

The Environmental Bi-Weekly

# High Country News

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Lander, Wyoming

Friday, October 22, 1976

## Telluride blues, a hatchet job

© 1976 by Edward Abbey

Telluride was actually discovered back in 1957, by me, during a picnic expedition into the San Miguel Mountains of southwestern Colorado. I recognized it at once as something much too good for the general public. For 13 years I kept the place a secret from all but my closest picnicking cronies. No use: I should have invested everything I had in Telluride real estate.

In 1970 a foreigner from California named Joseph T. Zoline moved in with five million dollars and began the Californication of Telluride. Formerly an honest, decayed little mining town of about 300 souls, it is now a bustling whore of a ski resort with a population of 1,500 and many more to come, if all goes badly, as planned.

"We shall develop," Zoline told *Colorado Magazine*, "a ski area bigger than Vail, as large as Ajax, Aspen Highlands, and Buttermilk combined, and twice as big as Mammoth Mountain in California." Two cheers for Zoline. The county chamber of commerce was delighted, but those who preferred Telluride as Telluride wept in their beers and prayed in the alleyways.

Mere men weep and pray, but MONEY TALKS. Money walks and talks and gets things done. Four years after his announcement (four years! it took 20 years to get the Wilderness Preservation Act through Congress, 40 years to have one tiny remnant of the California redwoods given shabby and inadequate protection as a national park) Zoline has completed five

operating double chairlifts, 32 miles of trails, and an 87-pad condominium.

Merely the beginning. Though the town offered only 700 "beds" in 1975, Zoline's Telluride Company expected 75,000 skiers in the '75 season and 170,000 by 1976. To accommodate such multitudes, Zoline planned to build a village for 8,000 on the mountain meadows at the foot of the lifts. Cabin sites or "ski ranches" are already being offered for sale (at \$5,000 to \$10,000 per acre); and Holiday Inn has begun to make inquiries. The 20-year plan for Big-T envisions, on paper, a cable monorail system and a total of 17 lifts with the combined capacity of transporting 24,000 skiers per hour up a vertical distance of 4,000 feet; from there dropping them to the head of 60 miles of trail. Bigger than Vail! Better than Aspen!

What — another Aspen?

Yes, but different. Telluride's growth will be controlled and orderly, say the company executives, with "full environmental protection." The vague phrase rolls easily from the mouths of all developers these days. "Aspen grew without controls, under inadequate zoning laws," Zoline told *Colorado Magazine*. "We shall profit from that lesson here."

Maybe they'll profit. Then again maybe they won't. Telluride is a hard place to get to. The nearest big town is Denver, 325 miles away on the other side of the Rocky Mountains, an eight hour auto drive under the best conditions. The nearest primary air access terminal is at Grand Junction, 130 miles to the north. There is no rail line



to Telluride and the buses, at present, arrive only on weekends. If you elect to go by car, during the winter, you must drive the last 30 miles on a two-lane winding mountain road often surfaced with snow and ice, with chains advisable. Below the road is the deep canyon of the San Miguel River. Above are the high-pitched mountain walls and thousands of tons of snow, hanging there ready to slide.

Avalanches have been a problem in Telluride ever since the 1880s. Built in a nar-

row valley under 14,000-foot peaks, Telluride was hit by death-dealing avalanches in 1902, 1926, and 1927. Smaller ones occur every winter. With an average annual snowfall of 165 inches (Aspen averages 135), the next killer avalanche may come at any time. Even the summertime visitor to Telluride can see on the steep slopes above the town the swaths of destruction cut through the forest by snowslides both old and recent.

(continued on page 4)

**What some of us liked so much about Telluride was not the skiing but . . . its rundown, raunchy, redneck, backwoods backwardness.**

## Politics prevent fair nuclear initiative contest

by Marjane Ambler

Tackling a nuclear initiative campaign anywhere is tough, but in Montana, the odds against a fair campaign are even steeper. Events in the two months preceding the election have convinced nuclear initiative proponents that Montana is a state where large corporate interests still have an unusually strong hold on the courts and even the state's attorney general — especially at election time.

Obstacles peculiar to the political climate in Montana have discouraged some

safe power proponents in Montana enough to make them abandon their campaign. The principal group advocating it, however, gives the initiative a 50-50 chance.

Some of the initiative's opponents in Montana are familiar to initiative advocates in other states — the Western Environmental Trade Association (a coalition of industry and labor groups) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers. Winner and Wagner, a Los Angeles-based public relations firm that has worked for several states' anti-initiative efforts, has been hired to work on

the Montana campaign, according to a recent announcement by the rural electrification cooperatives (REA). The REAs have worked hard to fight the Montana initiative, including not only helping to hire the public relations firm and editorializing against the initiative, but also campaigning at the Montana Democratic platform convention against the measure. The REAs have pledged \$2,500 to help defeat the initiative, according to the Associated Press. The initiative proponents have spent about \$250.

Both the attorney general, Robert

Woodahl, and the Montana Supreme Court justices are up for election this November. Woodahl is running for governor against the incumbent, Thomas Judge. Two of the present five supreme court justices are running for reelection, and past rulings which consistently favored Montana Power Co. are a big issue in the campaign.

### NOT A BAN

In two separate cases — both of which the supreme court has been involved in —

(continued on page 7)

# HIGH COUNTRY

By Jim Bell

Campaign rhetoric and the presidential debates notwithstanding, there is an issue of overriding significance which has hardly been mentioned. It was on Oct. 17, 1973, that the OPEC oil embargo began. It was also the beginning of the realization that this country is no longer energy independent.

Democratic hopeful Jimmy Carter has proposed a cabinet-level energy agency if he is elected. And he has said, "We need to shift from oil to coal. . . we need to shift very strongly toward solar power and have strict conservation measures and then, as a last resort only, continue to use atomic power." Carter also said he would require mandatory fuel conservation. But he does not enlarge on these themes, and he seems not to thoroughly grasp the totality of the energy situation. If he does, he is not saying so.

President Ford's position on the problem appears hopeless. As *U.S. News & World Report* (Oct. 11, 1976) said, "Campaign aides feel there are more votes to be lost than won in calling attention to the Administration's energy policies." In fact, Mr. Ford seems to have only one policy. He advocates sharply higher fuel costs as the best way to encourage both production of energy and its conservation.

So with less than two weeks left in the campaign and only one debate remaining, it seems that the energy crisis is being literally ignored. Too bad, too, for energy, or the lack of it, may have more to do with unemployment, inflation, or foreign policy than all the other factors put together. One congressman, Mike McCormack of Washington, has pointed out that by 1985, being short a million barrels of oil a day will mean a loss of some 900,000 jobs.

Let us consider for a moment the situation we are in. The United Nations, in a 900-page study on "World Energy Supplies," says the U.S. consumed 30% of the world's commercial energy in 1974, with only five per cent of the world's population. (Remember, this was when we were still enmeshed in the oil embargo.) The study also found that American consumption of gasoline was approximately nine times the world average.

*U.S. News & World Report* (Oct. 4, 1976) reported, "Gasoline usage alone is breaking all records, averaging around 7.2 million barrels a day for much of the summer. That is 3.5% above 1975 levels." The *News* said, "The nation's energy crisis is drifting from bad to worse. . ." and went on to cite further statistics: U.S. oil production is down to 8.1 million barrels of oil a day — a drastic drop from the 1970 peak of 9.6 million barrels; imports from foreign countries are running a million barrels a day above last year's level, with Saudi Arabia being the number one supplier; imports now supply more than 40% of our oil, far above the amount we used at the time of the 1973 oil embargo; the use of electric power has increased by 5.2% in the first six months of 1976, the same rate as 1973 before the oil embargo.

It is interesting to note that while we continue our energy binge as if there were no tomorrows, experts point out that we are fast running out of world oil and gas supplies. The International Energy Agency says the Western nations show more inclination to expand supplies than to curb usage.

There appears to be a bleak prospect in the decades ahead. But at a time when steps could be taken to brighten that prospect, we hopelessly drift. Right now, President Ford should be jawboning everyone

concerned on the need for energy conservation. Every imaginable effort should be made to shift emphasis from energy wasteful ways to conservation.

On Oct. 4, the Federal Energy Administration released a report claiming a national bottle bill modeled on Oregon's could save 81,000 barrels of oil a day, while generating 118,000 more jobs. This is only one example of many steps that could be taken.

But we suffer from a lack of leadership and statesmanship. A virtual sword of Damocles hangs over our collective heads by reason of the energy situation. The viability of the U.S. as a world power could be questioned next week if another embargo would occur tomorrow.

And in the long run, without a comprehensive energy policy, we face the possibility of another Dark Ages.



## HCN Letters

### NEED ABBEY CONVERTS

Dear HCN,

I want to compliment you on your feature article, "Joy, Shipmates, Joy!" (HCN 9-24-76). If Ed Abbey can convert enough people to his way of thinking, we may be able to save some of America's wild places and wildlife from clearcutting, strip mining, motor vehicles, poisons, dams, channelization, high rises, super highways, air pollution, water pollution, and noise.

Dick Wilson  
Des Plaines, Ill.

### WASTE OF BEARS

Dear HCN,

It would be a waste of grizzly bears to attempt restocking them (see HCN, 10-8-76) at this time in the Weminuche Wilderness of Colorado or in any other area where domestic sheep or cattle are allowed to graze, since the big bear will prey on such animals and, in turn, be killed by the shepherd or rancher. One reason that you still find grizzlies in Yellowstone and Glacier Parks, as well as in several national forest areas of wilderness in Montana, is that domestic livestock, except for recreational stock, is not found there.

I only hope that we will keep enough wild country where the grizzly still exists in Montana and Wyoming, so that the remarkable creature can survive. Marginal as it usually is for commodity purposes, we



"AN ASTOUNDING BREAK-THROUGH, MEN! A CONTAINER GUARANTEED TO LAST A THOUSAND YEARS — NOW WE HAVE ONLY 23,360 YEARS TO GO!"

don't have to road and log this remaining wild habitat. And perhaps some grizzly country should be off limits to the public. It could reduce man-bear encounters.

Best regards,  
Clifton R. Merritt  
Executive Secretary  
Wilderness Resources Institute  
Denver, Colo.

### HART REGRETS AIR VOTE

Dear Friend:

A compromise Clean Air bill, vital to the protection of public health and the continued growth of our economy, was killed on the Senate floor. The failure of Congress to pass this legislation will have serious consequences for Colorado and the nation.

As a member of the Senate Public Works Committee which spent over two years working on this legislation, I am deeply troubled by this event. It demonstrated the ability of a few industries and large companies to kill a bill which was designed to protect all the people of this country.

The bill addressed two important issues — automobile emission standards and protection of pristine — "clean air" — areas of the nation. The bill relaxes automobile emission standards and deadlines to give the automobile industry time to develop new low-emission technology. The industry, however, hoped for even further relaxation of the standards and opposed the bill. As a result, existing tougher standards and deadlines will remain in effect. And, the automobile industry may face serious economic problems in the year ahead.

The bill would also have clarified standards for the protection of "clean air" areas of the country where the air is not now polluted. This section of the bill was opposed by numerous industries hoping for

more lenient standards.

Without the bill, however, the regulations in existing law, which give little control to state and local governments and which have been the source of much delay and confusion, will remain in effect. For Colorado and the nation, this has serious implications for industrial expansion, tourism, energy development and environmental protection.

The bill also contained numerous other provisions important to Colorado. One provision would have allowed adjustment of cars operating at high altitudes to improve pollution control, fuel efficiency, and drivability. Without this provision, it will be difficult for areas like Denver to solve their air pollution problems.

In January when the Congress will again address this issue, I will continue to work for a reasonable bill which accommodates the need for economic growth without sacrificing public health and our environmental resources.

Gary Hart (D-Colo.)  
U.S. Senate

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## Truth not Consequences



The truth is High Country News keeps its eye on the developing West. The paper tries to do an honest job of reporting. The consequence of not keeping an eye on West could be disastrous. That would be a taking a chance we're not ready to take. We hope you're not ready to, either. You can help to print the truth — not the consequences — by donating to the High Country News research fund. Donations are tax deductible. Make out checks to: "Wyoming Environmental Institute — HCN Research Fund," and send to Wyoming Environmental Institute, P.O. Box 2597, Jackson, Wyo. 83001. Thank you.

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# Editorial

HCN

## Recycling to save canyonlands

A recent nationwide poll conducted by the Federal Energy Administration found that 73% of those polled favored a mandatory deposit system for beverage containers. A poll in Oregon after its ban on throwaways was enacted indicated that 91% of the state approved of the law. Yet despite this overwhelming sign of approval, attempts to pass bans on nonreturnables are regularly defeated.

This year, bottle bills were killed in 38 state legislatures and the U.S. Congress, according to the Colorado Resource Recovery Committee. Four states — Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, and Michigan — will vote on bottle initiatives next month. Heavily financed industry campaigns are being waged to defeat the initiatives.

Nonreturnable bans have always been a good idea from a litter reduction and resource recycling standpoint, but our recently-recognized energy predicament makes such laws even more essential. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency reports that banning nonreturnables across the U.S. would save 18.2 billion kilowatts

of electricity — enough to supply the electrical needs of 9.1 million relatively affluent Americans annually.

That potential savings looks especially attractive to Westerners who keep hearing about the "need" to build gigantic coal-fired power plants in the Utah canyonlands and other wild, clean, primitive areas. There would be no "need" for Kaiparowits and five other power plants of identical size and polluting capability if we could just make the move to returnables.

It's such a crazy tradeoff — as if our right to throw a nonreturnable beer can in the roadway was more valuable than our right to enjoy the clean air of the canyon country. We're asked or told almost daily to sacrifice the quality of our environment. When will we be asked if we'd rather sacrifice a little frivolous convenience?

We owe thanks to the hard working volunteers who gathered enough signatures on petitions to put nonreturnable bans on their state ballots. At least some of us will have a choice.

—BH



Bristlecone pine at sunset. Photo by Judy Sumner.



# Guest Editorial

HCN

## Time to tackle population issue

by John Retrum

Zero Population Growth

Reprinted from the COSC Conservator

Colorado's population is growing faster than India's, and the nation's population is growing with no end in sight. Yet neither Colorado nor the U.S. has an explicit population policy or plan to stabilize its growth. Most people are surprised to learn that the U.S. is not on the path to population stabilization. The government says we are — but the government is incorrect.

No one can predict the future. What is possible is to make forecasts by projecting



current trends into the future. The U.S. Bureau of the Census, by projecting birth, death, and legal immigration rates, forecasts an end to U.S. population growth in the next 50 years. To illustrate, the bureau reported that the U.S. added 1.7 million people (about the size of Detroit) to its population in 1975. The total fertility rate (the number of children a woman has in a

lifetime) for this year was estimated at 1.8. If this rate persists and if legal immigration continues yearly at 400,000, the U.S. would stabilize its population in about 50 years.

However, official figures do not encompass an additional factor — that of illegal immigration. The Immigration and Naturalization Service of the U.S. Department of Justice reports that illegal immigration accounted for an increase of 800,000 people (low estimate) in 1975. If the total fertility rate persists at 1.8 and the current flow of illegal immigrants continues as is, the U.S. will never stop growing.

The Colorado Department of Planning has forecast a growth rate for Colorado that was 2.5% in 1975 and levels off at 1.9% by 1980. But here again the mistake is made of not including illegal immigration in the formula. The same Immigration and Naturalization Service reports that about 25,000 illegal immigrants are added to Colorado yearly. Thus, Colorado's population growth rate was well above India's of 2.4% in 1975.

The consequences of Colorado's explod-

ing growth rate outstripping India's is less frightening than is that of the sheer numbers of people that will be packed into our state before growth ceases. If all trends continue as they have in the past, Colorado's population could easily double in the next 40 years.

At this point it is well to reflect upon the fact that in a world of finite resources, infinite population growth is impossible. Since there is no disputing this statement, the real questions before us are when and how will we stop population growth. Obviously, the sooner the day comes, the more finite resources there will be to spread around, and the better for all.

As the size of the population will be a major determinant of the quality of life in the future, it is imperative that Colorado and the U.S. confront the population issue today. But a startling indifference to the population problem exists in our govern-

mental, educational, and religious institutions.

There is no benefit to an early cry of catastrophe. Neither is there benefit in treating the population issue with indifference. However, the longer environmentalists wait to press for population stabilization, the more fuel is added to the fire; and the longer it will take for the goals of environmentalists to be achieved.

HCN lets you put us on...

Free Halloween Costume



This Halloween you and your friends can scare up a storm! Make a costume out of High Country News — disguise you and your friends as environmentalists! Send us your friend's name and we'll send a free, sample copy. Or better yet, give your friend a gift subscription by enclosing \$10 and your friend will receive two costumes a month for the next year. (Wait 'till you see our Valentine issue.)

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Greeting Cards

Holly Merrifield, wildlife artist and friend, has designed these note cards for High Country News. These cards were so popular last year, we're trying them again. Ready for your personal notes, the cards are 3½ by 7 inches on ivory stock with gold envelopes. Designs are in wheatfield gold. A handsome complement to any message. (Please specify Moose or Eagle.) \$2. Ten cards and envelopes per set.

4-High Country News — Oct. 22, 1976

## Telluride. . .

(continued from page 1)

Of course this heavy snow cover makes possible good skiing and a long season. Among the runs already open is one called The Plunge. The Plunge drops 3,200 vertical feet in a distance of 2.5 miles — perhaps the longest continuous steep run in North America. Even the experts need 45 minutes to work their way down that one. The Big-T also offers helicopter transport to areas above and beyond the lifts, providing those skiers who can afford it a chance to play in the deep and virgin powder of the more remote mountain snowbowls.

But the skiing is good everywhere in the Rocky Mountains and the scenery at Telluride, though magnificent, is merely routine Rocky Mountain magnificence, no grander, for example, than the landscape of

for five or ten dollars in back taxes now are priced at \$10,000. And so on.)

Others among the town's original population — those too slow to speculate, manipulate, scam, and scheme — are going to have to suffer. A lot of the old folks who have lived in Telluride for many years, sometimes for most of their lives, are going to have to leave. Why? Because, being pensionaires, most of them, their fixed and humble incomes will not permit them to pay the runaway property taxes which have multiplied 10 times over in the past three years. For instance, a lot formerly assessed at \$100 is now appraised at \$1,000; a leaning clapboard shack with gingerbread filigree had a valuation of \$300 before — now it's \$2,500.

You might think it a simple matter to change the rules so that the old folks are taxed for the inflated value of their homes only if they choose to sell out. It would be a simple matter; but that's not the way we do business in this country. Business in this country depends on high volume and fast

### Others among the town's original population — those too slow to speculate, manipulate, scam, and scheme — are going to have to suffer.

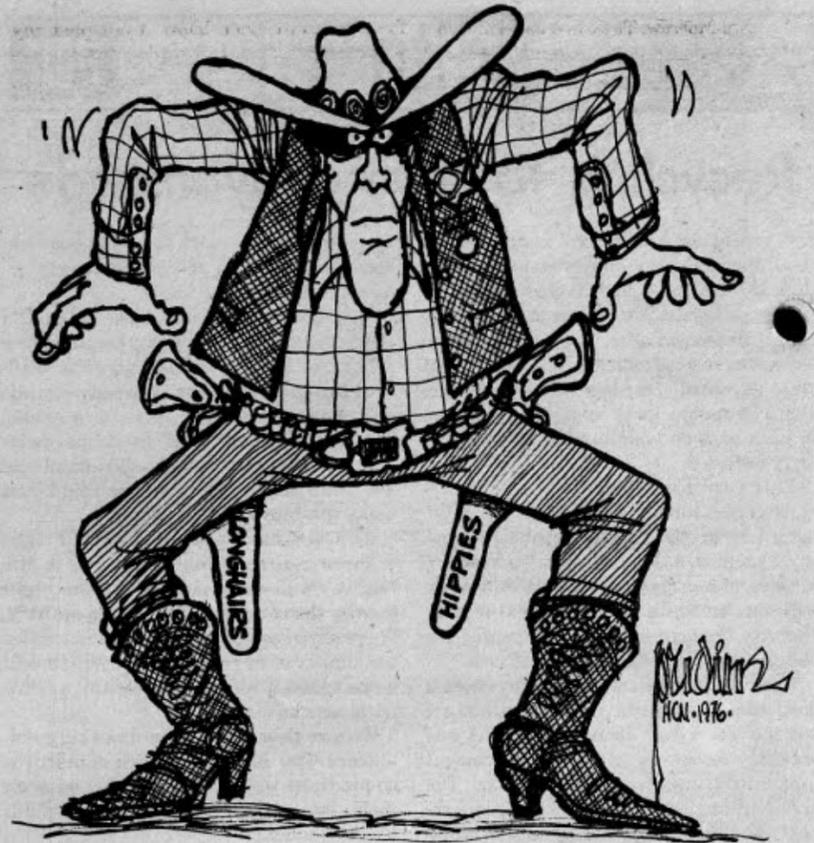
Sun Valley, Taos, Vail, Aspen, Alta, Snowbird, Park City, or any of a hundred other crowded, frozen, expensive, established ski resorts in the Inter-mountain West. What some of us liked so much about Telluride was not the skiing but that quality of the town which Zoline and his developmental millions must necessarily and unavoidably take away: its rundown, raunchy, redneck, backwoods backwardness.

That quality is one you cannot keep in a classy modern ski resort, no matter how much money is spent for preservation, no matter how many town ordinances are passed attempting to protect Telluride's antique Victorian architecture.

Some Telluriders, naturally, the crafty few who got in on the ski boom early, are becoming rich. Do I begrudge these native few their sudden unearned wealth? I sure do. But that's only normal spite and envy. (Christ, I could have bought the old Senate Bar & Whorehouse for \$4,500 in 1962, if I'd had the \$4,500. In 1974, the dump was sold for \$100,000. Vacant lots that used to sell

turnover. It's more profitable to force the old people out, lure new ones in. That's what keeps the real estate industry operating — displaced human beings. "Our retired people with fixed incomes will have to leave," says Don O'Rourke the county treasurer. Flatly. So that's the way it is, Mom. It's tough, Pop, but it's fair. Out you go. (Telluride has no doctor, but it had, last time I counted, six real estate agencies.)

In come the hippies then, the freaks, the rootless ones, the middle class proletariat with their ponytails and unisex beards, all of them, male and female, wearing the same bib overalls, Goodwill workshirts, and waffle-stomper boots — all trying to look different in the same way. The air is thick with flying frisbees, the sweet smell of *Cannabis sativa*, and the heavy rock electric jungle sound, the industrial beat of hardcore imitation-Negro music. ROCK, beneath the mountains, where once we heard only the sign of spindrift from the snowfields and Eddie Arnold on the



jukebox. But they have money, these freaks, and want to invest.

All of which poses a serious problem for the native residents, the business community. A serious psychic bind. On the one

### In come the hippies then, the freaks, the rootless ones, the middleclass proletariat. . .

hand the natives want the newcomers' money; on the other hand they hate their guts. Excruciating inner conflict. What to do? Well, why not take their money first then call in the cowboys every Saturday night and let them beat the living shit out of these long-haired weirdos? Such has always been the traditional style of hospitality in the Golden West; still is in Wyoming.

But something has gone wrong with the Colorado cowboys. Although they continue to wear the funny hats and the tight snap-button shirts they don't seem to like to fight so much any more, even when they've got the opponent outnumbered by the customary ratio of ten to one. Even on Saturday nights. The bartender at the Sheridan Hotel & Opera House explained it all to me (above the hysterical shrieking from the jukebox of some electronically-amplified imitation-Negro lady vocalist named Janis Jalopy or something like that): "It's like this," he explained, "it's that sex revolution. It finally come to San Miguel County about two years ago. Now even cowboys can get laid."

A break for the horses. With the cowboys pacified by sex, the solution to the hippie problem came to rest in the hands of Telluride's one-man law enforcement agency, Town Marshal Everett Morrow. From Oklahoma, seven years in Telluride, a welder by trade, police officer in his spare time, Morrow dressed in classic Western lawman's costume: boots, leather vest with tin star, concho-banded Stetson, the quick-draw artist's lowslung .45. Each shady looking newcomer got a personal welcome to Telluride from Marshal Morrow, including identification check with police record follow-up. His tactics, sometimes rough on the younger generation,

made Morrow a focal point of the cultural conflict between Telluride's conservative native establishment and the long-haired newcomers who have swarmed into the town during the past three years.

"The ski area will be the best thing ever happened to this town," said Marshal Morrow, "if we can get it without the goddamn hippies. It ain't the hair bothers me; it's the drugs."

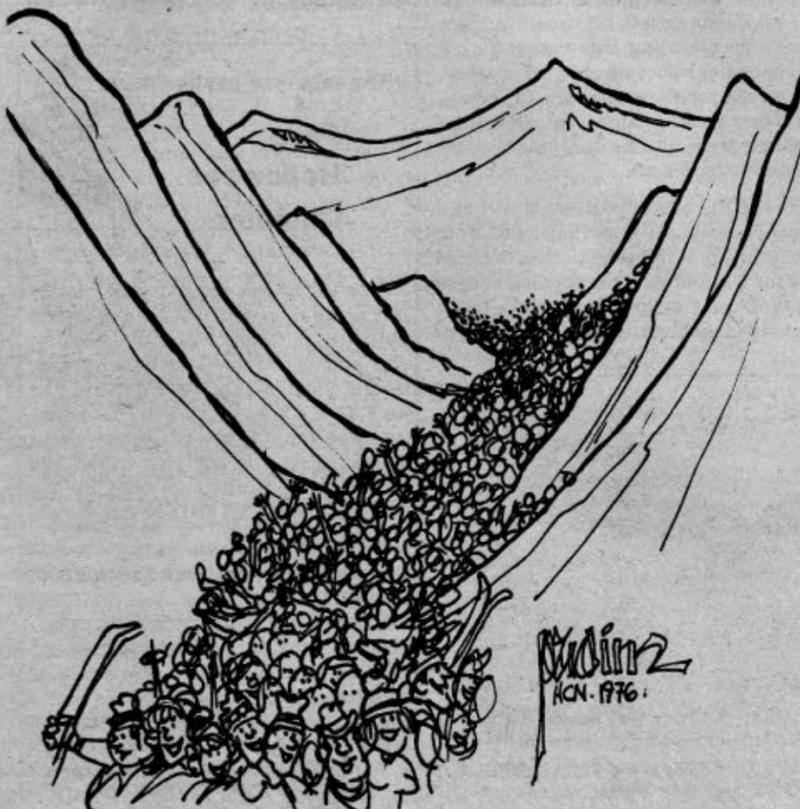
The chief drug being dispensed in Telluride today, however, is the same as it was 90 years ago — alcohol. The town has 12 bars, three package stores, and a special 3.2 beer joint and poolroom for teenagers. With a current population of 1,500 there's about one liquor establishment for every 100 citizens — man, woman, child, babe in arms. Contrariwise, there are only three churches and one part-time barbershop. That's the way things go in Telluride, downhill.

One afternoon a couple of years ago a man named Wayne Webb purchased a bottle of peppermint schnapps in the Belmont Liquor Store, Telluride. (Peppermint schnapps!) From there he went on to every liquor establishment in town, which includes the restaurants, and had a drink or bought a bottle. An hour later he was followed on the same circuit by Town Marshal Morrow who presented the manager of each place a summons charging him or her with the sale of liquor to a minor. Wayne Webb, who has the looks and manner of a man of 30, was 20 years old. The legal drinking age in Colorado is 21. Webb, employed by the Marshal, was a plant. Every liquor dispenser in Telluride apparently had been entrapped into breaking the law.

That kind of law enforcement does not set well in a town of only 1,500 people. A

### That's what keeps the real estate industry operating — displaced human beings.

stormy town meeting was called, promptly following the citations, during which the bar owners and their partisans (an overwhelming majority of those present, mostly the young, long-haired, new residents) demanded the resignation or ouster



of Marshal Morrow. The town council, consisting largely of oldtimers, declined to take action against Morrow but also dropped all charges against the liquor dispensers. This compromise was not sufficient to appease the anger of the crowd, for whom Morrow's entrapment bit was simply a final straw in a long history of alleged abuses. One of the most indignant of those present at the meeting was young Pierre Bartholemy, owner and operator of a restaurant he calls, *naturallement*, Chez Morrow. His friends call him Chez. He is a newcomer both to Telluride and to the United States. In the course of his harangue, which was long and passionate, M. Bartholemy urged the town council to take away the Marshal's TV set. "Zis Marshal," he said, "he watch too much zat how you call it? horse opera? too much goddamned Gunsmoke!"

Marshal Morrow replied by asking for an interpreter, saying "Sorry but Ah can't

for a moment, then blows it out past my nose. It doesn't smell much like tobacco. Smells like a blend of cured cornsilk and dried Kentucky horseshit. Yes, that's Bull Durham all right. And if he tries to draw on me, I thought, I'll grab the tag on his Bull Durham pouch and yank him off balance. That way he'll shoot me in the groin instead of the belly. The groin's nothing but a lot of trouble anyway.

Marshal Morrow studies me for a few more seconds, his cold steady eyes looking straight into mine, if I'd been standing two feet to the left and about 40 miles back.

"I kinda doubt it," he finally says, handing back my obsolete press card.

"Doubt what?"

"What you said."

"You mean the answer is no?"

"Yeah."

(That old Morrow, the bartender at the Sheridan explained to me afterwards, he's

winters of Telluride, at 8,800 feet above sea level, must be mighty expensive. In more ways than one: I thought of the canyon and mesa lands of Utah and northern Arizona — my country — being disembowelled, their skies darkened by gigantic coal-burning power plants, in order to provide juice and heat for frivolous plywood ski-hutches like this. Sad? No, not sad — just a bloody criminal outrage, that's all.

I stopped at the office for a few words with Mr. Zoline. Not available, the secretary told me; back in Los Angeles raising more millions. As I walked out of the place I paused for a final look back. The whole condominium rests on a boggy piece of bottomland beside the San Miguel River. Drainage problems are considerable. May the whole thing sink, I prayed, down into the muck where it belongs.

That afternoon I took the Telluride Company's free bus tour and chairlift ride. Anything to add to the overhead and help hasten the company into its inevitable bankruptcy. The chairlift ride up over the mountain meadows was quite enjoyable. The view of Mt. Sneffels and Mt. Wilson, two of Colorado's most spectacular 14ers, is certainly a good one. Routine but good. Our tour guide, full of enthusiasm, told us that Mr. Zoline had begun his new ski empire by purchasing, for only \$150,000, a 900-acre sheep ranch. Sheep ranch? I might have known that a goddamned sheep grower was at the bottom of all this. The swine.

On the way back I asked the guide about the Telluride Company's official symbol, the significance of which escapes me. The official symbol of the Telluride Company is what appears to be a fried egg with one quarter section cut away.

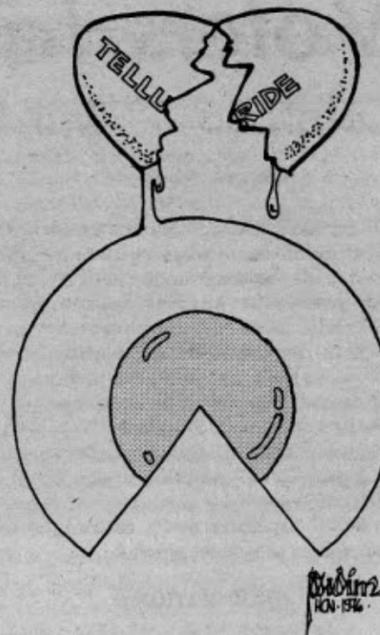
"That ain't no fried egg," the guide (a local boy) said, "that there's the sun a-comin' up behind a mountain with sunshine all around it. What they call a logograph."

"It looks like a fried egg."

"Yessir, but it ain't, it's a logograph. Ask anybody."

Evasive answer and typical: all you ever get from these company people is doubletalk.

Telluride. To hell you ride. All year mountain playground. And why not? The people need their playgrounds. We all need a place to escape to, now and then, as the



prison of the cities becomes ever more oppressive. But why did they have to pick on my Telluride? One more virgin valley and untainted town sacrificed on the greasy altar of industrial tourism, mechanized recreation. Soon to become, like New York, like L.A., like Denver, like Tucson, like Santa Fe, like Aspen (thus the development proceeds), one more place to escape from. Someday soon, if this keeps up, there will be no places left anywhere for anybody to find refuge in. Whereupon, all jammed together in one massive immovable plenum of flesh and machinery, then we may think, at last, in Fullerian-Skinnerian-McLuhanian telepathic union: ah! if only! oh if only we had . . . if we had only thought. . .

Thought what? By that time perhaps even the thought, even the memory of what (if only) could have been, that too will be lost. Perhaps forever.

Forever? Never say forever, pardner. But say — for a considerable spell of time. For one long long hell of a piece of time. Until those little voices on the mountain summits, one mile above, calling "don't fret Telluride we're coming" have their way, and the huge white walls come down.

"Telluride Blues, A Hatchet Job," was written in February 1975. Since that time, several changes have taken place. Town Marshal Everett Morrow has left and been replaced by Jim Hall. An Aug. 22, 1976, article in the *Denver Post's Empire Magazine* states: ". . . In spite of rumors in Telluride that 'Joe Zoline is producing a mint,' the company has not yet produced a profit. It has a deficit of more than \$1 million on the books." The article notes that Telluride now has two doctors and a clinic (the present number of bars was not given). Zoline has sold 60 of his 86 condominiums, 75 of his 111 one-to-three acre ski ranches, and is completing another 350-guest lodge. Last season more than 70,000 skiers visited Telluride. The *Post* article projects a 1988 population of 10,000-20,000 and estimates the present town population at 1,200. Referring to Zoline, Town Mayor Gary Bennett told the *Post*, "Half the town thinks he's a hero. The other half thinks he's an SOB."

"Telluride Blues, A Hatchet Job," will be part of a new book by Edward Abbey — *Malice Aforethought: Essays in Defense of the American West* — to be published by E. P. Dutton Co. this winter. Abbey is author of *Black Sun*, *Slickrock*, *Desert Solitaire*, *The Monkey Wrench Gang*, and other books.

### I thought of the canyon and mesa lands of Utah and northern Arizona — my country — being disembowelled, their skies darkened by gigantic coal-burning power plants, in order to provide juice and heat for frivolous plywood ski-hutches like this.

understand Chez's kinda English. . . Someone in the back of the standing-room-only crowd shouted "Fucking bigot!" and crept quickly out of the hall. Another person suggested that it was Chez who needed the interpreter since no new arrival to the American hinterlands could reasonably be expected to understand Oklahoman Morrow's "boll weevil English."

I braced myself for action. Nothing happened. Morrow merely smiled. The cowboy had the longhairs outnumbered: there were only two or three hundred of them. He lounged in the swivel chair behind the judge's stand at the head of the hall, listening in scornful silence as the indignation against him ranted on, peaked, leveled off, waned, and petered out. Meeting adjourned. The mob straggled forth into the night, defeated by the bland inertia of the town council, and dispersed to Telluride's 12 principal establishments of nocturnal worship. Democracy had suffered another crushing setback. Nothing new in that.

I wanted to interview the town marshal and managed to intercept him at his car. "I'm writing a story about Telluride for a magazine," I explained.

Pause. The marshal looks me over. He shakes a precise measure of Bull Durham into his ungummed Wheatstraw, checking me out at the same time with a pair of the regulation chill blue eyes. "Let's see your I.D."

I offer him my old pink LIFE card with the scowling passport photo, plainly stamped "Good Only for March-April 1971." (Issued for a trip to Sinai, called off on account of sloth.)

"So you're from the media," he says. "That's right. I'm a medium."

He rolls his cigarette with one hand, holding my card in the other, hardly glancing at it. His little cigarette, licked and twisted shut at one end, looks exactly like a joint. That was Bull Durham? In the little cotton sack with the black label and the yellow drawstrings?

"I ain't been treated too good by the media," he says. "They take a man like me, they like to make him look like a fool. Like a goddanged hick."

"I'm different from the others," I said. "I can see that."

"I'll treat you different." He lights the cigarette, takes a deep drag down into the delicate lung tissues, holds it

mean but he's fair: he treats everybody like shit.)

Next day I investigated Joe T. Zoline's million-dollar condominium. From the highway it looks like a haphazard arrangement of apple boxes; close up it looks bigger but the same. The roofs are flat. They won't hold up well under 165 inches — about 14 feet — of snow. The walls seem to be made of plywood. I noticed some of the exterior paneling beginning to peel and warp already, though construction was only completed a year ago. The interiors are cleverly designed: each of the 87 apartments, whether big or small, has high ceilings, a view of the mountains, and a little private sun deck. Each apartment (priced at \$39,000 and up) contains a fireplace, but the fireplaces are miniaturized, more decorative than functional; all heating, as well as all cooking, is by electricity. All-electric heating, in the nine-month

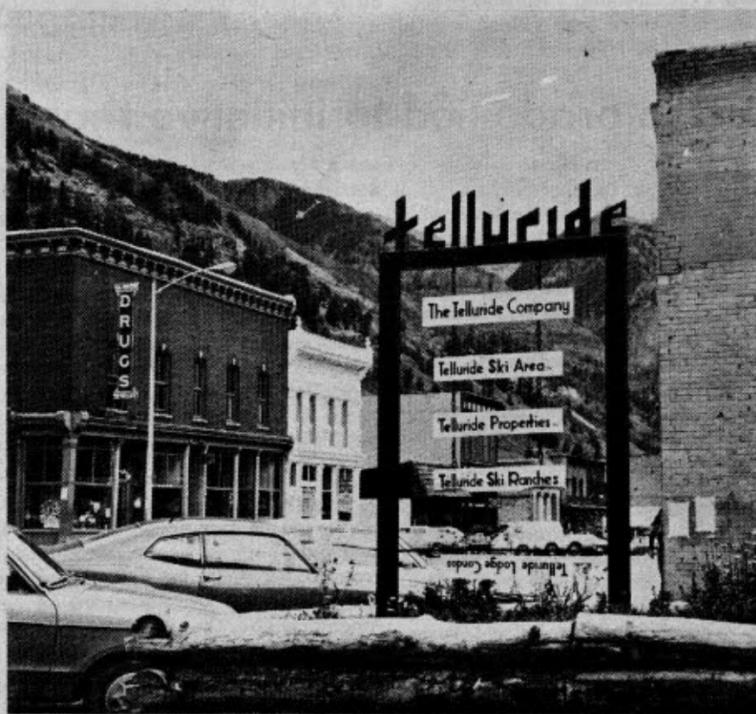


Photo by David Doll

6-High Country News — Oct. 22, 1976

# Voters face bottle, nuclear initiatives

## Colorado — will bottle bill work?

by Bruce Hamilton

Colorado is one of four states which will have an initiative measure to ban non-returnable beverage containers on the November ballot. And in all four states — Colorado, Maine, Massachusetts, and Michigan — the bottle and can industry and some labor groups are waging an all out campaign to defeat the measures.

Polls taken in all four states show that the propositions will probably be approved, but as election day nears the anti-initiative forces are expected to gain momentum and invest in expensive media campaigns to turn public sentiment around.

### PROPOSITION 8

In Colorado the anti-throwaway initiative is called Proposition 8. The measure would require a minimum five cent refundable deposit on all beer and soft drink beverage cans and bottles sold in Colorado after April 15, 1978. The measure also requires that all returned empty containers be recycled or refilled.

The Colorado law would not be a bottle bill in the strict sense of the term since returnable cans would be acceptable. The other three states considering initiatives proposed to ban flip top cans, but the Colorado law would accept them.

The group leading the initiative drive in Colorado is called Sensible Coloradans Against Throwaways (SCAT). The industry-labor coalition formed to defeat proposition 8 is called the Colorado Resource Recovery Committee (CRRC).

This is the first opportunity Coloradans will have to voice their opinion on throwaways. The Colorado Legislature has considered returnable container legislation every year from 1971-1976, but it has always died in a pro-industry committee before reaching the floor for debate.

### ANTI-LITTER, PRO JOBS

Both sides in the throwaway battle claim to be in favor of reducing litter, preserving jobs, and saving the consumer money. Each side cites different figures and studies to support their point of view. SCAT and CRRC also argue about the success of the Oregon bottle bill — the model legislation the Colorado initiative is based on which has been in effect since 1972.

A survey conducted by Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm's office concerning employment impact concluded that in the "worst case" of industry job dislocation a net increase of 1,541 jobs would occur. This would generate a net income increase of \$6 million to the people of Colorado.

CRRC Chairman Richard E. Powell says, "You can show a net gain in jobs on paper, but not in real life. There are 400 jobs — skilled jobs — in jeopardy if this amendment passes."

Two studies have been completed on the job impact of the Oregon bill. An Oregon State University study showed a net gain of 365 jobs and increased annual payrolls of \$1.6 million. An updated Applied Decision Systems study showed a net gain of 55 to 116 jobs and a payroll increase of \$1 million.

### CONSUMER COST

CRRC ads feature a care-worn woman shopper and the headline: "Careful Colorado. Don't vote yourself a 25 per cent

price increase for beverages, the way Oregon did." CRRC points out that a six-pack costs \$1.41 in Denver and the same product (not including the 30 cent deposit charge) costs \$1.69 in Portland, Ore.

Upon questioning from Steve Lany of the Rocky Mountain News, CRRC Chairman Powell admitted that he couldn't produce figures to prove that the price difference between Denver and Portland beverages was caused by the Oregon law. He said he could not document the claim that passage of Proposition 8 would increase Colorado prices 25% — but it was his "genuine feeling" that the ads will prove correct.

SCAT points out that beverage costs are also high in Washington — a state next to Oregon which doesn't have a bottle bill. Beverage prices in Washington are as high or higher than Oregon prices, according to SCAT. The Washington-Oregon comparison is a more valid comparison than the Colorado-Oregon comparison, SCAT claims.

The Colorado Public Interest Research Group (CoPIRG) reports that returnable soft drink bottles cost \$1.15 less per case than nonreturnable aluminum cans.

Total tax expenditures saved in Oregon when they banned throwaways totalled \$1.28 million in solid waste handling and litter clean-up annually.

### REDUCING LITTER

CRRC says a forced deposit bill isn't going to make people stop littering. CRRC argues that a litter law similar to the one in the state of Washington makes more sense than a bottle bill to fight litter. Part of CRRC's campaign has been focused on pointing to total resource recovery as an alternative to banning throwaways. CRRC's Powell says, "Total resource recovery isn't impossible — it's inevitable. . . . We simply can't afford to keep burying our trash, any of it. Deposit legislation merely distracts from the total problem and its real solution."

SCAT favors total recycling, but sees Proposition 8 as a seed that will "grow into a tree of total recycling." Throwaway bottles and cans are a high volume, highly visible, long lasting form of litter that can

## Will Colorado nod to initiative that California nixed?

by Joan Nice

After the sound defeat of a nuclear power safeguards initiative in California this summer, similar efforts in other states were thought to have a slim chance of passage. In Colorado, however, initiative proponents have reason to be hopeful.

Early this month a Denver Post poll showed that a measure similar to California's nuclear safeguards initiative, proposed constitutional amendment No. 3, was supported by a 55-to-26 margin, with 19% undecided. Safeguards amendment staffer Meladee Martin says she thinks that as the Nov. 2 election day approaches and the opposition begins its "megabuck spending" that margin will narrow. But she still expects to win.

"We're going to win — but not hands down," she told HCN. "Right now it's about neck-and-neck."

The Colorado measure, like its California counterpart, requires a two-thirds vote of the legislature to approve new nuclear plants in the state. It also would remove

Careful, Colorado. Don't vote yourself a 25% price increase for beverages, the way Oregon did.

Vote no on 8.

The right problem. The wrong solution.

Colorado Resource Recovery Committee  
Richard E. Powell, Chairman  
360 S. Morabe St., Suite 260 • Denver, Colorado 80209

THIS FULL PAGE AD appeared in the Sunday, Sept. 26, 1976, edition of the ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS, a Denver daily tabloid newspaper.

be economically and easily controlled. Due to the Oregon bill, an 83% reduction in beverage container litter was achieved in the state, according to CoPIRG.

SCAT says a litter law isn't a good substitute for a ban on throwaways because the ban is designed to do more than reduce litter. SCAT says the ban would reduce energy consumption and help get Coloradans out of the throwaway society mentality. If citizens learn to stop throwing away bottles and cans, they'll be on the road to

total resource recovery.

Former Oregon Gov. Tom McCall says the Oregon bill has worked in his state to encourage recycling and cleaning up the environment. A state poll conducted after enactment of the law indicated that 91% of the state's citizens approved of the law. "Please try to recall the last time that 91% of the citizens of any state agreed on a single issue," say McCall and Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm in a letter promoting Proposition 8.

federally imposed limits of liability for damage from a nuclear plant. In short, the issues are nuclear safety and nuclear insurance.

By keeping the discussion to these issues, Coloradans have taken a smarter approach to their campaign than did Californians, David Brower, founder of Friends of the Earth, told a Colorado audience. California initiative backers concentrated on the big spending of their opponents rather than on economic and environmental issues.

Nevertheless, Martin says she plans to emphasize the issue of opposition spending in the days before the election. Martin's group, Coloradans for Safe Power, has spent about \$86,000. Coloradans Against Amendment No. 3 has an estimated budget of \$250,000.

"When the public sees where the opposition money is coming from and why they are opposed to us it will be apparent that this fight is corporations versus citizens," Martin says.

Martin also believes that the history of the state's one nuclear power plant, Ft. St. Vrain, is an important issue. Due to construction delays, testing delays, and technical problems the plant is over four years behind schedule. It still has not produced any electricity.

Opponents of the initiative say that the measure amounts to a ban on nuclear power development. They argue that no one has ever been killed or injured by a licensed commercial nuclear energy plant — and that the initiative doesn't do anything to improve the safety of nuclear plants.

Initiative supporters are attempting to scare the public about nuclear technology, initiative opponents say.

Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm says he tends to remain publicly neutral on the issue. Both the Republican and Democratic leadership in the state legislature have come out against the amendment. Former labor leader Herrick Roth and state treasurer Sam Brown spoke at a public forum in favor of the measure.

Land use hearing highlights

# Country-city conflict in Colorado

Should we protect farmers' economic future by land use planning regulations? Is urban growth putting agriculture out of business?

These questions were raised again and again at a hearing held by the Colorado Land Use Commission in Fort Collins, Colo., Sept. 17. Over 50 people, mostly farmers and ranchers, attended the meeting. The event was one of a series of hearings set around the state to gather public opinion about present and future land use laws in Colorado.

The mayor of Fort Collins pointed to what is a disturbing trend for agriculture. The mayor, Earl Wilkinson, said that his city has had a population increase of 400% from 1950 to 1970, with a 600% increase in city land areas during the same period.

These increases indicate the city has decreased in population density per acre. This fact is exemplified by the high demand for single family dwellings.

This increase in population and decrease in density per acre worries many farmers and ranchers who are seeing their agricultural land assessed at development rates. These assessments, sometimes 500% higher than agricultural assessments, increase property taxes, making farming of the land uneconomical.

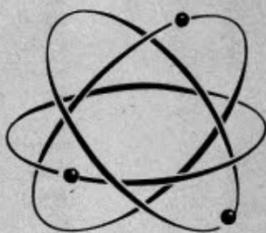
Opinions voiced by the public included: —Farmers and ranchers fear that federal funding for planning given to local and regional governments could lead to federal intervention in local land use decisions.

—Farmers and ranchers have spent a great deal of time and money developing their land. They should control its use.

—Present land use laws are more than enough. Better implementation of existing regulations should be made.

—Open space should be preserved by city purchase of land funded by a city tax. (This has been done in Ft. Collins.)

Few specific suggestions on changes in Colorado's land use laws were offered. One local rancher did suggest a specific remedy to water use problems in Colorado, however. He said that municipalities should not grow Kentucky blue grass, which consumes a great deal of water, but instead the cities should grow native grasses. The water saved could then be diverted to put more agricultural land under irrigation, he said.



LAND USE INPUT. Public hearings to help plan how Colorado will use its land are being held throughout the state. At the meetings, the conflict between agriculture and new uses has become a critical issue.

## Montana nuclear. . .

(continued from page 1)

the courts have ruled against the initiative.

The Montana Supreme Court allowed Woodahl to change the wording of the ballot at the last minute to say that a "yes" vote would "ban nuclear power in Montana until the conditions specified in this measure are met." Originally, Woodahl had written the ballot to say a "yes" vote would be "for requiring legislative approval of nuclear facilities" — as the initiative sponsors proposed it.

The change in wording is crucial to the fate of the initiative, according to its proponents, and the court loss of this issue was enough to make one of the groups supporting the measure disband.

Across the country, pro-nuclear forces are fighting safe power initiatives by calling them "bans." "The attorney general's language essentially disposed of the question of whether or not the initiative was a prohibition, which is the crux of the campaign of my clients," attorney Mike Meloy told HCN. Meloy represented Montanans for Safe Power in the case, the group that is still functioning. "The manner in which it is presented to the public is the most important issue. Therefore the decision by the Montana Supreme Court dealt a severe blow to their efforts," Meloy concluded.

Meloy pointed out in court that the attorney general, by law, is required to provide the ballot statements to the secretary of state within 10 days after receiving initiative measures. Woodahl did this, but two weeks later he suddenly changed his mind and rushed to the secretary of state's office to change the wording the day before the ballot printer's deadline.

Woodahl claimed his first wording was a mistake and said it would mislead the voters, but the district court said he could not legally make the change. The Montana Supreme Court, however, overturned the decision.

### CORPORATE SPENDING ALLOWED

A second court ruling allows corporations to donate funds to ballot issues. In a vaguely worded decision, the federal district court judge, James F. Battin, said a 1975 Montana law preventing such contributions to ballot questions was an unconstitutional infringement of free speech.

When the nuclear initiative was proposed, an imposing array of Montana corporations filed the lawsuit challenging the

law prohibiting corporate donations to ballot issue campaigns. They included several chambers of commerce, Montana Power Company, Montana-Dakota Utilities, Montana Associated Utilities, Pacific Power and Light, and both the Montana Stockgrowers and the Montana Woolgrowers Associations.

Jack Lowe, attorney for the state election commission, told HCN he feels sure the state will win its appeal at the circuit court of appeals in San Francisco. He says he thinks Battin is mistaken about corporations having first amendment rights. However, that case won't come up for another year or more, long after the nuclear initiative's fate is determined in November. Lowe says this ruling does not affect the prohibition of corporate donations to candidates.

Before Battin's ruling, the Montana Supreme Court had been involved in the case and had issued an injunction preventing the state from enforcing the law forbidding corporations from contributing to the ballot question.

### SUPREME COURT RECORD

Corporations — especially utilities — have scored an impressive number of victories before the high court in the past 20 years. One supreme court candidate, Dan Shea, says the present justices "bend over backward to aid large corporations" in the state.

An analysis by an independent researcher who now works for the AFL-CIO, Norma Tirrell, shows that in 19 years, the court has ruled in favor of Montana Power Co. 24 times out of 25 cases. Anaconda Company, another corporate interest in Montana which also happened to own most of the state's newspapers until recently, had won 80% of the 10 cases it had been involved in before the high court.

Montana's election commissioner said in the state's arguments before the district court on the corporate spending question, "Corporations have laid their heavy hands upon the operation of Montana government since the days when it was a mere territory, and a gold-rush frontier."

Judge Battin dismisses this idea, saying, "There is no legislative finding or history that indicates that what was once true is now true or that this is the reason for enacting the 1975 amendment" to Montana's corrupt practices act.

Nevertheless, testimony in the ballot wording change case seems to indicate that

corporations retain their influence. Woodahl's chief deputy, J. C. Weingartner, reluctantly admitted under oath that the request for the change in wording had come from two people. One was a representative of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, a union composed mainly of utility workers who have a reputation for defending Montana Power Co.'s interests. The other was from Walter Murfitt, who heads the Woodahl for Governor Club.

When this testimony was publicized, it put Woodahl in a somewhat awkward position. Capitalizing on Gov. Judge's refusal to reveal where several thousand dollars of campaign funds came from, Woodahl has been campaigning with the slogan, "This year . . . a matter of integrity!" Daily headlines spotlighting Woodahl's reversal on the ballot wording have caused some voters to be skeptical of his slogan.

### MALAISE OF PEOPLE

Evidence of corporate influence can only hurt the nuclear opponents' case in the eyes of much of the Montana public, according to Ed Dobson, a leader of Montanans for Safe Power. He says there's a general malaise in the state about the way that industry runs Montana, but most people don't know what to do about it. "That's one reason I'm hopeful about the potential of the initiative vote — it places real power in the hands of the people," Dobson says.

After the two court rulings, Dobson thinks it's a toss-up whether the initiative will win or lose.

An Associated Press analysis indicates that the initiative has less than a 50-50 chance. "The battelines are not evenly drawn," the Associated Press says. In addition to the disparity in budgets between the opponents and the proponents of the measure, the initiative has not received support from any of the environmental groups in the state, except the Montana Wilderness Association.

Dobson says that proponents of the initiative plan to start solar petitions in the immediate future which would be presented to the 1977 Legislature. The measure is now in the Legislative Council. Montanans for Safe Power hope to have the petitions on the street before the November election. "People in Montana want solar energy. If they see this as the alternative to nuclear power, then we'll win the nuclear initiative," Dobson says.

LET ME SEE WHAT THIS BROCHURE SAYS TO DO WHEN THE LIGHTS GO OUT... AND STAY OUT!

It hasn't gotten this bad yet. But unless we come to our senses, we will continue to be at the mercy of other nations which supply our energy.

And if they choose to quit sending us oil, it very well could happen tomorrow.

That's why we need all the energy sources we can get — including nuclear. Nuclear energy is safe. It pollutes less. It's economical.

**VOTE NO ON AMENDMENT #3**

Don't BAN one of our best sources of energy!

Amendment #3...the more you know about it, the less you'll like it.

Printed by Colorado Springs Association 11, John A. Linn and Stephen L. A. Matthews, Co-Chairmen  
118 1/2 S. P.O. Box 344 Denver, Colorado 80201 (303) 534-9191

**THE NUCLEAR DEBATE.** This advertisement is an example of the type of argument raised by opponents to the nuclear safeguards initiative in Colorado. Those against the initiative say it means a ban on nuclear power plants. Proponents say it only demands reasonable assurances of safety. The ad reprinted here appeared in the ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS.

# Oregon Trail

by Sarah Doll



The Oregon Trail is still visible in the broad, flat area near South Pass.

Photo by Tom Bell

Lewis and Clark, in the early 1800s, sent reports back east from Oregon of the fertile Willamette Valley and rivers filled with beaver and salmon. In general, reports on the vast space that lay between St. Louis and Oregon were unfavorable — just a huge obstacle in the way of a better life.

Overcoming that obstacle became the general goal of a young nation seeking morespace. The Oregon Trail was first explored in 1812 by Robert Stuart, an employe of John Jacob Astor, when he followed Indian trails back across the Louisiana Purchase from Oregon to St. Louis. He reported to Missouri newspapers that it was a feasible trip for a properly prepared wagon train. However, for several years cross-country travel was limited to river traffic. Not until 1830 was a wagon trip attempted, when William Sublette's party made it to Riverton, Wyo. In 1832 Captain Benjamin Bonneville made it across South Pass. When news of this reached St. Louis, the emigration was on.

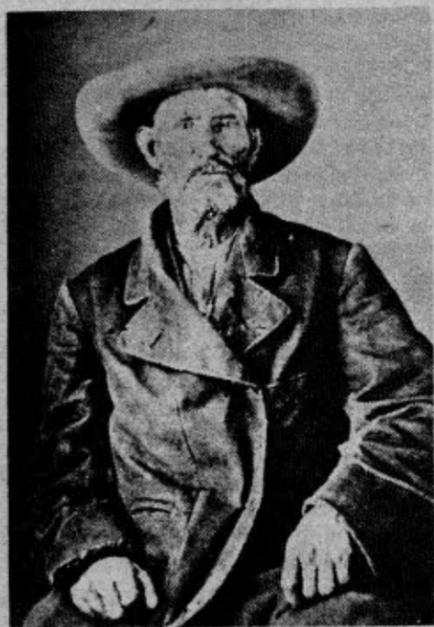
In his book *The Oregon Trail Revisited*, George Franzwa takes the modern-day traveler on a guided tour of the Oregon Trail from its origin in Independence, Mo. He also offers a short history of the trail, along with some fresh perspectives on both the motivation of the pioneers and their daily life on the trail.

A national panic in 1837 and a depression in 1842 sent many people scurrying west, looking for a better life. The Industrial Revolution did its part, too, as many Easterners saw their environment becoming polluted and discovered factory jobs to be deadly. Social unrest, particularly slavery problems, sent some.

A few religious men headed west to convert the Indians, sincerely believing that everyone would be happier with the white man's God. In some cases, they were right. The Flathead and Nez Perce Indians were so impressed by the white man that they desired his faith, hoping to gain power through it. Catholic Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet did much to establish favorable relations with Indians.

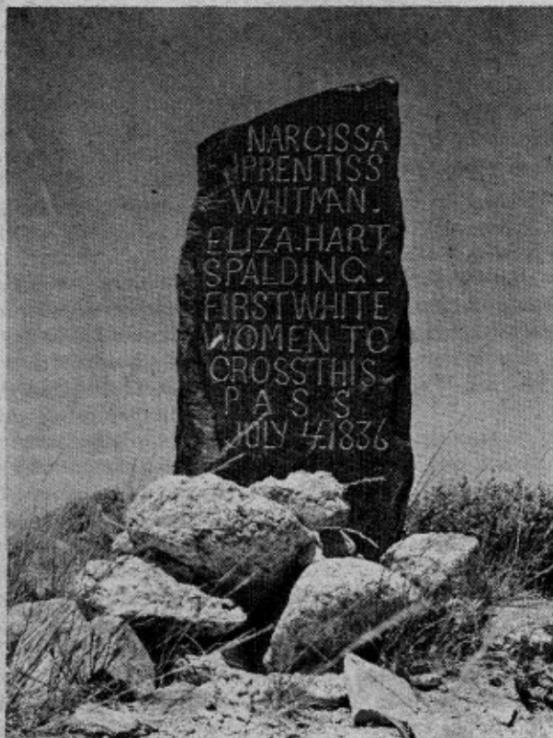
National leaders, especially Sen. Thomas Hart Benton of Missouri, encouraged American emigration to Oregon in order to gain political clout in the area, which was still under strong British influence. Patriotism ran high. Franzwa writes, "The national bird was soaring high, every tail feather in place and talons sharpened. Right up there with God, whom everyone knew was on our side, too. Oregon was this nation's Manifest Destiny. It would take a tremendous colonization to overcome the power of Britain's unquestioned right of prior occupancy. . . John Doe felt his duty was to his country then. . . He would do his part to lock up Oregon for the U.S., and quite incidentally better himself in the process."

It was a rough trip. From the 1830s until the end of the century, when railroad travel became more practical, 300,000 people started on the 2,200-mile, five-month journey. Real dangers were there, but minor irritations were more of a constant threat — the hot, dry wind that seared the skin and puffed the lips, the dust, the ferry operators that set up shop at every river crossing to rip off what they could, the thunderstorms, the breakdowns. Indians were not a large threat before the 1860s, when white man's constant treachery became well-known to their tribes. Cholera was a much-feared killer, but it killed in towns and cities more than



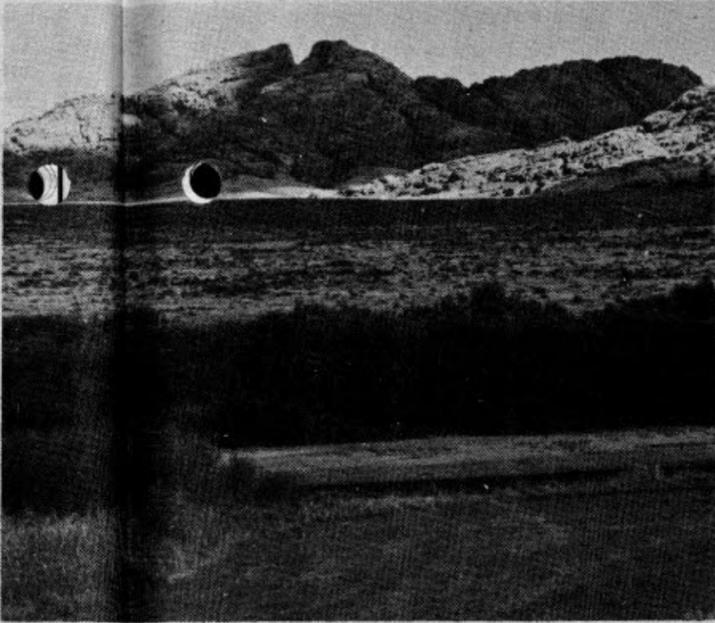
JIM BRIDGER

One of the first white men to cross South Pass was Jim Bridger, famous mountain man and guide over the Oregon Trail. Photo courtesy Missouri Historical Society.



The first women to cross South Pass, Whitman and Spalding were both wives of ministers. Narcissa Whitman honeymooned on the Oregon Trail.

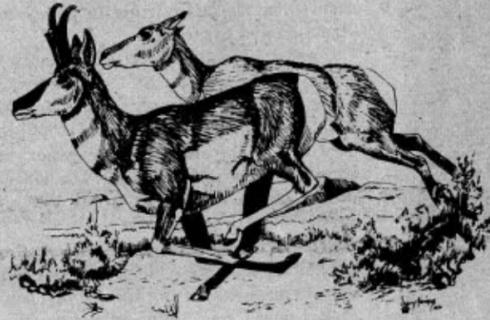
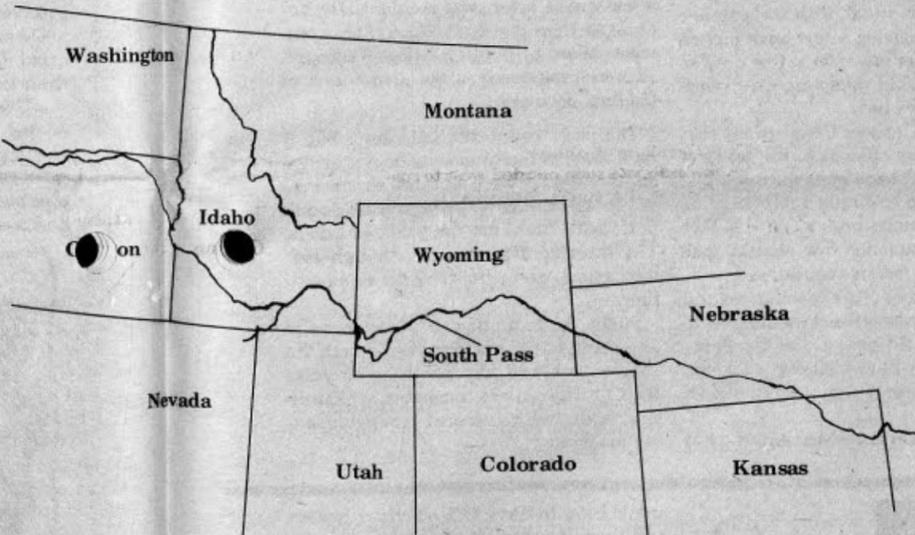
# Trail: a tie to the past



Split Rock, a large granite mountain in central Wyoming with a notch at the top, was an important landmark for pioneers traveling along the Oregon Trail. This view of Split Rock is from U.S. Highway 287. Photo courtesy Bureau of Land Management



Wagons travelling single file in rough areas carved deep ruts that still remain. In smooth areas, they tended to move in horizontal lines to avoid dust problems.



on the trail. Accidents took the most lives — careless handling of guns, youngsters falling out of the jolting wagons, mean cattle, drownings at river crossings. The estimated 30,000 that died on the trail were "buried along and generally in, the Oregon Trail, where the wagons would obscure the grave, dispersing the scent so the wolves couldn't find it, obscuring the evidence so the Indians couldn't cheat and bring home a free scalp." Only about 200 graves have been located.

It was undeniably a hard life, those five months on the trail, but life was hard almost everywhere in those days. In many ways it was a good life. The phenomenal buffalo herds were easy hunting, providing food, robes for warmth and for trade, chips for fire, and even body shields if water was hard to find. Children could be out on the prairie playing and exploring all day, having the time of their lives, as long as they kept up.

The travelers were taking part in the most exciting adventure in history.

Franzwa writes, "Even the lunar explorations pale in contrast to the western movement. The emigrant never before had seen a mountain, nor a desert, nor an Indian in his native habitat. Few had seen waterfalls. None had seen infinite prairies. Few had traveled for more than two or three days at a time; none certainly had traveled four or five months without respite. None had faced death on a day to day basis, with such studied nonchalance or determined fatalism." No experience of today can compare to it.

Much of the Oregon Trail today has been obliterated by development, especially in the eastern part, or has faded from natural weathering and overgrowth. In many places, the trail was a mile wide and very faint, since the wagons traveled in a horizontal line when possible to avoid dust problems. The Bureau of Land Management has set aside several points on the trail as Bicentennial Sites, with interpretive aids, but there is no real protection for the bulk of what remains of the trail.



Painting of Devil's Gate. William Henry Jackson (1843-1942), noted painter and photographer of the West, captured his impression of the westward migration on the Oregon Trail past Wyoming's Devil's Gate in this historical painting.

Photo courtesy Bureau of Land Management

11 10-High Country News — Oct. 22, 1976

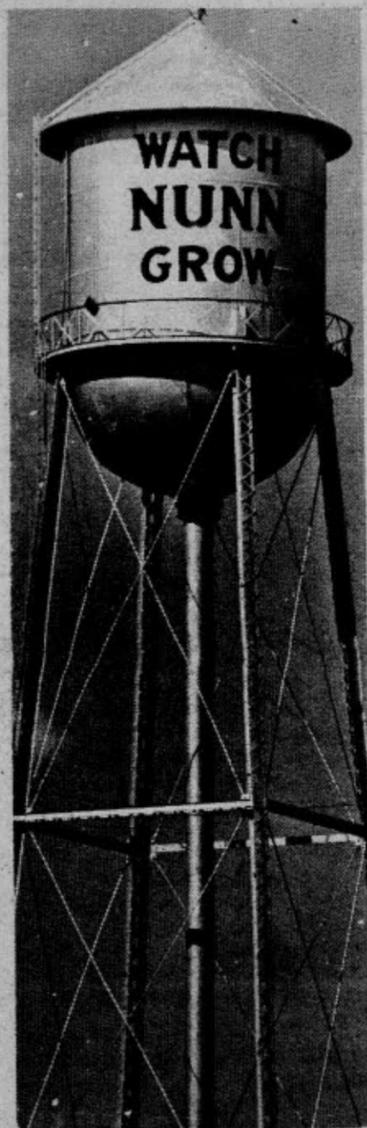
## Coal plant proposed in urban backyard

by Glen Smith

Which came first, the power plant or the population? Does a power plant produce growth or does it respond to growth?

Questions like these were raised and largely left unanswered at a recent hearing in Fort Collins, Colo., on a coal-fired power plant proposed by Platte River Power Authority (PRPA).

The proposed site is 11 miles northeast of Fort Collins and 20 miles northwest of



**POWER PLANT PROPOSED NEAR NUNN.** Despite the bias in favor of growth displayed by the town's water tower, Nunn, Colo., citizens who attended a recent public hearing did not seem pleased about the prospect of a power plant in their backyards. The plant has been proposed by the municipally-owned Platte River Power Authority to provide for the expected future needs of Loveland, Longmont, Fort Collins, and Estes Park. The proposed site is on the Campion Ranch near Nunn, 11 miles from Ft. Collins and 15 miles from Pawnee National Grasslands. Many people in the crowd were angry and outspoken about the utility's plans. If the Weld County Commissioners do grant a permit, one farmer reminded the audience, "We are a home-rule county now. There is always initiative and referendum." A hearing was also held in Ft. Collins (see story).

Greeley, Colo., on dryland farming country.

"If we don't start planning now, there won't be power — not to lure people to Colorado, but merely to take care of the natural growth which seems to be occurring here," said Albert Hamilton, President of PRPA.

But local residents aren't so sure. Many citizens believe the plant will encourage people to move to the Fort Collins area, which is already the fourth fastest growing area in the nation.

"If you find a way of stopping them from coming here, we'll start reducing our planning," Hamilton told the crowd.

The hearing was an emotional upsurge of disbelief over the fact that a power plant could really be moving in right next door. As one resident said, "The only objection I have is that it's too big and too close to my home."

PRPA is a municipally-owned electric utility formed by Estes Park, Fort Collins, Longmont, and Loveland. It is a political subdivision of the state and will not pay any taxes on the 3,000 acre site. But PRPA has proposed to reimburse local governments for administrative and physical costs which may arise from the plant's construction and operation.

Construction of a 200-400 megawatt plant will be started at the site around 1979. Hamilton estimates that the plant will be completed around 1984. The proposed site could absorb more generating capacity, however. Units could be added to produce 1,000 megawatts in the 1990s, he says.

The four cities of Loveland, Fort Collins, Longmont, and Estes Park are to be receiving 140 megawatts from the Yampa power project near Craig, Colo., in a year-and-a-half. But PRPA says that the northern front range area will exhaust that Yampa power by 1984; therefore they are planning the plant near Fort Collins.

About 250 people attended the public hearing. The four-hour meeting ran the gamut of questions about possible air pollution and damage to crops (which PRPA said would not happen, although no testing has been done at the site) to the assertion that the power plant would encourage growth.

The problem of approximately 10,000 acre-feet of water per year being diverted from agricultural use to a cooling pond for the plant was another worry for residents. PRPA says water which it has negotiated from the Windy Gap project will be more than enough for the 400 megawatt plant and the surplus will be made available for irrigation. Dual use of the plant's water, first for agriculture and then for plant cooling, is being considered.

Another water problem brought to PRPA's attention by the public was residential competition for agricultural water, due to the possible population increase caused by the power plant's construction.

Hamilton said that if this is a problem, additional water supplies should be found.

A Weld County farmer suggested that irrigation farmers could switch from flood irrigation to sprinkler irrigation. He said that he had saved one-third of his irrigation water by doing that.

So the hearing went on. PRPA responded to questions with deft, researched answers. Yet the lingering question of whether the citizens of Weld and Larimer counties can control their growth haunted the debate like a ghost.

## The twain shall meet



by D. Sawyer Whipple

(Editors' note: In this new HCN feature, D. Sawyer Whipple, who recently moved to Wyoming from Washington, D.C., challenges Rudyard Kipling's assertion: "Oh, east is east and west is west, and never the twain shall meet." The quotation is from "The Ballad of East and West.")

"The public be damned!" — some Vanderbilt or other and the U.S. government.

Government officials wax poetic whenever the subject of public participation in government decisions is broached. Phrases like "backbone of democracy" are tossed about with the respect due a grizzly bear in a crowded elevator.

Out of this unabashed awe for the wisdom of democracy has arisen one of the government's most useless institutions — the public hearing.

The government makes a great fuss about public hearings. Mention is made of how many are held, how many pages of testimony were heard (as if people talked in pages instead of ideas), and the geographic diversity of hearing sites.

And, public spirited citizens make an equally great fuss over preparation of testimony, the number of witnesses appearing for and against an issue, and the reasonableness of arguments on both sides.

But why? Almost no measurable good ever comes of the ritual, with the possible exception of removing a few bureaucrats from their seat of power for a few days so that they can't foul things up any worse than they already have.

Recently, the Interior Department sent four high ranking officials to the wilds of Cheyenne, Wyo. The officials were charged with the duty of presiding at public hearing to gather the public wisdom on whether Wyoming's reclamation law should take precedence over federal regulations.

During the course of the hearing, several environmental groups found themselves in the unaccustomed position of agreeing with some of the state's largest coal producers that, indeed, Wyoming's law should prevail, in total.

Interior, however, maintained that

while the "substantive" sections of Wyoming's law were good, the "procedural" parts — granting of variances to standards and permit applications, for example — should be superceded by federal regulations. The Interior officials, rather than absorb the "public input" that they ostensibly came to gather, spent the hearing asserting the correctness of the original decision, apparently unwilling to bend to overwhelming hue and cry for one set of reclamation standards.

As reported in the last HCN, Interior has said that it will "negotiate" with Wyoming state officials about these "procedural" matters, but the agency apparently doesn't consider this question suitable for "public input." How negotiable the standards are remains to be seen, but when Montana's reclamation law was considered for the same treatment, Interior again accepted "substantive" and delayed consideration of "procedural" matters, seemingly oblivious to the recent experience in Wyoming.

When I worked at the Federal Energy Administration, I was heavily involved in preparing for the public hearings on Project Independence. There were 12 hearings conducted far and wide throughout the continental U.S.A. By the end of the sixth hearing, the draft report of Project Independence was circulating within the agency for review. The final report, issued a few weeks later, was substantially unchanged from the draft. None of the comments heard at public hearings 6 through 12 were considered in the preparation of the final document.

This may seem discriminatory, but it isn't. None of the comments from hearings one through six were included, either. Project Independence was prepared by a computer with little use for public hearings. The Interior Department, though less mechanical, seems to share the same sentiments.

Public participation in government is important, but seems senseless for both the government and the public to exercise their futility unless comments, spoken in good faith, are considered in some meaningful fashion.

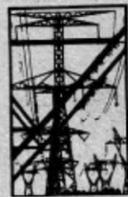


**EPA RULES AGAINST COLSTRIP.** The five companies proposing Colstrip Units 3 and 4 in Montana are suing the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) after the agency ruled Oct. 14 that they must meet the significant deterioration standards of the Clean Air Act. The companies had asked that the standards not be applied to the two units since plans for them had begun before June 1, 1975, when the standards were implemented. If the court suit is unsuccessful and if the Northern Cheyenne tribe succeeds in its attempt to get its air reclassified (see HCN, 7-16-76), then Colstrip would have to comply with Class I air regulations, which are the most stringent. EPA says all four units

would have to have 90% efficiency in controlling sulfur dioxide to meet Class I standards, according to the agency's preliminary calculations. Colstrip is 15 miles from the reservation. Federal Energy Administration Assistant Administrator William Rosenberg has quietly been trying to convince EPA Administrator Russell Train to deny the tribe's request, according to Coal Week.

**COMMISSIONERS NOD TO PAWNEE.** The Morgan County (Colo.) Commissioners have approved a zoning change which would allow the Pawnee coal-fired electrical generating plant to go ahead. A local group called Information Please argued against the plant, saying that land in the area has been used continuously for agriculture and hasn't changed in character enough to justify the rezoning requested. Public Service Company of Colorado said construction on Pawnee could begin within a month.

**WHEATLAND HEARING REQUESTED.** Laramie River Conservation Council (LRCC) has asked the district court to order the re-opening of the Wyoming Plant Siting Council's record on the



## The HCN Hot Line

energy news from across the country

**NRC READY.** The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission is ready to lift a moratorium on licensing of nuclear power plants which was forced by a court order in August. The court demanded a study of the possible environmental dangers of reprocessing nuclear plant fuel and handling radioactive wastes. While admitting that environmental impacts are larger than the agency had originally estimated, NRC now contends that licensing should proceed because nuclear hazards "continue to be small" and are outweighed by the economic and social damages a delay in building new plants would cause. On Oct. 13 the agency issued revised environmental impact estimates and proposed interim guidelines to allow a resumption of licensing.

### COAL LEASING PLAN ATTACKED.

The Interior Department's coal leasing program is in conflict with recent federal legislation, the Sierra Club says. According to the club, Interior's Energy Minerals Activity Recommendation System (EMARS), encourages Interior to react to industry desires. The Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act passed by congress in August demands resource-oriented planning, the club says. Sierra Club attorney William H. Haring pointed out conflicts between federal law and agency policy in a letter to Secretary of Interior Thomas S. Kleppe Oct. 11.

### PRIME MINISTER ANTI-NUKE.

Sweden's new prime minister says he plans to make his country the first in the world to turn away from nuclear power. He has since established a commission to study nuclear risks, which will come up with a policy decision no later than 1978.

**SEATTLE SNUBS NUCLEAR.** The Seattle City Council has chosen conservation instead of nuclear power as the best way to supply the city's future power needs. The decision followed a court suit by an environmental group against two nuclear plants. The suit resulted in a study of future power needs which substantiated the

Wheatland power plant. LRCC claims new evidence not presented at the original hearings raises significant questions about the safety of the proposed dam on the Laramie River. In addition, LRCC claims that the Missouri Basin Power Project made improper representations about the use of groundwater supplies for the project. A hearing is scheduled Tuesday, October 26, in Wheatland. MBPP has already poured foundations for the project.

**NO EMERGENCY.** The North Dakota Public Service Commission has denied a request by Otter Tail Power Co. that the proposed Coyote Power Plant at Beulah be granted emergency status under the state plant siting law. The decision means the PSC will have up to a year to study the application for the plant after it is filed. If an emergency had been declared, the PSC would have had to render a decision within six months.

**CONSERVATION COSTS MORE?** The head of Idaho's new conservation office says conservation, if successful, could lead to higher electric rates. Earl Adams, who came to Idaho from the Oregon energy office, says that happened in Oregon. As a

environmentalists' claim that conservation could supply future needs better. The city council is launching a vigorous conservation campaign, which may include mandatory home insulation standards, appliance efficiency standards, and construction and utilization standards for commercial buildings, according to **The Power Line**, a publication of the Environmental Action Foundation.

**GAS PIPELINE HUSTLE.** Congress has passed a bill which will expedite a go-ahead for a pipeline which would bring Alaskan gas to the lower 48 states. The bill sets deadlines for presidential and congressional review of the Federal Power Commission's recommendations, all to be complete about one year from now. While the procedures provide opportunities for two public hearings, judicial review is limited by the bill. All four proposed pipeline routes must be considered and environmental stipulations must be met, according to the bill. The public service commissions of 11 Western states have urged President Ford to sign the bill, saying that their region will face severe natural gas shortages if Alaskan sources are not tapped.

**NEW APPROACH TO SUBSIDY.** While Congress has rejected two bills which would provide federally-backed loans to the synthetic fuels industry, the Ford Administration is preparing another plan to give a federal boost to synfuels, according to **Coal Week**. In its 1978 budget, the Energy Research and Development Administration is expected to ask for funds to support loans for as many as six commercial synthetic fuel facilities. Several synfuel companies have said that some federal help will be required to encourage development of the costly technology. Opponents suspect the federal support program is unwise because synthetic fuels will be too high-priced to compete on the energy market.

The possibility that Alaskan oil may be shipped to Japan came under sharp attack by governors of Western states at their Western Governors Regional Energy Policy Office (WGREPO) meeting in Billings

on Oct. 7. The Ford Administration has since ruled out the possibility of sending the oil to Japan.

Montana Gov. Thomas Judge, whose state is facing a potential crisis in oil supplies, introduced the resolution which asked that immediate efforts be undertaken to assure Alaskan oil for inland domestic markets. Judge said 10,000 jobs could be lost at refineries in Montana if Canada curtails its shipments of oil to Montana refineries. Judge wants the U.S. Government to transport the oil along a northern U.S. route from the West Coast instead of a route from Los Angeles to Houston, Texas. However, recognizing that Southwestern members of WGREPO would be unlikely to support such a resolution, he asked instead for the more general resolution.

Concerned that the situation might develop again when the Alaskan natural gas pipeline is built, the governors asked that a "complete revamping of the planning process leading to this debacle be immediately undertaken to ensure decisions based on national rather than corporate interests."

The governors referred to the Alaskan oil supply situation as a "debacle" because a "huge" West Coast surplus of crude oil is projected for 1978. This surplus is because there aren't enough pipelines to carry the oil from the West Coast to the Midwest, according to the governors' resolution. Judge also pushed a resolution asking that federal tariffs be adjusted to encourage Canadians to export oil and natural

## Visit with Navajos convinces N. Cheyenne to oppose mining



MICHAEL BEAR COMES OUT

by members of the neighboring Crow tribe and by other Northern Cheyenne. Those who went, many of whom were undecided about strip mining before the trip, said they hoped other tribal members and especially the tribal council could be encouraged to also visit with the people there.

Talking with HCN after their return, one woman said she expected to see the Navajos with big fancy cars and homes. Coal mining and power production has been a part of the tribal income there for several years now. However, another participant, Michael Bear Comes Out, said that instead, all the money seems to go to the tribal government. Asked if the Northern Cheyenne should get per capita payments instead, one participant said no — then they'd end up on the Main Street of Hardin like the Crows. He was referring to members of the neighboring Crow tribe who now receive per capita payments — some of whom end up spending the money on liquor.

Presently, no coal is being developed on the Northern Cheyenne reservation since the tribe voided all leases and exploration permits on the reservation almost three years ago. A referendum vote is planned next year on coal development, tribal chairman Allen Rowland told HCN. He said he couldn't predict what the results might be.

In the meantime, the research office is conducting studies of baseline environmental and social conditions and of possible effects of mining. In addition, another trip to the Southwest is planned.

"The Navajos wanted us to see what's going on so we wouldn't make the same mistake," one of the trip's organizers told HCN.

## Natural gas, oil prices plague states

gas to the U.S. "This is the only thing they want from us," he said, speaking of Canada. The resolution passed unanimously, with only Gov. Ed Herschler of Wyoming abstaining. Herschler, whose state is one of the larger oil and natural gas producers, apparently didn't see any benefit to Wyoming.

### GAS PRICING UNDER FIRE

Federal policies on natural gas price regulations also came under attack at the meeting when Cameron Graham, who was representing N.M. Gov. Jerry Apodaca, said his state was affected "dramatically" when gas price policies were changed earlier this year. He criticized both the "tiering system," under which old gas and new gas are held at four different price levels, and the decontrol of "new" natural gas, gas that is produced after Jan. 1, 1975.

Graham says that by decontrolling only new gas, the price will rise to \$5 per thousand cubic feet. Two dollars is now considered high. Decontrolling all gas, on the other hand, would bring all the gas to the \$2 price, he estimates. He considers this price reasonable — low enough to reduce the impact on residential users but high enough to force most industrial users to convert to other forms of energy, such as coal.

The governors took no action at their Billings meeting but are expected to discuss the situation again at their next meeting.

12-High Country News — Oct. 22, 1976

## Wyoming ag water loans aid energy industry

by D. Sawyer Whipple

The conflict between energy development and agriculture has produced some strange alliances. A particularly controversial one appearing in Wyoming is the financing of projects that promote industrial development with state loans designated for agricultural purposes.

Several energy companies — including Carter Oil Co., Panhandle Eastern Pipeline Co., and Basin Electric Power Cooperative — are managing to provide for their water needs with the aid of state loans allocated for the development of agricultural water supplies.

Wyoming has a program for providing low-interest (four per cent) loans to agricultural irrigation districts to provide water for agricultural uses. Energy companies have underwritten projects for irrigation districts in exchange for a portion of the water. The Wyoming Farm Loan Board has conditionally approved three loans which will benefit industry as much or more than agriculture.

The clearest example of the process is the Middle Fork Reservoir on the Powder River in Northeastern Wyoming. The reservoir has a capacity for storing 49,600 acre-feet of water. Carter Oil, which is underwriting the project, is guaranteed 25,000 acre-feet. Historical flows of the Middle Fork show an average supply of water available for storage of just over 31,000 acre-feet of water annually. While irrigators can't lower the reservoir below 5,000 acre-feet, Carter Oil can, under the contract.

The result is that very little of the stored water will be available for use by irrigators. According to an engineering study performed by a consulting firm called VTN, "During the two driest years of the 21-year study (1948-1969), irrigators would have received no water." Optimistically, with maximum flows, irrigators would get 21% of the annual supply of water. Pessimistically, irrigators would get only six per cent or 1,500 acre-feet per year, VTN says.

According to Myron Goodson of Wyoming's Department of Planning and

Economic Development, the irrigation district has been trying to build this project for years, but didn't have the money without help from industrial users.

"The purpose of the reservoir is to capture and store excess flows of unappropriated water," Goodson says. "Anything they (the irrigators) get is gravy."

The excess water may be gravy, but some ranchers wonder if the spirit, if not the letter, of the law is being violated by using money designated for agricultural purposes to promote energy development, which could adversely affect some sectors of the agricultural community. In fact, several ranchers downstream of the Middle Fork Project contend that the Powder River will be virtually dry seven months a year as a result of the dam.



**NORTH PLATTE RIVER.** Industry is getting money at low interest rates from the Wyoming Farm Loan Board to develop water on two tributaries of the North Platte — money that was originally intended by the legislature for agricultural use.

The Middle Fork Project was first estimated to cost about \$8 million. State government sources indicate that delays and inflation may result in a final cost of \$16 million. One of the main delays has come in obtaining rights on 142 acres of land owned by the Bureau of Land Management.

### WHEATLAND PROJECT

Basin Electric Power Cooperative is participating in the Grayrocks Reservoir in Goshen County, Wyo., to secure water for the controversial Wheatland power plant. The reservoir will cost about \$10 million, with industry financing about 50% of the cost.

In exchange, the power plant will get 30,000 acre-feet of water out of the reservoir. The Corn Creek Irrigation District

will need 22,500 acre-feet of the total capacity to irrigate 15,000 acres of land. Total storage capacity will be 114,000 acre-feet.

The project is being held up because the Corn Creek Irrigation District still hasn't been officially formed. Without an irrigation district, the loan can't be finally approved by the Farm Loan Board.

### DOUGLAS PROJECT

In Converse County, Wyo., a loan has been conditionally approved for the Douglas Reservoir Water Users Association for upgrading the La Prele Reservoir. The reservoir is rated for a capacity of 20,000 acre-feet, but structural defects have kept actual capacity at 10,000 acre-feet. In return for 5,000 acre-feet of water, Panhandle Eastern Pipeline Co. will repay \$4,975,000 of the four per cent state loan. Panhandle Eastern would use the water for a gasification plant near Douglas.

In 1975, after conditional approval of these loans, the Wyoming state legislature passed an amendment to the water loan authorizations enabling the farm board to limit the loans to that portion of construction costs that will go to agricultural, municipal, or recreational use. This didn't apply, however, to loans made or approved conditionally before the amendment passed.

The total authorization for water development loans in Wyoming is currently \$20 million. Half of this amount is to be for small water loans, and half for large projects. The Farm Loan Board, which administers the program, has already committed a large portion of the available \$10 million to these three projects, reducing the amount available for other agricultural water loans.

Since industry, not agriculture, will receive the benefits from as much as 94% of the water from the Middle Fork project, 57% of the allocated water from Grayrocks and 50% of the additional capacity of La Prele, critics argue that the money may be going toward hurting agriculture, rather than helping it.

## Governors agree on multi-state problems tactics

by Marjane Ambler

"We want to know what pollution is being sent our way by other states and what water is going to be taken away from us," Nebraska Gov. James Exon said at the Western Governors Regional Energy Policy Office (WGREPO) meeting Oct. 7 in Billings.

Exon was explaining why he is interested in the multi-state planning process, which was approved by governors at the meeting. Observers say the new process could be a breakthrough for WGREPO in defining its role in shaping the future of the region.

Other governors suggested other problem areas which could also be approached using the new process. North Dakota is concerned about a Montana water permit for a gasification plant for Tenneco on the border that separates the two states.

Wyoming wonders what to do with the people in Sheridan County who need housing, schools, and sewer improvements when the tax dollars created by the new residents' employer, Decker Coal Co., flow north to the Montana capital and to Montana county seats.

Although governors of the 10 states in

WGREPO have long recognized such multi-state problems, until now there has been no coherent planning mechanism to deal with them. The new process calls for: identification of the problem, agreement by the affected states that action should be taken, appointment of a task force, WGREPO staff support for the task force, preparation of an ongoing report of progress, and suggestions for alternative solutions.

The governors of Wyoming, Montana, South and North Dakota took an immediate step toward formalizing multi-state planning by signing a memo of understanding at the Billings meeting, which prompted the governors of Colorado and Nebraska to say they felt left out. Under the memo, the four governors agreed to share information on all major proposals or applications for mines, transmission lines, pipelines, water use, generation plants, or coal conversion plants that might have transboundary effects. They also agreed that if a state has concerns regarding the impact of the development, those concerns would be taken into consideration in the permit decision.

Nebraska Gov. Exon signed the memo later and Colorado Gov. Dick Lamm said

he wanted to consult his natural resource experts first.

Whether or not the governors will be able to go beyond information-sharing to actual problem-solving will be answered in the coming months when the new planning process is tested. The first test is likely to be a tough one: agreement on the proposed Energy Transport System Inc. (ETSI) pipeline, which is to carry coal slurry from Wyoming to Arkansas to be used in a power plant there.

South Dakota Gov. Richard Kneip said at the meeting that he wanted to know adjoining states' thoughts on the pipeline before his state approves a water permit for 20,000 acre feet for the pipeline. ETSI has filed the application with the South Dakota Water Rights Commission, which must approve it before it is passed to the legislature for its approval.

ETSI has received approval from the Wyoming Legislature and from the state engineer to use water from the Madison Formation for its pipeline. Frank Odasz of ETSI told HCN that the additional 20,000 acre feet from the Missouri would be used either to supplement the water from the Madison if a larger slurry pipeline were

built or would be used for additional pipelines.

Kneip suggested a task force be established to tackle the problem. Since South Dakota's and Wyoming's water rights are involved, compromise will be difficult — at best.

Similar controversial water jurisdictional problems exist between other states in the organization. The flow of tax dollars is an equally tough question. One observer pointed out that by picking up the telephone, Wyoming could always find out how many employees worked at a mine in Montana and lived in Wyoming. However, open communication, such as the memo provides for, isn't enough. The social impact problems in Wyoming aren't solved until Montana offers a per capita payment from the tax dollars it collects from the mine.

Task forces are expected to be discussed again at the next meeting. No date has been set for the meeting.

**NEXT ISSUE: WGREPO, where is it going? HCN talks with William Guy, staff director of WGREPO, about what options the governors face as they decide the future of their organization.**



## Western Roundup

### Frome calls for fight to save Glacier

"The day of idealism is not dead," conservation writer Michael Frome told a Missoula, Mont., audience. He urged the gathering to focus their idealism on preserving Glacier National Park and on other environmental issues. "No single issue is more pressing than conservation," he said. "No generation has the right to rob future generations."

According to *The Missoulian*, the nationally renowned author and columnist pointed to the proposed Cabin Creek coal mine in Canada and oil and gas leasing on the Flathead National Forest as two major threats to Glacier. "If we can't save Glacier, what can we save?" Frome asked. He praised Glacier Park Supt. Phillip R. Iversen, The Flathead Coalition, and Rep. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) for their defense of the park. Baucus recently piloted legislation through congress to protect the three forks of the Flathead River under the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

### Southwest clamps down on developers

For years, the Southwest has welcomed developers with open arms, but now both Arizona and New Mexico are cracking down on unscrupulous land developers, according to a *New York Times* story. "Arizona was an uncritical ally of anyone who wanted to promote growth," according to Arizona Attorney General Bruce Babbitt. Although subdivision laws in both states are still narrow, the attorney generals in Arizona and New Mexico are prosecuting companies under consumer protection and security regulations. Babbitt attributes the land-fraud problems to "the mythology of the West, the frontier ethic," the notion that "this is the land of redblooded, unbridled free enterprise" where selling land "was just like prospecting for gold."

### States reopen Bear River Compact

Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming have reopened the Bear River Compact to re-divide water in the river basin. Existing rights would not be affected by the new adjustments, according to R. Keith Higginson, director of the Idaho Department of Water Resources. Also, the water rights of the Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge would not be jeopardized. The compact modification would not make any new water available, but it would set limits on future uses by states. Idaho Gov. Cecil D. Andrus praised the revision saying it will "prevent a tragic 'use it or lose it' race with Utah" to develop the river. Public hearings will be held on the plan on Nov. 22 in Logan, Utah; Nov. 23 in Preston, Idaho; and Nov. 24 in Evanston, Wyo. The revised compact must be approved by all three state legislatures, all three governors, the U.S. Congress, and the President before it becomes law.



#### LAVA FIELD PRESERVATION PROPOSAL

A representative of the University of Montana's Wilderness Institute has been studying the Wapi and Craters of the Moon lava flows in Idaho to determine if they should be set aside as the Great Rift Primitive Area. The proposal involves 270,000 acres of public land between Wapi and Craters of the Moon parks in central Idaho. The Bureau of Land Management has hired Andy Gibbs of the Wilderness Institute to come up with a plan for preserving the area, according to an *IDAHO STATE JOURNAL* report. Gibbs' plan was unveiled in five public hearings held around the state in August. Gibbs calls the desert lava fields "beautifully stark." The primitive area proposal is now winding its way through the BLM review process.

Photo of desert lava in Craters of the Moon National Monument courtesy of the National Park Service.



#### COLORADO SKI MANAGEMENT PLAN UNVEILED

Colorado state officials have released a "winter resource management plan" to help guide future ski development in the state. The plan seeks to coordinate development proposals with local, state, and federal agencies' review programs. In the past, new ski area approval has been uncoordinated and confrontations have developed — as in the case of the Beaver Creek ski area proposal near Vail where the state temporarily blocked U.S. Forest Service approval. The Forest Service has a major responsibility in ski area development since most potential ski areas are located on national forest lands. Local involvement in ski area planning hasn't been an important part of Forest Service ski area approval in the past, but new Forest Service guidelines call for greater local involvement. The state has asked the Forest Service to inventory all available winter recreation resources on national forests in Colorado so that future development can proceed according to state needs, according to the *ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS*.

### Pinyon pines saved from strip mine

A determined effort by citizens to save a unique grove of pinyon pine trees from strip mining has apparently paid off. The grove, located north of Fort Collins, Colo., is from 800 to 1,000 years old and is believed to be the most northeasterly group of the trees found in North America. The grove is on a state school section of land leased to Colorado Lien Co. for strip mining limestone. The limestone is used by Holly Sugar Company to bleach sugar. The state grove covered 250 acres, but stripping has reduced the grove to about 100 acres. Under pressure from citizens and representatives of Colorado State University (CSU), and with state Rep. Jim Lloyd (D-Loveland) acting as catalyst, an agreement is being worked out whereby Holly Sugar will relinquish its claim to the land to CSU for research and preservation, according to *Triangle Review*.

### Nebraska threatens Grayrocks lawsuit

Nebraska will consider an injunction if necessary to stop construction of the Grayrocks Reservoir for the coal-fired power plant near Wheatland, according to Nebraska Gov. James Exon. Concrete has already been poured for the 1,000 megawatt coal-fired power plant, but Nebraska doesn't plan to allow the reservoir to be built until it has some assurances that it will get its share of the North Platte River, Exon told HCN. The Grayrocks Reservoir would be built on the Laramie River, which is a tributary of the North Platte.

Speaking at the Western Governors Regional Energy Policy Office (WGREPO) meeting, Exon said Nebraska was working with Wyoming to try to settle the dispute, so it would be a "friendly suit" if it were filed. However, after the meeting, he admitted to HCN that it won't remain friendly if Nebraska goes to court to disturb consent decrees that have governed how the two states have been divvying up water for the past 30 years or more. Legal observers in Wyoming, however, interpret the suit as a threat which Nebraska isn't likely to follow through with since Nebraska would likely lose more water rights in court than it would gain. In addition, Lincoln — Nebraska's capital city — has already contracted for electricity from the Wheatland plant and consequently has a vested interest in the plant being built.

### Land use board approves Catamount

The Colorado Land Use Commission will not use its temporary emergency powers to stop the controversial Lake Catamount resort development proposed for near Steamboat Springs (see HCN 9-10-76). Instead, the commission asked Routt County to designate land next to the project as critical wildlife habitat where development should not occur. The land in question is an important elk calving and wintering area. The Colorado Division of Wildlife, environmental groups, and some local citizens are opposed to the entire development, according to the *Rocky Mountain News*. Also, a cease and desist order issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to stop a dam on the Yampa River for the Lake Catamount resort has been lifted. Dam construction required a Corps permit or state certification, but neither had been obtained by the developers. State certification was granted early this month, according to the *News*.

14-High Country News — Oct. 22, 1976

Built courthouse collectors

## Lively professor makes Laramie's sun, wind work

by Phil White

Each Thursday noon, an odd collection of students, faculty, townspeople, and assorted lost souls gathers at the University of Wyoming Student Union for an amorphous group's weekly ritual called "The Environmental Lunch."

Started by environmental writer and journalism professor Ernest Linford four years ago, the lunch usually sparkles with fresh, unconventional, and often bizarre approaches to the environmental dilemma. For the past couple of years, chief catalyst and autocrat of the luncheon table has been U-W civil engineering professor John M. Hill.

Hill, 63, is best known in Wyoming for his advocacy of wind power, and he frequently enlivens the lunch with graphs, diagrams, and models of ideas for exploiting the wind. One of his charts examines the power potential of a huge grove of wind turbines in the "wind capital of the U.S.," an 8,500 square mile area in southern Wyoming.

### GROANING POWER PLANTS

Hill, a Laramie native, is enthusiastic about all forms of alternative energy and energy conservation.

He concludes his formal talks by having members of the audience come forward to turn a small magneto from an old-time telephone. The magneto is wired through a switch to an electric light. It turns easily and smoothly until Hill closes the switch. Then it becomes almost impossible to turn. "Now think about how the power plant's turbines groan when, on a larger scale, we flip the switches to 'on,'" Hill says, "and leave them on long after we've left the room."

Hill envisions banks of wind turbines pumping water back up above hydroelectric dams. He thinks factories powered by wind could call their employees to work during high winds and give them short vacations when the wind drops.

He thinks hydrogen has great potential as a fuel. A couple of years ago, Hill combined water with calcium chips to release hydrogen into a balloon. Then he put the balloon over his unmodified Volkswagen's carburetor and ran the engine for a full minute.

Hill's dog Rex sleeps in a cement dome doghouse with stained glass windows. It

was built as a model for a "foolproof and failproof" human house, strong enough to support a large turbine with a shaft through the middle of the house.

Hill says the idea began forming in 1946 when the constant wind through most of the year hampered him and his brother, Bob, also an engineer, in the construction of a building out on the plains near Laramie:

"As I froze my fingers laying cinder block, I wished we had that cold wind turning a generator to produce heat and keep us warm. A whole basement-full of water heated by wind would heat a house for a month. As we discussed the idea back and forth, we decided that instead of using a generator, why not heat the water by stirring it, on the principle of the water dynamometer? With 13 steel discs rotating very close to 12 stationary discs, not touching each other, the process of shearing the water will heat it. By adjusting them closer than a safety match's thickness and with sufficient power, they'll make the water into steam before your eyes."

Then, by a process of thermo-siphon or convection, the basement-full of heating water would rise by itself and run through the house's radiators and then back to be heated and rise again. It would require no outside energy besides the wind.

### NO APRIL FOOL

Hill's interest in wind power then lay dormant until 1970, except for one flare-up on about April 1, 1950:

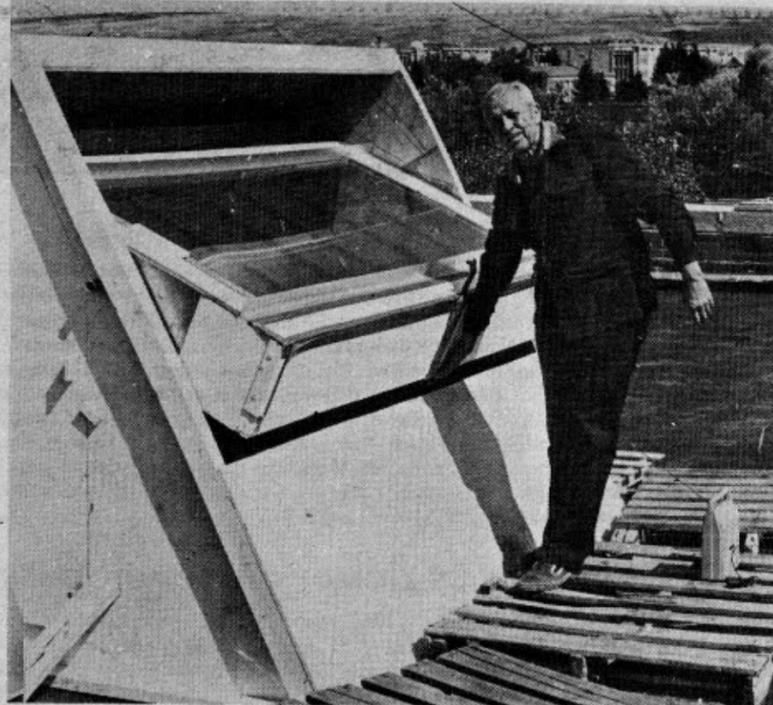
"On that day, the *Laramie Republican Boomerang* had a big front-page headline which said: 'Bureau of Reclamation to Make Power with Wyoming Wind.' The story described plans to build a 100-foot wind turbine on Sherman Hill (just east of Laramie) to make electric power. Then at the end of the story it said, 'April Fool.'"

"People have always joked about the wind around here. But we dug into the story and learned that the Interior Department was proceeding with actual plans to build a large wind power installation, near Casper or Laramie. The Korean War came along then and ended these plans. This just set wind-power back another 20 years."

### COUNTY SOLAR PROJECT

Hill's interest in solar energy inspired him to spend most of the summer on the roof of the Albany County Courthouse in Laramie building solar heaters in what must be one of the first county-funded alternative energy research projects in the country.

It all started with Albany County Commissioner Marguerite Nelson, who enjoys fresh tomatoes in January grown in the solar greenhouse she and her husband built at their home south of Laramie. Nelson persuaded her fellow commissioners to



**THE COURTHOUSE EXPERIMENT.** John Hill on the courthouse roof with his collector. The device rotates to gain maximum exposure to the sun. It cost \$500. The aluminum plates were made from discarded detour signs and the steel plates from old road grader blades. For glass, Hill used a double-paned patio door.

allocate \$3,000 to Hill "to build and install three types of solar heaters on the county courthouse as an experimental project."

Working with his son, John Hill Jr., a literature student in Wisconsin, Hill has nearly completed two of the three courthouse pilot projects. The first is a seven-foot high box, eight feet long, which houses aluminum and steel plates painted black to collect the sun's heat. A double-paned patio door insulates the plates from the wind. A small fan moves air over the plates. On a sunny fall day at noon, the air is quickly heated from 70 to 170 degrees. Hill plans to run the heated air through an unused ventilator in the roof and into the district courtroom.

"Hopefully," Hill says, "our solar heat will rest the thermostats a bit before they signal the furnace to burn gas coming down from Sand Draw, near Riverton, Wyo. So, when they ask me where's my storage for the solar heat, I say it's up in Sand Draw."

The second heater, a smaller box which can rotate on both a horizontal and a vertical axis and thus point directly at the sun all day, will use water trickling between a black and a clear sheet of plastic to collect solar heat.

The third project will be a water-type collector mounted on a large piece of wood, shaped and painted to look like a tree. The collector will be attached to the side of the courthouse and the water will heat a large mud ball underground where heat would be stored for days of little sun.

Hill says that seven rows of collectors,

each 130 feet long, on the courthouse roof would provide three times the collecting area necessary to heat the entire building.

### WIND V. COAL

The prospect of using Wyoming's mineral tax revenues to build bigger football stadiums and support extravagant athletic programs is unacceptable to Hill. This idea is being considered by the Wyoming Legislature. "The state should be putting that money into wind and solar energy research, since Wyoming receives sun and wind in such abundance," he says.

In August, Hill visited the Energy Research and Development Administration (ERDA) national wind power director, Louis Divone, at the agency's new Washington, D.C., headquarters. ERDA has just constructed its first big wind turbine, for light winds, at Sandusky, Ohio. The agency is presently considering 17 sites, none in Wyoming, for construction of four large turbines for strong winds.

Hill says Divone told him that Wyoming isn't being considered partly because Wyoming "is an area of cheap coal. We can't be putting our wind development there." This seems to Hill to be missing the point, and smoking up Wyoming's air unnecessarily.

But he continues to seek funding for wind and solar research while constantly cogitating and evaluating new ideas to save and produce energy. The subject so engrosses him that one wonders why Hill's brain waves couldn't be tapped as an alternative energy source.

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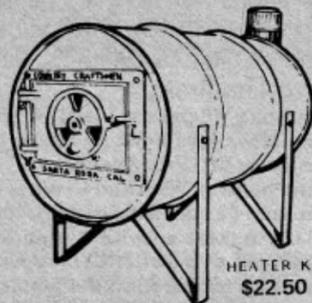
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## HCN Bulletin Board



Oct. 22, 1976 — High Country News-15

## DISTAFF CORNER

### LOONEY LIMERICKS

by Zane E. Cology

A young crusader named Fred,  
Grew weary of clean up and said,  
"Let's get to the root,  
Men, not cans, pollute.  
Let's ban all the people instead!"



### WHO RULES IDAHO?

The Idaho Study Group is investigating the question, "Who Rules Idaho?" The first of its reports examines the relationship between corporations and city tax rates. The report points out that the city of Lewiston lost over \$445,794 in tax income in 1975 because Potlatch Corp. and Omark Inc. are located adjacent to, but outside, the city limits. Similar situations exist in other Idaho communities. Individual copies of the report are available from the Idaho Study Group, Box 8482, Moscow, Idaho 83843 for 25 cents each plus 25 cents per order for mailing. The next two reports will focus on the forest products industry and utilities. Subscriptions to the entire series cost \$5.

### ASSISTANT LOBBYIST SOUGHT

The Colorado Open Space Council is seeking a part-time assistant lobbyist for the 1976-77 state legislative session. The job includes office work and lobbying at the capital from early November through July 1977, with the possibility that the assistant will become the chief lobbyist for the following session. Resumes may be submitted to the COSC office, 1325 Delaware St., Denver, Colo. 80204 before October 31. For more information, contact COSC.

### RURAL CONFERENCE

The Second National Conference on Rural America will be held Nov. 15-16 at the Savery Hotel in Des Moines, Iowa. The meeting will focus on rural land issues such as strip mining, the right of eminent domain, Indian lands, and protection of the family farm. For more information contact Rural America, 1346 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 or phone (202) 785-2936.

### COMMISSIONS UNACCOUNTABLE

Common Cause has released a report on the public accountability of all 51 state public utility commissions. On the basis of a questionnaire, 31 state PUCs were found unaccountable. Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming were among the states which failed. For a free copy of "Money, Secrecy, and State Utility Regulation" write Common Cause, State Issues Development, 2030 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.



### UTAH ROADLESS AREAS

Kim Crumbo, wilderness coordinator for the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club, is trying to put together information on roadless areas in the national forests of southern Utah. The information will be used to respond to upcoming U.S. Forest Service land use plans for roadless areas. If you have experience in the area, contact Kim Crumbo, P.O. Box 158, Hyde Park, Utah 84318.

### SAVERY-POTHOOK HEARING

The Bureau of Reclamation will hold a public hearing Oct. 30 in Baggs, Wyo., on the proposed Savery-Pothook water development project near the Colorado-Wyoming border. Copies of the draft environmental impact statement on the project are available in public libraries near the project site and from the Bureau of Reclamation, Box 11568, Salt Lake City, Utah 84111.

### CALL THE CORPS — FREE

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a toll-free telephone number for questions, comments, and messages relating to the work of the Omaha District. By dialing 1-800-228-9477 callers can leave their comments or questions on a recording along with their name, phone number and address. The number can be reached by callers from Montana, Colorado, South Dakota, North Dakota, Iowa, Wisconsin, Wyoming, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Illinois, and Indiana.

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### AMAX COAL EIS OUT

The U.S. Geological Survey has released a draft environmental impact statement on the proposed Eagle Butte strip mine (also called Belle Ayr North) near Gillette, Wyo., by Amax Coal Co. The plan calls for stripping 566 million tons of coal on 3,076 acres over 30 years. Copies of the EIS are available from the U.S. Geological Survey, Environmental Impact Analysis Program, 760 National Center, Reston, Va. 22092

### MONTANA HEARING POSTPONED

A public hearing to review the proposal to adopt Montana's reclamation requirements on federal coal lands in the state has been rescheduled. The Oct. 21 meeting has been put off until Nov. 18 to allow more time for public review of the proposal. For more information or to register to speak, contact the office of public affairs, Bureau of Land Management, Billings, Mont. 59107 (phone (406) 657-6561). The hearing will begin at 9 a.m. in the Eastern Montana College Library Building, room 231, in Billings.

### GRIZZLY HEARING

The Senate Interior Appropriations Subcommittee will hold a public hearing Nov. 4 in Cody, Wyo., on grizzly bear management in Yellowstone National Park. Experts disagree about the impact of park management policies on the grizzly population. For more information on the hearing, contact Sen. Gale McGee, U.S. Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510.

### GRAZING REVIEW EXTENDED

The period for public comment on proposed changes in livestock grazing regulations for federal lands administered by the Bureau of Land Management has been extended until Jan. 31, 1977. Copies of the plan (see HCN, 9-24-76, p.5) are available from state offices of the BLM. Comments should be sent to the BLM, Washington, D.C. 20240.

## Eavesdropper

environmental news from around the world

### EXPENSIVE APPEARANCE.

President Gerald R. Ford's appearance at Yellowstone National Park on Aug. 29 to announce his Bicentennial Land Act to expand the National Park System cost the U.S. Treasury \$153,000, according to a syndicated column by Jack Cloherty and Bob Owens. Conservationists were critical of the program because it was announced only weeks before congress was due to adjourn and passage seemed hopeless. They called it an election year ploy. The legislation did not pass, but Interior Department officials say Ford will go ahead with the program if reelected.

### TOXICANTS BILL SIGNED.

President Gerald R. Ford has signed a bill adding new federal controls over toxic substances which could harm human health and the environment. The bill gives the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency power to prevent or limit a chemical's use if studies show it is hazardous. Most existing laws allowed government agencies to ban a product after it was on the market. This legislation requires testing and approval before substances are marketed. The bill also imposes a two-year ban on PCBs.

by Marge Higley

Reluctantly, and procrastinating every step of the way, I am getting the cabin ready to close up for the winter. All that remains to be done is shutting off the water system, and battening down the canvas curtains over the screens on the front porch.

This afternoon I did the necessary little chores that need hot scapy water, like cleaning up the stove and the refrigerator. The refrigerator is almost barren and sterile-looking, since for the past week I have been trying to eat up everything in it.

I found that I had almost a full loaf of bread left and decided to put some out for the bluejays. I counted out four pieces (for four days' breakfast toast) and then added two more, to eat with the last of the bacon and the last two eggs for supper tonight. The rest of the loaf I took out and tossed up on the roof of the coal shed, where the jays are accustomed to finding the tidbits I leave for them. Generally, I break such handouts into smaller pieces, but for some perverse reason I wondered what they'd do with five full pieces of bread.

I didn't have to wait long — but the show wasn't exactly what I expected. A little grey squirrel had spied the feast from his perch high up in a lodgepole pine near the shed. He jumped onto the roof to investigate. Sitting on his haunches, he got one piece of bread into a vertical position. It was as tall as he was, but by steadying it with his front paws, he managed to get the upper crust of it into his mouth.

I fully expected him to eat it on the spot, but it soon became apparent that he had other ideas. Head high to keep it from dragging, he carried it to the edge of the roof, where he carefully rebalanced it before he made a flying leap for the tree trunk. Encumbered as he was, it was a precarious landing, but he made it, head down, and fighting for his balance, but with the bread still intact. As he turned around to climb up, though, the bottom half of the bread broke off. I could almost share his frustration and indecision as he stopped to look down at the broken piece of bread at the foot of the tree. I swear he literally shrugged his shoulders as he decided to take up what was still in his mouth before returning for the other half!

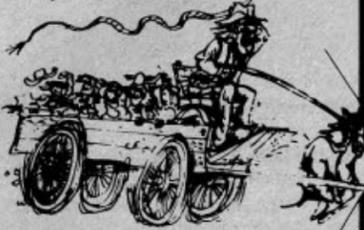
As he started back down I heard the peculiar "scree, scree" of the jays, as three of them landed in a blue flurry on the roof of the shed. The squirrel was obviously aware of them, too, and they caused another moment of indecision. Should he salvage what he was sure of, lying at the foot of the tree — or should he try to protect what he thought was his own private hoard on the shed roof?

He didn't hesitate long. With a flying leap he was on the roof, and before the startled jays knew what he was up to, he dragged one piece of bread to the edge, dropped it over the side, and scurried after it. With never a backward glance, he retrieved it and dragged it into a hole under the floor of the shed. The jays quickly polished off the bread on the roof, but didn't see that half piece at the foot of the tree.

I waited awhile, but the squirrel didn't come out, even after the birds had flown back into the woods. A brisk fall breeze blew in over the lake, so I went inside to put on a sweater and replenish my coffee cup. When I returned, the half piece of bread had disappeared. I don't know who got it, but I have a hunch it wasn't the jays!

### HCN Special Edition!

(Hurry afore it's too late!)



Load up the kids  
and head on out to buy the  
**High Country News  
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18 pages, glossy cover  
a roundup 1969-1975  
of the best of High Country News,  
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of the Rockies. \$1.50

16-High Country News — Oct. 22, 1976



by Orville Schell, Pantheon Books, New York, 1976. \$6.95, soft cover, 200 pages. Photographs by Ilka Hartmann.

Review by Peter Wild

The law locks up the man or woman  
Who steals the goose from off the common,  
But lets the greater villain loose  
Who steals the common from the goose.  
Old English Proverb

Wrapped in green meadows and sea mist, tiny Briones perches on the western edge of this continent like some fragile maiden about to hurl herself into the sea when the grimy hands of the twentieth century get too close. Most of the residents, though, would prefer to ignore the outside world that pursues them, prefer to shut their eyes against the mindless droves of humanity that roar up from San Francisco in hundreds of cars on weekends and holidays. Centuries ago Aristotle stated Briones' delicate position: "The good life

depends on intimacy and small numbers." It's an old story. Briones could be destroyed by a few quick thrusts from the eager outside world. A freeway, a patch of condominiums erected by realtors from the city, an industry brought in under the banner of "more jobs," and the town begins its tumble into the abyss.

Still drowsy from its long sleep, Briones begins to understand how it is about to be used by urban discoverers. A proposed sewer line would be built more for those who build sewer lines than for the residents who will be stuck with the astronomical price tag. A new highway would benefit those who construct highways, while increasing the crunch of weekenders. It dawns on the townspeople that nobody consulted them about the projects, that few residents want either one of them.

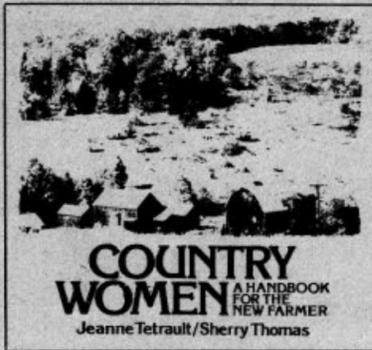
After the initial stages of digging in their heels, they see how outsiders view their community. To the city people armed with blueprints, "... money is the issue, not life." The locals get angry. At a hearing one blurts out to the assembled squad of highway engineers, "This is my home! And I don't want your goddam road so people can go faster!" Fortified with assorted liquors, another slashes the tires on a developer's Lincoln Continental, takes a mop handle to the windows of a real estate office, and gets thrown in jail in order to better meditate on his indiscretions.

**The Town That Fought To Save Itself** is the story of how the residents slowly, painfully wake from their torpor and begin to assert themselves over their own destinies. Fueled by anger they declare a county recall election and turn out the representatives of exploiters. The new officers vote a moratorium on development, the first group in the nation to decree zero growth for a community.

The account is a core drilling of the process, a portrait by one of the participants of the bumping and grinding personalities, interspersed with brief treatises on flush

toilets and windmills, and transcripts of rowdy, sometimes hilarious, public meetings.

It may be that such activism has a favorable edge in the frenetic atmosphere of California. Whatever, the case of Briones exemplifies the fact that towns with anything worth saving in their relationships with the earth had better start acting before the land speculators, the highway men, and absentee landlords begin acting for them.



by Sherry Thomas and Jeanne Tetrault, Anchor Press-Doubleday, Garden City, New York, 1976. \$6.95, paperback; \$12.95, hard cover, 381 pages. Photographs, illustrations, and diagrams.

Review by Peter Wild

Cut two pieces of baling wire into three-foot lengths. Make a handle on each. Holding one loosely in each hand, horizontal and at the level of your chest, walk around your land. The rods will start dipping when you are over water. If the water is close to the surface, they will vibrate in circles when held overhead. So goes one sugges-

tion on how to begin a complete water system for your new farm. The authors were skeptical about "witching," as it's called, until an old-timer showed them how it's done. Whether or not there's anything mystical about the process, "witching" often works, and that, after all, is what counts when you need water. The following pages detail how to build the entire system.

Hints along the way — learned through trial and error by the women writers — will give even the novice a sense of confidence. For instance, when digging a well with hemp rope on a windlass to haul out the dirt, Nylon will slip. When you've set up all the pipes to your barn and house, and in a flush of satisfaction you turn the water on — and they leak! — then what do you do? The authors have been through it; they take you in hand.

Not willing to accept the standard patterns that society offered, several years ago they quit their jobs in the East and headed West. The two women were feminists; they wanted to farm. All they had was determination. **Country Women** is the result of their experiences, a guide for other country newcomers — male or female — on how to make a go of it on the land, from buying property to delivering goat kids. Without condescending, Thomas and Tetrault assume that the readers are country dunces. They don't know how to hold an axe or recognize the symptoms of milk fever, how to butcher chickens or what to do about gophers in the artichokes.

The women realize that no volume can cover all situations. Their appendix suggests further reading and lists supply companies that they've found to be reliable. Publishers are flooding the market with a confusing variety of back-to-the-land manuals, some good, some merely gimmicks. Anyone interested should first take a look at **Country Women**. Oversized, beautifully designed and illustrated, the only bewildering thing about this authoritative book is its low price.

## Dear Friends,

When Tom Bell edited **High Country News**, he refused to accept any advertising. He didn't want the paper to be reliant on commercial interests which might attempt to influence the editorial policy of the paper. He realized he was shunning much-needed revenue, but he preferred to be pure.

When Tom left his editorial duties in Lander and moved to Oregon, we decided to try accepting advertising to improve the paper's financial picture. We vowed to remain independent and never become beholden to any advertiser. We also worried about taking up our limited space with ads which ran counter to our environmental philosophy.

We thought we solved our problem by adopting the following policy printed in our advertising brochure: "We will not accept ads which conflict with our environmentalist editorial stance. For example, we would not use our space to run ads for motorized recreational vehicles, devices which consume large amounts of energy, or

substances which might pollute the land, air, or water."

This position seemed comfortable at first, but we keep bumping into more gray areas where we feel uncomfortable acting as moral censors for our readers. Should we use our space to advertise a political candidate we may not support? Should we discourage ads for ski resorts? Is HCN a proper place for real estate sales ads?

Most recently, we were approached by the opponents of an environmental initiative in Colorado to see if we would accept an ad against the measure. We supported the initiative, so we rejected the paid ad and decided to run a story on the controversy instead (see page 6). As things worked out, we finally decided to use anti-initiative ads for illustrations with the story. We did not accept payment for the reprinted ads.

But our decision to reject the ad made all of us a little uneasy. Our dilemma was summed up by an editorial statement in the **Straight Creek Journal**, an alternative Denver newspaper. SCJ received a letter from

a reader protesting an ad in the paper against the Colorado bottle bill initiative. SCJ defended printing the ad stating: "It has been the policy of **Straight Creek** to resist any pressure to censor the content of paid advertising. We believe that advertisers — including the opponents of Amendment 8 — have a First Amendment right to express their views in print. Freedom of the press should not be the private privilege of those who own one. We deplore the standards of the **Denver Post** and **Rocky Mountain News** when those papers refuse to accept paid advertising from individuals and groups that are the victims of their disapproval, such as gays. We do not intend to perpetuate the same abhorrent practices by substituting our tastes for theirs. However, we fully intend to use our news and editorial resources to investigate and comment upon the issues raised in the fight over Amendment 8."

We agree with SCJ that advertising is a good way to get information to the public — and free speech is a cherished right. We know we won't let advertis-

ers' financial pressures influence our advocacy, but should we allow ads from ski resorts, pro-nuclear advocates, or subdividers to take up valuable limited news space? If we accept too many anti-environmental ads, are we denying environmentalists their free speech by converting one of the only environmental newspapers around into just another periodical filled with commercial messages?

One solution is to add more pages to HCN as advertising volume permits. Another solution is to continue to wrestle with the problems posed by gray area ads and to continue to reject anti-environmental ads.

In our reader survey, 98% of the respondents said they supported HCN's decision to accept advertising. Now we have another question for you — How do you feel about us censoring ads for you? If we can find a way to continue to provide the same amount of news space every issue on the average, would you mind the occasional objectionable ad? Drop us a line and let us know. It's your paper.

—the editors



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