

Fall 1999

The Planet, 1999, Fall

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the planet

fall 1999



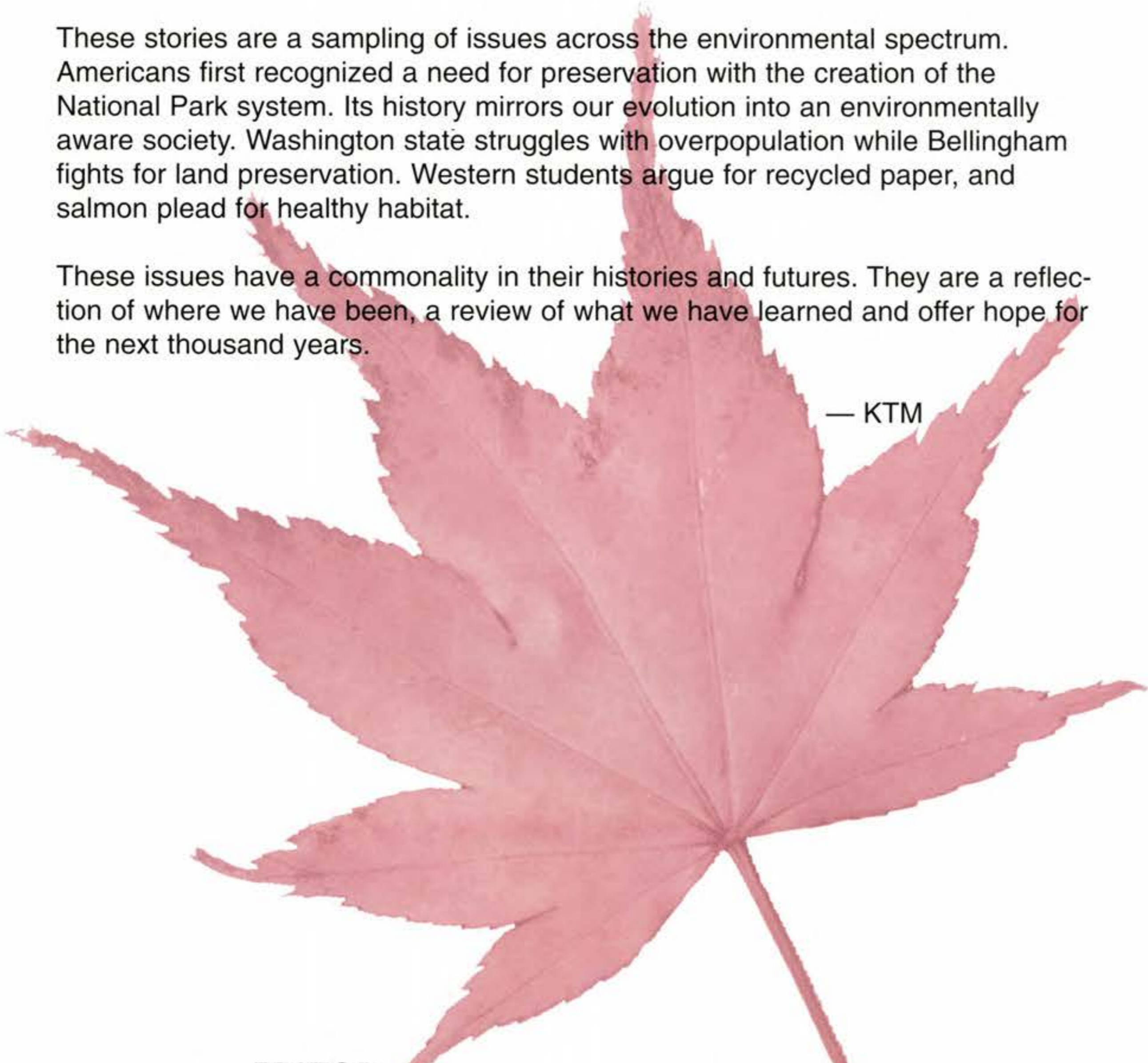
December 1999 – the end of a decade, century and millennium.

Environmentalism was born in this time, has grown and changed. This issue of the Planet aims to capture the history of the movement, its present status and the direction in which it is heading.

These stories are a sampling of issues across the environmental spectrum. Americans first recognized a need for preservation with the creation of the National Park system. Its history mirrors our evolution into an environmentally aware society. Washington state struggles with overpopulation while Bellingham fights for land preservation. Western students argue for recycled paper, and salmon plead for healthy habitat.

These issues have a commonality in their histories and futures. They are a reflection of where we have been, a review of what we have learned and offer hope for the next thousand years.

— KTM



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The Planet is the quarterly environmental magazine of Huxley College of Environmental Studies, written, edited and designed by students. We are proudly dedicated to environmental advocacy and awareness through responsible journalism.

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Photos: Shane Powell



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LIVING LEGEND

Courtesy of Wilson Library Special Collections



by Skye Thompson

In the minds of most, the environmental movement wasn't really rolling until the 1960s. And while it may be true that mainstream America wasn't hip to being "green" until then, the roots of American environmentalism run deep in the fertile soil of American culture.

To understand the earliest beginnings of the movement, a look at the people who began it is important. America's first environmentalists weren't angry protesters of what they saw as wrong; they were enthusiastic proponents of what they saw as right. They were naturalists, hunters, surveyors, poets, artists, philosophers and self-styled transcendentalists. Among them, names such as George Catlin, George Perkins Marsh, Frederick Law Olmsted, John Wesley Powell and Henry David Thoreau are paramount. Perhaps the most interesting of America's early environmentalists, however, was John Muir.

A Scot by birth, Muir was raised in Wisconsin. By 21, Muir was dissatisfied with his father and life on the farm. His curiosity and instinctive love for nature called him into the mountains. He headed west and never looked back. Muir once confessed to his journal, "I am hopelessly and forever a mountaineer."

As a writer, naturalist and proponent for wilderness, Muir rose to become America's premier preservationist. In 1892 he founded the Sierra Club. He filled his personal life with intense exploration of the natural world and died fighting for the preservation of what he loved. In 1914, at age 76, Muir was dead.

I often wonder what Muir would think of the world today. It is said that if Muir wasn't walking solo through the mountains he was enjoying long conversations with friends. Sometimes I imagine I was one of those lucky few, and that I can ask him questions. If I could, I would invite him over for tea.

I imagine John Muir sitting with me in my living room at home. We share a pot of tea and relax lazily in front of a warm, open fire. We are both content after a day of walking through the woods that surround my house.

Muir is calm and has a natural quiet about him. Like a man who has just received a massage, he is at a point of equilibrium with his surroundings. His scraggly beard swirls off his chin in torrents of silver cirrus clouds. Muir supposedly never shaved his face. It occurs to me that he would not be the same person without his beard. It fits him.

A commonality exists among his features, his beard, his hands, his eyes, that construes a quality of wisdom. He is comfortingly familiar. With his kind smile and twinkling eyes, Muir could easily pass as one of Jerusalem's three wise men.

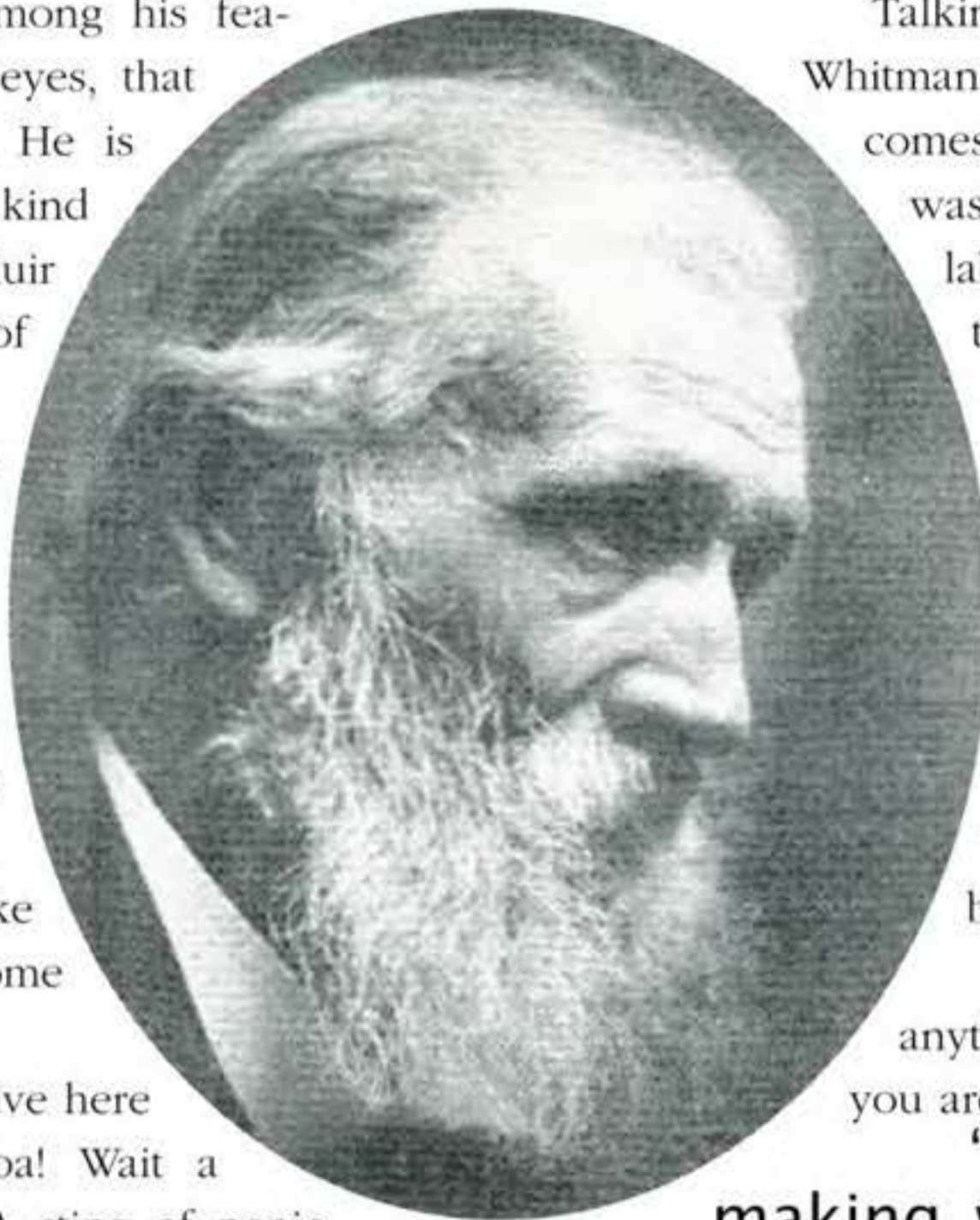
Muir's disposition seems rather introspective, philosophical. I wonder if he was always this way. His calm demeanor belies his Scottish ancestry, at least in my living room this evening.

"There is no repose like that of the green deep woods. Come to the woods, for here is rest."

"That is precisely why I live here John," I respond proudly. Whoa! Wait a minute! Can I call him "John?" A sting of panic surges through my mind. Shouldn't it be "Mr. Muir," or "Sir John" at the very least? I forget who I'm talking to. If I address him with all the respect he deserves he would be "Your Royal Highness," or "The Earl of Environmentalism." But my oafish discourtesy seems not to disturb his easy manner, and he nods as if to agree that indeed it is a nice place I have chosen.

"John, the philosophy and lessons you left us in your writing are still regarded as mainstays in the body of American natural history literature. What do you think makes it so durable?"

The coarse hairs bristling from his upper lip spread in a warm broad smile exposing the pink of his lower lip.



"The mountains are fountains of men as well as of rivers, of glaciers, of fertile soil. The great poets, philosophers, prophets, able men whose thoughts and deeds have moved the world, have come down from the mountains."

"I see." Muir's eyes, blue and full of fire, meet mine when he speaks. I stammer under the weight of his pointed gaze. "And you spent your entire adult life among the mountains."

"I only went out for a walk and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in."

"Wow! That's wonderful."

Talking to this guy is like talking to Walt Whitman or Dr. Seuss; everything he says comes out as glorious flowing poetry. If I was an English major I'd be counting syllables and measuring phrases. But all that would be too distracting. Instead, I try to concentrate on what he says.

"What do you think people take from reading what you've written?"


"I have a low opinion of books; they are but piles of stones set up to show coming travelers where other minds have been, or at best smoke signals to call attention."

"You don't think people learn anything from your books? Is that what you are saying?"

"No amount of word-making will ever make a single soul to know these mountains. One day's exposure to mountains is better than cartloads of books. See how willingly Nature poses herself upon photographer's plates. No earthly chemicals are so sensitive as those of the human soul. All that is required is exposure."

"John, today photographers don't use plates, but I think I get what you're saying. If people go into nature with an open heart they may experience the true wonderment of what Mother Nature really is. Have you heard the saying, 'a picture is worth a thousand words?' And you say even pictures can't do nature justice. I guess I agree with that."

I pause to recapture my thoughts. I've always been impressed with Muir's personal resolve to have lived in the mountains. I catch his eye again and breathe in to speak.

A photograph of a mountain range under a bright, hazy sky, with a close-up of a person's hand in the foreground. The hand is the primary focus, showing detailed skin texture and veins. The background is a soft-focus landscape of mountains and a bright sky.

"You led a righteous lifestyle John. But people today don't have room in their lives for living like you did. The demands we're forced to endure in today's society are hard to keep up with. The problem of making a living in American society is often compared to the image of a treadmill. In order to live you need a house. To buy a house you need a job. To go to your job you need a car. To pay for your house and your car you need a job. But wait a minute, you need a house and a car to have that job, and so on. It's a cycle, and it's very hard to get out once you're in."

Muir's hands, branching around his mug of tea, summon images of bonsai limbs, strong and thick with age, use and experience.

"I want to ask you about your lifestyle choices John. How did you find the time to get away from the hustle and bustle in life? You once quit a factory job to walk 1,000 miles from Indianapolis to the Gulf of Mexico, leaving behind not just your job but your family too. How could you afford to take such a long, obviously life-changing and seemingly whimsical trip?"

"How could I have afforded not to?" A look of mild confusion furrows his brow. "Skye, most people are *on* the world, not in it. They have no conscious sympathy or relationship to anything about them. They are undiffused, separate, and rigidly alone like marbles of unpolished stone, touching but separate."

Talking to this guy is like talking to Walt Whitman or Dr. Seuss; everything he says comes out in glorious flowing poetry.

"So you made a conscious choice to be in touch with nature?"

"Mmm," he replied with a nod.

"Well I agree. We all need to be more conscious of nature, and I think that is part of the problem. We aren't very aware or in-touch. A professor at school today asked us to identify the layers of culture and society which insulate us from nature. I made a list of 50 things in less than five minutes. But in today's society, how do you think people can get closer to nature? How can they get themselves *in* the world instead of just *on* it when we live in a landscape paved with asphalt?!"

"The clearest way into the universe is through a forest wilderness."

"A wilderness?" I pause, a bit confused by his poetic and cryptic language. This guy speaks in riddles! Sensing my ineptitude he continues.

"Henry David Thoreau once said, In wildness is the preservation of the world. I say, In God's wildness lies the hope of the world."

More riddles. "But John, most people live in cities today. How do you stay in touch with wildness in the city? Must people quit their lifestyles to regain a relationship with the universe? Must the people of Bellingham travel to Mount Baker wilderness every weekend, and to the Bob Marshall every summer? That's a lot of traveling. Clearly not everyone is able to live the mobile lifestyle you kept. How then?"

The dying light of the fire highlights Muir's sun-streaked hair. His eyes now are warmer than before.

"After I had lived many years in the mountains, I spent my first winter in San Francisco. I used to run out on short excursions to the hills across the bay for rest and exercise. I always brought back a lot of flowers, as many as I could carry, and it was most touching to see the quick natural enthusiasm in the hearts of the ragged, neglected, dirty little wretches of the city. As soon as they caught sight of my wild bouquet, they quit their pitiful attempts at amusement in the streets and ran after me begging a flower. When I stopped and distributed the treasures, giving each a lily or daisy or flowering Dogwood, their dirty faces fairly glowed while they gazed at them and fondled them reverently as if looking into the faces of angels from heaven. It was a hopeful sign."

"You mean each of the children, city urchins all of them, saw nature in the flowers?" I interjected. "And that's how we too can reconnect with the universe. We must appreciate and enjoy the inherent wildness in the nature around us. In things like flowers."

Muir nodded silently and swirled the remainder of his tea.

"No matter into what depths of degradation humanity may sink, I will never despair while the lowest love the pure and the beautiful and know it when they see it."

The fire, now reduced to coals, pulsed with wavy orange and black zebra stripes. I watched them burn amongst themselves and smiled a big toothy grin realizing the wondrous natural beauty of rapidly oxidizing charcoal.

As we face the turn of the millennium, perhaps no character is as important in the status of American environmentalism as John Muir. The ideas and actions, writings and teachings he has given us are the seed out of which the 20th century's environmental movement has grown.

In many ways, Muir is to the American environmental movement what Thomas Jefferson is to the creation of the United States. He is one of American environmentalism's founding fathers.

But why have Muir's ideas endured unchanged into the present? Simply because their meaning is still relevant. Like the music of Mozart or Beethoven, Muir's writings have become timeless classics. And as our world's civilizations and

cultures become more hectic and complex, the simplicity of his messages cuts deeper than ever. The use of his perspectives is an unparalleled tool in criticizing today's cluttered culture. Of course it is not always easy to understand his writing. Some of his language is poetically abstract. Often we read his writings and are left scratching our heads in wonderment. But his abstractness is visionary and important. And as we approach the turn of the millennium, like no other time in history, the world needs the influence of John Muir.

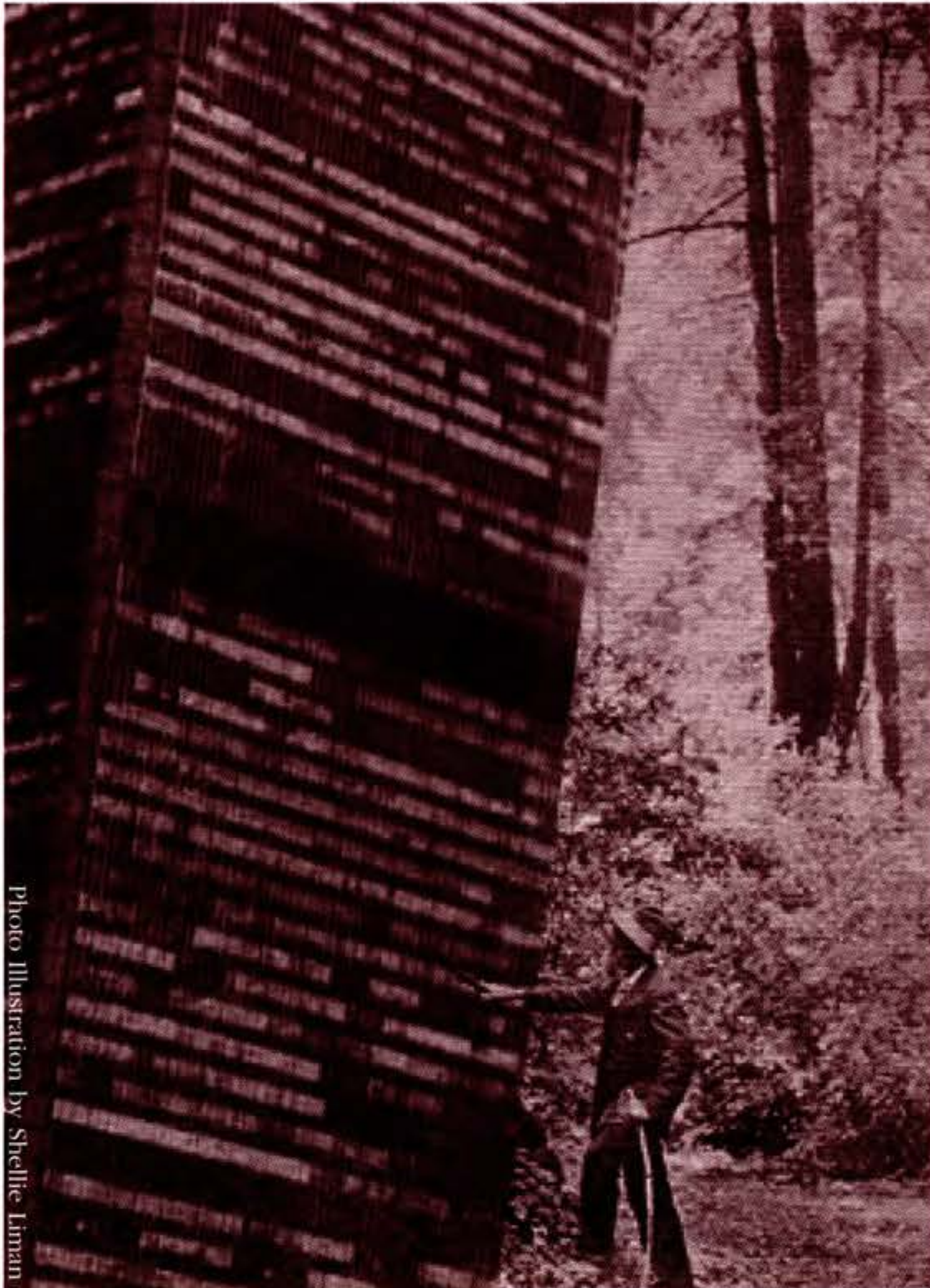


Photo Illustration by Shellie Liman

I could not believe what this woman was asking me. Was she kidding?

"Well honey? Do you or don't you?" she asked, crabbiest and more demanding than the first time.

My mind swirled. Was this a joke? Some kind of new employee

initiation? Or was this woman really serious?

"Listen honey, do any of these rooms have televisions or not?" she demanded a final time.

"No ma'am," I stammered, still bewildered. "None of the rooms in Grant Village have televisions."

"You mean to tell

me you charge a fortune and don't ..." she began to rant.

I turned away, dumbly, my thoughts in a jumble. Why is she yelling at me? It's not my fault. And then the thought hit me, she came all the way to Yellowstone ... to watch television?



I had come to Yellowstone National Park to work and play for three months during the summer, to get away from television - not to mention traffic, pollution and technology. I thought everyone else had too. I assumed this encounter would be a lone occurrence. I was wrong.

I have been visiting Yellowstone with my family since I was in the third grade. Even at a young age I felt the magnificence of the park and Grand Teton National Park to the south. I fell in love with the park the first time I visited. Since then I have had a passion for parks and the freedom they represent. The creation of parks was the first step toward environmentalism in the United States.

The actual idea for a park system began in the 1830s with the visions of an artist named George Catlin. He suggested, "... a magnificent park ... A nation's park, containing man and beast, in all the wild(ness) and freshness of their nature's beauty." It wasn't until 30 years later that Catlin's idea began to take root.

Many people believe Yellowstone was the first land set aside for protection, but it was actually Yosemite. In 1864, Yosemite Valley and the Mariposa Big Tree area in California were given to the state by Congress for "public use, resort and recreation." This was the first action involved with creating what we now call the national park system.

Eight years later, Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming was created. Two million acres of mountains, forests, lakes and valleys were set aside "as a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people," to be administered by the federal government. The U.S. Army protected the park until the National Park Service took over in 1918.

Yosemite and Yellowstone are still confused today. As I prepared for my summer adventure in Yellowstone, a few friends expressed concern for my safety. They were worried about the murderer who had

killed three women last spring. Again, Yosemite, not Yellowstone.

The founding of the Sierra Club in 1892 by John Muir was another step for our country's environmental awareness. This was the first private group to focus on environmental issues and preservation of our natural lands. Muir and others believed the Sierra region in California deserved attention and protection. Their first conservation effort was a campaign to defeat a proposed boundary reduction of Yosemite National Park. The Sierra Club still focuses on environmental issues and resource protection.

In 1906 the National Forest Service was created with a mission contrasting to that of the national parks. The national parks were created for preservation, whereas the NFS supported Gifford Pinchot's idea of conservation - wisely using the land in a way that does

not completely deplete the resources. Conservationists were against national parks because they felt the resources located on protected lands could be put to good use.

On August 25, 1916, the National Park Service Act was signed by President Woodrow Wilson.

"It is the federal government agency that literally oversees the operation of the parks," said John Miles, professor of environ-

mental studies at Western.

The NPS administers the park system, oversees park operations, preserves wildlife and maintains the roads and facilities in the parks. Therefore, it would be the NPS a visitor would complain to about construction delays, not employees such as me. Roads in Yellowstone are terrible. Small cars have been swallowed by the potholes. This past summer a section of road was closed every night, which, of course, was cause for many complaints.irate tourists pestered me, wanting to know why the construction couldn't be done during the winter when fewer people visit. A good solution - if the roads weren't covered by 15 feet of snow.



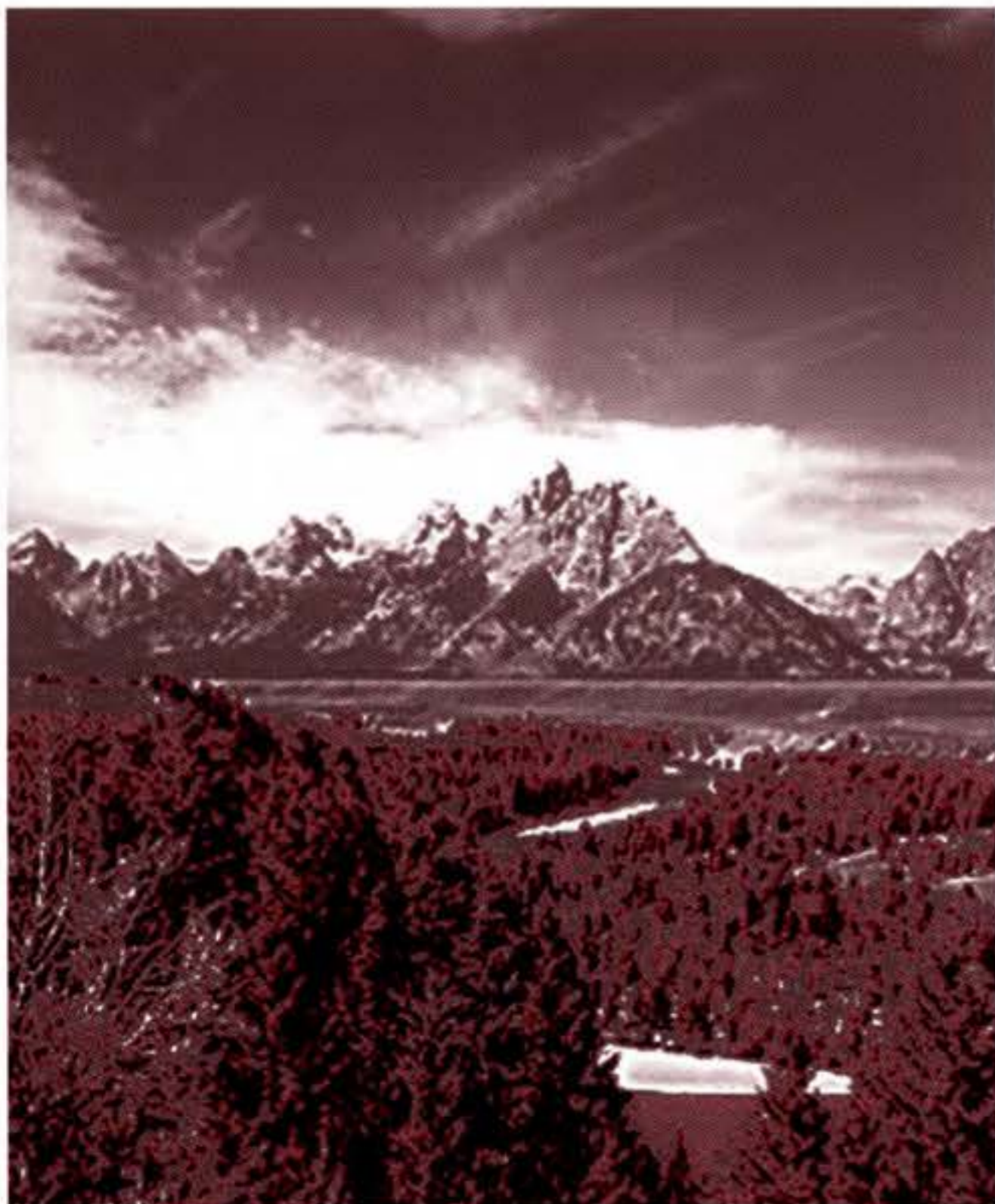
Three years later the National Parks and Conservation Association was created as a “watchdog of the national parks,” Miles said.

“The NPCA is simply a private, non-profit organization of citizens who lobby congress for national park policy issues, watchdog the park service to make sure they’re doing what (the NPCA) think it ought to,” Miles said. “They do public information kinds of work, they produce reports on the state of the parks all from the outside.”

Another victory for the protection of the parks came from an unusual beginning. Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s New Deal bolstered the American economy by increasing job opportunities. In 1933 legislation was passed, approving the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps. Young men were paid to do park development, erosion control, flood control, water conservation and wildlife protection. This led to an increase in the nation’s natural resources. Until this point, the country had focused mainly on conservation.

“Then came the second World War and the very rapid growth of industrial capacity in the United States, which resulted in an escalation of a whole range of pollution problems,” Miles said.

Chemical pesticides, industrialization and nuclear fallout from bomb testing created extensive air and water pollution. In 1962 Rachel Carson published “Silent Spring,” a book explaining how the pesticide DDT moves up the food chain and could ultimately be harmful to human health. The book made people aware of environmental issues and started them thinking about ecological problems.



In 1963 Congress passed the Clean Air Act, which sought to reduce air pollution. Although this was good for our environment, it hurt businesses by regulating the amount of air pollutants they could produce and forcing them to pay for environmentally sound systems.

“There were people who thought the legislation was negative in the sense that it curtailed businesses or that it cost money,” Miles said.

Others believed the legislation didn’t go far enough. I have realized I am one of those people. The air in Yellowstone and the surrounding wilderness is fresh and clean, unlike city air, which stinks and makes me want to wear an oxygen mask. If the Clean Air Act is taken further, it could remedy this. Anyone who argues that pollution creates beautiful sunsets should visit Yellowstone – amazing sunsets and clean air.

A year later the Wilderness Act was approved. Miles said its purpose was to create “portions of public lands in which human modification will be minimized.”

“There could be no motorized vehicle use; there could be no permanent installations like the building of dams or the building of cabins or of anything of that sort,” Miles said.

The act created 9 million acres of land for people to visit and featured areas of ecological, geological, scientific, educational, scenic or historical value. The land set aside for this purpose has grown to 104 million acres. President Clinton recently proposed adding another 40 million acres.

As with the Clean Air Act, some complained.

“Miners, loggers, the resource industries were the primary opponents because they were essentially, as they put it, being locked out of this portion of the landscape,” Miles said.

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1970 was the next major environmental legislation.

“Americans believed that the protection of their environment was a ‘good,’ a socially advantageous and highly desirable goal ... It committed government to ‘create and maintain’ conditions under which man and nature can exist in productive harmony, and fulfill the social, economic, and other requirements of present and future generations of Americans,” according to Hal Rothman.¹

NEPA created a process by which the federal government could review the impact of developmental projects. Part of this review was performed by agencies who considered public input on the projects. It required the Department of the Interior to find viable alternatives to development as well.

"It gave a voice to the public in the decision-making regarding projects that had environmental implications," Miles said.

The Environmental Protection Agency followed a year later. Most federal environmental agencies were now combined into one superagency to deal with a whole range of issues. The EPA was a tool for environmental politics.

In the late 1960s Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. Senator from Minnesota, had visions of a national event where people could collectively express concern for the environment.

"April 22, 1970 ... and so on that day hundreds of thousands of people on campuses and in communities all across the country at that time, simultaneously, celebrated or marched or had teach-ins or whatever, all to express their concern about the environment," Miles said.

Because it was politically decentralized, it was a huge success - approximately 20 million people participated. The media coverage brought the environment to the forefront of American concerns.

"I don't think it's ever been as big as it was the first time, but it's one day when people can raise their voices on behalf of the environment in sufficient numbers that it gets a little bit of attention from the media and the general public who may otherwise not be paying a lot of attention," Miles said.

He said he participated in the big day. He was at that time the director of student activities at Western and helped the students organize celebrations on campus.

Finally came the Endangered Species Act in 1973. People had recognized the problems resulting from ecological destruction and decided to take action. Species such as the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, pelican and bison were seriously declining.

A threat to the welfare of the animals was felt, and legislation was passed for protection.

It was difficult for the government to define "endangered" and many animals whose species were in decline are still in trouble such as the spotted owl and the California condor. Some species have recovered. Bald eagles, peregrine falcons, grey wolves, bison and grizzly bears have all rebounded due to protection from this legislation.

Sometimes life in Yellowstone would be easier if these animals had been allowed to become extinct. Traffic jams there aren't caused by cars, they are caused by bison crossing the road or grizzly bear sightings. Actually, the bison don't cross the road, they stand in the middle, preventing cars from passing.

On the other hand, it's amazing to see a herd of bison roaming the Hayden Valley, a grizzly bear swimming in a pond or an eagle catching its breakfast from a river.

I saw some of the best animals while driving at night. I have a theory that the faster you drive at night in the parks, the more animals you are likely to see - in the glare of your headlights. Ocelots, coyotes and foxes have all almost become roadkill in my presence. I honestly think animals wait to cross the road until they hear a car coming. And no, unlike what some tourists believe, the animals are not caged at night.

My three months in Yellowstone were amazing and I experienced nature as never before. I attribute this to all the environmental legislation passed during the past 100 years, which protected the land, air and animals. I only hope the coming century will continue and expand upon what has already been done.

By the way, when visiting Yellowstone, no, there is not a switch to turn the geysers on and off. And don't ask about the elevators either - trust me.

¹ Rothman, Hal. "The Greening of America?"



URBAN OVERLOAD

by Erin Armstrong

More than **300** new residents funnel into Washington state each day. According to the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, 29 cities roughly the size of Tacoma or Spokane could conceivably be added to this state by the mid-**21st century**. Along the I-5 corridor, drivers view the towering evergreen hillsides with the silhouette of The Cascade and Olympic Mountain ranges in the background. With 29 more cities, I-5 will become an **endless city of skyscrapers** and parking garages, making it impossible to even see the skyline.

With projections such as this, come unanswered questions and new challenges. This immense influx of people **threatens the quality of life** for each person who resides here.

Urban sprawl is a consequence of increasing population and a leading environmental problem in Western Washington. Members of 1000 Friends of Washington, a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting growth management for a livable Washington state, have a vested interest in discouraging urban sprawl. Urban sprawl is a type of low-density development, characterized by large lots and pavement over a huge area of landscape, that serves a small number of people, according to Rich Thorsten, Outreach Director of 1000 Friends.

Urban sprawl increases air pollution, destroys wildlife habitat, causes overcrowding in schools and jams freeways.

“If we don’t want to keep ripping up the countryside to accommodate those people, it means that there needs to be more people living in the urbanized areas.”

Washingtonians need to look no further than their own backyards to see the negative results of urban sprawl. At times a visible brownish haze blocks the view of Mount Rainier's snowcapped peak and downtown Seattle. Bare and desolate hillsides where lush, green forests once stood are an unattractive sight seen from many neighborhoods where houses will soon be built.

“It is the way we have been growing for the last 40 or 50 years,” said Thorsten. “It is a pattern of growth that is unsustainable from an environmental view because it converts thousands of acres of open space to pavement, and from an economic view . . . it costs the taxpayers more money to serve outlying developments with basic needs such as fire, police, water and sewer services.”

The American dream is a suburban, spacious home with a two-car garage. Green hedges trimmed to perfection and a white picket fence enclosing a spacious backyard. People value their privacy and feel that living in single family homes on 1,000-square-foot lots will ensure they obtain it. New and old residents have realized this dream — in vast numbers.

“If we don’t want to keep ripping up the countryside to accommodate those people, it means that there needs to be more people living in the urbanized areas,” said Shane Hope, Management Director for Growth Management Program, a state-wide program designed to control sprawl. “It is going to mean that we need to do some things differently, like building smaller lots and looking to the older traditional models of towns and cities.”

Traditional towns were comprised of apartments, cottages and townhouses, built on lots less



Photo by Shane Powell

than half the size of modern lots, she added.

The number of people living on massive plots of land, and the projection of continued growth impacts Washington residents financially. Higher tax revenues are needed to support the increasing amount of infrastructure required to repair foundations of freeways, maintain parks, upgrade sewers and provide other needed services.

New resident homeowners pay for a portion of this infrastructure through their utility and service fees. Existing residents also shoulder a majority of the costs as a result of the newcomers, Thorsten said.

Water quality and supply also suffers.

"When development occurs, builders scrape the land off near the water and that debris clogs up the nearest stream," Hope said. "And laying new pavement, even if it's further away from the water, can still block the rain from absorbing into the ground and runoff floods into streams."

In 1998, 1000 Friends of Washington listed Lake Whatcom as one of 10 most endangered places in Washington. The lake supplies water to the entire city of Bellingham. As urban growth within the watershed continues, the quality of drinking water is threatened.

Washingtonians may think twice about filling their glasses with tap water when they realize that urban runoff contains pesticides, chemical fertilizers, road salts and chemical residue from oil and gasoline.

In a 1998 study conducted by the Washington Public Interest Research Group, Washington was listed as one of the states with the highest concentration of cancer causing pollutants in its waterways due to growing population and industrial activity, Jon Stier, staff attorney at WashPIRG said.

In Bellingham Bay, more than 1.3 million pounds of toxic chemicals such as formaldehyde, chlorine,

methanol and chromium were found between the years of 1992-1996, according to Stier.

"Whenever you have toxins in water it is important for people to realize that eating the fish and swimming in that water can make people sick," Stier said.

As residents of Washington know, traffic jams are a daily part of life in urban areas. Trapped in gridlock, students, workers, travelers and truckers more often feel as if they are sitting in a parking lot rather than driving along a freeway. Some people choose to impatiently wait in one lane as cars go flying by. They talk on their cell phones or crank up volume on the radio, wondering if they will make it on time. Other commuters lay on their loud horns, weaving in and out of lanes while trying to get to their destination faster. Their frustration builds when they see nothing but an ongoing streak of red tail lights ahead. Increasing traffic problems force Washingtonians to have to plan their timing and routes of travel along the I-5 corridor in advance.

Statewide, nearly 30-percent of residents commute 30 minutes or more, one way, between home and work. More than 90 percent of these commuters live in the state's major metropolitan areas, according to the Department of Natural Resources. This means there are more cars on the freeway for longer periods of time, which leads to traffic jams and air pollution. These problems directly relate to the structure of the state budget.

"The break down of the budget is still very much geared toward subsidizing the development of roads," Thorsten added. "Driving automobiles continues to be a mode of travel we rely on very heavily."

Other forms of transportation need to be easily accessible in order to convince people to use their cars less frequently.

"People are not going to change if it is too difficult," Hope said. "In order to make any sort of transportation system work, you have to have enough people close together and a number of different options so that people don't have to get into their cars to get to where they need to go."

Washington is one of the few places where a person has access to snow skiing in the morning and waterskiing in the afternoon. But not if traffic confines them to their cars all day. Besides, those places may not even be there in the future.

"Many ski areas and trails are already being overrun by people," Thorsten said. "Right now at places like Mount Si and part of Mount Rainier, you are already seeing lots of people, and if another 3 million or more are added there will be a large impact on recreation."

Another heated debate is the effect of sprawl on salmon.

"One hundred years ago salmon could be seen swimming in thousands of packs through rivers, streams and oceans," Thorsten said. "Nowadays, we only have about 10 percent of the salmon we had back then."

In Washington's government, non-profit organizations and concerned citizens in urban, suburban and rural neighborhoods are finding solutions. These groups will have to work together to maintain ecological balance.

The Growth Management Act, of 1990, is one form of legislation working to solve some of these problems.

"The idea of the Growth Management Act is not to stop growth," Hope said. "It has a role in helping to determine how we plan, grow and develop. The decision was made so that if we're going to grow let's grow better and in ways that are less harmful to the environment."

While the GMA is redirecting people into urbanized areas, the state still faces problems with incoming people. Seventy percent to 80 percent of Washington residents live on the western side of the mountains, Thorsten said.

"In the greater Seattle area we have more jobs than we have skilled laborers to fill them; so this region is growing very well," Thorsten remarked. "Spokane and the Tri-cities are not experiencing significant economic growth at this time. We may be able to bring in 4 to 5 million more people in the state, but we can't put 80 percent of those people in the Puget Sound region."

King, Pierce and Snohomish voters approved the building of a light rail system in November 1996. The light rail would run from the south edge of Seattle to the University District, and possibly farther north if funding is provided.

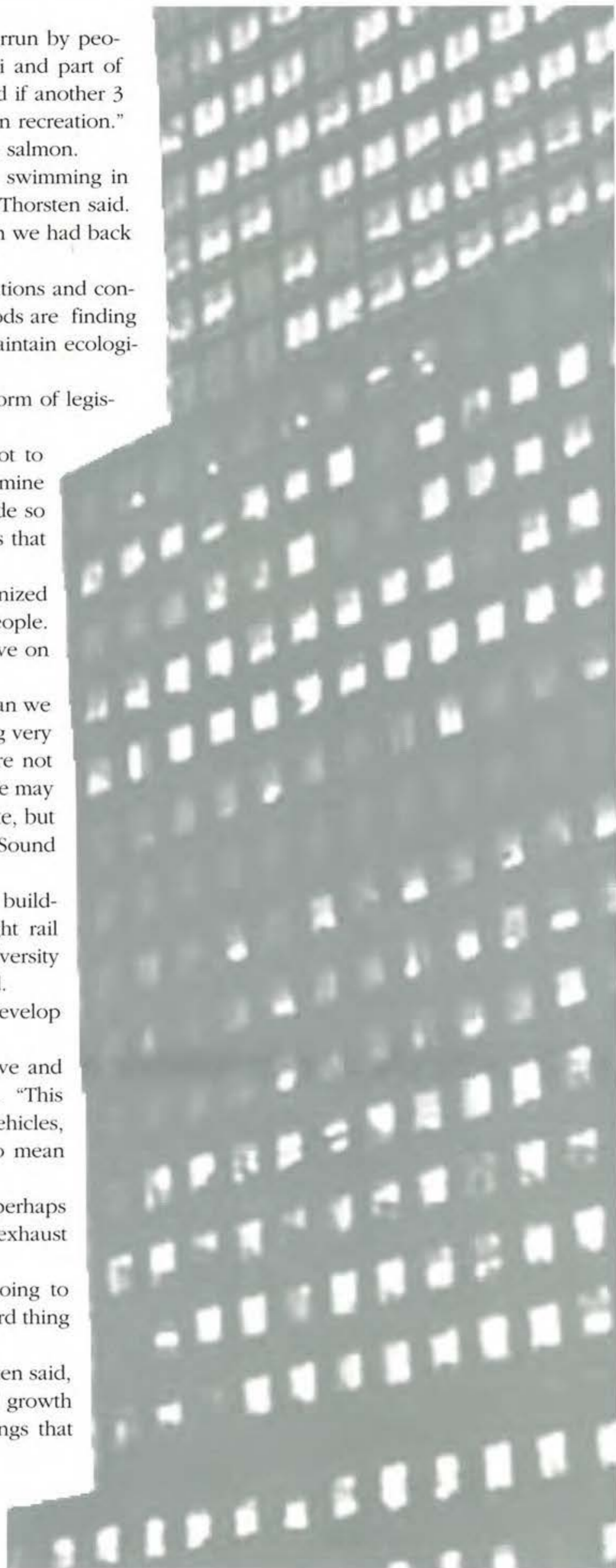
Various local governments are attempting to develop Commute Trip Reduction Programs.

"These would reduce auto trips through incentive and regulatory means with major employers," Thorsten said. "This could provide money for people who don't use their vehicles, could subsidize bus travel or ferry travel. It could also mean employers would pay the full cost of parking."

With less cars on the freeways, people can perhaps breathe clean air while going places rather than sucking exhaust fumes into their lungs.

"With the kind of growth occurring, we are going to have to pay more attention to how we develop ... the hard thing is that no one wants to give up anything," Hope said.

"Population growth by itself isn't an evil," Thorsten said, "but, at the same time, if we are not careful, fast, rapid growth can destroy the environment and ruin some of the things that makes the Northwest a great place to live."



1872 Yellowstone National Park created

1890 Area outside Yosemite Valley becomes Yosemite National Park

1892 Sierra Club formed

1900 Wild buffalo population drops to fewer than 40 animals

1903 President Theodore Roosevelt creates first national wildlife refuge, on Pelican Island, Florida

1905 National Audubon Society organized

1905 U.S. Forest Service created

1906 Yosemite Valley becomes part of Yosemite National Park after 42 years as a state park

1913 Hetch Hetchy dam in Yosemite National Park approved by Congress

1916 National Park Service created by Congress

1933 Civilian Conservation Corps created by

1935 Wilderness Society co-founded by Aldo Leopold and Arthur Carhardt

1936 National Wildlife Federation formed



1969 Alaska Oil fields open for exploitation

1970 Denis Hayes organizes first Earth Day

1970 Congress establishes Environmental Protection Agency

1970 Clean Air Act and National Environmental Policy Act passed

1973 Eighty nations sign the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES)

1976 National Academy of Science report on CFC gasses warns of damage to the ozone layer

1977 Love Canal, New York, evacuated after discovery that hazardous waste had been dumped on the site of a neighborhood and schoolyard

1979 Three Mile Island nuclear meltdown

1980 "Superfund" legislation directs EPA to clean up abandoned toxic waste spills

1981 Earth First! founded

1989 Congress votes to halt timbering in Alaska's Tongass National Forest, the last undisturbed temperate forest in the U.S

1989 March 24. Exxon Valdez oil tanker runs aground in Prince William Sound, Alaska, spilling 11 million gallons

1947 Dec. 6. Everglades National Park established. Defenders of Wildlife founded

1948 Federal Water Pollution Control Act passes Congress

1948 Aldo Leopold writes "A Sand County Almanac"

1948 20 dead, 600 hospitalized in Donora, Pennsylvania smog attack.

1951 The Nature Conservancy formed

1960 Clean Water Act passes Congress

1962 Rachel Carson writes "Silent Spring"

1963 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty between U.S. and U.S.S.R. stops above-ground tests of nuclear weapons

1964 Congress passes Wilderness Act, creating National Wilderness Preservation System

1965 Congress passes Water Quality Act setting standards for states

1968 The "Population Bomb" by Paul Erlich published

1968 David Brower leads effort to save Grand Canyon from dams proposed by Bureau of Land Management

1969 Santa Barbara Oil Spill



1990 United Nations warns that global temperature rise might be as much as 2 degrees F in 35 years, recommends reducing CO2 emissions worldwide

1992 June 3-14 Earth Summit is held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The centerpiece is the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC), better known as the Global Warming Treaty

1995 Nigerian government executes journalist and environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa, who had been active in fighting pollution from Shell Oil Co. in the Ogoni homeland. International protests of Shell activities continue

1997 December 11, Kyoto Protocol adopted by U.S. and 121 other nations, but not ratified by U.S. Congress

1999 Worldwatch reports that 7 out of 10 scientists believe we are experiencing the largest mass extinction of species in history

1999 Earth Day Network organizers plan for global environmental awareness with 500 million participants April 22, 2000

1999 U.S. Congress fails to ratify Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

1999 Massive street demonstrations held during World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial meeting in Seattle

WAVES

of warning

by Christine W. Ross

Pacific Northwest salmon have swam the streams, oceans and rivers with relative security for thousands of years, feeding and fertilizing the planet's ecosystem along the way. Though always victims of natural predators – sea lions, whales and terrestrial creatures such as bears and eagles – salmon did not face real trouble until humans arrived. And even then, when salmon were merely fished for sustenance by seafaring tribes, runs were ample and healthy. The problem of survival came with industrialization, urbanization and the realization that a lot of money could be made off a seemingly endless resource.

Beyond the business and the government there is a human side to the salmon story. Fifty-three-year-old Nick Karuza has lived in Whatcom County his entire life. Karuza's life in many ways parallels the rise and fall of both the fish and the commercial fishing business.



Karuza is a third-generation fisherman. His 17-year-old son, Nathan, however, will break the tradition.

"He doesn't even want to be ON the boat," Karuza says emphatically, acknowledging the struggle his first-born has witnessed throughout the past decade.

Karuza's eyes are dark brown and intense, the same mahogany-color as the weathered, varnished panels inside the cabin of the *F/V Alice Anne*, his 1973, 52-foot purse seiner. The boat is moored at Blaine Marina, where a small fleet of three-quarter ton pickups fills the parking lot and a sharp, gutsy breeze blows hints of another bad winter. On a cold, windy Sunday, the forlorn faces of fishers hauling 5-gallon pails of oil and carts of supplies up the docks offer a grim testimonial to the future. It is the yachters, in their posh, yellow and turquoise polypropylene Patagonia jackets, who appear unconcerned about the economic blight bearing down on these men like syphilis on the crew of the *Santa Maria*.

The *Alice Anne* smells of diesel and fish, though she hasn't left the harbor this year. The tiny berth toward the stern is cluttered with gear and old clothing.

"You'll have to excuse the mess," Karuza says, explaining that he's been too busy working his night job as an operator for Western Refinery Services to come down to the boat and clean. His daylight hours have been filled with trying to bring attention to an industry he calls "decimated."



Photo by Christine W. Ross



Courtesy Whatcom Museum of History and Art

The tiny stove in the galley is clean and free of pots, pans or dishes, but the boat is a mess. Light blue paint is chipped overhead and the seat cushions are worn, revealing the foam filler within.

Karuza says this is the first time he hasn't fished for Fraser River sockeye since he was 14 years old. The lucrative salmon run closed to commercial fishers in June because of low-returning fish counts.

Karuza's financial situation gets worse every year. He figures he averaged about \$50,000 per year in the good days of fishing; this year, he says, he's "not likely to make a penny."



Photo by Shane Powell

He and his wife Diedra are doing what they can to survive. They have four kids, all under the age of 18. He says the state has robbed fishermen of their financial independence and left them with nowhere to go. Karuza's boat was chained up by the harbormaster in August because he was a month and a half late on his moorage payment. The harbormaster told him he was tired of all the commercial boats in the marina.

"We haven't went on a vacation in 10 years," he says. "We get food from the food bank." His wife home-schools their children, one car is broken and Karuza uses the other for traveling to work. Diedra says she is trying to work out of their home, selling cosmetics. Karuza, meanwhile, is valiantly experimenting with other ways to pay the bills.

"We're learning commodity trading and futures," Karuza says hopefully. It isn't a future they anticipated when they were married 18 years ago.

Where do fishers such as Karuza fit into the planet's fragile ecosystem?

Ed Owens, executive director for the Washington Coalition of Coastal Fisheries, says the commercial salmon fishery is a very small part of the salmon's problem.

Owens has a voice like tires rolling down a dirt road. It is hard to match the baritone with the image of salmon crusader.

He has definite opinions on the species and on the industry.

"The past is glorious," he says with an air of finality. "The present is dismal, (but) the future is bright." Owens says he believes the problem with government is that it "cannot write a piece of legislation that is all-encompassing and fix an issue ... One size does not fix all.

"Surveys show universally that everybody's in love with saving the salmon until it comes to paying for it," he said, adding that in many instances the solution is as simple as the removal of "fish-passage barriers" – dams, irrigation ditches and dikes, for example. Owens says if there's one real problem for the salmon, it is habitat.

"It's habitat and it's habitat and it could be habitat," he says. "I say that facetiously but in each area, it's habitat." Land development, agricultural practices, timber practices, even something as simple as a children's playground next to a stream, can affect habitat.

When it comes to the future of salmon, Owens is one of an optimistic minority. He has dedicated the past 25 years of his life to activities regarding salmon legislation. Though he says he is not an environmentalist, Owens recently united 253 organizations, from sport, commercial and tribal fishers to environmentalists and businesses, under the umbrella-purpose of forcing the state legislature into action. The result of that action was House Bill 2496, the Salmon Recovery Bill.

Legislation, however, can move with the speed of a receding glacier, and some, particularly fishers, wonder if it is moving in the right direction at all.

shut (development) down. Their goal is not to save salmon but to stop development."

Ericksen does, however, think there's hope.

"I'm very optimistic about what we can do," he says. "If the goal is saving salmon ... I think we can get there." He stressed that the government cannot regulate everything and other factors – Taiwanese driftnets, tribal fisheries, Canadian fisheries or ocean conditions, for example – all contribute to diminishing fish populations.

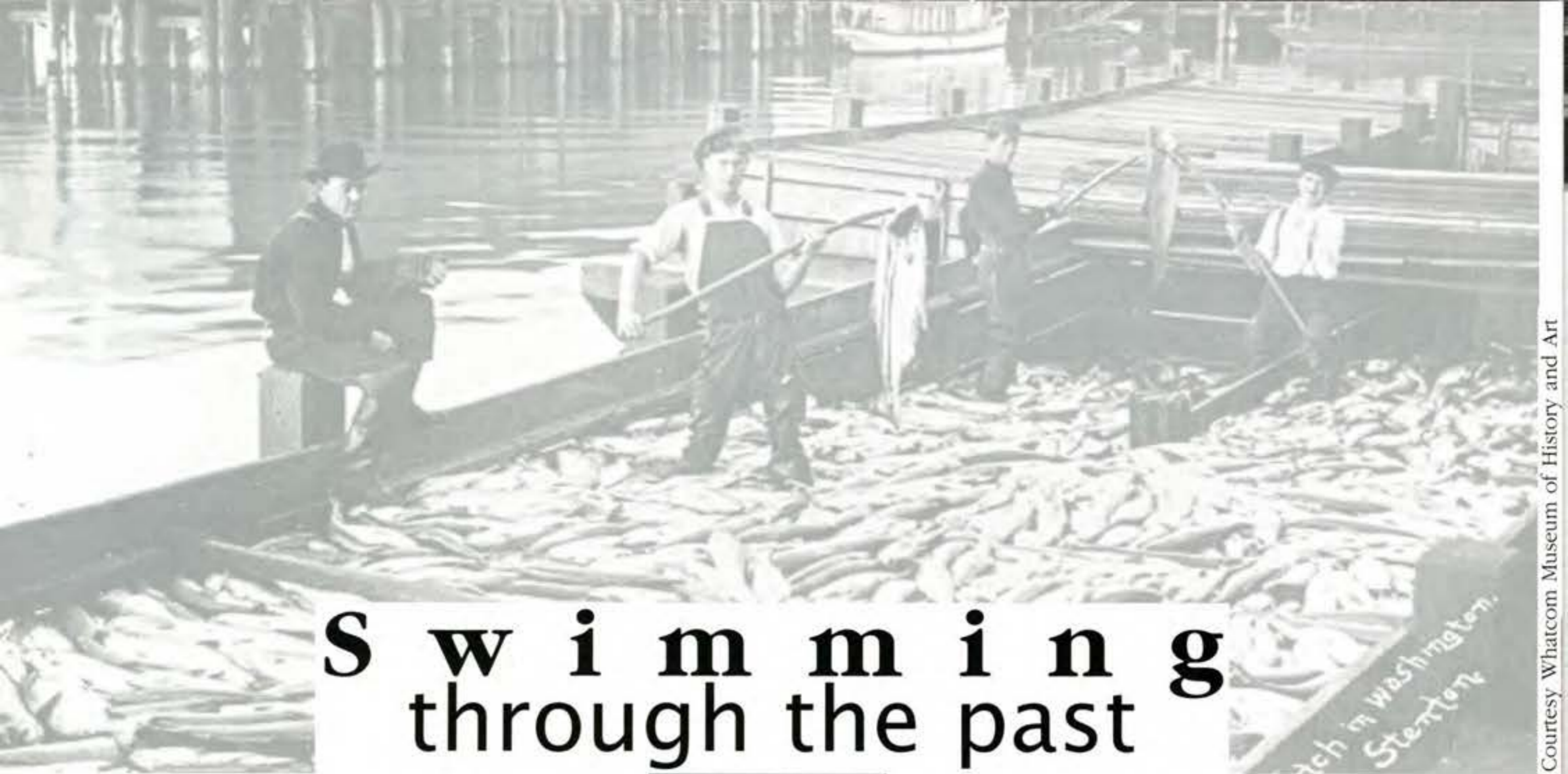
The future of commercial fishing may not look as promising as the future of the



From a state perspective, says Washington state Representative Doug Ericksen, one of the problems is that nobody is in charge of the fishery.

"There are so many things outside the control of the state legislature," he says. "We control a very small amount of habitat and a very small number of commercial fishermen. There is no way to say 'X' is the problem. People are using the Endangered Species Act as a tool to say no more growth and to

Northwest salmon, but at this point in evolution the contemporary needs of one group are being sacrificed for the long-term successes of the other. Something has to give and, fortunately for the fish, salmon have people on their side who take a long look at the big picture, people who rank posterity above profit.



Courtesy Whatcom Museum of History and Art

Swimming through the past

Christine W. Ross

Salmon are big business and always have been. Fish canneries both at Bellingham Bay and Semiahmoo produced record numbers of product earlier in the century. As awareness of waste and over-fishing spread and canneries went out of business, fishers picked up the profits. Several Northwest salmon runs are facing extinction, and as one millennium gives way to another, the nebulous futures of salmon, commercial fishing and the environment lie in limbo.

The problems facing salmon in many ways parallel problems facing the planet at large, problems such as destroyed or dwindling habitat, mismanaged population-growth, and an economic imperative that puts conservation behind profit. Salmon are a big chunk of the ecosystem. But just how strong is the planet's ecosystem? Is it like a brick wall, or a block of Swiss cheese? How much plucking can the ecosystem tolerate? Are hydroelectric dams, logging and waterfront homes mercilessly yanking bricks out of the system?

The first North American salmon cannery began in 1866, near the mouth of the Columbia River in Oregon. The first salmon hatchery on the river followed just 12 years later, serving as evidence of the already dwindling runs and of the growing, profitable hunger for the pink-fleshed delicacy. During this time, the first fish commissioner's office was established by President Ulysses S. Grant. It was commonly called the Fish Commission and became the predecessor to today's National Marine Fisheries Service. The Fish Commission began investigating diminishing fish numbers on the Columbia as early as 1894, one year after a 43-million-pound record catch of Columbia River King salmon.

In 1899, Bellingham's first cannery was built for Pacific American Fisheries on the Fairhaven waterfront. It operated until 1965, when, after three decades of declining Puget Sound runs, PAF was dissolved by shareholders.

The federal fish commission operated independently until 1903, after which it was absorbed by the newly established Department of Commerce and Labor and renamed the Bureau of Fisheries. In 1938, the Bonneville Dam was built without provisions allowing for salmon passage, following a 1937 announcement by fisheries Commissioner Frank Bell that salmon migration and spawning grounds had been taken care of. The Grand Coulee Dam was built three years later, again preventing salmon passage and destroying 1,000 miles of habitat.

Shortly afterward, the Mitchell Act promoted hatchery development in compensation for depleting stocks – officially beginning the overt manipulation of salmon. Dams were now getting so much attention that a proliferation of logging practices went unchecked. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service was officially created the following year; in 1970 it became the National Marine Fisheries Service. By this time, however, salmon were in serious trouble. Three years later, Congress passed the Endangered Species Act and the governmental responsibility for salmon fell into the hands of the NMFS. Today, 19 West Coast runs are listed as threatened or endangered under the act.

ACADEMIC

ACTIVISM

by Patrick McKay-Beach

Dear Mr. Lyles,
I regret to inform you that your beloved organization,
Huxley Environmental Resource Bureau (HERB),
is dead. The cause of death was apathy,
the same apathetic trend you saw plaguing
campus organizations throughout the United States.
Contributing factors were bureaucracy and a
lack of funding.

This is the beginning of my letter to Joseph Lyles, director of HERB during the 1978-'79 academic year. To the best of my knowledge, he graduated soon after, and remains unaware that HERB no longer exists. Most people, even Huxley students, are unaware that HERB ever existed. My letter is as much to tell students a story of how the school they attend came to be, as it is to tell Mr. Lyles what has become of HERB. He may never read it anyway.

The story begins with the birth of Huxley in 1969.

Sure environmentalism existed at Western before Huxley, but not activism of the type that came with the advent of the College of Environmental Studies. Preservation and protection were more the style of the times, working with the dominant paradigm instead of challenging it.

Huxley changed all that.

"The first students at Huxley were a bunch of fireballs," said Lynn Robbins, an original Huxley professor. "They wanted to radicalize the campus and the community."

HERB was their organization.

In the early '70s, a sense of urgency existed, as if it may have already been too late — too late for a biosphere dying under the burden of too many people making too many mistakes.

Huxley was the answer, a college devoted to learning about and learning to protect the environment.

HERB began with the best of intentions as a simple referral service, a means for students to learn about environmental issues and become part of the ecology movement. With a volunteer staff and a small reference library, HERB was a complete, self-sustaining organization.

Then it grew.

Like any movement — growth or death. To remain static is a form of death, or at least of diminished life. So HERB grew, adding a newsletter, "The Huxley Humus," and a community recycling project. Too fast. HERB could not keep up with the monetary and energy demands of the projects it created.

In 1976, HERB joined Western's Associated Students Service Council and gained a budget and staff continuity — but lost autonomy. HERB became subject to the policies and restrictions of the A.S. HERB sold its soul to the A.S. for funds.

In 1978, the recycling program was divorced from HERB, again for the sake of funding. The A.S. Recycle Center was its successor.

Photo illustration by Shane Powell



All this you knew, Mr. Lyles; much of it you wrote yourself in a handbook for those who would follow you as coordinators. But you, Mr. Lyles, were the last coordinator of HERB.

In 1979, HERB was re-named the Environmental Center, removing from its name the very mention of Huxley and belonging more to the A.S. "The Humus" too disappeared, evolved. General environmental news was printed in "The Monthly Planet," and Huxley College news was relegated to another new publication, "Cascade Grits," which eventually became "The Huxley Hotline."

During this time, Huxley College itself was changing. Once a hotbed of hot-blooded radicals, the demeanor had become subdued, complacent. The teachers were more confident in their ability to discuss a subject now a decade old. Students were seeking careers instead of fighting battles.

"By the early '80s, it seemed like we had already taken care of things," said Gene Myers, a student at Huxley from '78 to '82 and a current professor. "All we needed to do was fine tune what we already had."

By the late '80s, the apathy was fading. Students found a balance between radicalism and complacency, between the desire to change the world and the need to get paid. A plethora of clubs formed to meet new challenges: Western Animal Rights Network, Western Endangered Species Alliance, Western Environmental Watch, Environmental Justice Network and many others. These organizations sought a paradigm shift.

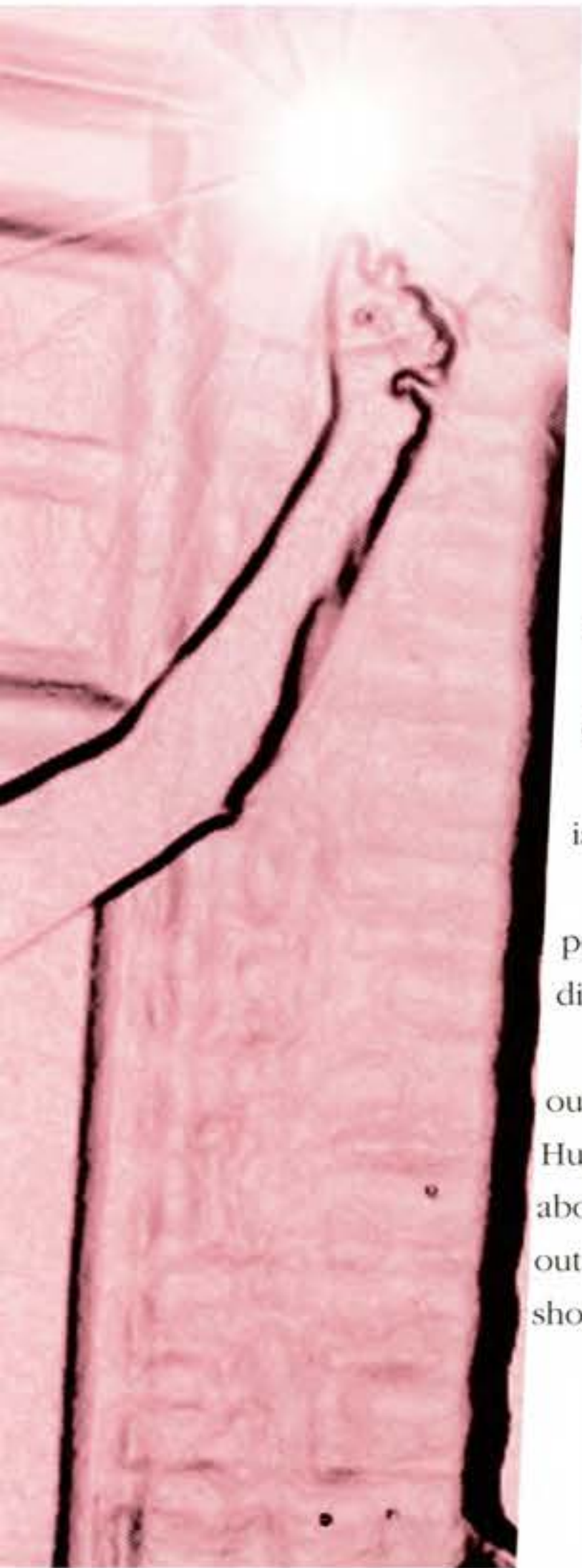
While these clubs formed, environmentalism branched into other departments — biology, political science, psychology and economics.

"Environmentalism has become accepted," said Myers. "The issues have gained legitimacy."

A sign of Huxley's success? Perhaps. But others see this incorporation of environmentalism as a mere token, a small step in the right direction.

"What we have been doing is fine tuning a broken system without thinking that the system itself needs changing," said Patrick Taylor, Huxley student and co-coordinator of the EC. "Regulations (brought about by the radicalism of the '70s) focus on cleaning up what comes out of the end of the pipe. We need to question whether the pipe should even be there."

Mr. Lyles, I offer this as consolation: although HERB is dead, the spirit of HERB lives on. Huxley's staff and students have a vision for the future and a desire to make a change. The spirit, not the name, is what matters.



The NATURE of generations

by Lisa Beck

On a sunny day in autumn, many Western students unknowingly pass-by a bird sanctuary located across the street from the Viking Union. On the grassy knoll in front of Old Main are two stone bird-baths. They stand alone, enclosed by elderly cedar and pine trees, awaiting the birds' return in spring. The words, "Class of 1920," are etched in the wide basin of one birdbath; the second columnar bath, made of white bricks, is named "Alkisiah." A middle-sized rock with a weather-beaten plaque dedicates the sanctuary to a mysterious woman named Ida Agnes Baker.

On the same fall day, a man makes several telephone calls to a senator in Washington, D.C., from a small office in downtown Bellingham. Joe Scott, the conservation director with Northwest Ecosystem Alliance, hangs up the phone with a sigh of relief. He is working on a letter to President Clinton concerning the federal government's management of Washington state national forests.

Baker and Scott each represent a different era of environmental awareness in Bellingham.

As the year 2000 approaches, Bellingham is plagued with problems of population growth, water quality and the threat of species extinction.

Environmental awareness in Bellingham did not start in the radical era of the 1960s and '70s as many people believe. A faint heartbeat of the environmental movement can be found in its infancy at the turn of the 20th century. Its mother, Ida Agnes Baker, was one of Western's first teachers when the university was called the State Normal School. She taught from 1899 to 1921.

Baker instructed nature and forestry classes and wrote for several prominent environmental magazines of her time. She was noted for a deep love of birds and long nature hikes around Sehome and the Mount Baker foothills, according to the school's newspaper, *The Weekly Messenger*.

Baker once convinced four faculty members to walk 50 miles with her from Lake Crescent to the sound, because "she felt motorcars or carriages did not allow her to see everything she wanted to see," writes Western graduate Cindy L. Carroll in her manuscript about Ida Agnes Baker.



Photo courtesy of Wilson Library Special Collections

The professor wanted to turn all of Normal's campus and Sehome Hill into a bird sanctuary, according to *The Weekly Messenger*. Although that goal was never reached during Baker's lifetime, she channeled her love of nature to her students.

"Ida Agnes Baker started a club in 1906 called the Alkisiah," says Jeff Jewell, photo historian for the Whatcom County Museum of History & Art. "It may be considered one of the earliest environmental groups in Bellingham."

Alkisiah is Chinook for "in the near future." The all-women's club performed community service, planting tulip bulbs for harvest in the fall and selling them in the winter. The women also acted out plays and hosted fundraisers to support the YWCA, according to Carroll's manuscript.

The Alkisiah's most outstanding accomplishment is the bird sanctuary dedicated to Baker. According to *The Weekly Messenger*, the well-loved teacher was walking home on the night of January 29, 1921 and was killed by a street car when she stepped with her umbrella into traffic at the intersection of Laurel and Garden streets. Baker was near-sighted and police assumed she could not see the trolley.

The bird sanctuary, in front of Old Main, is a relic from a time when Bellingham's resources seemed limitless. Mixed deciduous trees gave way to rolling hills of ancient evergreens and the snowcapped peak of Mount Baker. The landscape appeared endless: people saw no reason to preserve it.

"Baker's view of nature was esthetic," Jewell says. "She wanted to preserve it for pure enjoyment."

Joe Scott works for preservation too – but not just for enjoyment.

"Human impact is everywhere you look," Scott says spreading his arms wide, gesturing to the city of Bellingham outside his office window.

Since 1904, Bellingham's population has grown from 22,632 to 61,980, according to the 1998 U.S. Census.

"Growing population is going to impact our abilities to restore salmon because so much of that habitat has been degraded," he says. "So much of the community is at odds with that restoration."

The Olympic pipeline explosion illustrates Scott's point. On July 10, 1999 a gasoline leak exploded killing three people and burning 1.5 miles of Whatcom and Hannah creeks. Investigators suspect 277,000 gallons of gasoline were released into the creek and soil, while an estimated 15,000 to 28,000 fish were killed.

Some people feel the Olympic Pipe Line Co. should not be allowed to resume operations through Whatcom Falls Park. Meanwhile, city officials struggle to set a new code for safety inspection and monitoring requirements.

While the Bellingham of the 1990s is fraught with a growing number of people and limited resources, the Bellingham of the past was not. Baker's esthetic ideology was a stark contrast to the practices of resource extraction that dominated the town in its earlier days.

Logging and coal mining in the Glacier and Mount Baker regions brought a rush of miners and lumberjacks to the area. People pulled what they could from the land, without thinking about the destruction they caused, Jewell explains.

Baker's reason for preserving the environment was uncommon for her time. Money was the driving force behind the movement that many historians identify as the beginning of environmentalism in Bellingham.

Environmental awareness came about because of tourism, Jewell says. The Mount Baker Club was a group that saw economic opportunity in preserving Washington's wilderness.



The club was established in 1911 to draw public attention to the Mount Baker Region. The group held an annual marathon, built hiking trails and promoted the idea of Mount Baker becoming a national park. They also collected photographs of the area and had the pictures sent to the Midwest and the East Coast in an attempt to attract tourists, Jewell says.

Tourism in Washington boomed after World War I. The popularity of the automobile in the 1920s gave rise to an era of "motor tourists." Automobile freedom helped replace railways with freeways. In 1904 a mere three automobiles were in Bellingham.

In 1998, 122,167 passenger vehicles, gas and diesel powered trucks were licensed in Whatcom County,

according to statistics from the Washington State Department of Licensing.

"Chuckanut Drive and the Mount Baker Highway were paved to attract the motorists," Jewell explains.

Just as tourism peaked in Bellingham, it was curtailed when the Great Depression hit in the 1930s.

Environmental awareness continued to evolve in the '40s and '50s, but exploded in the 1960s and '70s.

"It was the coming of age for the environmental movement," Scott recalls reclining in his office chair, with his feet up on a bookshelf.

Deforestation, pollution and urban population growth were the apex of environmental issues, he says. Resources were becoming scarce.

It was in the '80s that Scott became involved in environmental work. He said his interest in nature came from hiking. On his backpacking trips through the mountains, he saw deforestation up close and his anger was ignited.

"I remember the age-old saying, 'if you don't like what's happening, do something about it,' or something like that," Scott says with a grin.

So he "plugged in," as he calls it, to the efforts toward saving Washington's forests. Scott got the name of the Northwest Ecosystem Alliance from a friend and volunteered for the non-profit organization.

As Scott became more involved, he served as president of the board of directors. After eight years on the board, he became the conservation director for NWEA in 1997.

"Bellingham is pretty in tune with water quality, salmon and population," Scott comments. "We're already aware these problems are just beginning and some people, in other parts of the country, are just waking up."

Although Bellingham is aware of its problems, change comes hard.

"Consumption has gone unchanged" Scott says. "We consume 30 to 40 percent more fossil fuels than citizens in other countries.

"We've gone from a generation that conserved fossil fuels, and we have devolved to an affluent generation with SUVs, big houses and elaborate vacations. It's disturbing to me because we know better, but we're choosing to ignore that," he says.

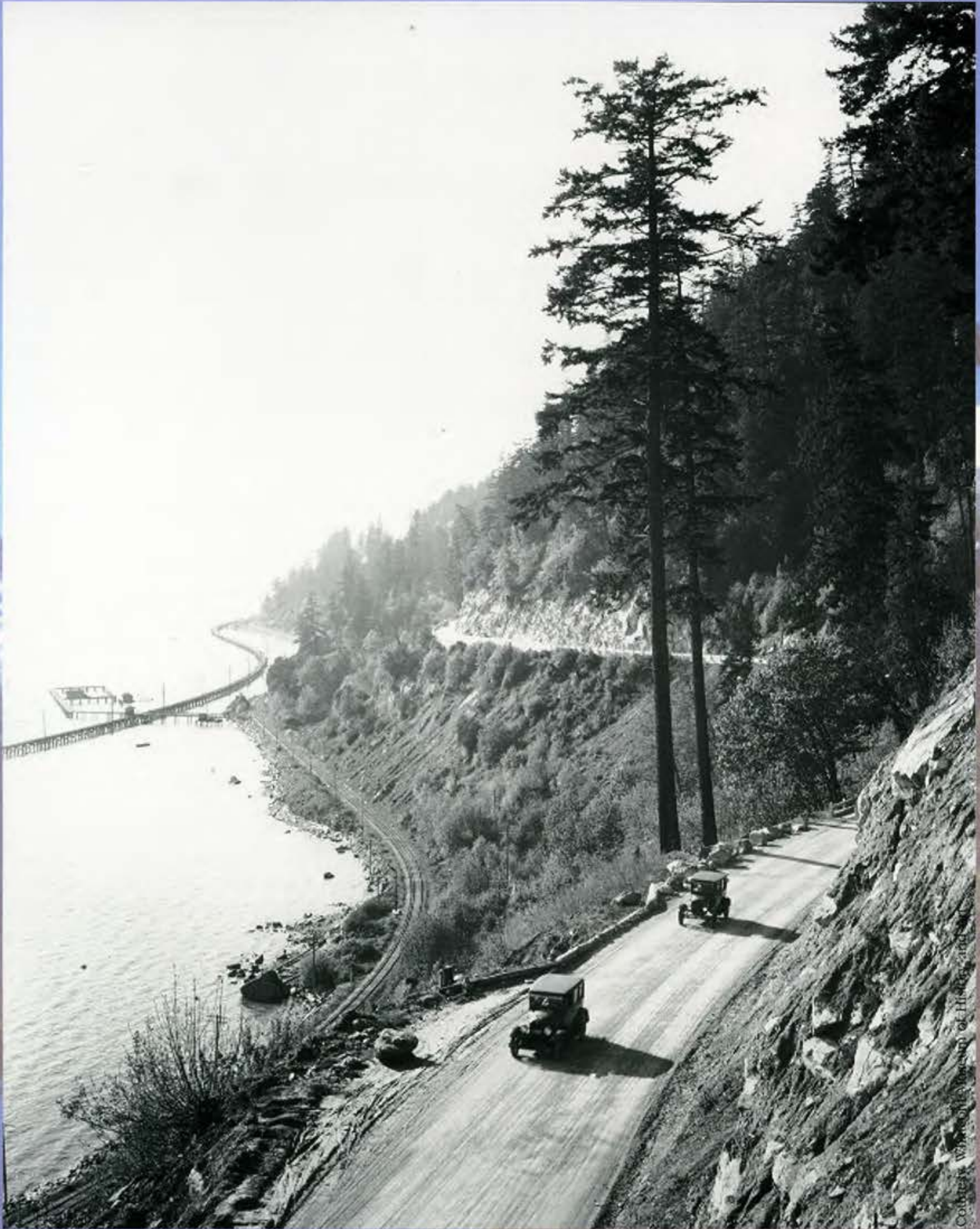
As the next millennium approaches, Bellingham will face the same growing pains that other towns in Washington have faced in the past. Population growth, development and environmental degradation are only the tip of a glacier of problems.

Although Baker and Scott are separated by time, their hearts are in the same place.

Baker strove to preserve Washington's untouched wilderness, and Scott fights to protect the little that remains. As always, the future holds excitement and fear of the unknown.

Solving the dilemmas that lie ahead will depend on the community uniting as a whole.

"Everybody needs to be involved, not just professionals," Scott says. "They have to be engaged; everybody has to be on the team to turn things around."



a future with an **ATTITUDE**

Our future?:

- 2000 – A new millennium. The technological revolution continues.
- 2004 – Animal cloning for commercial purposes is legalized, opening the door to research for human cloning .
- 2013 – All commercially produced food is genetically engineered to grow bigger with less land and nutrients.
- 2037 – All National Forests are sold to commercial logging companies and clear cut, causing mudslides large enough to eliminate cities the size of Seattle.
- 2058 – Continually growing populations and urban centers have connected major cities, such as Chicago and New York, making one, huge cement block.
- 2069 – Ninety seven percent of school-aged children have never seen a tree aside from those that grow to 3 feet in their city park due to air pollution and water scarcity.
- 2072 – Global warming causes Antarctica's glaciers to melt, raising the sea level and drowning large masses of land, including Florida.
- 3000 – Another millennium begins. Technological chaos ignites a nuclear war.

Pessimistic? Yes, but certainly not uncommon.

We're inundated daily with this type of information. And with such ominous and looming problems, it's easy to feel defeated and cynical. Taking responsibility for such an enormous world can seem useless. And, partly, this is true. Finding the solutions is always harder than accepting the problems.

I like to think we have inner mechanisms, like magnets, leading us to our place in nature. But too, I often feel we are evolving to a place where those devices are becoming endangered. Large cities have evaporated the outdoor experience, severing many people from the natural world. People are born in man-made environments. The stimulus of technology glues people to video games and televisions; the lure of consumption has replaced the outdoor experience with shopping malls. The modern society keeps is too much of a distraction to even consider a connection to the natural world. People are left powerless, apathetic, lost.

This large view is enough to throw anyone into despondency, and even the small problems here on Western's campus are enough to cause despair.

Ten years ago, Western's students were fighting the same battles fought today. We're still trying to have recycled paper placed in the printers and copy machines, still trying to get people to bring re-usable mugs to satisfy caffeine fixes. Battling these same issues today is frustrating. Why haven't we been able to settle these battles and move on to new ones? Western is like a microcosmic example of the world 100 years ago. If we continue to fight the same fights without accomplishing anything, where will the world be 100 years from now?





The world's human population recently exceeded 6 billion, and with the rate we're growing, it will be twice that by the middle of the 21st century. Washington state's population will almost quadruple in the same amount of time.

Environmental damage accelerates with population growth. Having a child has become an environmental problem, a moral burden.

But all of this, in essence, comes down to the attitude that shapes our view of nature and our place in it. If we can't foresee a livable future for ourselves, how will those that come after us?

I propose that the answer lies in changing our focus from problems to solutions. We must stimulate connection, conviction and action from a psychological angle. We will never sustain ourselves without the state of mind to carry the world forward.

Let's take a different look.

Western is still struggling to get recycled paper into the printers and copy machines, but Huxley College has become one of the most respected schools of environmental studies in the United States. Students bring ideals, hopes and dreams here. They learn through Western's struggles to take on the world's larger problems. And they will raise the children who will continue to do the same.

To look at population growth with a world view is horrifying. It makes it nearly impossible to think positively. But looking at it in terms of curbing growth through policy and education, and making growth sustainable through better development and living practices, will allow the possibility for these things to happen.

Maybe the tourist at Yellowstone will go home and realize that having a TV isn't as essential as they previously thought.

Our perspectives are indeed what will change the world. How we perceive our future is the shape it will take. Without hope we are lost; without a vision we are bound to defeat. Maybe the largest responsibility for those with hope and optimism is to be certain they are carried into the new millennium, they are shared and they remain.

Our future:

- 2000- The new millennium. Chaos breaks loose as all computer systems crash, and modern technology is rendered useless.
- 2006- The rebuilding of information systems aids in rational and efficient policy making and communication.
- 2014- Almost all commercial logging stops.
- 2023- Communication through wood-paper products is obsolete.
- 2035- All food production is based on organic and sustainable standards.
- 2048- World population growth has leveled off at 6.5 billion.
- 2060- Education is experimental based, so all students learn how to live while learning.
- 2072- Besides the major urban centers such as New York City, cities have been decentralized into small communities, where everyone helps each other live a healthy and eco-friendly lifestyle.
- 2089- The hole in the ozone is no longer detectable.
- 3000- A new millennium begins with peace and connection.

Fall 1999, the last wine-red and golden leaves are spiraling to the ground, the rain has begun its prolonged descent over the emerald Northwest; the weight of nature is settling to become the soil of a new century.

Like the rest of the world, we have reached an apex in time: the turn of the millennium.

Though it is merely a flicker in the story of the earth, the turn of the millennium marks a monumental event in human history - not just because of a change in numbers, but because of a change in awareness.

Our understanding of nature has evolved from seedling to tree in the last century. And though we have not given this understanding nearly the respect it deserves, we have great capacity for change. The environmental movement of the last century, watered by catastrophes and fertilized by extraordinary leaders, has provided the roots and revealed the path we must take.

From the creation of Yellowstone to the recent designation of Joshua Tree, from John Muir and Henry David Thoreau to today's Ralph Nader and Wendell Berry, there is a long line of footsteps on the environmental path. Strong laws have risen from our local and federal governments, certain businesses have begun to reflect on their operating methods, environmental organizations now number in the thousands. But despite our victories and advances in the last century, we have barely skirted the edge of the unique responsibility that comes with being human. We have still not traveled far enough. In fact, we have hardly begun.

If the events of the past century have taught us anything, they have taught us that minds and attitudes must change in order for change to occur at all.

For too long, our sense of responsibility and regard for the rest of the world has remained dormant only to be awakened by the tragedies that threaten our way of life. The Santa Barbara Oil Spill and the Cuyahoga River fire in the

1960s evoked outrage and the realization that environmental problems were real and could affect all of us. But now we are all too aware that environmental problems exist and that we are on a collision course with the natural world. Now, we must move beyond reaction, move into consideration.

In the early 1900s, the common response to an encounter with a tree was to cut it down. Today, deforestation, the depletion of fisheries, the hole in the ozone layer are all evidence that our attitude has not changed sufficiently. We are 6 billion people now and combined with a global capitalistic market, we are putting enormous strain on our natural resources and the lives that depend on them.

We are told if we continue to grow at our current rate the earth will reach its carrying capacity by 2040. But in many ways this is nonsense. We reached our capacity years ago when the first non-human species began dying off to make room for our rapacious consumptive habits.

If we and the rest of life on earth will proceed in the next century, the next millennium, then we must quickly awaken from the misperception of self that still plagues our species. We must realize that we are one species among many; we must extend our moral circle to include the rest of life. If we will survive in this new century, then the earth has only just given birth to the environmental movement, our morality is a recent discovery and we are on verge of moving further ahead in a shorter amount of time than we have ever dared to imagine.

As Scott Russell Sanders writes in his book *Hunting for Hope*, "The question is not whether life will go on with or without us. The question is whether we will continue our reckless use of the earth until we perish, taking innumerable other species down with us, or whether we will work to preserve the intricacy and beauty of our home."

Each of us is spiritually called to become a part of change, to participate and pay attention. It is a colossal task, but a possible and rewarding one, should we choose to accept it.

Our awareness of the natural world is reflective of our awareness of ourselves. It is time to expand our awareness in all directions. This means we must become a part of something larger, a part of community and a part of hope.

The 21st century demands we leave the dominant paradigm of the 20th century behind. The new millennium commands a mental revolution, a moral transformation and the courage to not just survive, but to live.

—Shane Powell



Entering the new millennium, the fall 1999 Planet staff decides what to bring along and what to leave behind.

Erin Armstrong

TAKE: Family & friends, future husband, Saturday Night Live

LEAVE: Monday Night Football, perms, the internet



Shellie Liman

TAKE: Hawaiian Islands, sunshine, mountains, John.

LEAVE: GP, pollution, mean people



Skye Thompson

TAKE: My childhood, a frisbee, Brita water filter

LEAVE: Jerry Springer, professional wrestling, bad gas mileage



Erica Oakley

TAKE: Family, Chrissy, Sarah, handful of daisies, my mom's spaghetti

LEAVE: Bill Clinton, I-695, dirty laundry



Patrick McKay-Beach

TAKE: Awareness, simplicity, passion

LEAVE: Consumerism, sensationalism, egocentrism



Kimberly Colleran

TAKE: Good vibes, ice cream, connection to Earth

LEAVE: Television, poor vision, vanity



Lisa Beck

TAKE: Honesty, home, sense of humor

LEAVE: Personal debt, broken friendships, pineapple sherbert



Christine Ross

TAKE: Case of red wine, Steve and Exeter.

LEAVE: Racism, pollution, politics



Shane Powell

TAKE: Tolerance, Mandarin, free speech

LEAVE: Slade Gorton, doubt, marshmallows



Kayley Mendenhall

TAKE: View of Lake Mayfield from my cabin, potato burrito.

LEAVE: Umbrellas, cockroaches, overpopulation.



