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Monthly



Planet

FEBRUARY VOLUME 2 NUMBER 3

A PUBLICATION OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY



Mellow Mammals of the Sea

by Jim Lane

The southern coastline of Florida, with its white sandy beaches and tangles of mangrove trees, is home to a wide and diversified assortment of inhabitants. They range anywhere from the oil covered tourists and retired elderly that blanket the beaches, to the alligators and diamond backed rattlesnakes that inhabit Florida's marshes and inland waterways. The coastline of southern Florida is quite unique in this respect, for it is an area that has been either totally developed or left entirely wild. There is however, one resi-

dent of Florida that has managed to make the best of both worlds. This animal is the Manatee.

When the first sailors reported back to Europe concerning the new world, they told stories of seeing a half woman, half fish along the shoreline of what is now Florida. What they were in fact describing, however, was the eight to twelve foot long, fifteen hundred pound Manatee, which is a slow, ponderous sea mammal. Ponce de Leon, in his quest for the fountain of youth, also came across the Manatee and termed them "sea wolves". Far from being either mermaids or wolves, Manatee are

large, gentle creatures that possess one of the most homely faces in the animal kingdom. They are also strictly herbivorous, eating between one hundred and fifty to three hundred pounds of grass per day. They are built similar to the Dugongs of India, which like Manatee, are members of the order Sirenia. They have broad flattened tails like whales, no hind limbs, and small fore flippers. Often called sea cows, they are in fact more closely related to the elephant.

At one time there were tens of thousands of Manatee along both coasts of Florida. By 1927 however, the state had to pass a law prohibiting their killing because of possibilities of their extinction. Although hunting for the most part has stopped and the Manatee possess no natural enemies, they still number less than a thousand. The two biggest threats facing these gentle creatures have come from developers and speedboats. So many Manatee have been killed by the hulls and propellers of speedboats, that the state of Florida was forced to post Manatee warning signs around certain inland waterways. The problem of land development has been less easy to deal with. Manatee are highly susceptible to changes in their environment, and because they only produce one calf at a time, are slow in building up a solid population. When forced to move because of encroaching land development, Manatee sometimes have a hard time breeding at all. This was seen in the early part of the century, when attempts were made to use Manatees to clear the weeds from essential water channels on sugar estates in the Caribbean. The Manatee refused to reproduce and soon died off.

There are only a few areas left in Florida where Manatee feel comfortable enough to make their home. Strange as it may seem, one of the largest of these areas is in

Continued on Back Page

Northwest Power Bill

By Chris Burke

On November 19, 1980, the U.S. Senate agreed to the House version of the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act, better known as the Northwest Power Bill. The bill is designed to provide an adequate power supply for the northwest, and to avoid legal entanglements over the allocation of cheap, and scarce electricity from the thirty federally funded hydro-electric plants on the Columbia River. Proponents of the bill claim that it will keep utility rates as low, or lower, than they would be without the bill, while emphasizing the use of conservation and renewable resources.

The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) has been responsible since 1937 for the transmission and sale of federal hydropower. Because of the bill, BPA will take on the responsibility of meeting the growing electricity demands of the people of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. Many opponents of this bill feel that this represents an unnecessary federal response to a regional problem. Utilities all across the nation are faced with the problem of meeting ever-growing energy demands, and they are acting to meet those demands without federal intervention.

Many people who oppose the bill fear that it will take control out of the region and deposit it in Washington, D.C. To avoid this, Congress made the formation of a regional planning council a major provision of the bill. The eight person council will consist of two governor-appointed members from each of the four states. The council will be responsible for developing a plan for the region which will contain, among other things, a conservation program, a system for weighing environmental and social costs against energy demands, and a program for the pro-

tection and enhancement of the fish and wildlife along the Columbia River. In developing this plan, the council must keep in mind the priorities of the bill, which are: 1) cost-effective conservation, 2) development of renewable resource facilities, 3) cogeneration, 4) maintenance and development of conventional facilities. 'Cost-effective' is a term used often in the bill. It simply means that the proposed measure or facility must be reliable and available within the time needed, and will meet or reduce the electric power demand at a price no greater than the least cost alternative.

Since the Bonneville Project Act of 1937, BPA has had the responsibility of marketing federal hydroelectricity. A preference clause in the 1937 act gave the consumers of publicly owned utilities first call on the electricity from the federal plants. This preference clause was not implemented until 1973 when it became evident that the growing demand would exceed the available supply. The investor owned utilities of the region (I.O.U.'s) could no longer rely on cheap federal hydropower to meet their needs. They began using more expensive thermal resources, such as nuclear reactors and coal-fired plants, to supplement their electricity supply. As a result, rates rose in the investor owned utilities until they averaged twice the rates of public, consumer owned utilities. (80% of the consumers in Washington are serviced by consumer owned utilities. Bellingham is part of an investor owned utility, although there is a drive on now toward the formation of a public utility.)

The 1980 Northwest Power Bill makes BPA the agency responsible for erasing the rate difference between public and private utilities. Bonneville will buy high priced electricity from the IOU's and sell back an equal amount of electricity

at the lower, federal rate. This transaction will occur in gradual increments, beginning with the exchange of 60% of the IOU electricity. In 1985 the exchange will reach 100%. The direct-service industrial customers of the region -- essentially the aluminum plants -- will absorb the cost of rate relief to the IOU customers. The direct-service industries (DSI's), in exchange for paying higher rates, will receive long-term power contracts. This arrangement is acceptable to the DSI's because the alternatives, unreliable electricity or relocation, are not economically feasible.

Bonneville will also offer long-term requirement contracts to each utility in the region. The utility must submit a demand forecast for the next 20 years, and Bonneville then becomes responsible for acquiring the inevitably more expensive resources to meet the future demands of all the utilities which sign the contract.

Bonneville is not permitted to own or construct generating facilities to meet these demands. Instead, BPA can use its newly upgraded status to obtain the low interest money available to government corporations. The bill allows Bonneville to use this money to finance conservation measures, renewable resource and other small generating facilities, and research and development projects. Bonneville is also allowed to pay 'front-end' costs, such as feasibility studies, for small generating facilities.

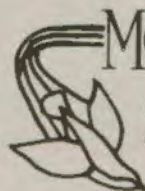
The bill prevents Bonneville's borrowing to finance large, conventional plants. But BPA can pay 'front-end' costs for such a plant if the builder agrees to sell the theoretical capacity of the plant to Bonneville. This purchase agreement assures Bonneville's control of the electricity the plant is capable of producing. It also means that the ratepayers of the region will pay for, but never own, the plant, even if it never puts out a watt.

The final outcome of the various financial arrangements allowed



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by the bill is the same. The authority to build a plant is separated from the responsibility to pay for it. The risk is spread over the entire region. A setup quite similar to this was arranged in 1970 in order to build WPPSS nuclear reactors 1, 2, and 3. Separating the authority to build from the responsibility to pay, often decreases the builder's incentive to get the job done on time, at cost.

As Bonneville integrates the price of the new, expensive electricity with the price of the cheap hydropower, rates will begin to rise. The consumers of a high load growth utility, such as Seattle, will pay rates which do not accurately reflect the cost of the resources acquired specifically to meet their demands. The bill does protect preference customers from the costs of demand growth in investor owned utilities. Increases which are determined to be the result of the acquisition of expensive electricity to meet IOU needs are to be charged to the IOU's or other customers. However, the bill cannot protect small low growth publicly owned utilities from the increased demands of other fast growing consumer owned utilities. The artificially low rates of a growing utility, such as Seattle, will be subsidized by the ratepayers of slow growing utilities, such as those of Western Montana. The benefits of prices kept artificially low eventually wears thin, as evidenced by the oil and natural gas industries.

The Northwest Power Bill of 1980 is possibly the best bill it could be considering the complexities of the issues involved. It emphasizes conservation, giving it a 10% advantage. This means that any conservation effort will be favored even if it costs up to 10%

more than any alternative capable of generating the amount of electricity the conservation saves. The bill also places the use of renewable resources and cogeneration ahead of conventional facilities. It attempts to protect and improve the fish and wildlife of the Columbia River, and it attempts to keep control in the region both through the regional planning council and requirements for public hearings.

Nevertheless, the bill does represent the assumption by the federal government of the problems and responsibilities utilities all over the nation are handling alone. It links the people of the entire region in a way many may not like. Whether this bill sets an example for the future handling of similar situations remains to be seen.



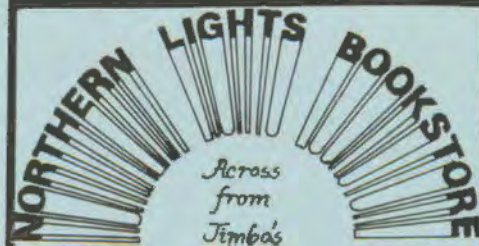
BOOK REVIEW

AMERICAN ENVIRONMENTALISM: VALUES, TACTICS, PRIORITIES, by Joseph M. Petulla. College Station, Texas: Texas A&M University Press, 1980

One of the chief problems of the American environmental movement is the definition of philosophy--the exploration, examination, and elucidation of ideas--of the many different causes that have been combined in it.

In this book Joseph Petulla sorts out the various issues and concepts of environmentalism by tracing their inspiration and values from the three traditions of environmental thought--the biocentric, the ecologic, and the economic. He examines the movement's historical roots, assumptions, goals, values, politics, struggles, successes, limitations, trends, and finally, the priorities it has brought to the national consciousness.

This disentangling, clarifying process involves political implications and judgements about the recent directions of the environmental movement. Parts of the book appear to champion the environmentalist cause, for Petulla has examined environmental history with sympathetic appreciation for its values.



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On the other hand, other sections of the book are critical of environmentalist thinking by their analysis and conceptual exploration of the assumptions, methods, data, and propositions of the movement.

Absolutist assumptions and methodologies often lead environmentalists and their opponents into conflict, yet even conflict groups must live with each other in the natural world, and that natural world must be understood by reason. This book attempts to establish wider ethical understanding and a political basis for support of environmentalism by promoting rational discussion about increasingly important subjects.

American Environmentalism is required reading for all serious students of environmental philosophy and politics.

--John Miles



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In Quiet Desperation

by Mark Gardner

"The mass of men live lives of quiet desperation." These words were written by Henry David Thoreau back in the 1800's while he was conducting his famous experiment in aessential living at Walden Pond. Yet as many of us are painfully aware, these words describe our own times with a ringing truth even more revealing than in Thoreau's day. Industrialized civilization moves at a frenetic pace, churning and transforming the natural environment into endless geometrical expanses of roads, buildings, cities, and other monuments to humanity's fundamental dissatisfaction. The beings who propel such forces learn from birth about the gods of progress and achievement, and spend their lives in desperate attempts to find the happiness that would surely be theirs as they approached the thrones of these elusive deities.

Yet the entrance to the gods' chambers are never to be found. The goal is always one step, one accomplishment away, as in the legend of King Tantalus. Tantalus was condemned to stand up to his chin in a pool of water and beneath fruit laden boughs, only to have the water or the fruit recede at each attempt to drink or eat.

Yet the struggle continues, even though weariness soon begins to set in. Many would stop if they knew of an alternative. But to stop means to lose one's identity, an identity created not through knowledge of who we are, but through constant comparison and competition; maintained not by spontaneous living but by having, consuming, manipulating.

Since we were small children we have been taught that only by constant competition and struggle can we accomplish enough to deserve respect and affection. Since a tender age we have been indoctrinated into the heroic struggle of the ego--for grades, athletic victories, preatige, romantic conquests, power, money, conspicuous consumption. The wonder and awe of living slips away as we become enveloped in a purely intellectual and goal-oriented world. Our interpersonal relations become more and more distant as we lose our ability to see others as having value in themselves, instead seeing our fellow

humans only in terms of judgements and comparisons. Our heart grows dull, our vision clouds and our thinking becomes conservative and mechanical as creativity and emotion slip away.

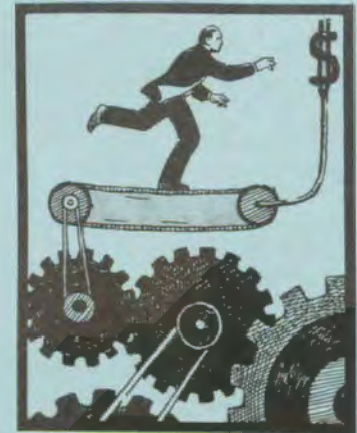
Eventually the struggle loses its initial thrill and modern man is left with a hollow that will not be filled. For aome, escape is the answer--drugs, alcoholic stupors, or feelingless sex are sought to make up for the hollowness. A hollowness that was created by constant competition and the superficial and insincere relations that often pass for friendship and love in our confused culture. Or the game is played with even greater desperation, resulting in consequences which are deadly serious--massive thermonuclear war machines designed to obliterate great proportions of the earth's living things or the great thrusts of "progress" which threaten to overwhelm the earth's ecosystem. Those even less equipped for the struggle immerse themselves in collective identities to provide partial relief from anxiety and loneliness--witness Jonestown, or more recently, the Moral Majority.

Such is life for many of the earth's millions. Yet one is left with the nagging feeling that something must have gone wrong, somewhere. What we have done is to place ourselves in traps of our own making. Our culture hypnotizes us into seeing only one side of our total human nature--the active, aggressive, ego-oriented side. Our needs for growth, love, and self-transcendence are subordinated to the survival struggle. Creativity is sacrificed to conformity; humor to seriousness; warmth to aggressive purposeful behavior. The more these other sensitivities and needs are repressed, the more desperate we become--and we have persisted so long it is not even clear that our civilization will survive the 20th century.

We need to escape from the chains that bind and to regain the entire human nature that is ours by birthright. What is needed is the development of the capacity to see beyond the ego structures of our own minds, beyond the socially acceptable behavior patterns that have led the world into much misery and strife. Enough of us need to get past the aggression and mis-

trust mirrored on so many of our faces, past the failures and confusions and insecurities to the place where we can recognize our fundamental unity with one another and with all living things. We need to regain our personal wholeness. If this really is the end we seek, then meditation is a more valuable activity than constant judgemental thinking; one sincere sentence worth more than an entire encyclopedia of disconnected facts; one honest friendship more important than scores of sexual conquests.

We will never overcome our environmental and social problems until outward accomplishments and egotism cease to be the whole of our lives from birth to death. All of our problems are soluble if only the will can be mustered. But we will never make it unless we cease to think of ourselves as lonely atoms in a hostile universe, and cease trying to manipulate and fix all of life into predictable forms, hoping in the process to find the elusive potion that evaporated so quickly as in a summer breeze.



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With Love and Delicate Concern?

by Stan Holmes

The newly appointed Secretary of the Interior, James G. Watt, might have to blow the dust off his six shooter when confronting angry environmentalists over land preservation issues in the west.

A showdown at high noon is possible, and environmentalists sweat and shudder for good reason: federal regulations protecting the environment are anathema to Watt.

"Like hiring a fox to guard the chickens," protested Bernard Ewell, president of the Colorado Open Space Council. Said Carolyn Johnson, an official of the Public Lands Institute, a privately funded watchdog group: "Watt may be the first person ever to unite 176 separate Indian tribes on a single issue: opposition to him."

Watt, an attorney born and raised in Wyoming, brings to the new Reagan administration a toughness and tenacity chillingly effective in opposing federal regulations of any kind. The most recent example was the formation of the Mountain States Legal Foundation, a public-interest firm of ten lawyers, and backed by archconservative Joseph Coors, the Colorado brewer.

The Foundation's main purpose is to "protect the concepts of the free enterprise system." This means they consistently support big business interests in opening more Western land to development and exploitation. The unfortunate fact is that Watt, as president of the Foundation, has had a devastating effect in the courtroom--he wins a lot.

In one suit, the Mountain Foundation sued successfully to block the Colorado Public Utilities

Commission from requiring utilities to sell natural gas to the elderly and handicapped poor at discount rates. The Foundation contended that the state should not require private companies to pursue "public welfare" goals to the detriment of other power users.

Mountain States' current suits point to the Jicarilla Apaches to prevent them from levying taxes on natural gas pumped from their reservation in northern New Mexico. The Jicarilla Apaches are over-seen by the Department of Interior. In another case, Watt's law firm in October persuaded a federal district court in Cheyenne, Wyoming to rule that the Departments of Interior and Agriculture could not refuse to consider applications for exploratory oil and gas-drilling leases on federal land that is being considered for reclassification as wilderness.

Environmentalists fear that when Watt becomes Secretary of Interior, he will actively pursue opening of more Western lands for private oil and mining companies. They have reason to fear, since nowhere in Watt's past performances has he shown an interest for preservation. He calls his opponents "environmental extremists--one of those special interest groups who would deny the balanced management of resources for the benefit of consumers and for all of America."

Watt's pledge to manage Western lands with "love and delicate concern" is as reassuring as Reagan's promise of being a perpetrator of peace. He quickly contradicts himself by acknowledging his intent to move aggressively to inventory Western public lands that might have potential for oil, gas, and coal exploration.

Reagan's nomination of James G. Watt for Secretary of Interior is disheartening, but predictable for an administration that still believes the free enterprise system is a panacea to all our nation's problems. Reagan plans to firmly adhere to the notion of economic expansion and exploitation of resources as a stimulus to activate the rusted engines of industry. On that premise, Watt fits perfectly into their philosophy. Yet, with 176 separate Indian tribes actively opposed to him, we can hope for, and might get, another "Custer's last stand."



WESTERN TRILLIUM

*Geoffrey died two years ago,
I am on Chichagoff Island; it is
a very primordial, wild place.
Inland sea passages, rain forest,
mussel beds, kelp gardens, wind,
storms, sunshine and sudden rain
again; a tiny deer across the bay,
so delicate, the reflection of
forest and cliff in the water,
the unearthly scream of Raven;
Return.*

*The spirits are moving today, are
somberously alive in the wind that
laps the water on the shore, moody
in the choppy bay and evanescent
light. The warm and chilling wind
that rushes through the trees,*

*waves of grass, the sudden rise
and billow of the great branches.
Majic, gray and melancholy
movement of spirit, as in the wind
across a cemetery, the haul of a
coyote, the cry of a loon and the
scampering of a hermit crab between
gusts to the shelter of a
barncle-crusted rock, met with the
timely breathing of the sea.*

--Leslie Hulbert--



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New Year's at Whatcom Creek

By Rick Adams

The morning of Jan. 1, 1981, marked the joyous beginning of the new year. While some recovered from celebrating New Year's Eve, others settled back to enjoy their annual feast or a few hours of television. Jan. 1st also marked the day Whatcom Creek underwent drastic changes.

Whatcom Creek was devastated by an oil spill which contained a toxic chemical called pentachlorophenol, commonly used as a wood preservative. The chemical, which originated from Frank Brooks Lumber Company, located on Iowa St., seeped into the creek and out to Bellingham Bay after a tank containing the preservative ruptured.

The spill, which contained a 5 percent solution of pentachlorophenol, immediately started killing all inhabitants of the creek from Fever Creek to Bellingham Bay. Although the spill occurred Jan. 1st, neither government officials nor residents of the area received word of the incident until the following Monday or Tuesday.

The most damage occurred when the spill entered the water system of the Maritime Heritage Center, which is a local hatchery for chinook salmon and steelhead trout. The hatchery, which was made from Bellingham's old sewage treatment tanks, is a project dedicated to restoring salmon runs in Whatcom Creek.

When the chemical reached the hatchery, 20,000 steelhead and 30,000 chinook salmon were killed outright. This loss was quite unfortunate, as a few quick decisions could have saved the salmon

and steelhead.

As the spill flowed down Whatcom Creek, none of the government agencies who were aware of the problem called the hatchery. If a phone call had been relayed to the hatchery, the water source, which enters from Whatcom Creek, could have been disconnected, thus possibly saving the fish. If the year-old fish could have been saved, they would have been released this spring hopefully to return in 1984 to Whatcom Creek and the Nooksack River for sport fishermen. The few fish that did survive the spill were moved to the State Game Department hatchery at Whatcom Falls Park to avoid further contamination.

Those fish that died were taken to the Thermal Reduction Company for incineration. The fish were burned for about one second at about 2,000 degrees, which should destroy the toxic chemicals from the spill. Ashes from the fish were then segregated at a landfill.

Other contaminated debris, such as soil and weeds, were removed from the creek and stored in empty tanks to be shipped to a federal hazardous material storage site in Oregon.

In addition to the loss of the hatchery fish, the entire marine system of the creek was devastated by the noxious chemical. The spill apparently killed all the fish and marine life from Brooks Lumber Co. to the mouth of Whatcom Creek. Only those fish above the spill or those entering the creek after clean-up operations survived.

From Jan. 1st, the time the spill occurred, to Jan. 5th, when the spill was publicized, many fishermen from Bellingham caught and consumed fish from the creek. The short-run effects of the pentachlorophenol were quite apparent--sore throats and diarrhea. No one knows what the long-run effects will be, if any.

A group of children from the Bellingham Day Care Center was also exposed to the chemical. The children were on a field trip at the Maritime Heritage Center before word of the toxic spill was made public. The children could smell the oil and saw dead fish in the pond. Within ten minutes the instructor removed the group from the grounds, but this was not soon e-

nough. Several children complained about sore throats, two children suffered diarrhea and one child suffered sharp stomach pains that night.

Health Department officials are asking people to stay out of Whatcom Creek until further notice. They are also asking that people refrain from fishing in the creek or catching shellfish near the mouth of the creek. Signs have been posted along the creek and will remain until water samples, taken by the Health Department, return from the Department of Ecology in Seattle.

Frank Brooks Manufacturing will be responsible for the cost of public and private damage and also faces state and federal penalties for the oil spill.

Many factors, such as human error, lack of communication, and irresponsibility, can be blamed for this disaster. However, placing blame should not be a focal point, rather, mechanisms for the prevention of like occurrences should be quickly implemented. Bellingham does not have a policy relating to spills within waterways. No one is in the position of informing the necessary agencies who could control such spills.

Hopefully, the Whatcom Creek spill will bring a general awareness to the public of the dangers of such hazardous chemicals and bring changes that could prevent such events from taking place in the future.



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Hope for the Eagles

by Gay Roselle

Despite protection by an act of Congress, bald eagles have been trapped, shot, and poisoned until in many areas they are close to being eliminated. Egg collectors steal their eggs, and dead eagles are sold on the black market for their feathers and talons.

Today, bald eagles have been driven out of twenty-seven states, predominantly in the South and East. The number of eagles being hatched has declined by 96% in some parts of the country. These declines have been caused by high levels of noxious pesticides in the birds' diet. The pesticides interfere with calcium metabolism, resulting in egg shells that are easily broken. In states where they survive, eagles have been pushed into small, isolated areas.

The Skagit River, between Rockport and Marblemount is one such area. This area provides habitat for one of the two largest wintering populations of bald eagles anywhere in the U.S. The eagles move into the upper Skagit River from late November to early January. Some eagles stay into late February and March, depending upon the amount of dead salmon.

Survival of these eagles was uncertain until 1971, when a concerned student undertook a four-year protection project. John Ellingson of the University of Washington was concerned over several questions. Would this land fall into the hands of developers, thereby making the area unfit for an eagle habitat? Would enough salmon remain to supply the eagle

population with its food? Would timbering operations strip the banks of the high trees where the eagles perch?

John received support from The Nature Conservancy, a powerful nationwide group, which has preserved 750,000 acres of wildlife habitat in its twenty-five year history.

John then researched the county clerk's records to determine who owned the land. 1,000 acres of the eagles' habitat were owned by Simpson Timber, Scott Paper Company, and Fred Martin, former state senator. 1,000 acres would probably be enough land to protect the eagles, if it were available.

State help was needed from the Dept. of Game and the Dept. of Fisheries. Ralph Munro, special assistant to Governor Evans, gained support from directors of both groups. But funds were still unavailable. Conveniently, Fred Martin, partial owner of the land, supported the cause strongly. He had been looking for some way to ensure protection of the eagles. Simpson Timber was also cooperative. They immediately suspended cutting operations between Rockport and Marblemount.

Acquisition of the land is being made by a combination of gifts and purchases. As of 1976, the seventy-three acre Martin property had been bought for \$15,000, which is a fraction of the true value. Simpson Timber traded the land, along with the timber, for \$126,000, again a fraction of the real cost. Plans were made to buy the Scott Paper Co. property for \$75,000 from a nationwide public subscription. At the present,

there are 1,500 acres of protected eagle habitat on the Skagit. Three-quarters of the land is owned by the Dept. of Game, and one-quarter is owned by The Nature Conservancy.

The only limitations placed on the area are restriction of foot traffic on sandbars where eagles feed and under their roosting trees. No restrictions upon fishing and birdwatching were implemented. No disputes between fishermen and eagles were predicted. There has been intensive steelhead fishing on the river for 30 years, with no effect upon the eagles. The Dept. of Fisheries agreed to stock the tributaries generously with fish.

The Rockport-Marblemount eagle refuge provides a valuable resource for studying eagles. Banding studies are done to determine where the eagles' homes are after they leave the Skagit in late February. Finding the summer site provides opportunity to ensure that that site is protected. This is especially important as oversights regarding the safety of breeding grounds have led to the elimination and decline of many species.

A January, 1980 report notes a redistribution of bald eagles along the Skagit. Eagles are spreading out over northwest Washington instead of congregating on the Skagit, apparently because of a food shortage. The Skagit drew only 100 eagles in 1980, compared to 400 in 1979. Chum salmon had a poor run this year reducing the food available to the eagles. More eagles have been found in other areas than usual, however. The Nooksack had about 280--twice as many as last year. There appears to be an ample food supply there. Copper Creek observers sited 40 eagles, compared with 12 last year. The Sauk River spotted 50 for the first time. Kent Taylor, Dept. of Game, feels the decline on the Skagit is not serious, and that the eagles will continue to return for many years to come.



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Manatees. From page one.

the water around the Crystal River Nuclear Plant. Located roughly seventy miles north of Tampa, it has the distinction of being the most ill plagued nuclear power plant in America today, having suffered numerous malfunctions over the years. Nevertheless, the Manatee seem to enjoy the extra warm water and abundant grass there. A special bond also seems to have developed between plant workers and the Manatee. At the end of last spring, an orphaned baby Manatee was found alone near the plant's shoreline, its mother had apparently been killed by a speedboat. Concerned plant workers took the baby to one of the plant's water holding tanks and cared for it until help came a week later. The baby has recently been brought back to the plant, and is now a permanent resident there.

Although the Manatee have had it rough up to this point, things are starting to look up. A Manatee recovery project has been started, centering around the efforts of J.P. Garner, owner of Homosassa Springs, which is a marine attraction on the Crystal River. He recently got the federal go ahead to make Homosassa Springs a haven for injured Manatee. Another project is taking place in Brazil, where Amazonian manatee have had it just as rough as their brothers and sisters in Florida. Four hundred thousand of them were turned into machine belts before the Brazilian government began protecting them in 1967. A project is now under way to breed Manatees in lakes formed by hydroelectric projects in the Amazon. The project is being undertaken by the Smithsonian Institution with the help of the Brazilian national electric company, ElectoBras. This project could prove quite tricky, for Manatee are not easily relocated. Even so, at least the effort is being made to help these mellow mammals of the sea make a comeback.



Review

INCIDENT AT EAGLE RANCH, by Donald G. Schueler. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1980

In December of 1975 the manager of Eagle Ranch, a 6000 acre spread west of San Antonio, Texas, watched angrily as a helicopter pursued a golden eagle. The eagle was shot and killed, the incident reported, and an investigation initiated. Eventually it was learned that this chopper alone, with its aerial gunners, had killed more than 100 bald end golden eagles during a two year period. The federal government brought the case to court, and the defendants, a government trapper and several sheep ranchers, were found guilty of violating the Bald Eagle Protection Act. They were then fined and given suspended sentences.

Donald Schueler, a writer and literature professor, covered the trial for Audubon Magazine, becoming very curious about the background of the case. Why were ranchers killing eagles? Were eagles preying significantly upon sheep? What was the involvement of the Animal Damage Control Department of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the killing of predators in general and eagles in particular? How widespread is the aerial shooting of eagles?

Schueler traveled widely in West Texas and asked many penetrating questions. Incident at Eagle Ranch is the report of his probe. It is an excellent piece of work, one of the finest pieces of environmental journalism in recent times. Schueler describes the incident at Eagle Ranch and tells the story of the subsequent investigation, of the cover-up faced by the investigators, and of the ultimate breaking of the case with the help of an informer. He thoroughly studies the major elements in the case: the ranchers, the predator control agency of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the predator control personnel in the field, and the predators themselves. He goes beyond the eagle case to review the situation relative to predator control in the west. He summarizes the status of control efforts with coyotes, bobcats, and mountain lions, as well as eagles (which, it turns out, are not the serious predatory hazard to sheep that the ranchers think they are). In the

end, he makes several recommendations that might improve both predator control and the lot of the predators.

Incident at Eagle Ranch is very well written. The author tries to be fair, while not trying to hide his concern for the wildlife involved in the controversial predator control issue. His book beautifully illustrates the complexity and value-laden nature of environmental problems, and is highly recommended.

--John Miles

CREDITS

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