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Betrayed By Our Own - The Gross Expansion

Since 2003 I have been dreading the day when I would have to write this article. I attended the first Gross Reservoir expansion scoping meeting at the S. Boulder Rec. Ctr. when Denver Water started its war against Coal Creek Canyon and the Colorado River with big posters depicting the massive destruction to our mountain quiet, air quality, flora and fauna and their propaganda that it was already a done deal. No amount of graphs or charts could hide the hubris of their corrupt, antiquated and environmentally unsound plans to rob the Colorado River of more water to store and sell mainly to allow green Denver lawns and promote more urban sprawl. I had just enough Environmental education with a degree from CU Boulder to know how bad this war could get and how much the enemy's deep pockets could affect the outcome.

It didn't stop me from fighting though, as a canyon resident for 45 years this natural place is my home and worth defending – barring Edward Abby's *Monkey Wrench Gang* tactics I decided to make it a pet project for my work in this publication and have probably made my readers sick of all the updates, notices of public hearings, legalities from trusted sources and actual facts that could have made the outcome much different. The blame rests firmly on the shoulders of one judge that suggested settlement instead of continued litigation and the Boulder County Attorney's office who decided they just didn't want to work hard at this issue any longer. Intimidated by the constant outright untruths from Denver Water and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission – they caved and erroneously believe money can mitigate the negative effects of the massive construction/ destruction the project will rain down upon our fragile ecosystem and bedroom communities.

Now there are surely readers that will consider this article doomsday thinking and over the top assumptions about the negative impacts Denver Water has in store for Coal Creek Canyon and North Shore residents, and I hope you end up being correct. I am a firm believer in pulling positives out of negatives and have achieved some in my personal life against all odds. AND, not but - the facts are not in our favor so we will have to dig deep, stay vigilant, be pro-active, voice concerns, document all details, take pictures or video's of any and all negative impacts that are sure to begin next year or sooner.

Drive the canyon State Highway 72

at your own risk and expect peril around every corner, because I can assure you CDOT will not be working to prevent your demise or even save you from danger. As with Highway 93, our possible deaths will be statistically called 'expected mortalities' and little to nothing will be done to protect us from semi-truck trailers crossing the double yellow lines on hairpin turns.

We don't know what Denver Water plans in the way of road construction (my gosh aren't we sick to death of never ending road construction?). But we may be in for more.

For a canyon already experiencing out of control road rage due to overuse on a narrow mountain highway, we will most certainly see more and more problems when 20 mph is the norm behind a line of vehicles being impeded by semi-trucks unable and unwilling to pull over and let residents get to work or home on time.

It rankles me to implore readers to make note of each and every negative impact the project might have on them once it starts, but Boulder County has made the decision (which in my opinion was uneducated, insulting, possibly illegal and downright irresponsible) that we can be helped with dollars they are holding for us to mitigate these negative impacts. We will need to inundate the Boulder County Commissioners with requests for monetary compensation because we have no idea how long the funds will last.

Finally, I must in good conscience comment on the virtual commissioners' hearing when they betrayed us for said monies: I have no doubts to the truth of their comments about how hard it was for them to make the decision to take blood money (Continued on next page.)



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i.e. the 'settlement' from Denver Water. What I do take issue with is that none of them must live here and suffer the impacts their decision make us victims to.

They won't personally miss all the birds, wildlife, quiet in our backyards that we will for YEARS. They can't possibly understand our health issues from air and noise pollution for YEARS. It made me sick they took that opportunity to try and justify with their personal pain at having to make that decision when they know we are the ones who will have to live each day for YEARS trying to mitigate the negative impacts no one can mitigate no matter how much money you want to throw at the problems.

Shame on the Boulder County Attorney's office for giving up too soon, when the actual facts about FERC's illegal permitting of a water storage facility is portrayed as a hydroelectric project. But hey, this is not the first time FERC has corruptly permitted Gross Dam as hydroelectric.

History will be the true test to show how ill conceived this environmental destruction is when nearly empty reservoir (like Lake Powel) and a severely impaired Colorado River pays back a corrupt utility that put greed over conservation at every turn.

Too bad the Elk can't vote out elected officials such as Denver Mayor's that support environmental destruction in favor of green lawns over all else and care not for saving the Colorado River.

It will be too late for the Elk cows (cover photo) that lost their Winiger Ridge calving grounds yet again to human destruction of ecological habitat. Studies say that herd decreased by the hundreds when the existing Dam and reservoir were built. Most migrating up to Highway 72 north of Nederland to the old Caribou Ranch - now an Open Space Park that closes every spring for Elk calving. See the Letters Section for more information on Gross Expansion documents and legal details.

By A.M. Wilks

Restricting human activity in elk (*Cervus elaphus*) calving areas during calving season can be controversial because of increasing human uses of elk habitat, and little evidence exists to evaluate impacts of these activities on elk populations. We evaluated effects of human-induced disturbance on reproductive success of radiocollared adult female elk using a control-treatment study in central Colorado. Data were collected during one pretreatment year and two treatment years. Treatment elk were repeatedly approached and displaced by study personnel throughout a 3-4-week period of peak calving during both treatment years, while control elk did not receive treatment.

We observed elk on alpine summer ranges in July and August on both areas to estimate the proportion of marked cows maintaining a calf. Calf/cow proportions for the control area remained stable, but those for the treatment area declined each year. Average number of disturbances/elk/year effectively modeled variation in calf/cow proportions, supporting treatment as the cause of declining calf/cow proportions. Average decrease in calf/cow proportion in the treatment group was 0.225. Modeling indicated that estimated annual population growth on both study areas was 7% without treatment application, given that existing human activities cause some unknown level of calving-season disturbance. With an average of ten disturbances/cow above ambient levels, our model projected no growth. Our results support maintaining disturbance-free areas for elk during parturitional periods.

Gregory E. Phillips and A. William Alldredge from their Journal of Wildlife Management

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Road Map For Today's Conservationists

By Rachel Love Nuwer-High Country News Mar. 29, 2021

Threatened species and how we might save them

Beloved Beasts: Fighting for Life in an Age of Extinction

Michelle Nijhuis 352 pages, hardcover \$24

W. W. Norton & Company, 2021

This story was originally published in Undark and is reproduced here as part of the Climate Desk collaboration.

Today's conservationists are taxed with protecting the living embodiments of tens of millions of years of nature's creation, and they face unprecedented challenges for doing so — from climate change and habitat destruction to pollution and unsustainable wildlife trade. Given that extinction is the price for failure, there's little forgiveness for error. Success requires balancing not just the complexities of species and habitats, but also of people and politics. With an estimated 1 million species now threatened with extinction, conservationists need all the help they can get.

Yet the past — a key repository of lessons hard learned through trial and error — is all too often forgotten or overlooked by conservation practitioners today. In **Beloved Beasts: Fighting for Life in an Age of Extinction**, journalist Michelle Nijhuis shows that history can help contextualize and guide modern conservation. Indeed, arguably it's only in the last 200 years or so that a few scattered individuals began thinking seriously about the need to save species — and it's only in the last 50 that conservation biology even emerged as a distinct field. **Beloved Beasts** reads as a who's who and greatest-moments survey of these developmental decades. Through the eyes and actions of individuals, it portrays the evolution

of the surprisingly young field from a pursuit almost solely of the privileged Western elite to "a movement that is shaped by many people, many places, and many species." It's in the gray area of the personal, though, that the book is most fascinating. Even the most celebrated and successful conservationists had human flaws, and Nijhuis does not shy away from these details. As she writes, "The story of modern species conservation is full of people who did the wrong things for the right reasons, and the right things for the wrong reasons."

In one chapter, for example, Nijhuis tells the story of William Temple Hornaday, an American taxidermist who served as the first director of what is now the Bronx Zoo, and who is credited with saving the American bison from extinction. By the late 19th century, evidence clearly pointed to the fact that bison, a species that once numbered tens of million, were set to disappear due to wanton over-hunting. Yet at the time, most people assumed that "species were static and enduring," Nijhuis writes, and those who did catch wind of the fall of the American buffalo mostly responded with a shrug.

Strangely for his time, Hornaday became obsessed with the animal's plight. He decided that the only way to preserve the species from extinction was to establish a captive herd to, as he wrote, "atone for the national disgrace that attaches to the heartless and senseless extermination of the species in the wild state." With Theodore Roosevelt's backing, Hornaday established a small bison herd in the Bronx in 1905, one whose urban descendants became founders of some of the 500,000 bison that survive today. More than just *(Continued on next page.)*



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save a species, Hornaday's work helped bring public recognition of extinction as a "needless tragedy" rather than an inevitable cost of expansion, Nijhuis writes.

Yet despite all the good he did for the natural world, Nijhuis points out that Hornaday's successes — like many conservation gains of the 19th and 20th centuries — were built on a foundation of nationalism, sexism and racism. "For Hornaday and his allies, the rescue of the bison had nothing to do with the people who had depended on the species — and a great deal to do with their own illusions about themselves," Nijhuis writes.

Bison were slaughtered en masse in the 1800s, not just for their hides but also "as a convenient way to control" Native Americans who depended on the animals for food, Nijhuis writes. At the same time, white men like Hornaday and Roosevelt began appropriating bison as a symbol of rugged Caucasian masculinity, both for the animals' association with a "strenuous life" and as the target of choice for wealthy white male hunters. Despite evidence to the contrary, Hornaday placed partial blame for the bison's demise on Native Americans, and his Bronx-raised bison, Nijhuis points out, were released on land seized from the Apache, Comanche and Kiowa. Protecting bison, therefore, meant protecting "a perniciously exclusive version of natural progress," Nijhuis writes.

With each subsequent generation, though, the

conservation field has gradually improved in terms of its scope and ethics. In his older age, Hornaday, for example, supported and encouraged the activism and ecological education of Rosalie Edge. A bird-loving New York socialite, Edge helped to reform the Audubon Society, which, at the time, supported the eradication of raptors and opposed tightening of hunting restrictions.

A year before the term "ecosystem" was coined in 1934, Edge discussed with Hornaday a groundbreaking realization she had come to: that species should be protected not only because they are of interest to humans — as had motivated Hornaday and the men of his time — but because each forms a vital link in a living chain. A decade after Edge and Hornaday's conversation, the centrality and fragility of ecological connections would become all the more apparent when Rachel Carson pondered the impacts of the pesticide DDT on raptors at the Hawk Mountain Sanctuary in Pennsylvania, a protected area Edge founded.

Ideas and connections continued to build. Around the same time Edge was campaigning for birds, Aldo Leopold popularized the idea that ecosystems, not just species, need to be protected, and that game is a public trust that should be managed by science-based law. This zeitgeist shift resulted in the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation. Leopold "believed it was possible to love other species and use them wisely, too," Nijhuis writes. The conservation movement gained momentum in the wake of World War II, Nijhuis writes, when the word "global" came into wider use, and the interconnectedness of the world — both ecological and human — became glaringly apparent. Data compiled by the newly established International Union for Conservation of Nature also revealed just how many species faced extinction, and shifted the movement's focus to emergency relief. But as conservation spread to other continents, especially Africa, it continued to work through various growing pains, including racist views about independent Africa's inability to manage its own natural resources. "Many foreign conservationists saw the African landscape as John Muir had seen Yosemite — as an extraordinary place meant to be visited, not lived in," Nijhuis writes.

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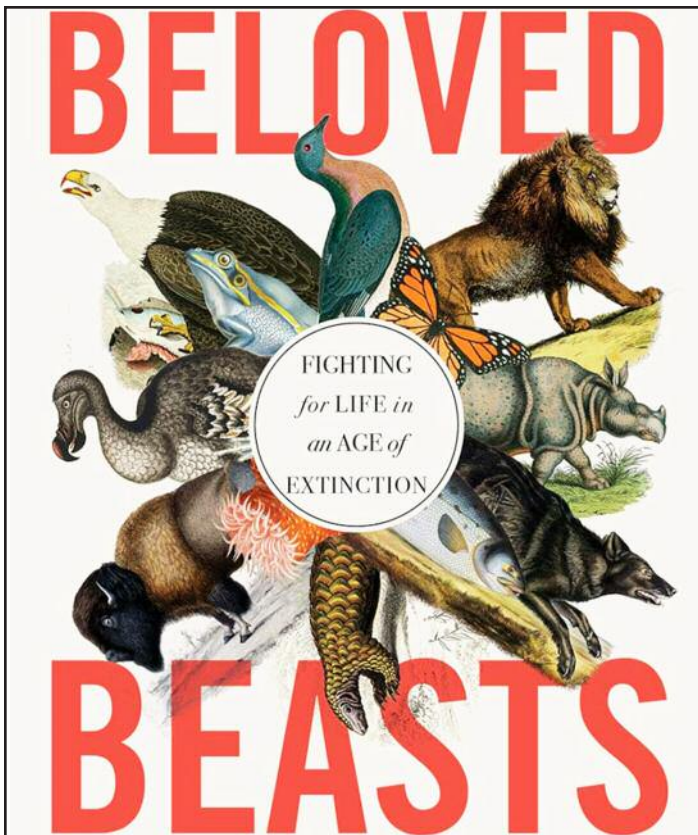


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This so-called fortress conservation approach perpetuated in the 1950s and 1960s — a top-down enterprise in which global authorities ultimately inform national and local agendas — has since come under fire and has been increasingly replaced by a version of conservation that acknowledges that humans are an inextricable part of the landscape. Additionally, time and time again, conservationists have learned (oftentimes the hard way) that protection of wild places can never succeed without buy-in from the people who live there. “To protect biodiversity — to provide other species with the resources they needed to adapt, survive, and thrive — conservationists, including conservation biologists, had to persuade some of their fellow humans to make some sacrifices, at least in the short term,” Nijhuis writes.

The problem, Nijhuis continues, “isn’t inattention to human needs, but inattention to human complexity.” Conservationists too often view humanity the same way

they would a population of species that fits into a single ecological niche with set relationships and dependencies, Nijhuis argues, rather than as thinking and technologically endowed beings aware of our place among other species and each other. Nor are we passive players. “As the future perfect turns into the present perfect, we can apply ourselves to creating a tolerable present and future — for ourselves and for the rest of life,” Nijhuis writes.

The decisions we make are often unpredictable, though, informed by a vast array of social, cultural, and individual factors. “Conservation biology, in other words, can’t be left only to the biologists,” Nijhuis writes. It’s for this reason that the field has begun to draw upon other realms of expertise outside of pure ecology, including economics, politics, social science, and more. This need for diversity — not only in nature but also within human endeavors to protect it — is something that Leopold and others recognized decades ago, but has only just started to come to fruition in any practical way.

History is an integral part of that complexity, too. Just as we cannot protect something that we do not know exists, past failures and successes likewise cannot be taken advantage of for future gains if history is forgotten. As Nijhuis writes, “We can move forward by understanding the story of struggle and survival we already have — and seeing the possibilities in what remains to be written.”

Rachel Love Nuwer is a science journalist whose writing has appeared in The New York Times, National Geographic, Scientific American, BBC Future, and elsewhere. She is the author of Poached: Inside the Dark World of Wildlife Trafficking.



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The Hallmark Or Horror Of Holidays

By Diane Bergstrom

Ahhh, the holidays are here, for some. How are you feeling? Happy? Nostalgic? Filled with so much love and faith that you would be a shoe-in to star in a Hallmark Channel Christmas movie? Where the dynamic tension plot point mystifies whether the perfect couple will actually meet each other before the holidays as the secondary characters worry about the dwindling availability of homemade wreaths for the village. But as Hallmark goes, everyone meets their right somebody and everyone gets their wreath.


Are you stressed? Thinking about gift budgets, travel plans, security lines at DIA, snow tire/chain restrictions for traveling on I-70, using up vacation time, draining your pretax health accounts, COVID-19 complications, or addressing any project beginning with the phrase,

“year end” before the actual year’s end? Are the anticipated gatherings raising your internal mercury? You know the scenario, the completely unrealistic expectation of a compatible group dynamic of people who might live eight miles away from each other but come together once a year for scripted holiday bliss. Wrong. If you didn’t get along in July, why would it be smooth sailing in December? Then throw in the religious differences, political passions and opposing positions on, say, everything? Especially since we don’t seem to have conversational discussions these days, just polarization. Makes me crave a cup of Swedish glogg just thinking about it. Liquor sales do indeed go up during the holidays and I’m not convinced celebrations take all the credit. Great Uncle George used to call it, “liquid courage.” Spot on, Uncle George!

What are you going to do? Aside from all of the decisions about all of the holiday factors, choose good company. Be aware that a major stressor at any time of the year is when things don’t happen in the time we expect them to. Choose holiday options and companions that don’t make your jaws clench, your heart squeeze, and the pit in your stomach harden. If you feel that invisible emotional body armor is needed to protect you from barbed comments flung in your direction by relatives/obligatory companions, give yourself permission to be elsewhere, or at least cover your exposed parts. Choose self-preservation. I did that for the first time in 30 years. I had shown up for the same people within a larger group, regardless of how I

was treated or received. For the most holidays, I’ve had great moments but scenarios and hosts change and so do relationships. I chose not to show up for inconsistent unacceptable behavior. While I missed the young people near to my heart, the whole package was too toxic. My heartache was intense but temporary. I look forward to continuing my relationship with the young people on a different field.

As Nature abhors a vacuum, saying no to unhealthy options will open the space for better ones to be presented. That year, I had the least stressful, calmest Christmas Eve ever, with my favorite people spontaneously showing up. Choose peace over dread. Dear cousin Lael texted me, “While we are not a traditional family in any way—it’s still a loving and respectful bunch.



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Dear readers, writers and advertisers,

Let me take this opportunity to thank all my loyal contributors and advertisers, without which this magazine would not be the same.

As Diane says in her article here: "It could happen."


I agree with her sentiment, and thank her for including 'My Family' which consist of my favorite creatures on this planet: Dog, Cat, Horses who share their good natures and companionship all through the year and especially appreciated during the holidays.

One of my favorite holiday memories is of a horseback ride during a snowstorm on Christmas: wearing ski goggles and several layers of clothes. The big fat flakes falling and covering everything in a layer of champagne powder. Just stayed close to the cabin and barn, but filled with the joy of beautiful nature and warm animals. Cat sat in window and watched with disdain at our antics and licked the snowflakes off my parka when we came back inside. Got her taste of winter that way. Anita Wilks

You can join us and say 'blankety blank' to anyone who does not embrace that and believe that's what a family is!" Lael always has my back, and dear cousin Kay rapidly planned a new traditional, or one off, Christmas brunch.

So this holiday season, may you have a wonderful time with the family you've got, or the family you've chosen, or the fur family surrounding you, or by the way you treat yourself. Wouldn't it be nice if hosts at restaurants asked, "Treating yourself tonight?" instead of, "Just you?" My mom always said you're in good company when you're by yourself. Jane Fonda told her kids to choose relationships where they are seen, safe, and celebrated or get out. I will add supported too, and why isn't that a great list for every relationship we're in? Even during the holidays! Listen to your sweet inner voice and join, or create, scenarios that make your heart and soul soar. Whatever you do, may you have a joyous, meaningful time of making positive memories of holiday traditions, either old or new. And may a wonderful new year be in store for all of us.

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Solstice Stone

By Valerie Wedel

...Light at the end of every dream

Toast your toes by the fire, as nights grow cold... Here is a story to while away our first and longest winter evening. A tale for the eve of Winter Solstice... A bit of ancient and mysterious lore, from our Irish ancestors. The Dream of Aengus:

“...As he spoke, he paused before a great mound grown over with trees, and around it silver clear in the moonlight were immense stones piled, the remains of an original circle, and there was a dark low narrow entrance leading within - He took Con by the hand and in an instant they were standing in a lofty, cross-shaped cave, built roughly of huge stones. “This was my palace. In days past many a one plucked here the purple flower of magic and the fruit of the tree of life...” And even as he spoke, a light began to glow and to pervade the cave, and to obliterate the stone walls and the antique hieroglyphics engraved thereon, and to melt the earthen floor itself like a fiery sun suddenly uprisen within the world, and there was everywhere a wandering ecstasy of sound; light and sound were one; light had a voice... “I am Oengus, men call me Young. I am the sunlight in the heart, the moonlight in the mind; I am the light at the end of every dream... I will make you

immortal; for my palace opens into the Gardens of the Sun”.” (excerpted from George Russel, 1897 (2), on p29, Brennan (1))

This is a poetic description of an ancient observatory known today as Newgrange. Newgrange is one of the ancient giant stone buildings, or megalithic structures, sprinkled throughout the British Isles. Newgrange and others have been written of since medieval days. Our fireside tale was first written down in medieval times, perhaps a thousand years ago. The tale is said to be far, far older – truly ancient.

In ancient tales, Newgrange is a palace, a place of great festivity and magic. Once known as Bru na Boinne, it is perhaps the most famous of the ancient sites (Brennan, p 10). Three times 50 sons of Kings dwelt there... There were three fruit trees that were always in fruit, and a magic cauldron from which no company, no matter how large, ever went away hungry.

The first person in ancient Celtic lore to live at Bru na Boinne was Elcmar, who was married to Boand, Lady of the River Boyne. This mound was also known as Bru mna Elcmair, or the Bru of the Woman of Elcmair. In other words, the Mound of the Lady of the River Boyne.

The next inhabitant was Dagda, also known as the Good God. Dagda is perhaps the greatest of the native Irish gods. He is also known as Ruad Ro-Fhessa, The Lord of Great Knowledge. Dagda was very tricky. He changed time so that he could send Elcmar on a journey, which Elcmar thought lasted only one day. Yet it was really nine months. Dagda stayed with Boand, who conceived and delivered a son she called Mac ind Oc, or the Youthful Son. This son is our Oengus, from the story here.

Riddle us this:

Young Oengus asked Dagda for a mound of his own. Dagda, who was not the builder of the mounds, said, “I have none for thee.” Oengus then replied, “Thou let me be granted day and night in thy dwelling.” Dagda agreed, and then said, “thou hast consumed thy time,” Oengus replied: “It is clear that night and day are the whole world, and it is that which has been given to me.” From then on the mound was associated with Aengus, son of Boand. It is as Bru Mac ind Oc, or the Bru of Oengus, that this mound was most widely known in ancient tales.

Let this sink in... Can we imagine losing a palace to a riddle game of words? Could this happen today? Our ancient Celts had a different kind of society. Kings, Queens and Bards held the countries together. A bard was a musician, often a harper. Bards actually had power to bring down kings if they were not doing good things for land and people. If a bard wrote a satire and ruined a king’s reputation, the king lost his office. This power of music and riddle and rhyme is hard for some of us to completely

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Dagda was one of the Tuatha de Danaan, the Children of Great Goddess Danu. They later became associated with the magical sidh, or faeries that lived “underhill.” So Dagda was bound by his word, and outwitted by his son. He gave the mound to Aengus to honor his word, even though the word was given from being outwitted.

Legend has it that the Tuatha de Danaan are immortal. Since we are speaking the name of Dagda today... Well, maybe they are. And, every great tale also deserves a little science. What does science have to say about Newgrange, the Mound of our River Lady Board?

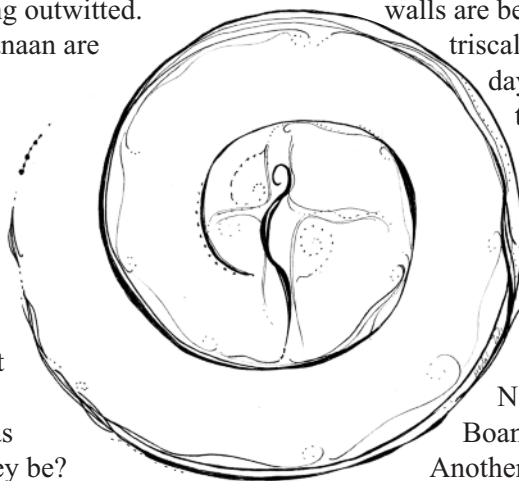
In the 1800’s, archeologists believed this mound and others like it were tombs. And yet... like the pyramids, they were not really used as burial chambers. What else could they be?

Some students of ancient lore believed that Dagda was a sun god. He and his son had many poems and stories, tales of wonder and magic, told and retold, and then eventually also written, about them. If Dagda was a sun god, what if the mounds were solar observatories? Stone calendars marking the rising and/or setting sun on the shortest day of the year? Could our ancient, stone-age ancestors have built such sophisticated buildings?

The premise in Brennan’s book, the Stones of Time (1) is... yes. Building on the work of scientists, some using sophisticated astronomical computer programs, sun angles were studied for the mounds, including Newgrange, or The Mound of Our River Lady Board. Sun angles were studied

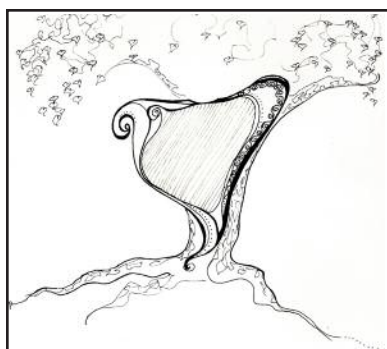
both today and as of the time they are thought to have been built. The mounds do indeed align with sunset, on the winter solstice!

Photographers have captured incredible pictures of rays of light at sunset on the winter solstice, just touching deep walls, which are dark the rest of the year. Carved on these walls are beautiful works, such as spirals and triscallians. At one special moment of one day of each year, rays of sunlight light up these carvings! Brennan’s book is highly recommended for anyone interested in reading more about this! Imagine a stone carved spiral, hidden in darkness for all but one moment of each year – touched by a beam of light from the setting sun, on the winter solstice! Welcome to Newgrange, the Mound of our River Lady Board.



Another tale of magic and wonder, for another winter evening... How was this, and other amazing stone observatories, built by our ancient, Stone Age Celtic ancestors? Perhaps another evening we will ask the Fomorians, who lived in the British Isles before the coming of the Tuatha de Danaan... A joyful winter solstice to you!

References: 1. Brennan, Martin. *The Stones of Time: Calendars, Sundials, and Stone Chambers of Ancient Ireland*. Inner Traditions International, Vermont, 1994 ISBN 0-89281-509-4 2. Russel, George. *A Dream of Angus Oge*. 1897 3. Youtube: <https://youtu.be/4VZdTnmZSwE> A telling of the Dream of Angus Oge with short video. Story Teller: Anthony Murphy 4. Wikipedia: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AengusSolsticeStone>



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Bear's Ears Monument

By Nick Martin High Country News Oct. 8, 2021

**Bears Ears is back — but don't celebrate just yet
Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk unpacks the deeper
implications — and limitations — of Biden's
monuments proclamation.**

In October the Biden administration announced it will reverse the Trump administration's reduction of Bears Ears and Grand Staircase-Escalante national monuments, and the Northeast Canyons and Seamounts, a series of sea canyons and mountains off the New England coast. The decision arrives four years after the Trump Interior Department reduced the protected area around the Bears Ears region by 85%, upsetting many tribal leaders and citizens who have stewarded the area since time immemorial.

Among those leading the charge to reinstate the Obama-era protections was Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk, a citizen and former head councilwoman of the Ute Mountain Ute Tribe and co-chair of the Bears Ears Inter-Tribal Coalition. Lopez-Whiteskunk has delivered her message to Washington, D.C. for decades now, pushing U.S. elected

officials to listen and consult with the tribal nations affected by this series of back-and-forth designations. One morning, Lopez-Whiteskunk spoke with High Country News about the Biden administration's decision, her grandmother's and her family's ties to these lands, and what a long-term plan for Bears Ears could potentially look like. This conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

High Country News: What was your immediate reaction to hearing the news — and did you know it was coming down before it was officially announced?

Regina Lopez-Whiteskunk: I didn't know prior to the announcement. It was a little bit of a surprise. I had been, relatively speaking, kind of in this little mode of thinking that the administration was going to draw it out until the very last moment.

My emotional reaction was almost disbelief. It's funny — even though I like to credit myself as being educated and knowledgeable of the different systems that we live with today, I still have distrust. I still have that gut feeling like, "I'm not gonna celebrate until I actually see it on paper and hear a proclamation, then I will believe that it actually has happened." And I think that that kind of comes from that historical distrust between the federal government and a lot of Indigenous groups in this country. **HCN:** This fight was one that was personal for so many. I know we've interviewed you about this before, but your grandmother grew up in the Bears Ears region. Could you explain for our readers what it means to have this area protected again from that familial perspective?

RLW: In this fight, I was really surrounded by a lot of the knowledge and experience of my elders and ancestors. And that was my tie; the politics came later. What was close to my heart was hearing my grandmother share childhood stories, and speak of her watermelon garden, and missing family when she was forcibly taken away to the boarding school. When she ran away from the boarding school, where did she go? She walked all the way back to where her family lived — in the area near Bears Ears.

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When you see our elders humble themselves before you with their tears and their emotion, that means a lot. And that’s exactly what she shared with me many times. And each time I would visit her and see her along the way, she would always remind me: She said, “Regina, always remember to come home, no matter where you go. Out there in this world, no matter what you do, always remember to come home.” As soon as I would come back from Washington D.C. or any other places that I would travel related to Bears Ears. I worked hard to make it a point to come back to her —specifically her —and let her know I am home, and I’m safe. Those tender guiding principles come from a place that is so sacred, and that place is directly connected to land. That’s home. And she shared a lot of that and really helped me to begin to grasp why this landscape is important. It was important for the immediate idea of family and connection to family and memories, but it also represented the life and times of our ancestors.

HCN: One of the main rhetorical devices employed by the state officials who hoped to see the Trump cuts upheld was that those seeking to restore the boundaries were “outsiders.” Now, you and I can both see the obvious absurdity in that statement. What has it felt like for you, mentally and emotionally, to have to engage in a political battle where this kind of erasure was so casually deployed?

RLW: One of the things that I have come to understand is that when we speak as Indigenous people, when we speak to history and to the past, we go all the way back to our origin stories. That’s the starting point of existence in these

areas. And that’s validated through ceremony, through prayers, through songs. And one thing that I have identified pretty consistently across the board is a lot of those specifically speaking — and I’m going to just speak out on



Newspaper Rock is one of the important cultural sites in Bears Ears National Monument. Photo courtesy Tim Peterson

the opposers, especially within the state of Utah — when they speak of time and their so-called entitlement to these areas, it’s all based in a very current time, which is when a lot of the cities, the towns and communities were established. The activities that were tied to a lot of these establishments were things like gold mining and building the railroads. And it was about developing the land that, at the end of the day, brought some (Continued on next page.)

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sort of revenue or reward to people.

When you look at the spectrum of time how Indigenous people look at it, the non-Native people of this area have only been in this neighborhood for a very short amount of time, in comparison to how we're taught we came to be in these places. It's something that, I think, really speaks to a lot of the guiding principles that our elders have always taught us — to not be greedy, to be open and sharing with people and animals and all the living beings that are out here. Homesteaders came and began to occupy the land and began to conduct these mining activities and such — it's only been very recently that they've been here.

Our people teach us not to think you can own air, water and land — that we serve these resources. We do our best to help from overharvesting, we have our own unwritten management plans that are embedded in principles and embedded in the stories — embedded in our culture, our ceremonies and our dances. But it's very difficult to look at the spectrum of time in both worlds. And that's what I want people to understand. We're not saying we're entitled to these lands. We're saying we want these places protected because this is where life has always occurred for our people. I speak that in a broad sense, whether you were Navajo, Hopi, any of the pueblos, Ute, Paiute — it didn't matter. We were out living on this land, but we never staked

or claimed entitlement and/or paid for these places. We serve these places, and we were very respectful of where we were.

Now, enter the reality we live in, where there's ownership and entitlement of land. Now, water has a price tag on it. It's just really hard for us to shift between both worlds. It's really hard to explain those differences in the thought of trying to pursue commonalities.

HCN: Obviously the outcome was the one you were hoping for, but I'm curious to hear about how you felt the Biden administration performed in terms of consulting the appropriate Indigenous parties on this matter over the past ten months.

RLW: I was rather on the disappointed side with the administration. When (Interior Secretary) Deb Haaland came out to the Southwest to visit Bears Ears and met with the tribes and the coalition, it really was an opportunity for our federal government and other organizations to determine how these conversations were going to transpire. I was really starting to lose confidence, and I'm still not sure where I'm at. And so that was kind of the sentiment I was starting to come to terms with, because as time marched on, we weren't really getting any indicators that anything was going to be done. Conversations were very isolated to specific groups. Granted, I get it — the tribal



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leaders have the capacity to have those conversations. But we're forgetting what type of space this is that we're talking about. It's public land. And we are the public, whether I'm an elected official right now or not.

Consultation is largely based in theory. When you look at consultation, there is really no decision-making mechanism; there is no weight of what traditional knowledge is versus scientific or political values of these areas and discussions. We're also in a time of COVID, and that has kind of dissipated public engagement. Consultation should be with tribal leaders, but again — that's in theory. Consultation in practice is so blurred and nonspecific. Consultation in different federal agencies may mean something as minimal as making contact with someone in that or of that Indigenous group. And that does not outline whether that's a decision maker, an elected leader. That demonstrates the lack of seriousness that I often spoke to when I was an elected leader, because we want to be taken as any other elected official in the world, because we are sovereign voices for our tribes, our groups, our nations. But we are taken very lightly.

HCN: Regarding these monuments, we have a situation where Trump reversed Obama's designation, and now Biden has reversed Trump's. Are you concerned about the fragility of these protections — this being something that could easily change depending on the administration? What's a better way to ensure long-term protections for this area, and other areas, waters and sites that so many in Indian Country are working every day to safeguard?

RLW: I do have a concern about it appearing to be a ping-pong kind of situation. My concern is that the only reason that this is being responded to at this time is because it's almost throwing the bone to the — I hate to say it this way — it's throwing a bone to the little Indian people. "Maybe you all can be happy, we're gonna do this." You're telling me that that's not on purpose?

If we're going to truly come to equitable, inclusive issues that we can solve together or feel good about, then let's make substantial changes to where this doesn't become a change today, and then a new administration comes on, and they change it by throwing the Utah delegation a bone, because they're one of the sponsors of the infrastructure legislation. (Bears Ears) shouldn't be a negotiating factor. It shouldn't be something that is throwing any group a bone. It should be something that truly means something. We're only talking about public spaces; we're only talking about the earth beneath our feet; we're

only talking about areas that are tied to Indigenous people. When the government takes things like Bears Ears away from Indigenous groups, that's an act of genocide. We're so afraid to speak those terms, but we're not afraid to use them as bargaining tools and negotiating factors to make a specific elected official feel OK or feel safe, so that he may be reelected — like a game of chess, so they'll serve a purpose. But for how long will they serve that purpose? And how does this become more substantial? The next step is to solidify it within, maybe legislation in Congress, or maybe the next step is that these places begin to become national parks. As long as they are national monuments, they're vulnerable to political change. So, are you really doing me a favor (with the designation), because whose time are you actually wasting?

Nick Martin is an associate editor for HCN's Indigenous Affairs desk and a member of the Sappony Tribe of North Carolina.



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Top right: *playing cats.*
Bottom left: *Sarascen from Denise.*
Bottom right: *We Love Horses.*

Car Insurance Fraud

From Jim Plane – State Farm Insurance

What is auto insurance fraud?

Insurance fraud occurs when someone intentionally provides false information to an insurance company for money the person is not entitled to receive. Car insurance fraud is illegal in all states and can be committed by those who are insured or criminals committing scams or theft. This type of fraud varies from soft fraud such as not reporting all of the drivers on a policy to hard fraud when an auto accident is staged.

Fraud is a major issue for all types of insurance, costing Americans billions of dollars each year. And when it comes to car insurance fraud, it's not only costing drivers money, it's putting them at risk on the road.

How fraud affects an individual

According to the Insurance Information Institute (III), auto insurance fraud costs insurers billions each year. Customers and policyholders end up absorbing a lot of the cost, which may amount to an increase of your personal car insurance premium. Additionally, schemes that involve staged car accidents or fake crashes put other drivers and their passengers at risk on the road.

Types of car insurance fraud

Injury fraud. This type is either through staged car accidents or fraudulent claims leading to payments for unnecessary medical treatment or treatment not actually received.

Exaggerated claims damages. This type involves increasing the amount of the claim in order to cover the deductible.

False registration or documentation. This type involves registering a vehicle in a place where premiums are lower, understating annual mileage or misrepresenting the use of a commercial vehicle.

Counterfeit airbags. Less expensive counterfeit airbags are installed by unscrupulous auto repair shops that receive reimbursement from insurance companies as if they are legitimate airbags. Counterfeit airbags can be dangerous and can result in injury or death to vehicle occupants.

False reports of stolen vehicles. This includes inflating and misrepresenting values of stolen vehicles. It can also include reporting a vehicle as stolen when it has not actually been stolen.

What happens if you commit car insurance fraud?

The consequences of fraud vary by the offense committed. They range from your claim being denied, your policy being canceled, fines being incurred or jail time. When you file a claim with an insurance company, a vast amount of information is requested about the incident. This may include photos, police reports, diagrams and any repair bills or medical bills.

Some insurance companies use technology to help identify fraud or suspicious patterns and the claim may be flagged and sent to a special investigations unit or department. A more in-depth investigation may take place.

Help fight car insurance fraud

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Here are a few things you can do:

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Refuse to sign any documents or agree to any terms at the site of an accident. Don't tailgate – this gives criminals a chance to take advantage of you.

If you are injured and require medical treatment, seek treatment from a trusted medical professional.

Call the local police if you suspect car insurance fraud.



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43% Of Colorado Teens Use Phones While Driving

Teen drivers are one of the highest-risk groups on the road. Young drivers are more likely to make mistakes from inexperience, get distracted by devices or other passengers, or engage in risky behaviors like speeding, not wearing a seatbelt, or drinking and driving.

In recent decades, more states have implemented policy change in an effort to reduce risks for teen drivers and those who share the road with them. Most notably, states have adopted graduated licensing systems that progressively scale up young drivers' privileges on the road as they get more experience behind the wheel. States have also introduced stronger laws on the use of seatbelts, mobile devices, and substances, which apply to all motorists but are particular risk factors for teens.

Recent years have shown a marked decline in teen vehicle fatalities as a result of these reforms. In 2005, a total of 4,874 teens were killed in a vehicle crash. By 2019, that figure had fallen by more than half, to 2,165. However, there remains a significant gap between male and female fatalities: in 2019, the number of male fatalities (1,450) was over twice as high as the number of female fatalities (715) for teens aged 15 to 19.

One of the factors contributing to this difference is male drivers' tendency to engage in more risky behaviors behind the wheel compared to their female counterparts. For example, there is a statistically significant difference between the genders on seatbelt use, with 7.4% of males not wearing a seatbelt compared to 5.6% of females. Male teen drivers also have a slight, statistically insignificant edge in cell phone use (39.6% for males and 38.4% for females), though it is most concerning that the rate of phone use while driving for both genders is so high.

Distracted driving—including using a phone while behind the wheel—is highly risky, responsible for more than 3,000 vehicle deaths annually and more than 1,000 injuries each day. Some research estimates that texting while driving is even more likely to lead to a crash than driving under the influence. This is a particular issue for teens, who have high rates of phone use.

The distracted driving problem is worse in some states than others. Most of the states where teen drivers report the highest phone use are rural states in the Midwest or Mountain West, including five states where more than half of teen drivers admit to using their phones while driving. Teens in these states also tend to wear seatbelts at a lower rate than teen drivers elsewhere. The lower volume of cars on rural roads may be contributing to a false sense of safety, but vehicle accidents in rural areas are often more likely to result in injury or death.

The data used in this analysis is from the CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's Fatality Analysis Reporting System. To determine the states with the most distracted teen drivers, researchers at CoPilot calculated the share of teens using their phone while driving, defined by the CDC as having texted or e-mailed while driving a car in the past 30 days. In the event of a tie, the state with the higher share of teens who don't wear a seatbelt and/or the higher teen traffic fatality rate was ranked higher. The teen traffic fatality rate was calculated as the number of teen traffic fatalities divided by the teen population, averaged over the past five years.

The analysis found that 43.4% of Colorado teens used their phones while driving, defined by the CDC as having texted or e-mailed while driving a car in the past 30 days. Out of the 46 states with complete data available included in the analysis, Colorado has the 16th most distracted teen drivers. Here is a summary of the data for Colorado: Share of teens using their phone while driving: 43.4% - Share of teens who don't wear a seatbelt: 5.4% - Teen traffic fatality rate (per 100k): 12.5 - Average annual teen traffic fatalities: 45 - For reference, here are the statistics for the entire United States: Share of teens using their phone while driving: 40.0% - Share of teens who don't wear a seatbelt: 6.2% - Teen traffic fatality rate (per 100k): 11.4 - Average annual teen traffic fatalities: 2,446. The original report on CoPilot's website: <https://www.copilotsearch.com/posts/states-with-the-most-distracted-teen-drivers/>

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Study Reveals Further Mistreatment Of Orca

By Nick Martin High Country News Nov. 17, 2021

An audience at the Miami Seaquarium watches Tokitae on her 40th anniversary at the aquarium.

Jeff Greenberg/Universal Images Group via Getty Images

BACKSTORY:

Five decades ago, in 1970, a young orca living in the waters of the San Juan Islands off the coast of Washington was one of six whales that were hunted and abducted in Penn Cove. All of them were destined for display in aquariums across the U.S. While the whale was still in holding at the Seattle Aquarium, veterinarian Jesse White, employed by the Miami Seaquarium, named her Tokitae, reportedly after a Coast Salish word they had seen in a Seattle gift shop that translates to “bright day, pretty colors.” Tokitae was then shipped off to the amusement park in Miami. There, she was assigned the stage name “Lolita,” given a pool smaller in depth than she would grow to in length, and made to perform for paying customers.

Orcas maintain family-oriented matriarchal societies, with many remaining by their mother’s side for their entire life. The abducted whales’ many relationships — with their families, with the salmon of the Pacific Northwest, with the

Indigenous communities along the coast — were severed during this period. “To my tribe, the Lhaq’ te’ mish of the Salish Sea, they are people. In our stories, they have societies and a culture similar to our own,” Rena Priest, a poet and a member of the Lhaq’temish (Lummi) Nation, wrote in High Country News last year (“A captive orca and



a chance for our redemption,” April 2020). For 10 years, Tokitae had a tank mate named Hugo, but Hugo, like many orcas, could not adapt to captivity in the amusement park, where the two had to share a tank that was 80 feet long by 35 feet wide, and only 20 feet deep. Hugo died in 1980 of a brain aneurysm after constantly slamming himself into the

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glass walls of his home-cum-prison.

Efforts to free Tokitae have been underway since her abduction, with Indigenous nations, the Washington state government and animal rights organizations all demanding that Seaquarium oversee her return to the waters of the Salish Sea. In 2005, southern resident orcas were granted protection under the Endangered Species Act — protection that was extended specifically to Tokitae in 2015 by the National Marine Fisheries Service, a federal agency housed within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. While some hoped that this would expedite her return, the legal protections simply added a layer of red tape; given Tokitae's age at this point, a cross-country transportation effort could potentially be dangerous.

FOLLOWUP:

In late September, the U.S. Department of Agriculture released a report detailing how Seaquarium had failed to provide Tokitae with adequate living conditions and noting that the amusement park operators have repeatedly cut corners, endangering the health of the captive orcas. The report found that the orca handlers repeatedly fed the whales and other animals rotting fish and cut their daily meal sizes by roughly 30 pounds, all against advice of the park's veterinarian.

Additionally, the park's vet also informed Seaquarium staff that Tokitae had injured her jaw during one of her twice-daily shows and advised them to allow her time to heal before she had to resume performing head-first dives for tourists. As with the advice about feeding, the staff ignored the vet until the USDA stepped in. Those who advocate for Tokitae's homecoming hope that the USDA report will spur NOAA to step in and finally act.

This summer, while the USDA was conducting its review of Seaquarium, the House of Tears carvers from Lummi Nation transported a totem pole across the country, from Washington state to Washington, D.C., in an attempt to raise awareness for a number of issues, including the protection of sacred sites. Speaking to a group of water protectors protesting the construction of the Line 3 pipeline in northern Minnesota, Doug James, who, along with his brother, Jewell James, was one of the lead carvers on the pole, explained that the pair had carved a section on the totem pole specifically for Tokitae. "It's up to us to do what we can to at least allow her to go home and spend a lot of her days with her family," James said. "The guy that's running the Seaquarium, he's said, 'Well, if she leaves here, she'll probably just die.' Well, so what? What did you do with Hugo when he died? They threw him in the garbage dump. At least allow her the right to go back home and die with her family, so they could be with her. That's her God-given right."

Nick Martin is an associate editor for HCN's Indigenous Affairs desk and a member of the Sappony Tribe of North Carolina.

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Legal Arguments Against Gross Settlement

Dear Readers,

In light of Boulder County’s Commissioners and the office of Boulder County Attorneys decision during the virtual public hearing last month – the fight to stop Denver Water’s Moffat Collection System Project has been illegally decided for Boulder County residents without any public comment allowed. Our Commissioners did not want to give up the fight but were advised to by our county attorney’s office and the suggestion to take a settlement by a judge involved in the recent litigation.

My stance since day one has always been litigation not mitigation, as I know for a fact there is no way to mitigate the massive destruction this project will cause.

(The most recent legal argument from Mr. Thompson.)

“The county commissioners had and have no authority whatsoever to enter into such an agreement and it would be declared “void as against public policy” for many reasons if anyone filed a complaint in the Colorado District Court for Boulder County seeking a declaratory judgment to that effect and an injunction against the commissioners personally ordering them to see that Article 8 of the land use code is enforced. The law is all well-settled.

There is no question it would be declared null and void. It is conclusive proof that our county attorney and his staff

and probably our county commissioners aren’t thinking straight and have ignored their personal integrity red flags. It is way more than enough to justify a criminal investigation.” *I must agree with Mr. Thompson yet again and all efforts to inform BoCo Attorney’s have fallen on deaf ears.*

Editor

Letter to the Editor,

1) Referring to the FERC License Amendment Order, starting on page 36 of the Order, new articles 423, 424 and 425 are added to the License requiring Denver Water to prepare and submit, after consultation with Boulder County, a Tree Removal Plan, Quarry Operation and Reclamation Plans, and a Traffic Management Plan for approval by FERC. Which of these plans have been approved by FERC?

2) If FERC has not yet approved of any of these plans, the substance of which are required by Sections 4(e) and 10(a)(1) of the Federal Power Act to be a part of its license amendment decision, is it not true that there has not yet been a “final agency action” on Denver Water’s license amendment application?

3) If there has not yet been a “final agency action” on Denver Water’s license amendment application, doesn’t Boulder County still have the power to request a rehearing

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on the license amendment application after there is “final agency action” with regard to the Tree Removal Plan, Quarry Operation and Reclamation Plans and the Traffic Management Plan, and thereby preserve its right to appeal FERC’s final decision to the appropriate federal court, if it desires to do so, as set forth in the final condition of the FERC order, condition (Q) on page 38 of the Order?

4) If the FERC license amendment decision is not yet final, then Denver Water’s claim that it preempts our county’s land use regulations is premature and un-sound, to say the very least. Has Boulder County raised this issue in the case and will it be argued in oral argument if the commissioners refuse the settlement agreement?

5) This issue is an issue of the court’s jurisdiction. It is well-settled law that the federal courts do not have jurisdiction to hear hypothetical questions. Denver Water’s case essentially asks the hypothetical question “suppose we eventually get a FERC license amendment for the project, will it preempt local land use regulation?” Because it is well-settled law that an issue with regard to the court’s jurisdiction can be raised at any time, including at oral argument, does Boulder County intend to raise this issue at oral argument, even if it has not so far raised it, if the commissioners refuse to approve the settlement agreement?

6) In the two hearings in 2012 and 2013 on an IGA in lieu of going through the procedures otherwise required by Article 8 of our Land Use Code, I argued and presented a FERC decision to the commissioners and their legal counsel in which FERC stated that it was FERC’S policy only to license the discrete hydropower components of a water supply project, and not the water supply project itself. That FERC decision is in source docs. Within the last year or so, I also sent an assistant county attorney another FERC decision which explained that part of the reasoning for FERC’s policy of licensing only the hydropower components of a water supply project is to prevent license applicants like Denver Water from using a FERC license to preempt local regulation of a water supply project. I attached that FERC decision (*in source docs*). The FERC order for the Gross Expansion Project is very explicit in noting that not one drop of water would ever be stored in or released from Gross Reservoir for hydropower purposes. It is also explicit in explaining the separate and discrete nature of the hydropower components of the project. Have our county attorneys argued that preemption under these circumstances would be contrary to the intent of Congress when it enacted the FPA as well as contrary to FERC’s well-established policies?

7) Attachment A to the FERC license amendment order for the project is a series of Forest Service conditions which FERC incorporated into its license amendment order by reference. Forest Service Condition No. 6 provides, with reference to Denver Water’s operations on Forest Service land, that: “Licensee shall comply with all applicable

Federal, State and local laws, regulations and directives, including but not limited to ... relevant environmental laws, as well as public health and safety laws and other health and safety laws relating to the siting, construction, operation and maintenance of any facility, improvement or equipment.” Have our county attorneys argued that by placing this condition on the license amendment, FERC clearly did not intend that the license amendment would preempt Boulder County’s Land Use Code Article 8?

8) The county has already determined that the project is subject to Article 8 of our Land Use Code, which requires that Denver Water either comply with the Article 8 permitting procedures or propose an IGA in lieu of going through those procedures. It requires approval of the IGA after a hearing which is held at least 30 days after notice to the public and a finding that the IGA would satisfy the requirements for an Article 8 permit. In this case, that would require a showing as to how the \$10M offered by Denver Water would be used to mitigate the negative environmental effects that have been identified. Without such a showing, the \$10M would be nothing more than payola or bribe money. Are the county commissioners “above the law,” or are they bound by the law, in this case Article 8 of the county Land Use Code? **Jeff Thompson**

Source documents too lengthy to print are available as PDF attachments to anyone who wishes to contact the Highlander and have them emailed to you to read.

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A Song In The Shape Of A Woman

By Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

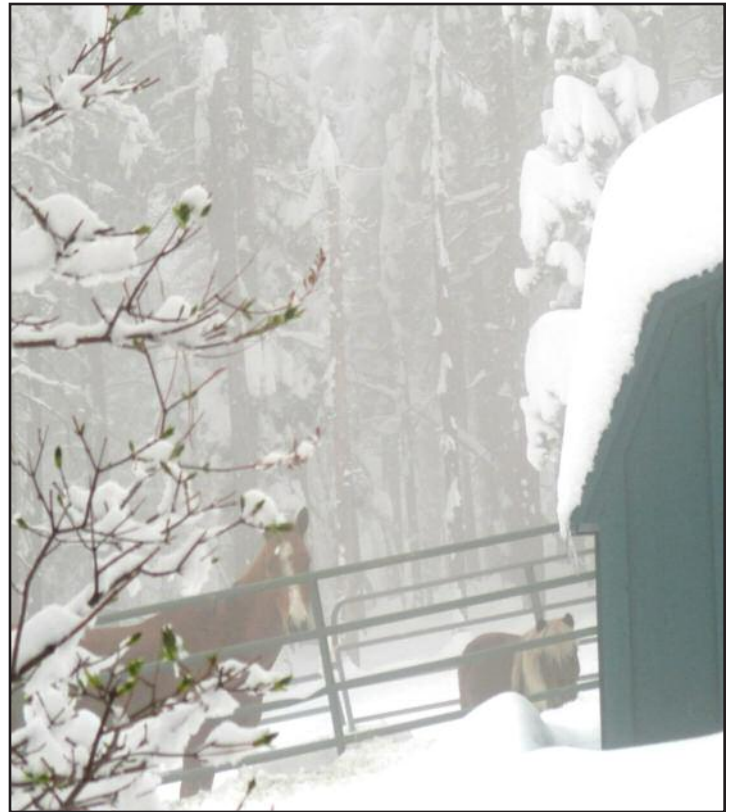
big world, let me be your minstrel -
a song in the shape of a woman. i
want to sing with the voice of ten thousand

snowflakes falling like promise from the bruised blue
sky. i want to sing with the pungent alto of juniper
berry warmed in the midsummer sun. i want to sing

of nectarine sunsets, evergreen tenor, snowstorms
in june. i want to sing of november's fallen
leaves, sailing the sidewalk like brittle canoes.

i want to sing the soprano of stars, the rhythm
of raindrops, the treble of tulips, the orbiting bass of
the pregnant moon. i want to sing with the echoing

silence that remembers itself in ancient stone.
i want to sing with the yellow buttercups
cradeled at snowline in may. i want to sing



with the brashness of daisy, the violence of
avalanche, the desperation of saxifrage breaking
from stone into startling bloom. i want to sing

with the lonely rocks in the san miguel river,
tumbling slowly to the west big world, let me
be your trusted minstrel, a song in the
shape of a woman.

Ms. Trommer: Word Woman

Published in 2000

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(Photo of horses in heavy snowstorm, by Anita Wilks.)

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Update: *BuffaloFieldCampaign.org*

Dear BFC Supporters,

Recently, I've been collaborating with many organizations from across the nation. My outreach to nonprofit and tribal entities focuses on seeking common ground for wildlife advocacy. I consistently draw attention to the many failures of state and federal managing agencies regarding wild, Yellowstone bison.

The Campaign's decades of knowledge and on-the-ground experience provides a powerful voice for change.

Yellowstone bison must be afforded the freedom to persist. Large intact landscapes provide critical ecosystem benefits imperative to the survival of the natural world and our own existence. As state and federal agencies continue to produce ailing and mismanaged landscapes, our mission is more important than ever.



Wild bison must be allowed to foster resilience for other wildlife species, and for the ecosystems upon which we all rely. Wildlife policy and management principles must prioritize a strong and resilient ecosystem. After decades of intensive state and federal management, Yellowstone's ailing bison herds must be allowed to recover. The artificial suppression of these wild populations, and the aggressive manipulation of their migratory patterns and habitat, is causing fundamental damage to ancient bison ecology and herd memory.

Regional bison populations must be managed in the same way as the local elk populations. Scientific, ecosystem-based wildlife management must guide the expansion of the bison populations. To fulfill their keystone role in the Yellowstone Ecosystem and beyond, wild bison must be allowed to migrate freely. An uncertain future of climate change and ecosystem stress must compel our leaders to protect our public trust wildlife and natural places. Healthy ecosystems are supported and maintained by robust populations of keystone species. To appropriately protect public trust of America's National Mammal, the federal government must reconsider their leadership for Yellowstone bison.

The Campaign has been doing this work a long time. We've witnessed the worst government actions taken against the bison and strive to hold them accountable.

We will continue to build coalitions and collaborate along shared values. While we develop relationships with diverse organizations from around the world, we honor our mission. The benefits of a robust bison population are significant. These benefits include sustaining a fully functioning ecosystem, protecting the public trust, maintaining the American character associated with our wild places, securing the treaty-reserved hunting rights of tribes, and maximizing bison restoration opportunities here, and elsewhere.

It is for these reasons Buffalo Field Campaign appreciates your support so much. We are acting on huge issues that require significant, consistent resources that our growing base of supporters provide. Your voice gives us strength as we speak for Yellowstone bison. Thank you for standing with us.

For the Buffalo,
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The Winnowing Of Winter

By Heather Hansman - HCN Nov. 1, 2021

Snow is alchemy, the exact right mix of cold, water and air. You can feel the difference of man-made — the stiffness and the catch — and the unbroken crystals of newly fallen fresh. Snow is sound, too, the creaky stick of cold storms, the ball-bearings swish of slush corn or the crackle of rime-y ice. That thing about the thousand words for snow is right.

If we lose the ebb and flow of winter — which we soon could — we also lose storm chasing, and the barometric adrenaline of waiting for a storm. There's a risk in pinning your heart to weather, and we skiers hang everything on snowfall. You know you're in trouble when you're constantly watching storm tracks and snow gauges, trying to predict the places where it's going to be the deepest. Letting the real-life logistics of where you're going to live, for instance, fade into the background while you focus on La Niña storm tracks and Farmers' Almanac predictions.

The greatest existential threat to skiing is the winnowing of winter. The viability of ski towns, and of the sport, is dependent on snowpack, which is being decimated by global warming. Depending on the emissions scenario you choose, snowfall is predicted to shrink by up to a third by the end of the century. That thin margin of weather is going to have a huge bearing on the future of skiing, and on whether or not people can keep counting on the seasons to eke out a way of life. Not just in the dry Southwest, but in British Columbia, where freezing levels keep creeping higher, and in New England, where almost every ski hill now depends on man-made snow. That problematic future

is easy to forget in deep winters, but it's abundantly clear in shallow ones. Skiing is one of the most carbon-intensive outdoor sports, and as it snows less, or rains more, it takes more energy and water to create snow.

The worst winter I lived in the mountains, I volunteer ski patrolled at Arapahoe Basin in Colorado, and in the early season we sidestepped the steeps of Pallavicini Face, packing down the snow with our skis so it would stick to the hills. We were trying, vainly, to hold onto some kind of base, to keep the mountain open. Mainly we were trying to hold onto our sanity, and protect everyone else's. When it doesn't snow, the land doesn't look right. A low-slung depression takes hold of the community. Everyone gets antsy. A couple of dry weeks in a ski town makes you wonder about the value of waiting for weather. Desperation sets in, and that particular season turned into a series of pray-for-snow parties and burnt-ski bonfire sacrifices to the snow gods. I did a lot of groomer skiing dressed like a hot dog to make things feel even a little bit interesting. But every new season hinges on hope for deep powder days. Did we used to talk about climate this much? Was it always this dry in December?

THE EROSION OF WINTER isn't just a bummer for single-focused ski bums and weather nerds. Rising temperatures and shrinking snowpack impact water supply, food security, and economic viability. Shorter, warmer winters, and precipitation that falls as rain instead of snow, screws up everything from electricity generation to fish migration. When the skiing is bad, everything is bad. The scientific journal Geophysical Research Letters found



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that the snow season in the western U.S. has shrunk by 34 days since the early 1980s. “The overall decline in snowfall has dampened profitability given the fact that industry operators have to incur significant costs in using snowmaking equipment,” the study read. It’s a hard economy to hold onto even when snowfall is consistent. Ski resorts have launched and faded in the lifespan of people who have witnessed the evolution from rope tows to mega resorts, and by the time today’s kids are old enough to work at a ski resort, the world of skiing could change.

Liz Burakowski, a climate scientist at the University of New Hampshire, says modeling the future of winter storms isn’t easy, because interconnected factors like El Niño, sea ice or snow cover in Siberia, create a complex puzzle. But despite the range of variables, there’s a clear warming pattern thanks to the way carbon dioxide traps heat in the atmosphere and warms it up. “The trend toward the end of the century is to see winters that are 8 to 10 degrees warmer,” she says. “That puts a lot of places right above the freezing level; the margin is small.”

That means some resorts, especially the tiny ones that don’t have the capacity to create their own winter through snowmaking, and which are in low elevations or Southern latitudes, are going to have a hard time staying economically viable in the very near future. And as winter

gets warmer, even the places that have invested in snowmaking won’t be able to do much. Even if you have the equipment to make snow, if it’s raining or hot you won’t be able to keep it on the ground.



Image credit: Chet Strange

Burakowski is the kind of scientist who can both rationally look at the facts and the modeling, and hold the emotional side of losing winter in her head, which makes her good at talking about it in real terms — a piece of her
(Continued on page 31.)

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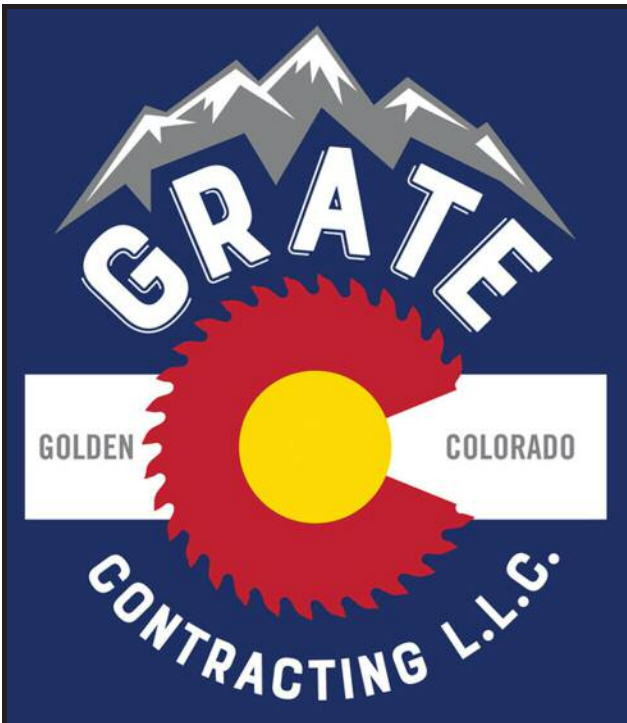


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job that's feeling increasingly urgent and important.

She says a big concern for the ski industry is back-to-back terrible winters, because after a few strikeouts, casual skiers start to lose their motivation. If a family of skiers skip a few seasons, their kids may move on to other sports.

The biggest imbalance of climate change, in almost any capacity, is that the burden isn't spread out fairly. The people who are most impacted by warming are often those who are least able to insulate themselves against it. As winter gets warmer and shorter, ski hills that struggle the most — the small ones in low, dry places, where funding is short — start to require more assistance. They need snow guns they can't afford, or water rights for snowmaking, or ways to pass the buck in years they can't open. Some ski areas will actually fare better in the face of climate change, at least for a little while, and those are categorically the ones that are already at a financial advantage, thanks to corporate cover. The snowy backbone of the country is already stippled with failed ski resorts. I'm afraid for places like this, and what might happen if they can't survive. Ski Santa Fe, despite the fact that it has thousand-foot-long chutes and steep, peppery tree skiing, caters to families and church groups.

THE REALISTIC FUTURE OF SKIING is a question of what counts as natural, what we try to create or maintain, and how long we can hold on to the past. There's a halo of goodness around the outdoor industry, a sense that it engenders environmentalists and breeds people who want to protect the mountains. But just because you love skiing doesn't mean you're doing anything concrete or impactful to preserve it. Half of American ski resorts operate on government-owned Forest Service land, because of last-century ideals about public-land use. That means that

anything those ski areas do to gin up visitors, or improve the ski experience, impacts collective resources, be it water supply or wildlife migration. And that's before you even consider the fallacy of federally owned public land, and how the American government came to consider it public after taking it from Native American tribes. We've historically viewed attractive outdoor economies as benign, but just because we love being outside doesn't mean we're not overusing resources or damaging landscapes. It's not just climate change and large-scale warming that impact the skiing experience, it's the way we skiers use resources, and the cascading impacts of snowmaking, transportation, trail cutting and energy demand.


In 2020, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the last five winters were the five warmest on record, and that's not likely to stop. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change says that under a higher emissions scenario (the path we're currently on), the total amount of seasonal snowfall is projected to decrease by 10% to 30% by the end of the 21st century. That impacts far more than skiing. In New Mexico, where the Rio Grande is the main water source for many of the biggest population centers, the river often runs dry in the summer because of overuse and overallocation.

Liz Burakowski and other climate experts are trying to translate those numbers and predictions into feelings, to make us act, even when it feels overwhelming and dire. I get a deep gut ache when I think about losing snow, about the contrast between my childhood memories of snow and the gray slush of right now. I'm scared and sad and somewhat perpetually grieving. How could it have gotten this bad so fast? *Future of Chasing Snow* by Heather

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Oracle Of The Soul

By Frosty Wooldridge

On a bike ride through Tennessee, I happened to stop by a WarmShowers host. That night, in his back yard, we sat around a campfire with four other cyclists who had pitched their tents on his green lawn. Of course, we appreciated his warm shower!

The WarmShowers concept interests me because I think it creates international goodwill and friendships. I've hosted dozens of international visitors from China, Japan, India, Holland, Norway, Italy, France, Sweden, Germany, Austria, Mexico, Africa and more—at my home in Golden, CO. Sandi and I live on Route 40, the main drag from San Francisco to the East Coast. We're the last stop as you exit the Rocky Mountains to enter the Great Plains.

It's really special when you meet people with an interest in exploring our planet on bicycles. Last fall, we enjoyed dinner with Sue and Pete Reah from Great Britain. They cycled across America coast to coast last summer. We still keep in touch. We met Lars and Maud bicycling the Continental Divide; they hailed from Holland as they stayed for several days. Lovely couples.

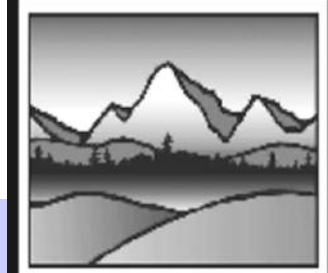
That night in the hills of Tennessee, our host told us a story about the 'Gems of Understanding' he had learned on his travels around the world. As the embers burned and the

smoke curled into the night sky, he related about a special sage in a king's court in medieval times:

As you grew up, you experienced different lessons along your life-path. You discovered a hot stove hurt when you touched it. A candle flame caused pain when you passed your finger over it. A rosebush thorn made your finger bleed. A bee sting caused you terrible agony," he said. From those experiences, you avoided the obvious in your daily meanderings. Marching into your teens, you discovered friendship, jealousy and betrayal. A bully beat you up. A girlfriend undermined you in your pursuit of a boyfriend.

In nature, you learned to run for cover during a lightning storm. When a dog gave chase, you picked up a stick to protect yourself. You learned life-lessons either by your parents advising you or you learned the hard way by direct experience. As you grew into your twenties, relationships grew more complicated, you worked a job with acerbic bosses and cantankerous fellow employees. You discovered many different aspects to how people operate in the world. Along the way, you picked up new understandings and created game plans on how to deal with your circumstances. All the while, you became a better you. But sometimes, you wondered about your choices or

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predicaments. I'm reminded of the ancient king who held court each day. He beckoned the local sage for words of wisdom. Each day for a year, the sage brought the king an overly ripe piece of fruit along with a witty statement. When the sage left, the king tossed the fruit into a hole in a pillar where it fell to the basement, untouched. One day, after the sage gave the king the overly ripe fruit, he turned to exit, but noticed the king tossing the fruit into the pillar hole. What are you doing? asked the sage. Did you not know I gifted you with a gem in the middle of each fruit? The king made an excuse before the sage exited the throne room. Quickly, the king ordered a knave to recapture the fruit. The king cut it open to reveal a valuable gem. He said, I never knew such beauty could be found inside an aged piece of fruit. The king ordered his staff to recover the gems from all the fruits in the basement. The gems of knowledge enlightened him, which allowed him greater understanding. He became a better king for all the people of his realm.

The great writer Thomas Moore said that every person faces the deadly turpitudes of living: obsessions, addictions, depression, loss of meaning, judging others, violence, anger, hate and prejudice. It's your challenge to connect with the divine in you. You might call it the "spiritual" within you. Choose to identify with your higher self. That quest creates a transformation that leads to your better well-being and better choices.

When bad things happen to you, decode the experience to see the gem. As you discover the synchronicity of the lesson, take advantage of it. Synchronicity coupled with purpose equals "coincidence." Once you step into the "flow" of life, those synchronicities multiply because your energies coordinate with the natural vibrations of the universe. Engage these talents: walk in the light, walk tall, walk with a song, walk strong, walk wise, walk with hope, walk with joy, walk with purpose and walk with passion.

People notice your demeanor. You attract them to their own higher self. Take advantage of a bitter experience, betrayal of a friend, unfair treatment by another or any of the overly ripe experiences of life. You will find a "gem" in the rotten fruit that will enhance your life beyond all ordinary understanding."

That night, after his story about discovering the "gems" of life, I sat there with an appreciation that everyone brings 'skin' to the game of life. Whether it's a campfire with strangers or spending time with your family, this thing called 'living' allows special moments, special times and special people you meet on your bicycle travels. And, to those of you I am going to meet this summer while I pedal across America, I'm excited to greet you. I'm excited to share with you. I want to hear your story. Together, let's make this a better world of understanding and acceptance. To that, I say, keep pedaling. It's a hell of a ride.

Happy Holidays



*May the Season bring you and yours
Happiness & Good Health!*

Highlander Ad Index & Business Telephone Numbers

ADVERTISING

Graphics Galore pg 7 303.642.0362
Highlander Monthly pg 27 303.642.0362

ANIMAL CARE

Angels w/Paws-Cat Rescue pg 31 303.274.2264
Cheshire Cat - Catio 303.642.0362
Hands, Hoofs & Paws pg 11 303.503.6068

ART

Portraits pg 22 303.642.8423
The Silver Horse - pg 25 303.279.6313
The Rustic Moose - pg 25 303.258.3225

AUTOMOBILE

Carl's Corner pg 22 303.642.7144
Kysar's Place pg 17 303.582.3566
LEGENDS Auto pg 9 720.366.0279
Mountain Muffler pg 14 303.278.2043

BUILDING/CONSTRUCTION

ACE Indian Peaks Hardware pg 12 303.258.3132
Arrow Drilling-pg 23 303.421.8766
Grate Contracting pg 30 303.579.9519
Kape Roofing & Exteriors ins cov 303.922.7663
Peter Palombo, Surveyor-pg 15 720.849.7509
RedPoint Construction pg 11 303.642.3691
Steel Structures America ins cov 970.420.7100

BUSINESS SERVICES

Graphics Galore pg 26 303.642.0362
Karen Schwimmer, CPA pg 9 303.642.0628
Wondervu Consulting Serv. pg 32 303.642.0433

CHIMNEY SWEEPS

Chimney Service of CO pg 14 720.515.0416
MidTown Chimney pg 28 303.670.7785

CIGARS

Foss Company pg 3 303.963.5693

CLOTHING

The Rustic Moose - pg 25 303.258.3225

COMPUTER SERVICE & REPAIR

Wondervu Consulting Serv. pg 32 303.642.0433

DRIVEWAYS/ GRADING SERVICES

Benchmark Land Care pg 9 303.485.1001
Rock Creek Civil, LLC pg 10 720.583.4555

ELECTRIC

United Power - Inside back Cover 303.642.7921

ENTERTAINMENT

Old Golden Events pg 8 VisitGolden.com
Jaime Mezo - Scuba - Cozumel pg 21
KGNU Radio pg 26 303.449.4885
Santa Paws pg 8 - Dec. 18th Must Sign Up

FARRIER

Forbes Farrier Service pg 10 303.642.7437

FIREWOOD & FOREST MANAGEMENT

High Timber Mtn Tree Serv. pg 17 303.258.7942
Lumber Jacks - pg 6 720.212.1875
Pruins Pruning/Tree Care pg 31 303.653.7967
Rock Creek Civil, LLC pg 10 720.583.4555

GIFTS

CCC Holiday Market pg 6 Dec. 4th 9am-2pm
Portraits pg 22 303.642.8423
The Silver Horse - pg 25 303.279.6313
The Rustic Moose - pg 25 303.258.3225

GROCERIES

B & F Moutain Market pg 7 303.258.3105
Golden Poultry & Meats pg 29 720.697.0508

HEALTH & FITNESS

Hands, Hoofs & Paws pg 11 303.503.6068
Massage, Yoga, Pers. Train. pg 16 310.741.0791
Clarity Water Services pg 11 303.717.9110

HOME IMPROVEMENT

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Grate Contracting pg 30 303.579.9519
Independence Roofing pg 3 720.399.0355
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Rock Creek Civil, LLC pg 10 720.583.4555

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HORSE TRAINING

Timberline Sporthorses pg 13 720.999.7235

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Jim Plane-State Farm- pg 20 720.890.5916

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Underground Liquor pg 11 303.582.6034

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Piano & Harp in CCC pg 13 303.642.8423

PROPANE

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REAL ESTATE

Byers-Sellers Mtn Properties pg 24 303.642.7951
Mock Group-Kathy Keating -Back cov 303.642.1133
Retail Space - Downtown Golden pg 5

RETAIL

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B & F Moutain Market pg 7 303.258.3105
The Silver Horse - pg 25 303.279.6313
The Rustic Moose - pg 25 303.258.3225

REVERSE MORTGAGES

Universal Lending Corp. pg 15 303.791.4786

ROOFING

Independence Roofing pg 3 720.399.0355
Kape Roofing & Exteriors ins cov 303.922.7663

STEEL STRUCTURES

Steel Structures America ins cov 970.420.7100

TAXES

Karen Schwimmer, CPA pg 9 303.642.0628

WATER & WELL

Arrow Drilling pg 23 303.421.8766
Clarity Water Services pg 11 303.717.9110

United Power Energizes Generator at Gilpin County School

United Power, partnering with the Gilpin County Office of Emergency Management, placed a 625-kw diesel generator on the Gilpin County School District campus. The generator was installed as a safety enhancement to serve both the school and community members in the mountain territory.

"United Power is excited to partner with Gilpin County on this key project for community members adjacent to the school district campus," stated Dean Hubback, United Power's Chief Energy Resource Officer. "Completing the project prior to the winter season should provide security and peace of mind to the residents in the area and provide a much-needed resource in the event of an extended power interruption."

Without a back-up power option, Gilpin County was required to notify parents and send students home during a power outage. The generator alleviates concerns for school administrators and parents of students. Additionally, the generator can provide a longer window of service during an extended outage, allowing Emergency Management to activate the site as an emergency warming center.



The generator can provide power to the entire school campus, including school buildings, gym facilities, the bus barn, water storage and delivery systems, pumping stations and the Eagles' Nest Daycare Center. The generator operates on an ultra-clean, low sulfur fuel and incorporates advanced emission reduction technologies.

"Gilpin County is kind of a unique situation," said Nathan Whittington, Emergency Manager at the Gilpin County Office of Emergency Management. "My biggest fear for this county is isolation, so building internal capability within the county is critical. I can't thank United Power enough. This is a huge win for Gilpin County."



Scholarship Opportunities

Applications Due: Jan. 28, 2022

Each year, United Power awards academic scholarships to outstanding students served by the cooperative. Scholarships include awards for students attending an accredited university or college in Colorado or pursuing a specific degree program, as well as 11 book scholarships. This year, United Power is also introducing a new scholarship opportunity for non-traditional students pursuing a technical or vocational degree. The cooperative will award 18 scholarships worth more than \$20,000, ranging between \$1,000 and \$2,000.

Eligibility varies for each scholarship, but in general overall academic achievement (such as GPA and ACT/SAT scores), extracurricular activities and community involvement rank high in the evaluation process. A written essay is required, and the applicant's primary residence must be in United Power's service territory.

For more information, including a list of available scholarships, visit www.unitedpower.com.

Winter Weather May Cause Outages

With winter weather arriving, the potential for outages due to strong winds, heavy snow and ice increases. Tree limbs become a hazard during heavy snow because they can break and fall into lines. Heavy snow may also cause damage to cross arms and other electrical equipment along United Power's lines.

United Power line crews are on alert for outages around-the-clock. We utilize sophisticated technology in our 24-hour dispatch center to monitor outages, but you can also help us restore power. We may not know the extent of an outage

or if there is an isolated outage affecting only one or two homes. A call from a member gives us a clearer understanding of the extent of the outage.

If you (and/or your neighbor) lose power for an extended period of time, usually more than a few minutes, please report your outage online, through the United Power mobile app or call United Power's Outage Line at 303-637-1350. If the outage is widespread, your call will be answered by our Automated Outage Reporting System. When reporting an outage, please provide any details you have.

United Power Coal Creek Office
5 Gross Dam Road | Golden, CO 80403

Member Services: 303-637-1300
Coal Creek Office: 303-642-7921



Payment Kiosk Location



EV Charging Site (CHAdemo, CCS/SAE)



www.unitedpower.com



Holiday Market - Saturday Dec. 4th 9am-2pm



CCCIA HALL - 31258 Hwy 72



Santa Visit - Drive Thru - Sat. Dec. 11th Noon-2pm



922 Camp Eden
Impeccably Maintained Stucco & Stone
3 BD/ 3 BA 2,641 sq.ft. **\$898,000**



11017 Circle Drive
Remodeled Home w/Greenhouse
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,420 sq.ft. 1.7Ac. **\$634,000**



122 Outlook Drive
Impressive Remodel
1 BD/ 2 BA 1,040 sq.ft. **\$525,000**



2874 S. Beaver Creek Road
Updated & Furnished 2 BD/ 1 BA
+ sep 453 sq.ft. Bunk Hs. **\$370,000**



1545 Ithaca Drive, Boulder, CO
Incredible Opportunity in S. Boulder
4 BD/ 2 BA 1,828 sq.ft. **\$899,000**



1209 Camp Eden
Remodeled Kitchen-Oversized Garage
3 BD/ 3 BA 2,288 sq.ft. **\$571,500**



3497 Coal Creek Canyon #18
Adorable Summer Cabin
3 BD/ 1 BA 1,184 sq.ft. **\$215,000**



126 Signal Rock
Lovely Landscaping/Divide Views
2 BD/ 3 BA 2,024 sq.ft. **\$600,000**



2663 Lump Gulch Road
VIEWS & Backing to National Forest
4 BD/ 3 BA 3,749 sq.ft. **\$649,000**



213 Rudi Lane
Oversized 2 Car Garage + Shop
2 BD/ 2 BA 1.15 Acres **\$470,000**



133 Linn Lane
Wonderful Log Home on Level Lot
3 BD/ 2 BA 1,900 sq.ft. .9 Acre



TBD Crescent Lake Road
Flat Lot, Privacy & Possible Views
1.43 Acres **\$125,000**



968 Divide View
Outstanding Views - 1.95 Acres
2 BD/ 3 BA 2,400 sq.ft. **\$715,000**



33858 Ave De Pines
Breathtaking Views - 2.8 Acres
3 BD/ 3 BA 2,345 sq.ft. **\$650,000**



14251 W. 91st, Arvada
Elegant Home w/Flatiron Views
5 BD/ 3 BA 4,786 sq.ft. **\$920,000**

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