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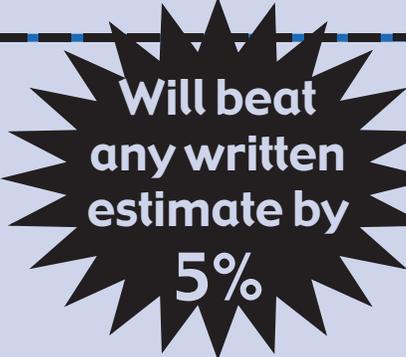


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Becoming A Butterfly

By Nature and Wildlife Photojournalist
Omayra Acevedo

There are some things in this world that linger inside of me like a moth to a flame. One of these things is a proverb so simplistic in every way, yet fills me with uncanny strength; a proverb that in my darkest of hours brings me undeniable light: ***Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly.*** Imagine yourself an egg 1.2mm high and 0.9mm wide, being carefully placed not inside your mother's womb, but in the middle of nowhere underneath the leaf of a milkweed where you are given 30 days, and 30 days roughly, to ascertain if you will survive to taste the sweet tender flavors of the earth's beautiful nectar. Considering you don't get eaten by another insect, bug or bird, or are thrown from your leaf several feet by the wind, or completely demolished by human destruction, I'd say the chances of your survival are pretty good.

Three to four days have passed since you were left to fend for yourself. You have emerged from your shell and found you are now the shape of a tiny larva. Something most people would squirm at the sight of. They don't know that in just a few weeks you are going to be the most beautiful creature they will rest their eyes upon. There you stay for the next 10 to 14 days growing all the length you will ever grow. Until you become too large for your own skin ...

It has been at least two weeks since you've joined the beauty of this earth when you begin to molt the skin you have grown into, and eating it. You are more vulnerable now than you will ever be; very little protection or support. You repeat this process, not once or twice, but five times. Suddenly, new skin hardens and molds itself to you, covering your entire body until you are utterly submerged into a beautiful ornament: Your Chrysalis. Before you know it, you are simply hanging from a tiny hook-covered appendage called your cremaster; well-camouflaged, since

you have no other means of defense against predators in this stage of your life.

Two more weeks fly by when you have turned almost entirely black and begin to shake uncontrollably - urging to break free. Hours pass and still you are fighting against whatever is left of your chrysalis when it happens...you break free! Welcome to your new life! Humans will now marvel at the perfection that is you, though they will do so with no knowledge of what you have gone through to get to where you are and to be this beautiful.

What's left? Well, now you mate. You find the one single partner who fills your heart with joy. Okay, well, maybe not, but a suitable partner to help plant the seed of the next generation will do. Word of advice? Choose wisely. He/she is the one you will mate with several times during your lives. Sadly, your lifespan will be anywhere from two to five weeks in the summer. Your offspring are bound to the same cycle, the same life, the same fate. Nature has willed it so. Don't worry. The final generation of Monarchs, which emerge in late summer and early fall, have an additional job: to migrate. To migrate to their wintering grounds, either in California for Western Monarchs or in Central New Mexico. Here they will survive, living up to nine months (Continued next page.)

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Highlander Nature

in hibernation until conditions in the United States allow them to return to reproduce once again.

Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly. For me, this is a small reminder of how short life can be, and yes, it can definitely seem short, but it can also be astounding. While you're here, fly free, live your life, take in all the beauty that surrounds you and the beauty you help create. I know what you're thinking, if butterflies are born just to mate and then die, why should we protect them? The reasons are endless, but I will share with you the reasons I find to be most important. Butterflies, like all creatures of this world, are part of life on earth and an important component of its rich biodiversity.

Butterflies are often portrayed as the essence of nature or as a representation of freedom, beauty, love or peace. For many years, and still today, a butterfly's life cycle has been used as an educational tool in our school systems. Butterflies are model organisms used to investigate many areas of biological research, including navigation, pest control, embryology, mimicry, evolution, genetics, population dynamics and biodiversity conservation. Butterflies are widely used by ecologists as keystone species to study the impact of habitat loss, fragmentation,

and climate change.

Several hundreds of thousands of people (especially in the UK) garden for wildlife, specifically for butterflies, including yours truly.

Every butterfly and moth has developed its own brand of chemicals to deter predators and parasites, find a mate, and even overcome the chemical defenses of its host plant. Chemicals with potential value. For example, powerful antibiotics have been found in the Meadow Brown, one of our most common and most widespread species.

Need I say more? For a nature enthusiast, butterflies define the miracle that is life. Call them angels, call them guardians, call them fairies in disguise, but I call them spirits of the Earth. They are part of a big chain of miracles that keep this beautiful world spinning round and round. Next time you see a butterfly, remember, it too deserves a home.... this home.

<http://www.butterflies.org/>

<http://butterfly-conservation.org/45/why-butterflies-matter.html>

<http://aqua.org/blog/2014/november/monarchs-ultimate-race?gclid=CPKpl7iMzssCFZCIaQod9HAILg>



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Smoke, Dust & An Unknown Future

From CSU

With climate change comes the threat of more wildfires, particularly in the western United States. And where there's fire, there's smoke.

This expected increase in wildfire smoke will no doubt affect overall levels of what's called particulate matter air pollution – the mixture of inhalable solid or liquid particles suspended in air. And wind-driven dust, on the rise due to climate-related aridity and changes in land use, is also expected to contribute to this pollution.

But exactly what the impacts of smoke and dust will be is hard to predict, in part because climate change is also unpredictable. Colorado State University researchers are looking to shed some light. They are doing a new analysis that will incorporate meteorological uncertainty into predictions of increased dust, as well as smoke from fires, and their impact on concentrations of particulate matter in the atmosphere.

EPA-supported research

A research team led by Emily Fischer, assistant professor of atmospheric science, will tackle this complex problem with support from the Environmental Protection Agency.

The team, which includes co-investigators Jeff Pierce and

Elizabeth Barnes in the same department, has been awarded a three-year, \$350,000 grant to determine how modeled, future climate events translate into uncertainty around dust and smoke and particulate matter pollution. The EPA has awarded a set of grants around the issue of particulate matter and related atmospheric pollutants. Awardees are charged with studying changing spatiotemporal patterns and environmental impacts of particulate matter in the U.S., with a focus on modeling of atmospheric and environmental processes.

The CSU team will model uncertain future meteorology and future smoke and dust by EPA region, to gain a comprehensive view of possible air quality implications.

Editor's Note:

“The 2016 ‘State of the Air’ report finds unhealthy levels of ozone in Denver, putting our local citizens at risk for premature death and other serious health effects such as asthma attacks and cardiovascular harm.” Said Curt Huber, Executive Director of the American Lung Association in Colorado. “Across the nation, the report found continued improvement in air quality, but more than half of the people in the United States live in counties that have unhealthy levels of either ozone or particle pollution.”



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Grand Canyon Abolishes River District

By Lyndsey Gilpin - HCN

The abrupt decision leaves the future of NPS river management up in the air.

Late in the afternoon on March 16, every phone of every employee in Grand Canyon National Park rang. It was a recorded message from Superintendent David Uberuaga, announcing that the River District was abolished, effective immediately.

The decision to get rid of the River District was a response to the Department of the Interior's Office of the Inspector General report released earlier this year, which documented Grand Canyon's 15-year failure to address sexual harassment of female federal employees who worked on the river. The investigation found the women were repeatedly propositioned for sex, harassed by male boatmen and supervisors and retaliated against after reporting incidents to management. The OIG report also stated that administrators at NPS were aware of these issues, but failed to take action for years.

In the email transcript of the call that was sent to

employees, Uberuaga said that the OIG findings "shattered the public trust bestowed upon us as federal employees," and that he takes "full responsibility for the situation the park finds itself in and ... accept that over time, a culture was tolerated that allowed sexual harassment and created a hostile work environment." To rebuild trust, he said he would take "decisive actions that demonstrate that we take such matters outlined in the OIG report seriously."

Uberuaga dissolved the district to have a fresh start and review of its mission and responsibilities, says James Doyle, spokesman for the Park Service. The district's six employees will be placed in other areas of the park. "We're not eliminating anybody's positions," Doyle added. This decision has raised concerns for many members of the river community because one of the four men accused of sexual harassment by 13 complainants and 22 other witnesses in the OIG investigation is still working at the park.

Several former and current employees have told High Country News they wonder what abolishing the River District does for fixing the culture if an alleged perpetrator is still employed. "I want to remain hopeful that it's on the right track, but I am concerned with there potentially not being accountability," said one woman, a former park employee and complainant in the OIG investigation who wishes to remain anonymous for her safety. "That makes me nervous."

It's unclear if Sue Masica, Intermountain Regional Director, knew about Uberuaga's plan. Doyle said she "may have" been aware of it beforehand, but superintendents do have the authority to make these types of staffing decisions.

This all occurred three days before Masica visited the park as part of her response to the OIG report. After the visit, she sent an email to Grand Canyon employees expressing her commitment to fixing the park's culture. In it, she mentioned some of the most echoed sentiments from employees, which included concerns about a culture of fear and retaliation, inequitable treatment and a lack of trust and

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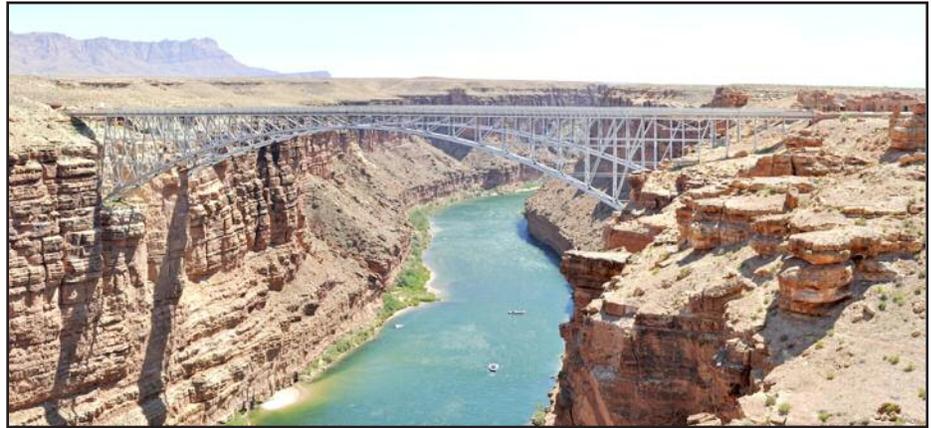
communication with administration. She also wrote that many people were concerned about the River District abolishment, and they said “not knowing what the park is moving toward and how important work will be accomplished is unsettling.” Masica’s letter did not mention disciplinary action for the accused sexual harassers and supervisors on duty when the incidents occurred.

For now, NPS-run scientific research and trail maintenance trips are on hold across the entire park. According to the agency, resource management and other work trips may be contracted out as needed from now on. However, since the river unit is disbanded and the boat shop doors are closing, it means NPS boatmen will be placed in new jobs, spread out throughout the park.

There will still be employees patrolling the canyon, though not under the umbrella of the old river district. The district, which has been around since the 1970s, was responsible for administration and resource protection of the 280 miles of the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park. River rangers ran emergency rescue and wilderness first aid services on the river. Rangers also monitored campsites, trails and artifacts down in the canyon, ensuring that NPS property wasn’t damaged. Since the district was abolished, these duties will still be fulfilled, but it’s unclear how and if they will be restructured.

“We will still be able to function safely,” Doyle says. Though one former river ranger, who requested that his name not be used in this article, is concerned that with a restructuring of the district, it will take longer for them to respond to emergencies.

Abolishing the River District strips NPS of many of its responsibilities on the river, which some local river guides say puts more pressure on commercial outfitters this season. Rafting trips run year-round, but the popular season kicks off on April 2, when the Grand Canyon River Guides Association hosts its annual guides training seminar and rafting trip from Marble Canyon to bring together river



Boats pass below a bridge on the Colorado River in Grand Canyon National Park.

Michael Quinn/National Park Service

guides from around the region. Usually, it’s a celebration for the river community, but this year, it’s also shrouded in concern about the investigation.

Earlier last month, Lynn Hamilton, executive director of the association, decided to remove a River District supervisor from the event’s agenda. “It would not have been appropriate to have him speak,” Hamilton says. “There will be people there that would be uncomfortable with it, and clearly we are on the side of all of the victims that have been so grossly affected in this horrible way, and for decades, no less.” However, Uberuaga is still slated to speak to the group of 200 people — his first public appearance since the OIG report was released in January. “The park will be asked questions and they will need to answer them,” Hamilton says.

It’s not yet clear if abolishing the district is an action just meant to save face, or if it’s the first step in a larger plan for NPS to address sexual harassment issues. The agency is staying tight-lipped about its next steps. The former river ranger says many Grand Canyon employees are concerned and frustrated about the ripple effects of demolishing the district and punishing employees who weren’t involved. “It’s like burning the whole house down when you find roaches in the kitchen,” he says.

Lyndsey Gilpin is an editorial intern at High Country News. She tweets @lyndseygilpin

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Share Your Perceptions

Graduate students at the Colorado School of Public Health are working on an initiative involving Colorado State University, the Tri-County Health Department and public health professionals from around the state to develop an interactive, online community engagement tool. *Everyday Colorado* was launched April 4, during National Public Health Week.

Everyday Colorado is investigating the intersection of the environment, public health and community development. The public engagement tool aims to generate knowledge from communities around the state about local environmental concerns, values, experiences and successes. “The success of this project relies on people sharing their stories with us to inform how we do business. We want to know about the everyday concerns and priorities of people in the diverse communities of Colorado, from Denver to Silverton to Sterling and everywhere in between,” says Tom Butts, deputy director of the Tri-County Health Dept. and one of the co-directors of the project.

The project explores both the everyday and emerging environmental health issues across Colorado’s varied and changing landscapes. Professor Jill Litt, who teaches the class at the Colorado School of Public Health at the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus and a co-director on the project, notes, “The student involvement, through community engagement and developing content about environmental policies and action steps, is a critical component of this community-based learning project.

Professor Jennifer Peel at the Colorado School of Public Health at Colorado State University and a co-director of the project, explains, “The ‘**Everyday Colorado**’ interactive online tool asks participants to identify values and rank concerns, and offers the opportunity to learn more about emerging issues that may affect the health and well-being of Colorado communities.”

With the results of the stories shared on the tool, **Everyday Colorado** will publish a comprehensive results report later this year, highlighting local and professional perspectives about Coloradans’ values and necessary action

steps to prepare the state for emerging challenges.

People can tell their stories at

<http://EverydayCO.org/your-values>

Questions about the project can be directed to Jacquelyn Murphy, at Jacquelyn.Murphy@ucdenver.edu.

The Colorado School of Public Health is the first and only accredited school of public health in the Rocky Mountain Region, attracting top-tier faculty and students from across the country, and providing a vital contribution towards ensuring our region’s health and wellbeing. Collaboratively formed in 2008 by the University of Colorado Anschutz Medical Campus, Colorado State University and the University of Northern Colorado, the Colorado School of Public Health provides training, innovative research and community service to actively address public health issues including chronic disease, access to health care, environmental threats, emerging infectious diseases and costly injuries. Learn more and follow ColoradoSPH’s updates on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. **Editor’s Note: Maybe a GREAT subject to share would be the environmental threat of the proposed Expansion of Gross Reservoir.**

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Buffalo Field Campaign-buffalofieldcampaign.org

BFC patrols spotted the first baby buffalo of the season in the Hebgen Basin on a recent morning. The little one is doing well, as is mom. They are both safe from government harassment as they are on their newly granted year-round Horse Butte habitat! Thank you! *Buffalo Field Campaign photo by D. Baker.*

Our new highway signs have arrived! Thank you so much for making it possible for us to get them! They are huge, heavy-duty, reflective orange, and carry the most imminent message: **Buffalo on Road.** Wednesday morning's patrols were the first to use them in the field. Our well-worn hot pink signs will now be used mostly for night patrols, as transportation officials have declared the hot pink color for emergencies only, and wild bison on a high-speed highway in the dark of night most certainly qualifies. Unfortunately, a disgruntled local has vandalized two of these signs, but we are hopeful we can fix and continue to use them.



Our rove patrols continue to be extremely busy along US Hwys 191/287, sometimes twenty-four hours a day, helping to warn traffic. We are pleased to report that since our last Update, no vehicle collisions with buffalo have occurred. Warm days and rain have helped melt a lot of the snow, so buffalo are able to access much more grass than they were just a week ago. Close to two hundred buffalo are on or making their way towards Horse Butte, with many still heading this way, still needing safe passage infrastructure from Montana.

Two of the pregnant buffalo who visited us this week, being approached by Vitani, one of our family dogs, who we had to coax away from the buffalo with an egg roll. She eagerly complied.

The other day we were gifted with the presence of four pregnant buffalo right in our yard. Before last week, these buffalo would have been in what the Interagency Bison Management Plan considered "zone 3," or zero tolerance land. The Montana Department of Livestock has never dared to haze buffalo off of our place, but now the buffalo are allowed to be here. It's a new awakening every day to see buffalo in places where once they would be targeted with cruel hazing, knowing that they should now be alright in these areas. Our main area of concern is along the Madison Arm Road, which leads to the South Fork of the Madison River and Denny Creek. This land has now been completely taken away from the buffalo, yet is important habitat that they greatly favor. There's still a lot of snow in this area, so buffalo are not accessing it yet, but when they

do we know the hazers will come to chase them away. The south side of the Madison is one more small but significant piece of ground that we must gain for wild buffalo.

Orphaned by Yellowstone's slaughter and in confinement for over a month, the fifty-seven young buffalo in Yellowstone's trap have lost their families and freedom forever.

Meanwhile, in Gardiner, all but two mature bulls have left the Basin, moving onto their calving grounds in Yellowstone's interior. With the Governor's decision now in place, mature bull buffalo also have year-round access in the Gardiner Basin. There again, we have much work to do, in gaining the same rights for the matriarch-led family groups. And there are still 57 orphaned (by slaughter) calves and yearlings inside Yellowstone's Stephens Creek trap, but no word yet as to what their fate will be.

For these buffalo it is either slaughter or quarantine — though one thing is certain: they will never again be wild and free, never roam the lands where they were born, never see their families again. We pray for these baby buffalo every day as we continue our work to fight livestock models of bison management. We will forever defend wild, migratory buffalo and their right to freely roam their ancestral lands.

Wild is the Way ~ Roam Free!~ Stephany

Go to the website for more information, ([address above](http://buffalofieldcampaign.org)) to donate for the cause and read about volunteer positions this summer in Yellowstone Park.

Radical Environmentalism?

Dear EarthTalk: What ever happened to the radical environmental group Earth First!? Are they still around and what other groups are leading the charge? Betty Jones, CA

Car bomb injuries, prison terms, and death were among the perils protestors with the Earth First! (EF!) movement faced throughout the 1990s. EF! formed in 1979, in response to what they called an increasingly corporate, compromising and ineffective environmental community. Throughout the 1980s and '90s, small EF! groups throughout the U.S. and other countries took part in protests that may have included road blockades, activists locking themselves to heavy equipment, tree-sitting, destruction of machinery and tree-spiking.

Tree-spiking, which was advocated by EF! co-founder Dave Foreman in his book *Ecodefense*, involves hammering a nail into the trunk of a tree to discourage logging as a result of chain saw destruction. In 1987, California mill worker George Alexander was nearly killed when the bandsaw he was operating was shattered by a possible tree spike. This led many EF! groups to reject this form of "ecotage" entirely.

In 2008, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) stated that they consider eco-terrorists, along with animal rights extremists, among the most serious domestic terrorist threats in the United States today. One group the FBI specifically named was the Earth Liberation Front (ELF), who they consider to be a "loosely-organized movement whose adherents engage in crimes like arson, fire bombings, vandalism, intimidation, assaults, stalking, etc.," ELF, which formed in 1992, received national attention in 1998 after they burned down a Vail Ski Resort in Vail, CO that resulted in an estimated \$26 million in damages. "Terrorism is terrorism, no matter what the motive," FBI Director Robert S. Mueller said. "There's a clear difference between constitutionally protected advocacy – which is the right of all Americans – and violent criminal activity." A study published in 2014 revealed that attacks related to eco-terrorism from 1970 to 2012 reached a peak of 163 incidents a year by 2001, but after 2003, the frequency declined, and by 2012, there were next to none. The decline in attacks coincided with stricter post-9/11 law enforcement policies against acts of eco-terrorism.

Today, groups like Greenpeace and Sea Shepherd Conservation Society — while not attempting illegal acts

that earn them the label of an FBI domestic terrorist threat — still gain widespread publicity for their bold and aggressive tactics to achieve their campaign goals. Paul



Sea Shepherd Conservation Society is one of the groups on the front lines of radical environmental activism these days. Credit: Stephan Ridgway, FlickrCC.

Watson, founder of Sea Shepherd, dispels accusations that they are an eco-terrorist organization, however, stating that they have no basis in fact. Watson has said that Sea Shepherd is an interventionist organization that intervenes against illegal activities, like the poaching of whales from a whale sanctuary. "I was invited to give a lecture at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia in August 2009

where one agent remarked that Sea Shepherd walked a very fine line with the law," Watson

detailed on the group's website. "My answer was, and he did not dispute it, is that there is nothing wrong with walking a fine line as long as the laws are not broken."

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Fracking Linked To Groundwater Contamination

By Elizabeth Shogren - HCN

Contaminants that likely came from fracking were found in an aquifer that supplies drinking water.

An investigation by Stanford scientists into a long-simmering controversy finds that hydraulic fracturing did pollute an underground source of drinking water used by people who live near Pavillion, Wyoming, according to a paper published recently in the journal *Environmental Science and Technology*.

The companies that drilled wells over the decades did nothing illegal to cause this problem, which suggests similar undetected contamination may be widespread, according to the scientists.

The scientists base their conclusions on a comprehensive analysis of reams of data available because the tiny rural community has been the scene of one of the highest profile test cases of whether the modern drilling techniques endanger drinking water supplies. In hydraulic fracturing, companies inject large quantities of water, sand and chemicals underground at high pressure to blast open rock or tight sands to get oil or gas flowing.

In several places across the country, people who live near drilling have complained that their well water was newly contaminated with foul odors, rainbow swirls or gases that would easily ignite. But establishing connections between the drilling and the pollution has not been easy. Companies have said the contaminants were naturally occurring or came from other sources.

The Stanford scientists say they are the first to prove the link anywhere in the country. They point to evidence from water samples taken from Environmental Protection Agency monitoring wells near Pavillion. Organic chemicals used in fracking fluids and not otherwise found in the environment such as methanol, ethanol and isopropanol were detected. "It is the match between chemicals used recently (in hydraulic fracturing and acid stimulation) and what's in the aquifer that is compelling," says Rob Jackson, a Stanford professor of environmental science.

The new research shows that gas wells were not

adequately cemented to prevent contaminants from flowing into the aquifer. It also shows that in some cases, hydraulic fracturing and acid stimulation of gas wells took place at depths similar to private drinking water wells, which is not illegal and is more likely to happen in the West because the formations that hold the gas are closer to the surface. The scientists also document that there is no barrier underground such as a layer of impermeable rock to prevent the gas from moving through the aquifer. In other regions of the country, fracking takes place thousands of feet below drinking water wells and impermeable layers of rock block chemicals from moving upwards over time.

The authors' conclusions conflict with a 2015 draft report from the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality which found that hydraulic fracturing fluids had a "negligible likelihood" of reaching shallower zones used for drinking water.

The Canadian company that produces gas near Pavillion, Encana, criticized the Stanford study. "I would call this speculation or theory," said Doug Hock, a spokesman for Encana. "After numerous rounds of testing by both the state of Wyoming and EPA, there is no evidence that the water quality in domestic wells in the Pavillion field has changed as a result of oil and gas operations."

But the new Stanford study isn't the first to suggest hydraulic fracturing may have sullied groundwater near Pavillion. A 2011 draft report by the EPA was the first to begin to draw the link between hydraulic fracturing and the contaminants in the underground drinking water. As ProPublica and High Country News reported, the agency found suspicious quantities of hydrocarbons and trace contaminants in residents' wells that could be tied to gas development. Then the EPA drilled two 1,000-foot-deep monitoring wells and found high levels of benzene and other carcinogens in the deep groundwater underlying Pavillion. But after much criticism that it had flubbed its research, the agency dropped its study in 2013, and shifted responsibility for further investigation to Wyoming.

Not long after, Dominic DiGiulio, the main researcher of that draft EPA study, retired from the agency and became a

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visiting scholar at Stanford so he could complete that work. He's the lead author of the new paper. "We looked at everything we could get our hands on," DiGiulio said in an interview with HCN, including getting data on methanol levels from the EPA through a Freedom of Information Act request. This data helped the scientists show that contaminants from fracking are moving upwards in the aquifer towards where people are getting drinking water. DiGiulio says he was compelled to complete this "unfinished business" because he believes the problems revealed in Pavillion may be widespread, particularly in the West, where companies conduct hydraulic fracturing in relatively shallow formations to extract coal bed methane and gas locked in tight sands.

"Especially in the Western United States, where it's really dry, there needs to be a better balance" between energy development and the protection of water resources, DiGiulio adds.

Under the 2005 Energy Policy Act, hydraulic fracturing was exempted from the Safe Drinking Water Act. The industry is the only one allowed to inject toxic chemicals into underground formations that may be used for public drinking water. Companies have long contended that they don't contaminate drinking water.

He and Jackson say states or federal government should set limits for how shallow companies can use hydraulic fracturing. No such limits exist. DiGiulio also hopes that the paper will rebut some of the criticisms of his 2011 draft study. "EPA never responded to any criticisms. It allowed misconceptions to continue. Hopefully this paper will clarify some of that," DiGiulio says.

The authors anticipated criticism, given how much

controversy has swirled around Pavillion. As one indication of just how contentious this study is, the journal had it reviewed by seven independent experts, rather than the normal two or three, according to Jackson.

The Stanford scientists concede that their research does not prove that the contamination from fracking goes all the way to domestic wells. What they did prove was that it got into an aquifer that supplies wells and the contaminants are moving upwards, possibly towards wells.

A draft report published in December by the Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality concluded the well water is generally suitable for domestic use, although the levels of some compounds exceeded the EPA's health-based standards.

However, the EPA criticized many aspects of Wyoming's report in an 18-page comment. For example, the EPA found the Wyoming report failed to reflect uncertainties about health risks or to specify when contaminants such as arsenic and uranium were found at much higher levels than would naturally be expected. Some of the uncertainty about health risks stems from the fact that there are no safe drinking water standards for about half of the organic chemicals detected in the drinking water wells, according to the EPA.

The EPA did not have an immediate comment on the Stanford paper but said it would review the findings as part of its final nationwide assessment of the risks of modern drilling techniques for drinking water. The agency's draft assessment showed pathways for contamination but found no evidence of widespread pollution of drinking water.

Elizabeth Shogren is HCN's DC Correspondent.

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Science Trumps Politics For Wolverines

By Krista Langlois - HCN

A court ruling may force wolverines onto the endangered species list, and open the door for other animals threatened by climate change.

In late winter, when the high mountains of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho are buried in snow, female wolverines in hidden dens give birth to one or two pure white kits. Scientists suspect the snow helps insulate the kits and protect them from predators like wolves, which might explain why mama wolverines often choose north-facing slopes where snowpack lasts longer. Later, when the kits are weaned, the lingering snow serves as a refrigerator: wolverines sometimes cache meat in snowbanks so they don't have to stray far from the safety of their dens to hunt or scavenge.

Though wolverines' dependence on snow isn't fully understood, researchers in 2010 concluded that the animals only reproduce where there's deep, long-lasting snow. The following year, scientists found that habitat with that kind of snow cover is expected to shrink by 31 percent in the next three decades. So in 2013, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed adding the 300 or so wolverines in the Northern Rockies to the endangered species list. They would've been the first species in the Lower 48 declared legally endangered because of climate change.

But then regional director Noreen Walsh abruptly changed course. Fish and Wildlife director Dan Ashe backed up her decision not to list wolverines, citing too many uncertainties in the scientific literature. So some 20 environmental groups, including the Western Environmental Law Center, sued.

Now, a federal court has ruled in their favor. On April 4, U.S. District Judge Dana Christensen declared that Fish and Wildlife's refusal to list wolverines as threatened or endangered was "arbitrary and capricious," and is forcing the agency to reassess. That means that the elusive, ferocious *Gulo gulo* is once again poised to become the first animal in the contiguous states to receive federal protections because of climate change.

The decision is significant, says Western Environmental Law Center staff attorney Matthew Bishop, because it suggests that climate change's impact doesn't have to be cut-and-dry to prompt protection. When polar bears became the first species thrust onto the endangered species list because of a warming planet in 2008, there was an obvious smoking gun — bears drowning and dying from starvation because thin sea ice limited their ability to hunt seals.

Wolverine researchers may never be able to produce that kind of clear evidence — the animals are notoriously reclusive and hard to study, and the effects of diminished snowpack will probably be less dramatic. Plus, since scientists don't agree on exactly why wolverines require

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snow for reproduction, predicting the precise impact of its loss is difficult. But Christensen says this doesn't matter. "If ever there was a species for which conservation depends on foregoing absolute certainty, it is the wolverine," he wrote in his 85-page order.

The decision could open the door to listing for other animals that are predicted to be impacted by climate change but aren't yet experiencing its effects. Pikas, for instance. Corals. Bishop thinks there are hundreds of candidates. As for wolverines, he believes the decision will lead to a threatened listing, though the timeframe is still unclear. (Threatened species aren't yet endangered but are likely to become so. They still receive protections under the Endangered Species Act.)

But given that the Endangered Species Act can't limit global greenhouse gas emissions, how can it protect the wolverine from climate change? One solution could be to reintroduce the animal to places where it's been extirpated, like the Sierra Nevada or Colorado Rockies. Parts of those high-altitude mountain ranges are expected to be spared the worst effects of a warming planet, so restoring wolverine populations there could help the species as a whole survive. Such reintroductions were part of Fish and Wildlife's 2013 proposal, and could well be part of a future recovery plan. Other solutions include limiting trapping, snowmobiling and other winter recreation in denning habitat.

But Wyoming, Montana and Idaho oppose listing the wolverine for precisely those reasons. Like many Western states, they see an ESA listing — even for an animal that lives mostly above 8,000 feet — as detrimental to economic development. Yet by law, endangered species decisions are supposed to be about science, not politics or

economics. Christensen suspects politics prompted Noreen Walsh's perplexing 180-degree reversal. "Why did the Service make the decision [to not list the wolverine]?" he asked. "Based on the record, the Court suspects that a



Wolverines are again poised to become the first species in the Lower 48 added to the Endangered Species List because of threats from climate change. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

possible answer to this question can be found in the immense political pressure that was brought to bear on this issue, particularly by a handful of Western states."

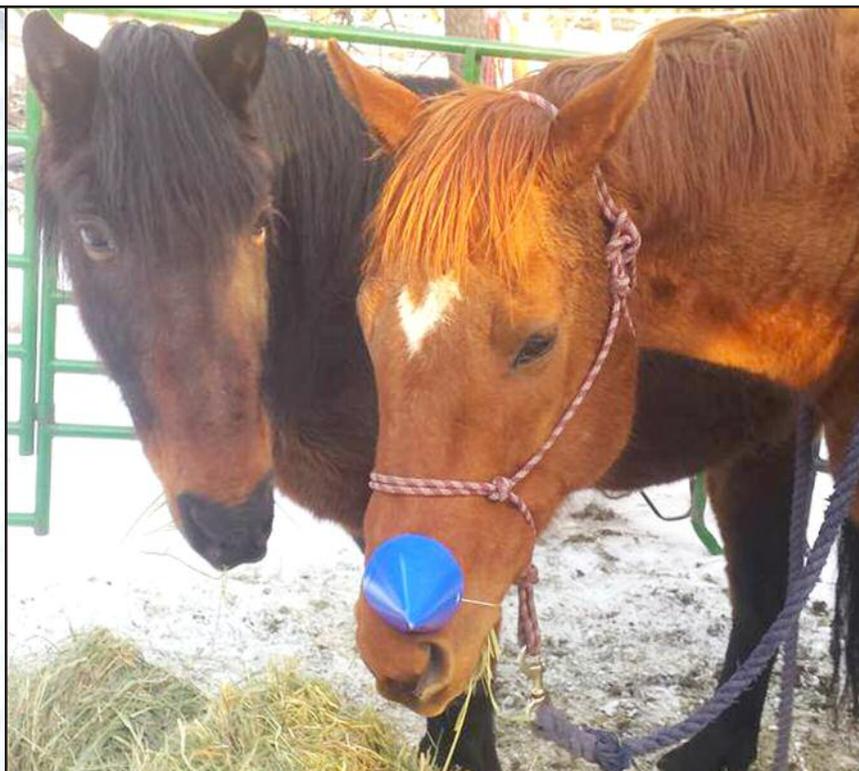
Bishop has been working in endangered species law for 17 years, and agrees that political influence has increasingly overshadowed science of late. Other animals, like Sonoran desert tortoises have been denied protection despite scientific evidence suggesting it's warranted. Bishop can only guess politics are at play — which is why he thinks Christensen's decision was a win for not just wolverines, but for other species living on the brink, too.

Krista Langlois is a correspondent at High Country News.


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Previous Page:

Left:

Maggie Mae & Honey Bear wait for puppy path to be shoveled.

Right: CC gives Jake a long look...for the Birthday hat on his nose.

Bottom: Too Cute Greyhound.

This page: Top Left: Stan.

Top Right: Snow day play.

Bottom Left: Learning Walk On

Bottom Right: Park puppy.

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Temple Grandin-American Academy Arts & Sciences

Temple Grandin’s worldwide reputation as a leader in the field of humane animal handling and autism advocacy has propelled her into one of the nation’s most distinguished groups – the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. The CSU professor of animal sciences was elected to American Academy among 213 new members announced April 20 in Cambridge, Mass. Grandin is an internationally recognized leader in animal handling innovations, and her expertise has been utilized by major corporations such as Wendy’s International, Burger King, Whole Foods, Chipotle, McDonald’s Corp. as well as the USDA, where she has trained auditors in animal care at livestock processing plants. Her approach to animal welfare is informed by Grandin’s own experiences with autism and through her perspective as a “visual thinker.” She is a tireless advocate for autism awareness, a role model for individuals across the autism spectrum, and an inspiration for families who have loved ones diagnosed with autism. Despite labels that were put on her at an early age, Grandin has accomplished much throughout her career, including earning her doctoral degree, authoring a New York Times bestseller, *Animals in Translation*, and having the story of her life depicted in HBO’s *Temple Grandin*, a film for which she was a consultant. “Temple Grandin is a one-in-a-billion mind,

and to include her as an autistic person in this group of esteemed scholars is an honor to her and to human potential,” said CSU Pres. Tony Frank. “We’re proud to include her unique and insightful mind among our faculty ranks.” Grandin is the third member of the CSU faculty to be elected to the American Academy.

Since its founding in 1780, the American Academy has served the nation as a champion of scholarship, civil dialogue, and useful knowledge. As one of the nation’s oldest learned societies and independent policy research centers, the Academy convenes leaders from the academic, business, and government sectors to address critical challenges facing our global society. Its ranks include winners of the Nobel Prize and the Pulitzer Prize as well as Grammy, Oscar, Emmy and Tony Award winners, and other lauded intellectuals such as George Washington, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Margaret Mead & Martin Luther King, Jr.

In addition to delivering a multitude of public talks and presentations, Grandin has also appeared in popular media outlets such as 20/20, 48 Hours, Larry King Live, 60 Mins, The New York Times, Forbes, and U.S. News and World Report. In 2010, Time named her one of the “100 Most Influential People” and her namesake film debuted that same year. She also delivered a TED Talk in 2010 on “The World Needs all Kinds of Minds.” Grandin’s visibility on the world stage has increased autism awareness and understanding in ways that are truly without precedent. “To see Temple Grandin included among such a distinguished group of scientists, writers, artists and civic leaders speaks to the power of her scholarship and the transformative nature of her autism advocacy,” said Ajay Menon, dean of the CSU College of Agricultural Sciences. “She has forever changed the way we understand the relationship between people and animals through her research and her own personal experiences, and she has left an indelible mark on the field of animal sciences, the colleagues she works with, and the students she has mentored.”

“I am both honored and humbled to be included in such a distinguished group,” said Grandin. “As I looked down the list of members both past and present, I was awed by the impact of their work and hope that my contributions will have as much influence as theirs.”

About the American Academy of Arts and Sciences: The Academy’s membership of 4,600 Fellows and 600 Foreign Honorary Members includes many of the most accomplished scholars and practitioners worldwide. Through studies, publications, and programs on the Humanities, Arts, and Education; Science, Engineering, and Technology; Global Security and International Affairs; and American Institutions and the Public Good, the Academy provides authoritative and nonpartisan policy advice to decision-makers in government, academia, and the private sector.

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Protect Against Spider & Insect Bites

From Jim Plane – State Farm Insurance

Spider and insect bites or stings can quickly suck the fun out of any outdoor adventure. Learn how to protect yourself, which dangerous bugs to keep an eye out for and what to do if they get you.

Help Prevent Bites and Stings

First things first, keep the bugs from getting to you:

- Wear protective clothing — such as lightweight pants and long-sleeved shirts, a hat, gloves, high socks, and closed-toe shoes — when working or playing outside, camping, or cleaning out sheds, garages, attics, and crawl spaces.
- Have a professional remove wasp nests close to your home or other living areas.
- Install tight-fitting window and door screens to keep insects from getting inside your home.
- Apply insect repellent to your clothing and skin before going outside.

Know the Dangerous Bugs

Avoid getting near these spiders and insects. Some of their bites are poisonous:

- Brown recluse spiders can be 1/4 to 3/4 inch long and have violin-shape markings on their bodies.

- Black widow spiders are about 1.5 inches long and typically have red, hourglass-shape markings on the abdomen.
- Wasps, which include yellow jackets and hornets, can be identified by a black and yellow or brown-red color pattern.
- Africanized honeybees look like regular honeybees but tend to swarm their targets with hundreds of stings.
- Red fire ants are less than 1/4 inch long and red-brown in color. They will bite and sting repeatedly if their colony is threatened.

Treat Bites and Stings

If you've been injured:

- Wash spider bites with soap and water, elevate the area and ice the bite to help reduce swelling, and seek immediate medical care.
 - If you aren't allergic to wasp venom, you can clean the affected area and apply antibiotic ointment. If you are allergic, seek medical treatment and take an antihistamine as soon as possible.
- Remove honeybee stingers by scraping them from the skin with your fingernail.



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Management Efforts May Not Benefit All Wildlife

It's no surprise that most conservation efforts in the United States focus on animals that are hunted. But a new study from Colorado State University researchers found that improving habitats for game animals has mixed consequences for other animals in the same setting. The study calls for more scrutiny of and a more holistic approach to current management efforts.

Hunting provides substantial economic benefits for states. Deer and elk hunters in Colorado, for example, must apply for permits annually. A deer license for non-residents runs \$432; a permit for in-state residents is \$43. A license to hunt elk is nearly \$500 for non-residents; the in-state charge is \$48. Nearly \$2 million from these fees support wildlife management and public land conservation in the state each year.

"There's this notion that habitat management that's good for game species is good for all wildlife," said Travis Gallo, Ph.D. student in the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Biology, and lead author of the study. "There's a lot of money that goes into habitat management for game species, and we wanted to see if there were any synergies between game management and conservation of species that were not the target of management actions."

Few studies exist on game management efforts. While

conducting a review of published papers, Gallo said that he and Associate Professor Liba Pejchar, also in the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Biology, switched gears once they saw the lack of scientific research on the topic. The duo ended up writing an opinion piece or perspectives essay on the issue.

"We found only 26 studies that measured the direct and indirect effects of game management efforts on non-game animals," said Gallo. Among the studies that did measure the effects of game management on non-game species, they found both positive and negative effects: a study of sage grouse management in the Western U.S. found that conservation efforts would likely protect 13 songbird species, while a study in Spain found that an increased abundance in wild boar, red deer and aoudad sheep decreased resources for native species.

The team also found instances where there were no effects. For example, a study that looked at prescribed fire on lizard abundance in central Texas found no short-term effect on other species.

New funding sources could help conservation management Gallo said that one way to even the management playing field is to create new funding sources for wildlife conservation. The federal Pittman-Robertson excise tax — which was implemented in 1937 — has successfully raised more than \$10.1 billion from sales on sporting goods that involve hunting, like ammunition and guns, fishing rods and reels.

In 2009, following a similar model, a group of more than 6,300 state fish and wildlife agencies, biologists, hunters, birdwatchers and others proposed the Teaming with Wildlife Act, which would have provided additional funding for wildlife preservation through a small tax on all outdoor gear, including camping gear, binoculars and outdoor apparel. This bill, however, failed to pass through Congress.

Gallo said that there's talk in the conservation community about reviving this sort of proposal. "A tax like this would not only increase funding for conservation, but it may

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create a sense of investment by those people that are now helping pay for conservation,” he said.

Gallo — who will graduate in May — said his research provides a good example, and hope, for the type of holistic



approach that is needed.

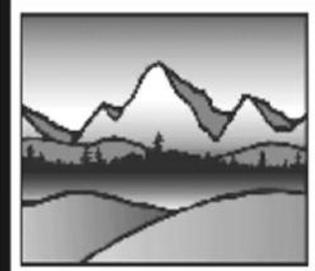
“My research is piggy-backed on a mule deer experiment in northwestern Colorado,” he said. “Colorado Parks and Wildlife was removing pinyon-juniper trees to increase the shrubs and grasses that mule deer like to eat. We collaborated with them and added another layer of research to assess the effects that this management may have on all the other birds and mammals in the area.”

“The hunting and fishing communities contribute a lot of

money and effort to wildlife management,” he added. “If you can find synergies between management for hunted species and conservation for biodiversity, we would be more effectively and holistically managing the land.” The article, “Improving habitat for game animals has mixed consequences for biodiversity conservation,” was published in advance online in *Biological Conservation*. The study will appear in the May print issue of the journal.

(Highlander file photo by Anita Wilks.)

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Flawed Justice System That Fails Victims

Review By Annie Dawid - HCN

Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town

is not intended for readers with delicate sensibilities. Jon Krakauer's newest book investigates, in great detail, several rapes perpetrated between 2008 and 2012 by members of the University of Montana football team, the Grizzlies. In Missoula, the "Griz" are hometown heroes, and those who cast aspersions on the celebrated players' reputations had better be prepared to face the consequences.

The rapists and their victims receive equal treatment here, along with prosecutors and defense attorneys, judges and detectives. Krakauer allows all of them to speak for themselves; no one emerges untainted. The "justice" in Krakauer's title remains elusive at best and is tarnished throughout, due to clumsy cops, politicized prosecutors, and a widespread lack of empathy for the few women willing to confront their attackers — always a minority among rape victims.

Rape, says one prosecutor, "is the only crime in which the victim is presumed to be lying." A defense attorney exemplifies that attitude in his address to the jury on behalf of his client, the team's star quarterback. "Why would he even think of committing such a reckless act, given his high profile in the community, his sterling reputation, and everything he stood to lose?"

Krakauer fans may be somewhat frustrated by this latest

work — not by the investigative reporter's uniformly excellent research, but by the dearth of compelling,

admirable characters, flawed but enthralling, who generally populate the writer's best-selling nonfiction, such as *Under the Banner of Heaven* and *Into Thin Air*.

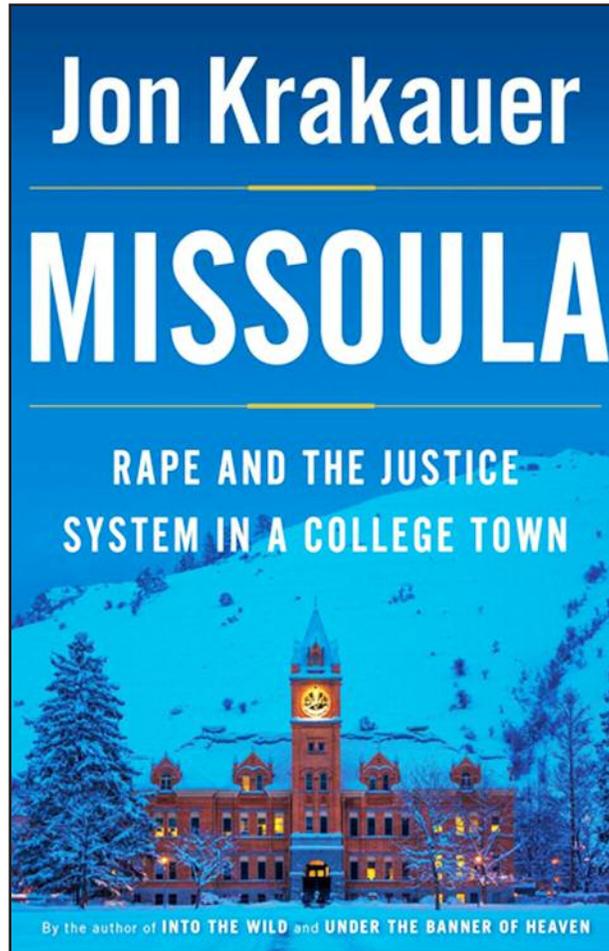
There are no heroes here, but one villain rises above — or sinks below — the rest of the muck: a female prosecutor who is reluctant to prosecute rape without a guarantee of winning, and who, upon leaving public office, immediately begins defending rapists. Kirsten Pabst, having established that the accused is an upstanding young man, "devoted the rest of her opening statement to vilifying his accuser," Krakauer writes. Such, we learn, is standard defense attorney procedure; the pursuit of justice has little, if any, role. Readers will finish this book with plenty of information but little confidence that the courts punish the guilty. "In Missoula, Grizzly football exists in a realm apart,"

Krakauer concludes, and the players and their lawyers "expect, and often receive, special dispensation."

Missoula: Rape and the Justice System in a College Town

Jon Krakauer

416 pages,
softcover: \$16.95
Anchor, 2016.



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BoCo Sort Yards To Open In May

Free slash and log disposal available at Allenspark and Nederland sort yards

Boulder County, Colo. - The Boulder County Community Sort Yard program, a free log and slash disposal service for mountain residents, will open for the 2016 collection season this month.

County residents can drop off tree branches, logs, and pine needles free of charge at either sort yard location. Please check web site for other services offered.

Nederland Area Sort Yard - 291 Ridge Road, Nederland

- Open Wednesday, May 4, through Saturday, Oct. 15
- Hours of Operation: Wednesday thru Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Allenspark/Meeker Park Area Sort Yard - 8200 Hwy 7, Allenspark

- Open Wednesday, May 18, through Saturday, Oct. 15
- Hours of Operation: Wednesday thru Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information about the sort yards and what materials are accepted, please visit the Boulder County Community Forestry Sort Yards web page or contact Wayne Harrington at 303-678-6368 or wharrington@bouldercounty.org.

Volunteer Sort Yard Hosts Needed

Volunteer Community Forestry Sort Yard Hosts are needed at the Meeker Park (near Allenspark) and Nederland Community Sort Yards.

Volunteers help make sure that sort yards continue to be a local hub of community-based forestry information. Volunteer Sort Yard Hosts will greet people as they enter the yard, collect data on the material they are delivering, and provide information about forest ecology, bark beetles, and wildfire mitigation.

Volunteers will not be responsible for helping unload materials. Volunteers will commit to four-hour shifts and 12 hours per month. For more information, please visit the Boulder County Volunteers web page or contact Shane Milne at smilne@bouldercounty.org or 303-678-6089.

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Unpeopled Places

By Ana Maria Spagna - HCN

In the late 1980s, I worked at a visitors' center in a trailer at the entrance to the Needles District of Canyonlands National Park, a still relatively unknown place then, a kind of secret. To get there, you had to drive 35 miles off the highway through slickrock and green sage, hazy mountains on the horizon and cottonwoods along the creeks, as startling a landscape as you'd find anywhere. Cars arrived at lazy intervals, and when people reached the desk, the conversation was often the same. That was the most beautiful drive we've ever taken, they'd say. Now, how do we drive out? The same way you came in, we'd say.

Sometimes they'd complain loudly. Sometimes they'd mask their disappointment. Rarely did they show enthusiasm. It was both exasperating and the stuff of comedy, but part of me could sympathize. When I was a kid, my family took cross-country trips and stopped at national parks — Zion, Bryce, Mesa Verde, the Grand Canyon. Were we finding solace in wide-open spaces? Uh, no. Our parents were just showing us all they could — on the way from one place to another— through the windows of an un-air-conditioned station wagon. Once, we kids refused to get out of the car: No more rock formations, we chanted. I sounded ungrateful, yes, but I was also getting hooked.

I remember standing on the North Rim of the Grand Canyon, thinking: Someday I'll go down there. The idea felt foreign but giddily within reach, like reading a book that opened a new world. When I finished college, I went straight to volunteer in a national park. At the visitor center desk, the second set of questions was nearly as predictable as the first: Where can we camp with no one nearby? What hike does no one know about? If we told people about the secret places, I wanted to say, they wouldn't be secret anymore. Duh! But I also knew that part of me wanted them to stay secret so they could be mine alone. So I sighed and pointed out some less-popular trails and campgrounds.

There are a thousand reasons why I was a lousy visitor center ranger. I don't like being indoors. I bristle at toeing a party line. I wear a uniform poorly — “unkempt,” read one of my evaluations. But the biggest reason was my uneasiness. The love of nature sometimes seems to hinge on greediness. People aspire to “bag” peaks and “score” campsites. We elbow in, believing we're more deserving because we are locals, or because we've invested more time or money into our vacation, or because we are stronger and more willing to take risks, or because, well, we're wearing a uniform standing behind a desk.

I didn't want to win the competition. I wanted to avoid it. So I found another relatively unknown park, North Cascades, joined trail crew, and headed for the unpeopled

places.

All my best memories are out there: watching peaks float above clouds from a meadow thick with flowers — paintbrush, lupine, columbine, lily — sleeping in old-growth to the patter of raindrops on duff, steeped in cedar and smoke, cross-country skiing past a boulder in a river from which a lone otter track slid into an ice-hemmed pool, and, on one off-season trip, sitting alone beside the Colorado gazing up at the distant forested North Rim. Still, I'm uneasy.

For one thing, I now realize these supposedly unpeopled places were actually well-known and often cared for by indigenous people. Then there's the fact that working for the Park Service took me far away from people who were different from me. I've often said that I'm more scared of a subway than a cougar. Which is telling. What if, when I say I like to get away from people, subconsciously I mean certain types of people? There was a time I'd have denied it vehemently. Now, I am not so sure. Still, I'm hooked.



A view of Sahale Mountain, Park Creek Ridge and Mount Buckner in North Cascades National Park, from the Stehekin River Valley. Deby Dixon/ NPS

Here's the truth. I long to be in unpeopled places, and when I find them, I'm often overcome with aching loneliness. I miss the people I love. I desperately want to share these places, even if it means re-entering the fray.

Not long ago, I visited Yosemite in early spring with my mom. Parking lots were under construction, requiring muddy too-long walks for her, and calendar views hid behind a stubborn veil of clouds. We drove in and out in a single day, but stopped at a lone roadside picnic table where new blades of grass showed between melting snow berms.

No one else stopped while we ate our string cheese and apples and listened to the charge of distant running water and smelled wet pine and asphalt. For a moment, the clouds cleared, and we had our own private peek-a-boo view of Yosemite Falls charging from sky to earth. I'm telling you: We totally scored.

Ana Maria Spagna lives and writes in Stehekin, Washington. Her most recent book is Potluck: Community on the Edge of Wilderness.

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Part 19 - Overpopulation

By Frosty Wooldridge

Fishing our oceans to death; surface of a haunted ocean

Oceanographer Callum Roberts said, “The oceans of today are filled with ghost habitats, stripped of their larger inhabitants.

Our dismantling of marine ecosystems is having destructive and unpredictable consequences. With species loss and food web collapse comes dangerous instability. The seas are undergoing ecological meltdown.

“Fishing is undermining itself by purging the oceans of species on which it depends. The wholesale removal of marine life and obliteration of their habitats is stripping resilience from ocean ecosystems.

“Moreover, it is undermining the ability of the oceans to support human needs. Overfishing is destabilizing the marine environment, contributing to the spread of anoxic dead zones and the increasing prevalence of toxic algal blooms. Nature’s power to bounce back after catastrophes or absorb the battery of stresses humanity is subjecting it to

is being eroded, collapsed fishery after collapsed fishery, species by species, place by place.

“It is easy to point fingers and say this is the fault of greedy corporations with their factory ships, or faint-hearted politicians overeager to please the fishing industry, or the great masses of poor people reduced to bombing and poisoning their seas to extract the last few fish.” — Callum Roberts in *The Unnatural History of the Sea*

(At 90 million tons of fish annually, the oceans cannot withstand humanity’s onslaught. At

some point, like the extinct Carrier Pigeon, untold species of marine life face extinction.) Photo by Greenpeace

As the human onslaught of the planet accelerates by an added 80,000,000 (million) people, net gain, annually and one billion every 12 years—the natural world staggers back on its heels.

Fully 80 percent of all life on this planet thrives beneath the surface of our oceans. This enormous body of water pulses with life-energy, which drives natural forces that sustain life on this planet. But in the 21st century the “Mob of Humanity” wreaks havoc on the foundation of life on Earth. It hooks, pollutes, skims, nets and daggers untold billions of creatures to death annually.

While Roberts brings his powerful research to the table, most of humankind remains oblivious to catastrophic onslaught raging beneath the waves. As a 50 year scuba diver, I watched it progress from the Gulf of Mexico into all of our oceans.

With America’s 319 million people devouring ocean marine life such as squid, crabs, shrimp, tuna, salmon, flounder, swordfish and so many other species—take a look at what 7.2 billion humans devour worldwide:

Giant ships, using state-of-the-art equipment throw out



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50-mile long drift nets that capture 90 million tons of marine life annually. These industrial fishing fleets exceed the ocean's ecological limits. As larger fish dwindle in numbers, the next smaller fish species are targeted and so on.

A Canadian fisheries expert Dr. Daniel Pauly warns that if this continues, "Our children will be eating jellyfish."

(Factory fishing ships with 50 mile long drift nets encircle hapless marine life, killing billions of creatures as "by-catch" while they scoop up endless fish for consumption by 7.2 billion humans) Photo by AndrewWillner.com

For the past 35 years, humans continue their annihilation of all species of sharks by killing them at a rate of 100 million sharks annually. You must wonder, "How much longer can this kind of a killing spree continue before the sharks and all ocean life reach a point of no return?"

(Source: Life Magazine August 1991; Julia Whitty, OneEarth Magazine)

(Thousands of miles of cut-loose drift nets kill millions of marine creatures unfortunate enough to swim into their deadly grasp.)

Photo by ksj.mit.edu

The latest threat grows beyond solving with "carbon footprint" waste from fossil fuel burning at 84,000,000 (million) barrels of



Highlander Worldview

oil daily and billions of tons of coal and natural gas annually—to overload our seas with carbon that acidifies the oceans to a point whereby marine life can no longer exist in the toxic ocean water. It would be like you taking a bath in carbonic acid water.

Another aspect of humanity's "deadly treatment" of our oceans deals with the

phenomenon of "dead zones" at the mouths of all our major rivers worldwide. For instance, the Ganges and Yangtze rivers exhaust their toxic sewage waters into the world's oceans 24/7 to create 20,000 square mile dead zones. The water grows so toxic that higher marine life cannot exist in those zones. In America, the Mississippi River spews chemical waste, petroleum waste and endless sewage waste to create a 10,000 mile square dead zone at its mouth in New Orleans.

WWII major war powers dumped their mustard gas, oil

and other chemicals along with radioactive waste into the oceans of the world. Humanity's 80,000 chemicals always end up in the oceans as their final toilet destination.

Over time, those toxic rivers exhausting out of Europe, Asia, South America, Russia and North America *(Continued next page.)*

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cannot help but toxically contaminate the oceans of the world. That means all the fish in them bear the chemicals they breathe and eat in their daily existence. With the latest Fukushima radioactive waste spill of trillions of gallons of toxic liquids, our oceans cannot help but stagger to keep their “Ph” balance. Fukushima spreading:

<http://www.conspiracy-watch.org/fukushima-radiation-is-in-america/>

When you include the 100 million ton, the size of Texas, (and growing by 2.5 million plastic pieces per hour), “The Great Pacific Garbage Patch,” which constitutes a floating plastic island and hangs 1,000 miles off San Francisco—you cannot help but understand that we humans desecrate our nest at blinding speed. Soberingly, researchers tell us that 46,000 pieces of plastic float on every square mile of our oceans. Those constitute pretty sickening statistics.

(Is it little wonder that marine life cannot survive the plastic onslaught of their environment? Ocean beaches around the world feature this plastic filth. I’ve stood in knee deep plastic on some beaches.) Photo-inhabitat.com

Plastic killing zone at Midway Island:

<http://www.upworthy.com/people-should-know-about-this-awful-thing-we-do-and-most-of-us-are-simply-unaware?c=ufb1>

Do the oceans stand a chance when we remain on course to add another three billion of our species within 34 years by 2050? Answer: not a snowball’s chance in hell!

So when you read a sobering series like this that reports on the underpinnings of humanity’s dilemma, what do you think? What do you do? How do you do it? When do you start?

It’s my contention that environmental leaders and demographic experts rattle the bars, scream at the media



and make some noise in every country around the world. Silence won’t cut it fellow humans. You need to engage your courage, your guts, your true grit and your creative energy to move the discussion to the highest levels in the USA, Canada, Europe, Australia and beyond. If the Western world doesn’t address this, no one else will touch it! Finally, your kids won’t be eating jellyfish; they will choke on seaweed.

Post Script:

Exactly 10 years before, when Newcastle yachtsman Ivan Macfadyen sailed the same course from Melbourne to Osaka, all he’d had to do to catch a fish from the ocean between Brisbane and Japan was throw out a baited line. “There was not one of the 28 days on that portion of the trip when we didn’t catch a good-sized fish to cook up and eat with some rice,” Macfadyen recalled.

But this time, on that whole long leg of sea journey, the total catch was two. No fish. No birds. Hardly a sign of life at all. “In years gone by, I’d gotten used to all the birds and their noises,” he said. “They’d be following the boat, sometimes resting on the mast before taking off again. You’d see flocks of them wheeling over the surface of the sea in the distance, feeding on pilchards.”

But in March and April of (2013), only silence and desolation surrounded his boat, Funnel Web, as it sped across the surface of a haunted ocean.

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Eco-Friendly Countertops & Flooring

Sustainable products have become very popular as homeowners today are more concerned with their ecological footprint than ever before.

Countertops - Many countertops on the market are derived from non-renewable resources. Some solid surface materials are composed with plastic, while engineered quartz products contain petroleum-based binders. Alternatives to these products include concrete, recycled glass, and—believe it or not—paper.

Concrete is a beautiful and versatile material composed of sand, rock, and cement. There is some debate about whether concrete is completely eco-friendly since it does require a lot of energy to produce. For a greener concrete countertop, some fabricators replace some of the cement with fly ash or other byproducts yielded from manufacturing plants. When sealing a concrete countertop, there are green seals available to reduce the Volatile Organic Compounds (VOCs) that can be present in many seals on the market.

For a modern and unique look, consider Recycled Glass countertops. These tops are created with broken bottle and jar pieces sourced from recycling programs. The glass is combined with a cement binder and pigment is added to create many color selections. These tops add an exotic flash to a kitchen without using precious resources.

Paperstone is a solid, non-porous countertop material composed from post-consumer recycled paper. The product is saturated with the fabricator's proprietary phenolic (organic compound) resins, and natural pigments are added. Heat and pressure fuse the sheets into a non-porous top. This innovative way to recycle paper is also a long-lasting product to complete a kitchen or bath project that complements any style.

Flooring - Choosing an eco-friendly floor that is durable and attractive is easy today with so many options available. Bamboo, linoleum, and cork flooring will leave eco-conscious homeowners happy.

Bamboo is an abundant, renewable plant, growing much faster than the trees required to make hardwood, but when used for flooring, bamboo looks and feels similar to hardwood floors. Stunning and moisture-resistant, bamboo is a top trending choice for contemporary kitchens.

A more traditional material for traditional kitchens, linoleum has been around for ages. Many older homes on the market may have original linoleum floors which is a testament to its durability. Because this product is so long-lasting, it is considered an eco-friendly alternative to hardwoods or vinyl floors. While linoleum is available in a lot of patterns and colors, it may be best to stick with neutral colors that will last for the long haul.

Cork flooring is gaining popularity because of its warmth, sustainability, and endurance. This spongy material is shock-absorbent, unlike most hard flooring. This floor will feel especially comforting for cold, tired feet during winter months. There is little maintenance involved with this floor that is available in many different colors. Be aware that sunlight can cause the floor to discolor, so if a kitchen has a lot of natural light, this floor may not be the best choice.

An abundance of choices exist for eco-friendly counters and floors. The kitchen and the bathroom are high-traffic areas where a lot of spills, splashes, and crashes can occur. While some of these products can be expensive, in the long-run, it is worth the investment to have products that will stand the test of time, not to mention the low cost to the environment.

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Do You Know?

Do you know throwing anything out your vehicle window is a crime that comes with a fine of anywhere between \$100 and \$1,000? This seemingly petty offense can lead to grassland and forest fires in dry conditions and in Colorado that can mean almost any time of the year when ignorant folks throw lit cigarette butts out their windows. Also dumping trash, construction debris, unwanted furniture or anything, for that matter along roadways, into culverts or gullies on public or private land is punishable by hefty fines. **Do your part and turn in litterbugs to the proper authorities - get license plate numbers for vehicles committing these crimes.**

Do you know hundreds of lives are lost each year due to drivers tailgating the vehicle ahead of them? One vehicle length for each ten miles per hour is the only sure way to give yourself time to stop should the drivers in front of you slam on their brakes. So do you EVER see drivers six car lengths away from the vehicle in front of them when the speed limit is 60 mph? Which is why following too closely at high speeds causes so many deaths and distracted driving is the next big cause for so much driving related death.

Do you know that if you just plan and pull off leaving

earlier to go to work or an appointment you can enjoy the scenery on the drive out of the canyons? Just imagine not elevating your blood pressure or the drivers around you when you don't feel you have to speed, cross over the double yellow line to pass, tailgate someone going five miles over the posted speed limit or use your phone while you're trying to maneuver hairpin turns. You could arrive to wherever you're going with time to spare in a controlled and easy going manner and then check your phone. Oh wait, that would mean using some self control and we all know our current culture frowns on that behavior!

Do you know many men don't hesitate to comment on a woman's appearance but would never consider doing the same about a man? For some unknown reason (*actually it is male chauvinism*) in our society when a woman's clothing, hairstyle, body size and facial features are often acceptable topics for discussion and criticism. You will never hear the same critiques about men's appearance, except maybe Trump's unusual hairstyle. The fact that women are guilty of this too is a sad part of our culture.

Do you know when Trump talks about getting things done in the Senate or House of Representatives he uses the term 'fellas' as if there are no women holding any of those elected offices. It is entirely possible he actually believes the good old boy network is still in place in Washington, and who knows maybe he is correct in that assumption.

Do you know corporate America is afraid of Hillary Clinton and since they run the major television networks and much of cable TV they work everyday to paint her in the most unflattering coverage whenever possible. It just might be because they are afraid if she gets elected the law that says corporations have the same rights as people could be overturned.

Do you know millions of cats and dogs are killed every year in animal shelters due to people not getting their pets spayed or neutered? It is a simple procedure for both genders and can be done safely when the puppy or kitten is young without any harm done as they grow into adults.

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email: marciniak.cpa@gmail.com



Most vet clinics and hospitals give discounts to low-income clients and in the springtime many offer specials at much reduced prices, so there is no excuse to delay the procedures.

Do you know reverse osmosis is the best water treatment for all naturally occurring or man made impurities in drinking water? Under the kitchen sink units are very affordable, easy to buy and the old myth that they waste water can be remedied by just not flushing your toilet once a day (*if it is yellow, let it mellow*). By treating your drinking water all the time you can avoid the expense of water testing and possible detriments to changes in your drinking water source. Simple upkeep of the filters is easy and can actually be done by homeowners, as the filters are available at most hardware stores. Depending on how many people use the drinking water (a designated spigot at the kitchen sink) filters can easily last a year.

Do you know common courtesy and random acts of kindness are fast becoming a thing of the past? Saying please, thank you and excuse me are no longer reflex as most people ignore each other whenever possible. It used to be reflex when making eye contact with a stranger or neighbor that people would smile or nod and often both just out of courtesy. Can you remember the last time someone did that to you or you just did it from reflex? We are rapidly losing a common cultural practice due to laziness, overpopulation and fear of the unknown. Each and every one of us can make a point to bring these courteous practices back by using common courtesies on a daily basis.

Do you know driving a motorcycle not licensed is illegal? Even on our local dirt roads, especially if it has **no muffler** i.e. no spark arrester and when you don't **stop and kill the motor for horse back riders (and you see them having difficulty staying on a frightened animal)** you can be fined or even arrested if someone gets hurt or killed. Take those machines to designated dirt bike areas, or face prosecution.

Do you know Hollywood and mainstream media is to blame for much of the violence in our everyday lives? Too many movies, TV Series, cable shows and even specials are dedicated to making serial killers, sociopaths, and

mentally deranged individuals into celebrities simply by giving them a place of importance to billions of watchers. Mainstream media is the worst whenever they show the face or say the name of terrorists, criminals and violent individuals after they have been caught. Much of the viewing population is easily impressionable and the sheer inundation of constant violence causes them to become immune to it.

I'm not in favor of censorship but I know many of the ills suffered in our country and the world are caused by the lack of self-regulation in Hollywood and in corporate or cable networks.

We can each do our part by refusing to watch gratuitous violence on TV, cable and movies. Adventure and drama films or shows do not by nature need to show blood, guts, gore and blatant deviant behavior - we all have imaginations and need to start using them regularly instead of paying Hollywood to continue their irresponsible assault on our society and culture. Violence can be depicted without showing it, as an intelligent viewing audience we can dictate what is produced (by not watching) and leaving the worst to our own minds. Hopefully someday violence will be treated as pornography, maybe both will become outdated and outmoded as the societal ills they truly are.

By A.M. Wilks

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MAY
2016

POWER UPDATE



New CEO Announced

United Power's Board of Directors announced the appointment of Darryl W. Schriver as the new Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for the electric cooperative.

Schriver joins United Power after 14 years with Taylor Electric Cooperative in Abilene, Texas, a cooperative serving nearly 20,000 meters in and around Abilene, Texas.



Director Incumbents Retain Seats at 2016 Annual Meeting and Election

Members celebrated the ways United Power is *Making Life Better the Cooperative Way* at the 77th Annual Meeting held on April 13th at the Adams County Fairgrounds. Incumbents Robert "Bob" Grant in the South district, Elizabeth "Beth" Martin in the East district and Ursula J. Morgan in the West district were all re-elected for another three-year term.

Nearly 850 attendees represented 419 registered members at the annual meeting that included dinner, exhibit booths, entertainment, cooperative reports, the election of directors, member forum and a special member question and answer session.

Members visited informational exhibit booths, enjoyed a full barbecue dinner and live entertainment by solo guitarist Dave Connelly in the Waymire Dome.

Complete annual meeting details and full election results can be found online at www.unitedpower.com.

Safety Poster Contest Winners

In February and March, United Power invited kids in grades K-5 to design an electrical safety poster that teaches family and friends ways they can stay safe around electricity. United Power employees voted on their favorite poster in each grade.

The winners each received a \$50 cash prize and their posters will be displayed online, in the *United Newslines* and on bus benches at stops around the service territory.

To view all the poster winners, visit www.unitedpower.com.



Electrical Safety Poster Contest Winner
Catie Kelley, age 9, South Elementary School

Pancake Breakfast – May 7th, 7-11 CCCIA Hall



34010 Skyline Drive
Remodel - All New! Beautiful VIEWS!
4 BD/ 4 BA 4,395 sq.ft **\$714,000**



TBD Rudi Lane West
.73 Ac. **\$30,000**



NEW LISTING!
555 Tunnel 19
Horse Heaven
3 BD/ 4 BA 3,137 sq ft **\$494,000**



33566 Coal Creek Canyon Drive
Beautiful Updated Log Home + Cabin
4 BD/ 4 BA 4,236 sq.ft. **\$389,000**



11 Leon Lane
Longs Peak View!
3 BD/ 3 BA 1,917 sq.ft. **\$369,000**



33901 Skyline Drive
Private Wooded Lot
3 BD/ 2.5 BA 3,174 sq.ft. **\$510,000**



33189 Janelle Circle
Beautifully designed & crafted
3 BD/ 2 BA 3 car Garage **\$374,900**



11566 Coal Creek Heights
Amazing Views!
4 BD/ 3 BA 3,250 sq. ft. **\$479,900**



0 Hollings Way - Land
Gorgeous Gently Sloping Lot
17.2 Acres **\$189,500**



0 Tiber Road - Land
Two Adjacent Lots
1.88 Acres **\$68,000**



500 Creekwood Trail - Land
Privacy and Seclusion
.69 Acre **\$49,000**



0 Lillis Lane - Land
Two building sites & much more!
5.04 Acres **\$79,000**



33966 Nadm Drive - Land
1.08 Acres **\$75,000**



13 Leon Lane
Love Living in the Mountains
3 BD/ 2 BA 1,781 sq ft **\$374,000**



1529 Foster Court
Beautiful Remodel
4 BD/ 2 BA 1,880 sq ft **\$289,500**



5575 W. 76th Ave. #201
Excellent Unit, Great Location
2 BD/ 2 BA 1,104 sq ft **\$173,000**



11758 Crescent Park Circle
Live in the Mountains on 2.4 Acres
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,199 sq ft **\$374,000**

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