the further weakening of the West's democratic and humane impulses. These impulses, marginal though they may be, are our only hope for creating, in Wallace Stegner's words, a society to match the scenery. There can be no intact, healthy environment without an intact, healthy human society. Either we strengthen the human society, or the human society will pull the environment (as it has been doing) down to the same low level as the society.

Once we admit — surely it is obvious to all — the unbreakable bonds between the health of the human society and the health of nature, the folly of ecotage becomes plain. Ecotage is a new word, but it is not a new phenomenon. It is the same natural, gut reaction our society has to every problem. You can see a form of ecotage on television each night. A nation in search

of justice, but despairing of its ability to achieve justice, satisfies itself with cop shows, in which the men and women in blue shoot their way to instant justice.

Ecotage is environmentalism's cop show. It is our cowboy movie. It is understandable, but it won't do what has to be done. Civil disobedience and principled protest, typified by the people who chain themselves to old growth trees, are one thing. But actions that take place at night, and which are not acknowledged by those who commit them, can only put off the day when the West's people turn to restoring the land we have degraded.

Restoration seems far off. As a society and as a user of the land, we have not yet hit bottom. More rage-inducing destruction — of old growth forests, of free-running streams, of clear skies — lies ahead.

Rage is understandable, it is natural. People who do not feel rage at the ongoing destruction of the natural world are either dulled by so much destruction or are less than human. But if we simply act out our rage, we add to the problem. The rage must be used to stop the destruction — not to destroy in a different way. Ecotage will only further corrupt and brutalize a society which is already sufficiently corrupt and brutal.

These are degenerate times. There is little light, there is much darkness. It is easy to lose faith, to declare the game lost or about to be lost, and to lash out in anger and despair.

To divert our anger into more effective channels, we must believe that there is still hope for both nature and society. There is no logical way to prove that nature and mankind can still be saved. It requires a leap of faith. Each person will have to reach that point by their own path, just as the Polish people and then the Chinese people somehow decided that they could topple their repressive and corrupt regimes without themselves becoming violent and destructive.

If we can make that leap of faith, and again believe in our future, then the choice of tools will be obvious. Those tools will not be cutting torches, metal spikes and molasses poured into diesel engines. The tools we must create and use are far less exciting and quick acting. They are the traditional tools decent, progressive, constructive societies have always used: good schools, citizen reform groups which act in public, competent and honest communications media, just laws and practices and an enlightened citizenry.

Because of its ambiguity, silence or quiet support, environmentalism as a whole has to accept some responsibility for what has gone before. But the time for ambiguity is now passed. The environmental movement must decide whether it is a reform effort, working within society to improve society, or an apocalyptic movement not subject to ordinary rules.

—Ed Marston

## LETTERS

### FORBES VERSUS HCN

Dear HCN,

The Dec. 7, 1987, issue of HCN featured a front-page attack on the Burlington Northern management and Dennis Washington of Missoula. The thrust of the article was that corporations are "bad" and that unions are the "innocent victims" of management. A followup article in the Jan. 4, 1988, issue, based on a *Forbes* magazine article that I sent to you, would have served as a balance if not for the condescending tone toward capitalism taken by (writer) Ed Marston.

Well, here we are one-and-a-half

years later — and Dennis Washington has made the cover of *Forbes*. I hope you will read the enclosed article (5/15/89) closely. The last two paragraphs of your Jan. 4, 1988, article summed up the situation at that time. I have the feeling that the results are not what you expected. Now you will probably object to the amount of money that Dennis Washington has made and ignore the positive impacts his businesses have had on Montana.

Owen Severance  
Monticello, Utah

P.S. Compare the statement on page 12 of your Dec. 7, 1987, article: "...the University of Montana in Missoula did name its new football stadium after Dennis

Washington. He donated some construction equipment and materials to the project," with the comment on page 91 of the *Forbes* article: "He contributed \$1 million to the University of Montana for a 14,000-seat football stadium that bears his name." I doubt if HCN would sneer like your author did if someone donated \$1 million to HCN. It would be nice if HCN would just objectively report the facts instead of always trying to tell its readers what they should think.

Dear Mr. Severance,

Thank you for pointing out that the *Forbes* approach to stories is different from ours. The one factual correction in your letter concerns Washington's \$1

million contribution to the University of Montana. The University of Montana Foundation tells us that Washington was the general contractor for the construction of the stadium, and that he made an in-kind donation of \$1 million of his cost. In other words, he donated construction equipment, materials and labor to build the stadium.

I think you would agree that HCN's description of Washington's contribution gives a better feel for the situation than *Forbes'* description, which reads as if the man made a cash contribution. That is especially true when you figure in the wriggle room a general contractor has in figuring an "in-kind" donation.

Your letter shows that *Forbes* never

(Continued on page 16)

**BLM land...***(Continued from page 13)*

director Robert Weaver has been skeptical about the BLM swaps.

"The lands being exchanged by the BLM are a speculator's dream. They are increasing in value on a daily basis," he said.

Weaver added that the BLM has given up valuable natural resource land that could have served as a green belt for a city that is converting thousands of acres a year into asphalt, homes and businesses. "The BLM is charting growth and where it occurs in the central part of the state," he said.

Besides giving up greenbelt areas some of the trades contribute to pressures for leapfrog development. Maricopa County Supervisor Carol Carpenter acknowledged that when the federal government sells or trades land there is always that potential. If the Board of Supervisors had not allowed a privately financed road to be built through the Sun Valley development it would not have been economical to develop that area, she said.

"The road did what was intended, which was to force the price of the land up. It was nice if you were speculating, but if you were not doing that it was very poor planning," Carpenter said.

The publicity over the 1988 BLM-Bell land exchange started to erode some of the strong backing Arizona environmental groups had consistently lavished on Bibles.

Rob Smith, Arizona director of the Sierra Club, said while the public has generally been well-served by the BLM trades, he is concerned that the BLM is giving up more land than is necessary.

"There is still a lot of work to be done and I hope some land is left to trade for special places we want to acquire. I hope the BLM has not given away all of our trading stock," Smith said.

But Smith's worries were confirmed by Arizona BLM realty specialist Bill Ruddick. Ruddick said the BLM has just about exhausted its trade base and the agency is nearing the end of the land exchange program.

"Our bank account is running low and we have just about traded away everything we have here," Ruddick said.

Jim Norton, southwestern director for The Wilderness Society, agreed with Smith that the public has gained benefits from the exchanges, but notes that "there has not been a lot of public review."

"We have not looked in detail to be able to say whether or not the lands the BLM has given up in return have had important resource or high economic values," Norton said.

David Alberswerth, director of public lands programs for the National Wildlife Federation, criticized BLM for

embarking on an ambitious land trading program with private parties without much public involvement or oversight.

"Our view is that for a program that was this intense and of that magnitude and impact, they should have done a lot more planning ahead of time and brought the public into the process. They basically ignored questions of whether the government got fair market value," Alberswerth said.

"Although land exchanges can be mutually beneficial to all parties concerned, they tend to make us nervous because the opportunity for hanky panky is certainly there."

Taking a less harsh view of the trades is Bob Witzeman, conservation chairman for the Maricopa Audubon Society. Witzeman said the trades have been an "environmental windfall" because they have put into public hands vast tracts of ecologically invaluable land that had been subject to overgrazing by ranchers.

Witzeman argues that the trades could not be completed if appraisals had been subject to public review, and that any money lost to the public in the form of windfall profits to developers will be recouped over time from the benefits associated with acquiring the private lands.

But Witzeman said the windfall profits which are accruing to private parties and the widespread publicity that follows threatens to end attempts by public agencies to acquire environmentally sensitive land controlled by private interests.

"The tragedy of the trades is, they are all going to backfire on Bibles," Witzeman said.

Last fall, another BLM land exchange was initiated with a Scottsdale development group involving 5,000 acres. The land is sloping saguaro-covered desert 30 miles northwest of Phoenix just a few miles from Lake Pleasant Regional Park. The land is near the 6,854 acres Bell acquired in last summer's land exchange.

The BLM valued Bell's Lake Pleasant property at \$11 million, with highway frontage carrying a \$5,000 an acre valuation and land away from the road valued at \$700 an acre. Brokers in the Lake Pleasant area said Bell's land could immediately be resold for \$16 to \$24 million, cash.

County Supervisor Carpenter says there is a rush on development in the area and land prices are escalating. "The Parks Department is very concerned with the potential for overdevelopment," she said.

The Maricopa County Planning Department and the Board of Supervisors both opposed trading this property

## Maricopa County opposed trading this property because they want the BLM land to remain a greenbelt for the city

because they want it to remain a greenbelt area for the city.

The investors trading for the other 5,000 acres near Lake Pleasant formed a company called San Pedro Investment Group. They completed part of the exchange last October and received title to 2,971 acres. They immediately sold the land to a group called Olympic Lake Pleasant General Partnership.

The Olympic Lake Pleasant partnership is marketing all 5,000 acres even though they only own 2,971 acres. The remaining acreage is still under consideration for exchange. A recently printed real estate sales brochure they distributed to such companies as Mobil Oil Corp. advertises the 5,000-acre parcel.

The brochure headline reads: "5000 ACRES WITH A NEW VIEW OF PARADISE." The slick eight-page ad is full of color photographs and graphs advertising the beauty of the desert and the growth and development potential of Phoenix.

Guy Inzalco is a member of the investment group that acquired and sold the first 2,971 acres in the 5,000 acre exchange. He says they are still working with the BLM to acquire the remaining acres in the exchange and that they are acquiring the property for the Olympic Lake Pleasant partnership. Inzalco says the Lake Pleasant partnership plans to hold the property as a future investment.

Inzalco adds that he and his three partners will make a \$600,000 profit on the trade if the entire exchange is completed.

"With four partners working over two years including our overhead and staff so far, we've made \$300,000; if we complete the rest of the exchange, we'll make another \$300,000. I don't think we are getting rich off these transactions or getting rich off the interests of the public trust."

Inzalco's profit may be low. According to Phoenix real estate developers, the value of property in the Lake Pleasant area will skyrocket once the federal government completes construction of a new dam in 1990, tripling the size of the lake.

Potential investors only have to turn to the BLM's sister agency in the U.S.

Department of Interior, the Bureau of Reclamation, to see much higher land values in the Lake Pleasant area.

The Bureau reached a settlement with private developers in early 1987 to condemn 397 acres of land for use in building the new dam at Lake Pleasant. The Bureau valued the property, which had secured water by drilling wells, at \$7.95 million. According to bureau records, the agency valued land in the flood plain of the Agua Fria River at \$8,000 an acre and land on higher elevations at \$20,000 an acre, far higher than BLM appraisals on land a few miles away.

One of the investors in the land purchased by BuRec was U.S. Sen. Dennis DeConcini, D-Ariz. DeConcini, who said his family business made the investment without his full understanding, later relinquished his interest in the property after BuRec said it could not reach a condemnation settlement with a sitting member of Congress.

Windfall profits to private developers resulting from numerous Arizona land exchanges have finally caught the attention of Congress. Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., and Rep. Jon Kyle, R-Ariz., said they plan to look into the BLM's exchange program in Arizona. The Inspector General for the Interior Department has also confirmed that he is investigating allegations of criminal fraud concerning the \$8.9 and \$19.5 million dollar appraisals on the same public land in the December exchange.

One thing they will quickly find is that the Department of Interior has a split personality when it comes to valuing the public's land. Records show that the Bureau of Reclamation is willing to pay a hefty price when it wants to acquire private lands. Its sister agency, the BLM, likes to put a low value on public land it is trading away.

In both cases, the taxpayer loses.

Jill Morrison is a freelance writer who commutes between Los Angeles and Tucson. John Dougherty, now a daily reporter in Dayton, Ohio, formerly worked in Arizona. This article was paid for by the High Country News Research Fund.

**LETTERS****Forbes...***(Continued from page 15)*

thought to question Washington's "\$1 million contribution" statement, despite far greater resources than we command. By comparison, HCN's Pat Dawson dug beneath the surface.

The real mystery is why you would take us to task for not writing like Forbes. Any perspective comes with built-in blindspots and built-in strengths. You happen to have inadvertently revealed Forbes' blindspot, as a businessman's fan magazine, and our strength. I'm grateful to you for that.

But I wouldn't pretend that our per-

spective, which emphasizes the environment over cash flow and profits, doesn't lead to errors of its own. That is why people should read a variety of publications, as you do.

Ed Marston  
Publisher

**PLUTONIUM PRODUCTION**

Dear HCN,

Since a strong nuclear deterrent seems necessary, consider the strength of the U.S. arsenal — 22,000 warheads — graphically. Take a map of the Soviet Union and by dotting in just 1,000 "pencil point" nuclear explosions you have illustrated our tremendous overkill capacity.

Now consider building in Idaho the S.I.S. — weapons-grade plutonium production facility — to give us a "bargaining chip" to bring Russia to the negotiating table, as some in Congress suggest. The S.I.S. might have been an effective bargaining chip in 1960, but today the delivery system is the critical factor of our military deterrence, not plutonium production capabilities. The U.S. Navy pointed this out when it recently decided to retire, unilaterally, 1,100 nuclear warheads full of plutonium because of obsolete missile technology. In light of these circumstances the continuation of plutonium production is a waste of manpower and economic resources.

Speaking of economics, it makes little sense to create new jobs in an industry that has already overproduced. Pluto-

nium is not only the most toxic substance known to man, but it has a half-life of 25,000 years and can be recycled from retired warheads if necessary. In fact, the nuclear weapons materials production industry should begin a gradual scale-down. Energy Department workers and scientists should be retrained in clean-up technology or offered educational opportunities similar to the G.I. bill to pursue new employment skills.

A verifiable plutonium cut-off agreement between the United States and the U.S.S.R. is a far better solution. We simply do not need the S.I.S., and beginning its construction would be a regrettable decision.

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