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3-1982

## Monthly Planet, 1982, March

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### Recommended Citation

Springer, Jim and Huxley College of the Environment, Western Washington University, "Monthly Planet, 1982, March" (1982). *The Planet*. 135.  
<https://cedar.wwu.edu/planet/135>

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# Monthly



# Planet

March VOLUME 3 NUMBER 4

A PUBLICATION OF THE ASSOCIATED STUDENTS ENVIRONMENTAL CENTER WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

## Act endangered

by Jim Lafley

One of the most important conservation efforts ever undertaken by this country is now in danger of being dismantled. The Endangered Species Act is before the United States Congress this year for mandatory review and any number of changes can be made in the Act. The changes range from strengthening the effectiveness of the legislation to eliminating protection for plants.

The Act was passed by Congress in 1973 and it provides protection for animals and plant species which are currently in danger of extinction or those that may become so in the near future. For this conserva-

tion program to continue it must pass both the Senate and the House of Representatives and be signed by the President before October 1, 1982.

Already anti-conservation lobbyists are approaching the Reagan Administration and Congress with plans to gut this law. Efforts to support the law are being backed by every national conservation group because they recognize its importance.

What makes such a law necessary? In recent decades the rate of species loss has been greatly accelerated. This rate increase can be directly attributed to human activity.

From 1600 to 1900, approximately 75 animal species became extinct, at a rate of 1 every 4 years. From 1900 to present, about 75 have vanished which is one a year. The rates do not include invertebrates and plants that have been lost. Biologists are now estimating that between one and three extinctions are now occurring daily and this rate may increase to one per hour by the late 1980s.

The known extinctions in this country have increased with the growth of human population. As we take over more land for our own use we destroy the habitats necessary for other species to survive and we lose them forever.

Why should we concern ourselves with these losses? Some of the material reasons for saving species include opportunities for improved crop production, new medicines from substances found naturally in wild species, and energy generation from biological sources.

An endangered Mexican plant was recently discovered to be closely related to corn. It is resistant to several diseases that plague our domesticated corn

varieties and scientists believe it may be inbred with our corn plants. The Mexican plant is also a perennial. It may be possible to develop a perennial corn which would require less care than our annual corn, thereby reducing production costs.

Many medicines have been derived from wild species. In fact almost half of the prescriptions used in the United States contain ingredients from natural sources. If we had lost a fungus, penicillium, we would not have the drug penicillin, nor any of the family of antibiotics that were later developed. Scientists are studying snails and mollusks in an effort to discover why they don't contract cancer. Another cancer treatment may be developed from a substance found in a rare Ethiopian plant.

Wood is an energy source often used as a direct fuel. Other plants produce hydrocarbon rich latexes which generate about 5 to 10 barrels of oil per acre. The copaiba tree in Brazil produces a sap which can be used to fuel diesel engines.

We would eliminate many of these opportunities by allowing species to become extinct. In addition, endangered species are important environmental indicators. The earth's rate of endangerment serves as a gauge which measures how much of its surface will no longer support healthy ecosystems and the species dependent upon them, including humans.

Natural systems generate oxygen, recycle nutrients, break down pollutants, maintain soil fertility, control water availability, and moderate climate. Life on earth would be difficult, if not impossible, without these free services provided by species diversity. No one can predict which species are ultimately of critical importance to human existence or will provide valuable benefits in years to come.

*continued on page 2*



BLACK-FOOTED FERRET

The black-footed ferret is a large weasel that inhabits the Great Plains region in association with prairie dogs. It is an endangered species and is rarely observed. The reason for ferret population decline is not known precisely but is probably due to elimination of prey and destruction of original grasslands.

*Act continued*

The purpose of the Endangered Species Act is to preserve species that are endangered or threatened by restoring these species to a point at which it is no longer in danger of extinction. The Secretary of Interior and the Secretary of Commerce are responsible for administering the Act.

Other important functions of the Act are determining and protecting the critical habitat of an endangered species. Critical habitat includes the areas of land, water and air space occupied by the species at the time of its listing that are required for its normal needs and survival. This designation is a means to alert federal agencies, landowners, and others to the presence of

endangered species. It only restricts federally authorized projects and does not necessarily restrict the rights of property owners or prevent development of the area. Certain areas may be excluded from this designation if the Secretary of Interior or Commerce decides the economic benefits outweigh the benefits of conserving an area. Such areas would not be excluded if the result would be the extinction of the species.

During reauthorization, the Interior Department may seek to limit the Act's protection to vertebrate animals only, eliminate critical habitat designations, make federal agency responsibilities optional, make it more difficult to list a species as endangered or threatened, and limit the rights of

citizens to ensure that the Act is rigorously enforced. These changes would destroy the Act's effectiveness. It seems absurd that the agency entrusted to administer and enforce the Act may propose them.

The effort to reauthorize a strong and effective Act will not be easy and it will require the efforts of a large number of people and organizations. Here's what you can do: inform friends about the importance of the reauthorization of the Act; write letters and make phone calls to administration officials and members of Congress and urge them to support a strong Act.

The plants and animals that need the protection of the Endangered Species Act are relying on your help for their continued survival. \*

## Chimps, bees, dogs and slime mold

by Valerie Smith

What is it that makes humans distinct from all other animals? Is it our "superior intelligence" that has empowered us with the ability to build skyscrapers, to virtually eliminate a disease like smallpox, and to develop a technology capable of annihilating millions upon millions of people? Or is it our emotions which make us the "superior" species, our sense of morals and ethics, our souls? Or perhaps it is language. Many scholars have assigned language as the determining factor in the difference between humans and other animals. For it is in our ability to communicate that our species has effectively retained and exchanged the information fundamental to any sort of cultural or technological development. But, as happened when the realization became widespread that the earth was not the center of the universe, our egos may suffer severe blows with the recognition that we are not the sole possessors of communicative abilities. Many animals, such as chimpanzees, bees and canines have a definitive means of communication. Perhaps it is through a growing understanding of the similarities between ourselves and animals that we will become unfettered by our egotistic perceptions of animals solely in relation to ourselves, and come to respect animal life for its own sake.

An example of a chimpanzee

that learned to communicate with humans is Washoe, born in Africa in 1965 and arrived in Reno, Nevada in 1966 to live with Beatrice and Allen Gardner. They wanted to study her communicative and learning abilities. She was taught American Sign Language, ASL, which is the gestural language most commonly used by deaf Americans. Washoe learned ASL through imitation or through molding, taking her hands and putting them through the motions. She caught on quickly and provided the Gardners with plenty of information about her ability to communicate.

Washoe and other chimps have shown the ability to grasp a fundamental feature of language - syntax. According to linguists, this is the essence of language. Word order is one devise of syntax, differentiating the meanings between "paint the box red" and "box the red paint." The Gardner's and their assistant Roger found many of the chimps could differentiate between phrases like "Washoe tickle Roger" and "Roger tickle Washoe." Such differentiation expresses a definite understanding of the syntactic devise of word order.

Many of the fundamental elements of language can be found in how these chimps communicate with sign language. They are able to invent sign combinations, even forming phrases with 5, 6, 7 or more signs to them. They can conceptualize and generalize. They can also use and understand the

various devices of syntax in language, evidently an important aspect of actual language.

Chimps have the ability to grasp language, which may be beyond the capabilities of other animals. But even though other species are incapable of language, they can often communicate amongst members of their own species. Consider the slime-mold, where the life cycle begins as a one-celled amoeba, but in times of famine will aggregate with other slime mold amoeba to form a kind of slug that creeps through the soil. Later the slug converts into something like a plant with a long stem topped with a globe of spores. The globe splits, and spores may adhere to some wandering worm to be scattered throughout the soil and start the life cycle once again. What kind

*continued on page 3*



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*Chimps continued*

of message is sent during times of food scarcity to draw all the one-celled animals together to form a conglomerate that moves like a single animal? It is due to chemical messages which draw one-celled animals together, a chemical called acrasin. But not only does the slime mold send signals to aggregate, it also has chemicals which repel. The repellent serves as a spacing mechanism to keep from decimating food sources in an area, causing organisms to starve to death. It also insures wider spore dispersal.



The honey bee has a remarkable method of communication: The "waggle dance". A worker bee returns to the hive to tell the others of the discovery of a food source. She (all worker bees are female) begins dancing and wagging her body, at the same time "buzzing" by rapidly vibrating her wings. The dance is a distinct figure 8 pattern, the middle line of the 8 giving her direction and distance of the food source.

The canines communicate primarily in three ways: with pheromones (chemical odors), sounds, and body language. Wolves and dogs are well equipped for sending odor messages with a scent gland near the tail and glands between the toes. When a dog urinates and scrapes at the spot with his paws, the scent of the site is added to with messages from these interdigital glands. The scent can be a territorial marker, an aid to finding the way home, or it can even identify himself to other dogs who know him.

The sounds that wolves and dogs make often correspond to certain situations. Puppies, for example, vocalize differently according to whether they are cold, hungry, hurt or playing.

In canid body language, a direct stare is the most obvious message: a threat. Threatened dogs may express submissiveness by

refusing to return the stare and looking away, or by cringing and rolling onto his back. Low ranking adult wolves lick the muzzle of a dominant wolf, behaving as if they were cubs and the other wolf the parent, signaling submission.

These animals are not the only ones able to communicate with one another. Scores of references exist citing studies which show that birds, frogs, crickets, ants, fish and of course, the well-publicized whale and dolphin, do indeed have communicative abilities. It is clear we are not the only animal capable of communicating with one another. The traditional means of separating humans from animals is slowly disintegrating.

Undoubtedly the discussion concerning the distinguishing factor which has allowed humans to develop civilizations and step foot on the moon will continue. But with each discovery of human-animal similarity, we may come closer to realizing we are as integrally bound to nature as the honey bee or nightingale, and with this commonality, we may learn to value animal life for the sake of animal life. Dr. Fox, a noted scientist in the study of wolf communication, put it eloquently, "Why must we justify the existence of wolves or whales or whatever by demonstrating their superior intelligence or sociability, in other words, their similarity to us humans. Everything is precious - whether it is human-like or not. What right have we to destroy any animal? That's why it is important to realize animals communicate and feel much as we do. Perhaps out of that, we can develop what we really need: a biospiritual ethic, a reverence for all life." \*

*No life can be barren which hears  
the whisper of the wind  
in the branches,  
or the voice of the sea  
as it breaks upon the shore.  
And no soul can lack happiness,  
looking up to the midnight stars.*

*William Winter*



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## Levitated train

by Mark Shulz

Emergent technology from the land of the Toyota now brings promise of an innovative mass-transportation system. This system would solve the industrialized world's need for an efficient, non-polluting, high-speed mode of transport. This new system could also be a powerful means for easing unemployment in many sectors of the economy by stimulating a nationwide revamping of our existing mass transportation systems.

This prodigious system could become attainable in the near future thanks to unrelentless efforts by the Japanese National Railway (JNR) to perfect and fully develop a train that operates on the principle of magnetic levitation. This magnetic-levitation system (mag-lev) employs superconducting magnets which generate a powerful magnetic field. These magnets, located within the train's undercarriage, have an opposite polarity to those on the sophisticated magnetless track, and actually lift the car off the track for a ride on a "cushion of air". Since the train and its electromagnets are not in direct contact with the track itself there exists virtually no resistance or friction whatsoever. Therefore, energy is utilized most efficiently.

continued on page 4

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*Train continued*

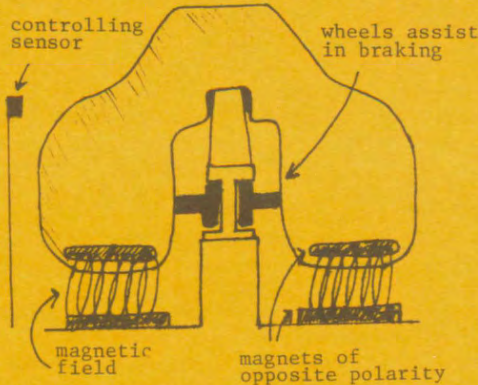
The mag-lev system works like this: electromagnetic coils in the train are supercooled with liquid helium to approximately -273 C degrees (absolute zero). These coils are then induced with electric current.

The cryogenic temperatures allow unrestricted current flow through the electromagnet once the source is shut-off. These supercooled coils on the train then induce currents in the track's magnets to produce an opposite polarity which levitates the train upwards. As the train runs it relies on exact computer engineering to control the speed and sway of the train. Prototypes of the system have recently approached 330 mph--almost 100 mph faster than the European models. At that rate a run from Chicago to Seattle would take little less than 8 hours.

Unlike its slow-moving diesel counterparts, the mag-lev system poses no threat to the air of the surrounding area. Riding on a "cushion of air", the system speeds along virtually noiselessly and promises to be much more comfortable than today's trains.

The cost of undertaking such a large scale venture as reconstructing our present railways poses a seemingly insurmountable barrier to its inception. I believe the long-run costs of pollution control and increased fossil fuel consumption from not implementing such a system more than offsets today's initial costs of constructing mag-lev systems nationwide.

Beginning a project in the U.S. comparable to Japan's mag-lev system would place our nation's economy back on the track, so to speak. It would revitalize many



Cut-away view of mag-lev train

sectors of manufacturing and construction that are suffering from a deep recession. It would also help give the nation a unifying goal to work toward.

The mag-lev system does have

problems. As stated earlier, initial costs would prove a substantial barrier. Also the cost of the liquid helium used to cool the train's electromagnets is significant. The train's themselves only prove useful in long-distance inter-city travel since high-speed is required for optimal efficiency. This results in a subsequent problem in that stops would be fewer and farther in between.

I believe that these problems are not insurmountable and that further research and development in magnetic levitation systems will overcome these obstacles. In fact, here in the U.S., Boeing is currently working on a slow-speed mag-lev system for commuter routes in cities and suburbs, while in Japan, work continues to perfect a long-range mag-lev. Adoption of mag-lev will lead to a swifter, cleaner, more-efficient transportation system that the future demands.

## Peregrine falcons: pesticide victims

by Jim Springer

The speedy and graceful peregrine falcon has been highly valued by man for thousands of years. The Egyptians made golden statues of this bird and European kings and noblemen paid fortunes for a champion that could swoop down at 175 mph and kill its prey with a blow of its clenched foot. This bird, once common in North America, has had a drastic population reduction and is now listed as an endangered species. Living in Bellingham, we are fortunate to be located just 20 miles from an area that supports the largest known wintering population of peregrine falcons in North America.

Peregrine populations have survived centuries of depredations by game keepers, falconers and egg collectors. But beginning thirty years ago this species disappeared abruptly from some regions and declined rapidly in others. The reason for this decline has been pesticide poisoning, in particular DDE, the breakdown product of DDT. The DDE is contained in the tissues of the birds on which the peregrine

feeds. The cumulative effect of the poison appears to affect the calcium-producing elements in the female birds' bodies so that their eggs are formed with shells that are too thin to withstand the wear and tear of incubation. In some cases there are no shells at all and the embryos quickly dehydrate.

It has been clearly established that pesticides such as DDT and dieldrin, which became widespread in the years following WWII, have caused shell thinning. The downward trend in the numbers of certain raptor species in the eastern U.S. has stopped since the 1972 ban on DDT, as these species have begun to breed more successfully. The peregrine falcon, however, seems not to have responded so far. Nowhere in North America have peregrine populations started to recover since the ban on DDT usage.

In 1970 a two-nation team of United States and Canadian biologists checked 237 known peregrine falcon eyries, covering fifteen regions in Canada and Alaska. The empty nests they found

*continued on page 5*

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revealed that pesticide poisoning has spread northward. In southern Canada only four pairs were found in 82 eyries, while in the Arctic tundra 53 eyries yielded 31 pairs.

During the winter of 1976-77 at least nine peregrines were present in the vicinity of Lower Samish and Padilla Bays, which are near the towns of Edison and Bayview, according to a Fish and Wildlife Service Report. These bays contain a significant percentage of the remaining estuarine habitat available to large numbers of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and raptors in the Pacific Northwest. The richness of this site attracts a diverse and abundant assemblage of wildlife species. Padilla Bay probably represents the largest and least disturbed stand of eelgrass left on the west coast of the U.S. Raptors are uniquely abundant in the area during the winter months. Commonly 100 raptors of 11 species winter there. Merlins and snowy owls are frequently seen and as many as 20 bald eagles winter in the area.

The two bays winter approximately 50,000 ducks of 26 species. Over 20,000 brant have been recorded there during spring migration. Wintering shorebirds number in the thousands, the most abundant of which is the dunlin. Overall bird diversity exceeds 200 species making it one of the most diverse areas for bird life in the state. It is this abundance of prey species that makes the area an excellent habitat for the falcons. These prey species are dependent upon the natural biotic richness of the bays for their subsistence. The bays are the most important staging area for the Pacific flyway. It is here that the brant build pre-migratory fat reserves before departing on their non-stop flight

to Alaska where they breed. If Padilla/Samish Bays and the rich eelgrass beds they support were not available, the brant population would suffer because they would arrive on their breeding grounds in poorer physical condition. Reproductive success would therefore be reduced.

The largest single landowner in the Padilla/Samish Bay is a development corporation. Their strategy over the past few years has been to buy out smaller owners to gain controlling interest of the tidelands. Development scenarios include recreational homesites and diked agricultural land. Diking or dredging and filling would eliminate eelgrass beds and destroy mudflats and salt marshes. The many species of plants and animals that are dependent on these habitats would be adversely affected by this loss. The threat of development is immediate according to the Fish and Wildlife report.

The Washington Department of Ecology is considering portions of Padilla Bay for an estuarine sanctuary. The department received preliminary acquisition funds from NOAA to cover studies and management plans. Designations as a state park, wildlife recreation area, research natural area, or national wildlife refuge are all possible alternatives that could offer some level of protection.

An undeveloped bay the size of Padilla/Samish is becoming a rarity as demands for shoreline development increase. A large undisturbed stand of eelgrass like that found in Padilla Bay is almost a thing of the past along the west coast. Take a trip down Chuckanut Drive some morning and check out this unique area. If you are lucky enough to see a peregrine falcon, you will have that experience in common with very few other people. If not, you will probably see a few bald eagles, numerous hawks, and an array of other birds, which will make the trip a memorable one anyway. \*



by Jim Lafley

Extinction: The Causes and Consequences of the Disappearance of Species. Paul and Anne Erlich

Extinction and speciation, the creation of new species, are important biological processes in evolution. Until recently the rate of speciation was greater than the rate of extinction. Man's actions have tipped the balance the other way.

How and why this is happening and what we can do about it is the subject of Extinction, a new book by Paul and Anne Ehrlich. The Ehrlichs skillfully outline the various reasons we should be concerned about the disappearance of species.

Four basic arguments for preservation are presented: compassion, other organisms have a right to be on the earth; esthetics, their beauty symbolic value or intrinsic interest should be considered; economics, many of them are of direct benefit to us for medical uses, food and the health of our crops; Indirect benefits, as components of the ecosystems, organisms provide free, indispensable services to us. The production of oxygen by plants and the decomposition of waste products are examples.

Our quality of life is intricately linked with the biological resources of the earth and our failure to deal with the results of our present actions will seriously effect the future of that quality. Although this somber point is stressed in Extinction, the authors also include bits of humor and interesting stories about different species.

Extinction contains a lot of valuable information that is easy to digest. If you have an interest in the topic, this book is an excellent primer. \*

PLEASE RECYCLE

# New federalism: what environmental impact ?

by Janet S. Senior

Ronald Reagan strikes again - for states' rights, for greater efficiency in government and for decreased government spending - or so he says. Those of us concerned about social justice and preservation of environmental quality have our doubts about the New Federalism plan.

Along with the proposed trade of federal financing of Medicaid for state financing of Aid to Families with Dependant Children (AFDC) and Food Stamps programs, the administration also proposes to turn back 43 "discretionary" programs to state and local control. At first it seems like a good idea to decentralize and return power and decision-making to within reach of the people. But, at second glance, the politics become more complex and the motives clear.

According to the Reagan plan, financial responsibility for a variety of programs including mass transit, sewage treatment facilities and child nutrition will be transferred to the states beginning in 1984, programs which now cost the federal government about \$30 billion every year. Initial funding will come from a federalism trust fund consisting of existing excise taxes and a portion of the windfall profits tax on oil - a sort of "super revenue sharing." Federal funding will gradually decrease over a ten year period toward a complete transfer in the 1990's.

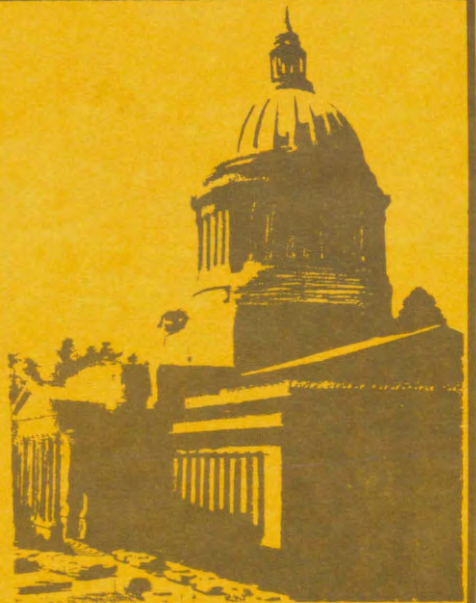
This financial finagling could pose a serious threat to environmental programs already crippled by budget cuts and faced with an uncertain future. This year, EPA's research and development funding has been cut 34 percent. More serious is the 31 percent decrease in the abatement, enforcement and compliance budget - allowing industries to procrastinate without any real threat of compliance lawsuits. Even funding of key issues like cleanup of hazardous waste sites has a somewhat dubious future. According to a recent Friends of the Earth analysis (Not Man Apart, Feb/March 1982) of the administration's budget proposal for the EPA, data shows that \$100 million of the

total \$300 million in industrial taxes meant for the Hazardous Substance Response Trust Fund (Superfund) will be directed away from its intended purpose and into the U.S. treasury. Without adequate funding and manpower, the EPA becomes a storefront - ineffective and inefficient.

Loss of grant money has also had a negative trickle-down effect on environmental organizations. EPA's public participation program was closed down, \$600,000 worth of grants abolished. EPA outbacks have reduced the funding previously available through The Urban Environment Conference - grants that have funded a variety of local projects and conferences meant to increase citizen awareness and invite informed citizen input. Also cancelled was Texas Tech's National Pesticide Information Clearinghouse due to lost EPA funding.

*"This financial finagling could pose a serious threat to environmental programs already crippled by budget cuts and faced with an uncertain future."*

The most important question in the federalism tradeoff is whether or not state and local agencies will be ready, willing or able to take over the management and administration of important environmental programs. Controversy abounds among state officials and staff members. Some claim very sophisticated operations and are very eager to dig out from under oppressive federal regulation. Others say they have the technical expertise in some areas but are afraid that state legislatures, more subject to industry pressure, are unlikely to replace federal programs. Many others are angered as they watch the demise of programs just beginning to show results. Dennis Abrams, director of West Virginia's Environmental Task Force, says "Reagan wants the states to take



over environmental regulation but without any money."

The federalism concept has played an important part in the history of environmental legislation, exemplified by the cooperative federal/state operation of programs dealing with air, water, solid and hazardous waste, and surface mining. Under these federal statutes, states have the option of running their own programs with federal assistance. Experience with such a system shows that the states vary considerably in their capacity and willingness to operate these programs. Repeatedly states refuse to take over programs, or they agree to take them over and then later hand them back to federal control when overwhelmed by administrative and political difficulties. This hesitation and/or avoidance behavior spells trouble if regulatory programs are left up to state discretion. Already strapped for funds, state governments just don't have the resources or motivation to administer, monitor and enforce environmental statutes without help.

The fact also remains that many environmental problems cross state boundaries, i.e. acid rain

*continued on page 7*

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*Federalism continued*

and management of interstate watersheds. States vary in their ability to work together to deal with and solve these interstate problems. If and when federal funding and assistance are cut off, those states less able or less willing to actively enforce regulations will attract polluting industries - federal mandates will be ignored.

Benjamin R. Schuster, acting director of the Center for the Study of Federalism, believes reduced funding and decentralization of control will ultimately result in fewer services, fewer personnel, more wage and income taxes, less reliance on property taxes, more dissension in public employment unions and possibly a rise in social unrest as seen recently in Great Britain. Schuster says Americans have become dissatisfied and frustrated with

unworkable schemes for improvement of seemingly unsolvable problems - environmental degradation, energy shortages and urban blight. We've put our faith in an indirect agent, the economy, hoping that as the economy improves our problems will be taken care of. The problem with such faith, according to Schuster, is that those programs cut are not those likely to be compensated for by an invigorated economy or reduced inflation.

If used properly, federalism could be a valuable tool to balance the constraints of social justice and equality with the regional and local flexibility necessary to attain social and environmental goals. If used only as a political ploy to draw attention away from a sagging economy and the dismantlement of protective regulation, federalism loses meaning and credibility and so does the administration which supports it. \*

## The potential of federalism

The "new federalism" of the Reagan administration presents both a challenge and an opportunity to the society. The challenge is probably of the greater magnitude because we are so ill prepared to seize the opportunity. The challenge is that the federal presence, in terms of grants and other fiscal support programs, is being greatly reduced at state and local levels, leaving those entities to find new ways to deal with local needs and desires. The opportunity is twofold: a) state and local governments must begin to decide what are the most important things to do with available funds, and b) in the process, they must find ways of becoming more self-reliant at all levels. However, this opportunity should be taken by state and local governments only in close concert with their citizenry, for as S.P.R. Charter says:

"...Each nation, each person can become more self-reliant; and that this must be done is daily becoming more apparent. It must be done from necessity...The idea of self-reliance...has increasing validity on all levels of human endeavour; without it, planetary self-sufficiency is in increasing question."  
(unpublished manuscript, 1976)

Because the validity of self-reliance has had little acceptance in modern society, we have not planned for it, and thus, we are unprepared for either the challenge or the opportunity of the emerging situation. Perhaps, on the other hand, the abruptness of the Reagan program will result in some creative and sensitive responses at the state and local level ....perhaps. \*

Ernst L. Gayden

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Though the celebration of Earth Day has declined from its heights in the early '70s, the Environmental Center plans to recapture some excitement on Thursday, April 22: Earth Day '82. The theme for this year's Earth Day will be "Wildlife and Wildlands," focusing on the importance of harmony between human and non-human environments. An informational fair featuring local and state environmental organizations is scheduled for Earth Day. The fair will include non-commercial information booths as well as music, mime and an Earth Opera. Discussion groups, seminars and slide shows emphasizing the wildlife and wildlands theme are scheduled throughout the day.

Joseph Meeker, author of *Comedy of Survival: In Search of an Environmental Ethic* and host of the radio series "Minding the Earth," will participate in a panel discussion with Western professors Earth Day afternoon. He will also speak at a potluck dinner that evening, co-sponsored by the International Club, the Folk Dancing Club and the E.C.

The Environmental Center will be moving during spring break to a new office in V.U. 216. Our phone number effective March 30 will be 676-3460. Although we will miss being so close to Huxley, we look forward to new opportunities to better serve the Western community.

-Gary & Chris-  
E.C. staff

The Environmental Center and KUGS FM 89.3 will host the Minding the Earth radio series during April and May. MINDING THE EARTH offers a fresh approach to environmental issues. It is not a conservationist cry of woe or another waltz through the tangled spaghetti of environmental policy. It is a clear-eyed view of the values which govern relationships between humans and the non-human environment.

Host for MINDING THE EARTH is Dr. Joseph Meeker, an author of many books and articles on environmental ethics. His twenty years of broadcasting experience, plus his full academic standing, give these interviews the flavor of conversation between friends.

The series will feature 30 minute explorations into contemporary issues; endangered species habitats, nuclear ethics, evolution and culture, agriculture without chemicals, ecology and religion, and a special two-part program with the Paul Winter Consort.

Dates and times of broadcasts will be announced in KUGS' spring calendar.



# A grizzly tale



by Michael Willis

"Are you carrying any guns, explosives or dangerous weapons?" the ranger asked impatiently as he glanced at the endless line of cars waiting to enter the park. "No," replied Carl Hammer, who was rapidly growing impatient himself. Leaning out of the control booth, the park ranger glanced into the cab of the pickup while handing a window sticker and some change to Carl. Carl shifted his pickup into low gear and rolled into Yellowstone National Park. He was about to achieve the unachievable.

Carl Hammer is not an ordinary person. Nor is his taste for adventure run of the mill. **Photographing wildlife is his game** and he includes himself in every shot. As unique as it sounds, one would have to see his photographs to appreciate his efforts. The walls of his coffee shop in Hero, Arizona, are hung with the best of his work. Hard to believe, unless you're Irish, is the photo of Hammer water skiing at 40 mph behind the Loch Ness monster. One might be impressed by a photograph of Hammer in a full scuba suit, 200 feet below the surface of Monterrey Bay, bronc busting a great white shark. But the most sensational is the shot of him high in the Cascades, pitching frisbee with the elusive Sasquatch. These are just a few examples of the extraordinary work accomplished by Mr. Hammer. And now to attempt the unthinkable once again, he has journeyed to Yellowstone in search of the fearsome Rocky Mountain grizzly bear.

Many sportsmen have combed the rugged landscape of this unique area and never captured a glimpse of this infamous creature. Today would be different. It's a clear, crisp day along the banks of the Firehole River in Yellowstone Park. The man climbs out of his pickup to survey the scene. The expression on his face indicates he found the place he had been looking for. Here to photograph a grizzly bear, Hammer investigates the site for signs of the animal. Satisfied with the location he begins to

unload his equipment. Camera case, tripod, and bait bag are carefully checked and placed into a backpack. This man is not after an ordinary wildlife photograph. If all goes well, this exposure will have an added effect; the bear will be kissing the photographer when the shutter opens. One might deem this an impossibility, but Carl Hammer has years of experience and he never goes home, if you'll pardon the expression, without some exposure.

Carl shoulders the backpack and begins to move. Sluething through the forest with the expertise of a true outdoorsman, he comes to a clearing along the river. To Carl's delight, a massive, chocolate brown grizzly is sloshing around next to the bank looking frustrated after an evening of poor fishing. Carl mentally processes every step of his predetermined plan to be sure that nothing is overlooked. With several precise movements, Hammer takes the tripod from his shoulder, extends the legs and stabilizes it on a level piece of ground. Next, he unshoulders the pack, unzips one of its compartments and carefully removes the camera. Carl opens the camera's film chamber and inserts a cartridge, keeping an eye on the bear at all times. He attaches the camera to its tripod and sets the automatic timer, giving himself five minutes to rendezvous with the wild grizzly.

Grabbing a small knapsack, Carl swiftly moves into position. At the same instant he is spotted by the grizzly. Working fast, our man drops from his standing position to one knee, produces a jar of honey from the knapsack and smears his right cheek with a generous amount. The bear is lumbering forward at an alarming rate, grunting and snorting like an old steam engine. Hammer tries to relax as the grizzly closes the gap between them, but the possibility of something going wrong is on his mind. "What if the shutter doesn't open," he thinks, "or the film snags?" Contemplation is cut short as the bear skids to a stop ten feet away. Trying to look friendly,

Carl bats his eyelids and smiles at the same time holding his breath and glancing at his watch. The sweeping second hand indicates that ninety seconds remain before the camera shutter opens. Not daring to move, Carl waits for what seems like an eternity as the bear takes one cautious step after another. The air is crackling with the tension of the moment. The bear is so close that Carl seems to sense its brainwaves.

Rushing electrical impulses traverse his spinal column as the grizzly's cold, wet nose touches his ear. Hammer glances to the side to see the curious brown eyes gazing at him from a huge head of brown fur. The second hand on his watch begins to sweep away the last five seconds. The bear's tongue slowly rolls up Carl's face as the kodachrome rolls through the camera. Slurp! Click! Mission accomplished. Triumphant, Carl almost reaches out to bear hug the giant animal. His survival instinct counteracts this foolish urge. He knows what he must do.

The bear is beginning to look annoyed as the layer of honey on his host's face wears thin. A fine predicament to be in but experience has taught this master of wildlife photography to attend to every detail. Slowly unzipping the knapsack that had been strategically placed in front of him, he reaches in and brings out a three pound salmon steak. All in one motion he captures the grizzly's attention, throws the fish to one side and confidently stands up for the leisurely stroll to his camera. Carl Hammer is oblivious to the sounds of the hungry bear devouring his food, for he is already planning his next kodachrome adventure.

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