

A fluffy golden retriever is sitting in a snowy landscape. The dog is looking directly at the camera. Snow is falling around it, and there are snow-covered branches in the background. The overall scene is a winter wonderland.

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About the Cover:
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My Doodlebug

You know you're in deep trouble when your rescue cat determines what or even if you can bring a canine into 'her' house. You may have read last month's story of my feline rescue and due to her fear and loathing of all canines I went a year without a dog in my life. Once my beloved Husky left this world, (*before her time*) – I decided to see if I could bond with the traumatized rescued cat before getting another rescued dog. I've pretty much always gone to shelters to acquire a canine in need of a home throughout my life. Always been happily satisfied with my choices over the years and was devastated by the passing of my husky mix, Velvet.

So the rescue cat Lilly and I spent a year by ourselves with just the equines out in the barn for company. At the end of the year I felt a yearning for that canine spirit and decided maybe if I got a puppy the cat could watch it grow up and not be as afraid. In theory it worked out, but alas the feline still harbors fear and loathing of anything or anyone other than me. She tolerates the Labradoodle I picked out that summer and disdains the simple fact that we need a dog.

Growing up I got to care for a Standard Poodle that belonged to a family member when they went out of town so I had an affinity for the AKC star member and set my sights on getting a puppy of that famous breed. Little did I know how much in demand they are and therefore way out of my price range. Disappointment turned to research and before I knew it I had found a doodle breeder right in my neighborhood. So convenience helped me to determine they had just had a litter of puppies that were mostly poodle with a quarter bird dog thrown in. With my heart set on a female I visited the home of the breeder and well, the rest is history.

When the puppies were very little I visited to pick a female and in the end she picked me. While I sat on the floor this little crème colored fuzz ball scooted over to sit in my lap and I was hooked. I had to wait for her to get to be over ten weeks old and then brought her home to where the fun began. I say that tongue in cheek because having a puppy without an adult dog to help or any recent experience with puppies made the next few months torture: for all three of us. The cat disappeared again and I was basically clueless about how much work an alpha female – highly intelligent breed dog would take. We were in uncharted seas and up a creek without a paddle, doomed to scar this canine within an inch of her



young life.

Luckily I had a large dog kennel and neighbors willing to loan me several baby gates and the living room became defcon Chanel. It took me two weeks before she decided what I was to call her: I tried (Continued on next page.)





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Highlander Animals

every name I could think of and while my favorite French designer's name was Coco – this dog was not a Coco. But what do you call a designer dog? Fearing the worst (*that she would get used to not having a name*), one day she was eating out of her dog bowl while I sat on the loveseat and I just said “Chanel” in a normal voice. She immediately stopped eating, looked over at me with her lovely liquid brown eyes and came lumbering over to slobber on me. It was as if she had waited for me to get it, dumb human that I was it only took two weeks.

The AKC has nailed the Poodle breed as being the smartest and I had met my match. I had to rise to the occasion and become as quick, bright and at the top of my game when training this dog. I put in the required twenty minutes a day for six months using a Halti Halter we became a daily pair in the little cul-de-sac of our immediate neighborhood. Teaching her to heel, sit, stay and come; along with the hand signals that go with the demands that canines need to





know. The hardest one was ‘stranger danger’ as she was overly friendly and would run up the property to the road whenever she saw someone walking along our dirt road. Fearing she would get hit by a vehicle I resorted to sneaking away from the house (*when she wasn't looking*) with my hooded sweatshirt on, mirrored safety glasses, neck gator across my face and armed with pinecones and sticks I waited for her to see me.

It wasn't long before she noticed me walking the road and started barreling up the acreage. From a good distance I started running towards her, silently throwing my sticks and pinecones at her and immediately she put on the brakes since no one had acted that way to her before. She turned tail and ran back to the house, confused and scared. I quietly went back around to the house leaving my sweatshirt, glasses and neck gator behind to be picked up later. When I came around the back of the house I went inside the back door and then opened the front door to find a scared puppy. Lesson learned and she still has a healthy respect for strangers which also keeps her staying put on the property.

Chanel is the smartest dog I've ever had: she watches me like a hawk. She knows what is going to happen according to what clothes or shoes I put on, if I take a shower and put on city clothes she expects we're going to town. She is a faithful and loyal companion, always happy and willing and has learned how to heel to the horse's right shoulder if I take her when I ride. A person couldn't ask for a more intelligent or more eager, loving and caring life partner. Any shortcomings on her part are only due to my lack of knowledge about her need for the proper direction. I'm very fortunate to have her in my life and well, the feline over the years has not exactly come around to affection for the dog but she hides it better all the time and depends on Chanel for company when they are left alone together. I'm just happy Lilly is not hiding behind the bed all the time due to fear and loathing of a canine. Every once in awhile the cat will reach out her little paw and try to grab the dog's leg as she walks by and we're just happy she feels comfortable enough to do that.

By A.M. Wilks

(Photo previous page by Omayra Acevedo.)

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Lawsuit To Stop Gross Dam Expansion Filed

By *Charlie Brennan-Boulder Daily Camera* (Facebook)

A coalition of six environmental advocacy groups followed through on a previously stated intention recently and filed a lawsuit at U.S. District Court in Denver challenging the decision of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to issue a permit for expansion of Gross Reservoir in southwest Boulder County.

The project, which is being pursued by Denver Water and would be the largest construction project in the history of Boulder County if it were to go through, is known officially as the Moffat Collection System Project.

Denver Water, which serves 1.4 million customers in the Denver metro area but very few in Boulder County, had hoped to start construction this year on the project, which would raise Gross Dam by 131 feet to a height of 471 feet, and increase the capacity of the reservoir by 77,000 acre feet. It has been estimated that construction would require the removal of as many as 650,000 trees from about 12.5 miles of shoreline, although some estimates have put that at a lower number.

The project was issued a permit by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on July 7, 2017, leaving only a license amendment needed from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in order to go forward. That is still pending, but could be ruled on at any time.

“We’re alleging they violated the National Environmental Protection Act and the Clean Water Act and the Endangered Species Act,” said Gary Wockner, director of Save the Colorado, the lead plaintiff in the suit.

“In layperson’s terms, one is that Denver Water doesn’t

need the water. Two is that they failed to look at reasonable alternatives, and three is that they are causing so much damage that they have failed to address or adequately mitigate the damage the project would cause.”

Other plaintiffs in the 57-page complaint are The Environmental Group, WildEarth Guardians, Living Rivers, the Waterkeeper Alliance, and the Sierra Club. Named as defendants along with the Corps of Engineers is U.S. Secretary of the Interior, Ryan Zinke, and Margaret Everson, acting director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It was recently reported that Zinke will be stepping down from his post at the end of last year.

“The remedy that we’re asking for is for them to stop the project and focus on alternatives,” Wockner said. “By their continued insistence to do this massive environmentally damaging dam expansion that further drains the Colorado River, the only remedy we consider is that they stop. “Denver Water has lots of alternatives to address their needs, and they have purposefully chosen not to do those and instead tried to further drain the Colorado River.”

Tom O’Hara, director of public affairs for the Corps of Engineers Omaha district office, said, “Unfortunately, Corps policy is we don’t comment on ongoing litigation.” The project is also subject to an ongoing dispute between Denver Water and Boulder County, over whether the project also needs to go through what is known as the “1041” land use review process. The county has contended that it is required to do so, while Denver Water believes it is exempt. Denver Water officials, who are not named defendants in the suit, could not be reached for comment.

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Preemption Issue - Recruitment BoCo Boards

Dear Editor,

BOCO intervened in the FERC proceeding a long time ago. I read the intervention and a subsequent letter BOCO filed and that is the problem.

BOCO is just pleading for better mitigation “before you impose this project on us.” It doesn’t address the biggest issue of them all - Denver Water’s claim that a FERC permit would preempt local regulation. Actually, BOCO’S intervention is just playing into that claim. The land use decision they are so excited about didn’t pertain to the preemption issue - that’s still out there and that’s the big problem.

The “they don’t need all that water” strategy could backfire in the long run. The less water they need the less water they can legally divert from the river and therefore, the less impact on the river. They don’t realize that a Colorado District Court (the district court that has jurisdiction over water rights on the Colorado River) has ruled not too many years ago that Denver Water will indeed eventually need a water supply of 450,000 acre feet - more than what Denver Water is telling federal agencies they need.

A different Colorado District Court (the district court with jurisdiction over water rights on South Boulder Creek) has ruled that eventually Denver Water will need all of the water - or most of it - that flows in South Boulder Creek at the dam. The damage to South Boulder Creek and the interests of Boulder and Lafayette is being virtually ignored.

Jeff Thompson

Dear Readers,

Recruitment now underway for advisory boards and commissions. Boulder County invites residents to voice opinions, provide guidance. Boulder County is seeking volunteers who would like to voice their opinions and help guide decisions on matters ranging from resource conservation to community and work programs. Beginning Friday, Dec. 7, members of the public are able to view vacancies and apply online for positions.

The county is recruiting residents for 35 open positions on advisory boards and commissions. Advisory boards and commissions provide recommendations to the Boulder County Commissioners and give residents the opportunity to have their voices heard within Boulder County government. The county, in turn, benefits from this citizen input.

Some of the boards that have a particular need for applicants include the Aging Advisory Council, Community Action Programs Administering Board, the Citizen Review Panel, the Historic Preservation Advisory Board, and the Workforce Development Board. If you have an interest or expertise in any of these topics, please consider applying!

To view descriptions and requirements for the various boards and commissions or to fill out an application, visit the Advisory Boards and Commissions Vacancies page of the Boulder County website.

The deadline to submit applications for the winter recruitment session is Friday, Jan. 11.

For more information, call the Boulder County Commissioners’ Office at 303-441-3501.

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Super Foods

If you're like most people, you rang in the new year vowing to finally eat healthier. But to follow through, you'll have to commit to choosing meals that pack lots of nutrition and lack the junk you don't need. That's why it's a great idea to eat more superfoods in 2019. They can make a powerful impact on your goals for the new year. And even better, a superfoods approach to eating is one that's sustainable for the long term.

The only problem? There's a lot of misinformation out there about superfoods and their benefits. Luckily, the American Diabetes Association's newest cookbook is out to set the record straight.

"You've probably heard about the almost 'magical' properties of certain foods," says Cassandra Verdi, MPH, RD, coauthor of *Diabetes Superfoods Cookbook and Meal Planner: Power-Packed Recipes and Meal Plans Designed to Help You Lose Weight and Manage Your Blood Glucose* (American Diabetes Association, 2019, \$19.95). "With all the hype out there, it's hard to cut through the clutter and know which foods actually do provide the most powerful health benefits."

"Some foods really do pack more nutrition than some other foods," adds coauthor Stephanie Dunbar, MPH, RD. "Once you've identified them, you can start working toward your health resolutions with confidence. And if you have diabetes, it's crucial to eat more nutrient-dense foods because they can be a valuable tool for better managing diabetes."

The authors—both registered dietitians—define a diabetes superfood as a food rich in nutrients that benefit


diabetes management or nutrients that are typically lacking in the American diet. *The Diabetes Superfoods Cookbook* offers reliable information about the superfoods people with and without diabetes crave. You'll find over 110 flavor-packed recipes that are simple to prepare and contain one or more diabetes superfoods to maximize the nutrient density in your diet. Further, the cookbook contains over 40 days of meal plans developed to incorporate diabetes superfoods and meet the ADA's nutrition guidelines.

Berries. "Strawberries, blackberries, raspberries, blueberries, and cranberries are packed with antioxidants, which are cancer-fighting molecules," says Verdi. "Berries are also a great source of fiber. We like them fresh, but they can be enjoyed frozen (great in smoothies) or in dried form as a tasty snack."

Citrus Fruits. Oranges, clementines, grapefruit, lemons, and limes are great providers of vitamin C and soluble fiber. The authors recommend packing oranges or clementines as a snack since they travel well. Or add a dash of fresh lime in your water for a bit of flavor. Citrus juices can also be used in all kinds of recipes to add the perfect pop of flavor.

Cruciferous Veggies. Cruciferous veggies like cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, and bok choy are rich in fiber and a plethora of phytochemicals, vitamins, and minerals. Incorporate them into a plate of crudites at your next gathering. Or lightly sauté, roast, or steam them as a side at dinner.

Dark Leafy Greens. Spinach, collards, kale, romaine lettuce, mustard greens, *(Continued on next page.)*



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watercress, and Swiss chard are nutrient powerhouses that provide vitamin C, fiber, folic acid, potassium, magnesium, and iron. They are also very low in carbohydrates so feel free to eat more! Pair them with other superfoods to create delicious salads, sandwiches, pasta dishes, omelets, or soups.

Fish High in Omega-3 Fatty Acids. The American Diabetes Association recommends that most people eat fish at least two to three times per week. Some fish are packed with nutrients called omega-3 fatty acids, which play a role in heart and brain health. These include salmon, trout, sardines, anchovies, herring, Pacific oysters, and Atlantic and Pacific mackerel. In addition to healthy fats, fish also provide vitamin D and calcium.

Healthy Fats. Diabetes nutrition guidelines have shifted away from promoting a low-fat diet in recent years. Newer research shows that when planning meals for diabetes, it's more important to look at the type of fat you're eating rather than the total amount of fat. Healthy fats may help with blood glucose management and lower the risk of heart disease. Sources include most plant-based oils (olive, canola, corn, etc.), avocados, olives, nuts, nut butters, and seeds.

"Use olive oil when sautéing or roasting veggies or to make homemade dressing," says Dunbar. "Snack on some avocado over toast or dice it up and enjoy it atop a salad or bowl of chili. Nuts, nut butters, and seeds are great for snacking, adding to salads, or spreading on sandwiches."

Herbs and Spices. While there is still a body of evidence building about the benefits of various herbs and spices, many of these plant-based ingredients have been associated with health benefits. Not to mention, they don't add any extra calories, carbs, or sodium to your dishes. So these are one of the best ways to flavor your food!

Lean Protein. Lean fish, shellfish, eggs (especially the egg whites), and poultry without the skin fall into this category. These foods are high in protein and contain little fat and no carbohydrate. Protein has less of an effect on blood glucose levels, so unless you follow a vegetarian eating pattern, it's a great idea to incorporate these foods into your meals in portions that fit your meal plan.

Legumes—Beans, Peas, and Lentils. These budget-friendly, plant-based proteins are also an excellent choice at mealtime! Legumes also include bean-based foods like hummus, edamame, and soy products. For 1/2 cup of beans, you get about 15–20 grams of carbohydrate, but you also meet approximately 1/3 of your daily fiber needs. They also provide magnesium, folate, potassium, and iron. "I never get tired of experimenting with the many types of legumes!" says Verdi. "They make the perfect addition to soups, salads, grain bowls, pasta dishes, wraps, or pretty much anything else."

Low-Fat Milk and Yogurt. Milk and yogurt provide important nutrients such as calcium and protein and are usually fortified with vitamin D. When it comes to milk, opt for nonfat milk whenever possible. And for yogurt, always compare nutrition information on labels in the yogurt aisle to determine the best pick. Be sure to check on those total carbohydrates!

"We're big fans of the very versatile nonfat, plain Greek yogurt," says Dunbar. "It's a protein-packed, lower-carbohydrate option that's great in savory or sweet dishes."

Sweet Potatoes. Sweet potatoes are packed with vitamin A, vitamin C, and potassium. They also have a lower glycemic index than regular potatoes, so they won't affect your blood glucose as much. They are a starchy vegetable, so it's important to eat them in small portions—1/2 cup cooked has about 15 grams of carbohydrate.

Tomatoes. These nonstarchy vegetables are packed with nutrients including vitamins A, C, and E, as well as potassium. They also are high in lycopene, an antioxidant that has been linked to many health benefits.

Whole Grains. Whole grains include oats, whole wheat, barley, brown rice, quinoa, farro, and even popcorn. Try to make most of the grains you eat whole grains! It's a simple swap from white rice to brown rice or from white bread to a nuttier, more flavorful whole wheat.

Whole grains provide dietary fiber and have been linked to heart health, which is important for people with diabetes because of their increased risk of heart disease. Whole grains also offer a host of vitamins and minerals.



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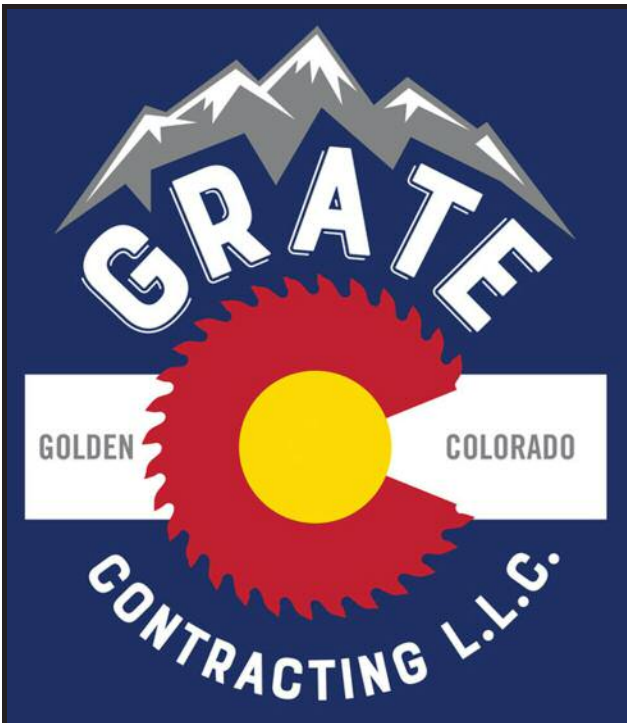
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Mini Garden Kits

Seedsheet Announces Mini Garden Kits Now Available for First-Time Gardeners Pre-Selected Mini Kits Ensure Thriving Plants in Smaller Spaces for Any Skill Level

Vermont-based AgTech startup **Seedsheet**, recently announces its newest product line, **Seedsheet Mini Kits**.

The new Seedsheet Mini's feature the company's

innovative gardening technology and software integration, in a size and price point appealing to aspiring first-time gardeners. It's designed as a perfect companion to any counter or windowsill for

specially curated, fragrant recipes.

Seedsheet's new line of mini gardens ensure thriving, full-sized gardens no matter the gardener's skill level. With three different kinds of Mini Garden Kits available, **Seedsheet** empowers anyone to easily grow a variety of delicious herbs, salads or pesto gardens within the comfort of their own home. Each sheet includes a variety of pre-selected organic, Non-GMO seeds in dissolvable pods for seamless planting and is specially designed with strategic seed placements to facilitate maximum growth. Using permeable fabric, each sheet is designed to keep weeds from affecting plant growth and health. Each mini kit is equipped with specially-selected soil and container to ensure proper root development and a custom-designed watering spout ensures the right amount of moisture is distributed to each garden's seedlings.

Regardless of the gardener's skillset, **Seedsheet** makes planting and harvesting a breeze for everyone with the Garden Guru messaging service. By opting in to this service, customers will receive updates for their garden in

which they can track garden progress and receive automated tips and video tutorials throughout the lifecycle of the garden, prolonging the harvest and ensuring multiple meals.

"Our mission with **Seedsheet** has always been to empower anyone to grow their own fresh and healthy food at home," said Cam MacKugler, founder and CEO of



Seedsheet. "Now, our new **Seedsheet Mini** product line encourages anyone to do this at an incredibly affordable starting price tailored to complete garden novices." **Seedsheet Mini's** are the latest kits to join the lineup of pre-selected plant varieties for the garden-enthusiasts to grow a bounty of food nearly anywhere. From beginners to expert gardeners, **Seedsheet's** garden kits are providing customers extensive cost savings and less trips to their local grocery store.

Seedsheet Mini Garden Kits are currently available for purchase at seedsheets.com and Amazon.com for \$14.99. **About Seedsheet™** **Seedsheet** was founded in 2014 and began on Kickstarter before quickly gaining retail traction and launching in Home Depot in 2016. The company appeared on Shark Tank in 2017 and has gone on to numerous QVC sellouts and features on Good Morning America and The View. The company manufactures each product in its Middlebury, Vermont factory, and proudly sources the finest organic seeds and soil in the industry. For additional information, visit www.seedsheets.com.

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The Lee Of The River Birch

By Patrick Foss

The river birch grew out of a wallow in an old stream bed. The stream hardly ran anymore and after just a few years the birch thought it had made a mistake. The sinewy, stringy, red barked, brushy birch needed huge amounts of water to survive; the wallow was wet sometimes, but it often wasn't. Each year the birch would suffer in the dry heat of August and September, trunk dying but never yielding. The dead trunk would remain standing and when the water returned a dozen new sprouts would start up around the perimeter. In time the birch was a hundred trunks, each a couple of inches in diameter...filling out a twelve foot circle with the long dead trunks still standing in the center.

Magpies took to nesting in the tangle of dead and live branches, adding their own scramble of twigs and string. After fifty years the birch became a fortress, so solid that even the wind could not pass. Many times it thought it would die in the droughts. The rain always came before it was too late; the birch was still there when Flashti arrived in the valley.

Flashti is a bright chestnut Arabian mare with high white socks, flaxen mane and tail...cowboys called her a light

sorrel with lots of chrome. Though retired, she had been a fine racehorse with many wins. She had lost an eye in an accident when she was a baby and could only see one side of her surroundings. Amazingly, she learned to trust her jockey completely when she raced and had become a legend at the racetrack.

Even as an old mare she could outrun most horses. Flashti became as good a broodmare as she was a runner, her foals had that same effortless way of going and became winners themselves. As impressive as Flashti was, the other horses in the valley would abuse her. *(Continued on next page.)*



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Highlander Horse

They bullied her, kicked and bit her from the blind side...they chased her away from the hay and when it was cold they wouldn't let her in the loafing shed where they shared their warmth.

Flashti sought harmony...a gentle soul that would follow the herd everywhere. She settled for avoiding the more aggressive horses and grazed a few hundred feet away from the herd...her one eye watching for an attacker.

Night after night in the bitter cold, the whole herd would huddle in the loafing shed but they wouldn't let Flashti in.

She found her shelter alone in the lee of the river birch. She stood by the river birch at night for years...and after she had a foal, Flashti and her colt would stand close to the birch at night, the mare always keeping her one eye looking out from the shelter of the birch protecting her baby. The following summer Flashti finally left the high valley for gentler living; her light sorrel colt with lots of chrome stayed behind.

The colt grew strong and confident...his name was Flashflood...the son of the great stallion Deluge and the race mare Flashti. Like his sire he became a scrapper, in a fight he would endure anything to get in close where he



could bite his opponent. He became the leader of the yearlings and heir apparent of the herd. Still though, like his mother had shown him...at night he stood by the river birch. Last night it was 9 below zero, with snow and howling wind...the loafing shed was empty. The entire herd stood with their leader Flashflood in the lee of the river birch. The birch smiled and bowed.



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Court Blocks Old-Growth Logging In Tongass

By Jodi Peterson - High Country News

Meanwhile, the Trump administration pushes to allow roads and more cutting.

BACKSTORY

At 17 million acres, Alaska's Tongass National Forest is part of the planet's largest intact temperate rainforest. Decades of battles over logging its ancient trees and a decrease in timber demand led to plans in 2016 to phase out, over the next 15 years, large old-growth clear-cuts. But many conservationists argued that greater urgency was needed to protect the ancient Sitka spruce, cedar and hemlock, which store vast amounts of carbon, and rare Sitka black-tailed deer, Alexander Archipelago wolves, salmon and other wildlife (**"An end to old-growth logging in Alaska's Tongass?" HCN, 10/31/16).**

Does a Forest Service plan to end clear-cuts of old stands go far enough?

By Elizabeth Shogren

By the end of last year, the Forest Service expected to finalize an amendment to the 2008 Tongass Land and Resource Management Plan that would phase out large old-growth clear-cuts over 16 years. "We are being very forward-leaning here," Bonnie, 48, says. DellaSala vehemently disagrees. He's now the chief scientist of Geos Institute, a small Oregon-based group of scientists and policy wonks who work with land and water managers and communities on climate change. DellaSala believes the Forest Service and Bonnie in particular should end old-growth logging across the 17 million-acre forest much

faster — not just for the sake of the ancient sitka spruce, cedar and hemlock, but for the planet.

Logging in the Tongass is already down to about one-tenth of what it was when Bonnie and DellaSala played hooky to visit it in the mid-1990s. And climate change may prove to be the force that ends wide-scale old-growth logging there permanently. "Although the transition time-frame is too long, when you look at the long and twisting timeline of Tongass management, the fact we are now talking openly and clearly about the end of old-growth logging and roadbuilding is a significant, positive event," says Tim Bristol, a longtime environmental advocate in southeastern Alaska.

The turning point came in November 2009, when world leaders gathered in Copenhagen to negotiate a new international climate treaty. Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack highlighted the "vital role" forests must play in combating climate change, singling out the Tongass, which may hold as much as 8 percent of all the carbon contained in America's forests. Bonnie, as Vilsack's climate change advisor, was listening just off-stage and felt tremendous pride: His work had long focused on the ability of forests to store immense quantities of carbon and blunt the impact of greenhouse gas emissions. (Wood products store only a fraction of the carbon of live trees.)

The agency believed that a plan produced with strong local input could survive political attacks and changes in leadership in Washington. DellaSala's quicker phase-out was rejected as too risky for *(Continued on next page.)*

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industry. Bonnie says it also would be risky politically; it assumes that a possible future Republican administration wouldn't reject it and that the formidable Murkowski wouldn't block it.

Last year, the committee voted unanimously to support a transition from logging old-growth to second-growth timber over 10 to 15 years. Second-growth areas support less wildlife, and since they already have been cut, logging them again doesn't require building new roads. Despite the vote, the timber industry, state government and the tribal timber organization attacked the plan, saying it wouldn't allow enough old-growth logging to keep them in business. The market for second-growth trees is uncertain, too. The proposal "will result in the bankruptcy and the closing of all major timber operators on the Tongass," Eric Nichols, a partner of Evergreen Timber and Alcan Forest Products, wrote to the Forest Service.

The Forest Service didn't do its own calculations, despite guidance from the White House Council on Environmental Quality that agencies should do so. In its environmental impact statement on the proposed plan, the agency downplays the impact of logging in the Tongass. "Emissions from harvests in the Tongass are very, very small relative to other sources," Bonnie says, such as deforestation in the Lower 48 and emissions from automobiles and power plants.

Jim Furnish, a former Forest Service deputy chief, knows that transitioning away from old-growth logging is hard but doable. He oversaw the end of large-scale clear-cutting in the Pacific Northwest after the courts ordered the agency to save habitat for the northern spotted owl. He and DellaSala have told Bonnie and others at the Forest Service that the reasons for saving the Tongass could not be more compelling or more consistent with the Obama administration's principles. Furnish keeps telling them it's "a huge carbon treasure chest. But we're not getting any traction with that."

Bonnie deflected repeated questions from HCN about why his agency failed to assess its Tongass plan's emissions or the projected costs of that carbon pollution for current and future societies from fiercer storms, rising seas, more destructive forest fires and the other negative effects of climate change. The White House's guidelines, first released as a draft in 2010 and finalized in August, don't require agencies to quantify the greenhouse gas impacts of their actions, but recommend that they do. Bonnie stresses that while the Forest Service has prioritized climate change in this and many other decisions, by law it also has to consider impacts on rural communities and jobs.

The agency's push for the industry to switch to second-growth timber comes after two decades of forest policy from Washington that dramatically shrank the local timber economy. Companies now cut about 40 million board-feet,



A legal challenge to timber sales in the Tongass National Forest argues the sites are vital for deer, prey of the rare Alexander Archipelago wolf. Kim Elton

down from a peak of nearly 600 million, and timber jobs are down 80%. Under the Forest Service's proposal, the Tongass would support about 200 direct timber jobs, an increase from current levels.

During a tense hearing on Capitol Hill, Murkowski asked the agency to delay the transition from old growth to save jobs. But Forest Service Chief Tidwell believes the phase-out will ultimately reduce opposition to logging and help the beleaguered industry sustain itself. There's already been, he said, "two decades of controversy and litigation around old-growth harvest and roadless (rules), and that's gotten us nowhere." He promised new markets for the smaller second-growth trees that would be logged instead. Murkowski shot back: "New markets are good, chief, but you still have to have trees that are mature enough to harvest." Now, Murkowski is pushing a bill to derail the proposed transition from old growth.

The Forest Service held meetings in Ketchikan and

Highlander Conservation

Juneau in to consider objections from all sides. Bonnie says he feels confident that the agency's blueprint will weather the criticism because the phase-out makes sense for the ancient trees, the community and the climate. *Correspondent Elizabeth Shogren writes HCN's DC Dispatches from Washington.*

FOLLOWUP

In late November last year, a federal appeals court ruled that the Forest Service must halt four Tongass timber sales that would have required building 14 miles of logging roads to reach 1,700 acres of old-growth rainforest. Greenpeace USA and Cascadia Wildlands had filed a lawsuit over the projects a decade earlier, arguing that Tongass officials had underestimated logging's potential impacts on deer, wolves and subsistence hunters. Meanwhile, the Trump

administration is considering exempting Alaska from the federal roadless rule that

limits road construction in national forests, potentially opening the Tongass to more road-building and more extensive logging.

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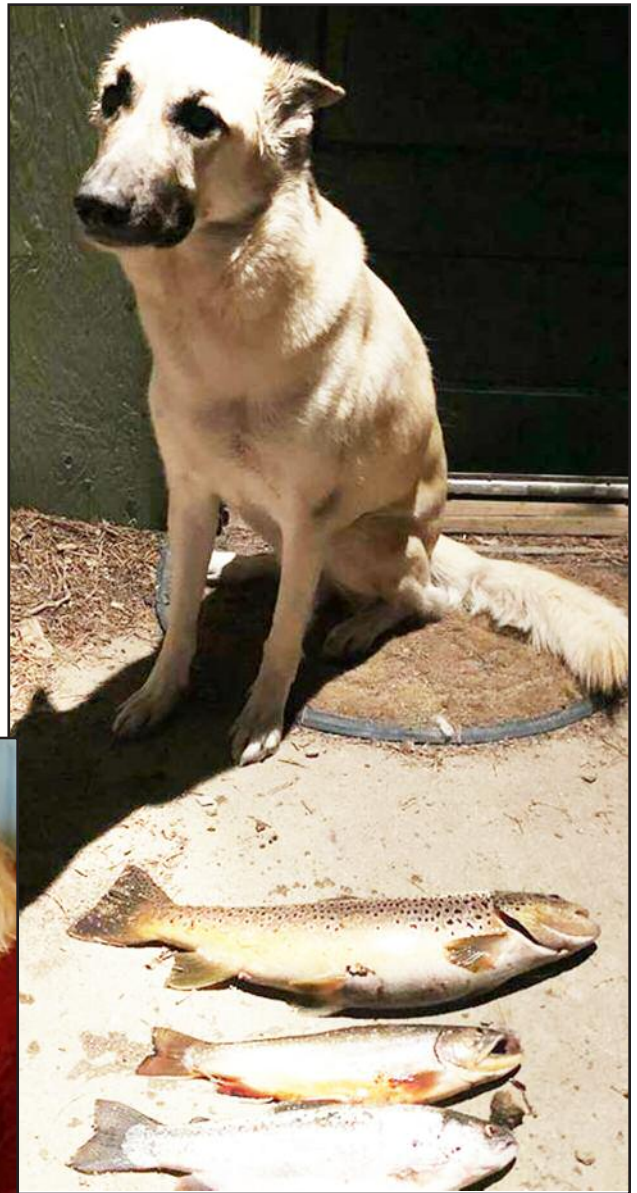



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*Top left: Chanel with Sascha.
Top right: I Love Horses-Facebook.
Left: Taz, from Denise.
Bottom left: Daja and Kari.
Bottom Right: Kiwi & Mango sun conure parrots from Audrey.*





*Top left: Ryder plays with Ayla, from Jan.
Top right: Mooch and Bogey share the dog bed.
Right: Rider shows off his fish catch!
Bottom: Poodles, from Monique.*



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Presence: Pelican

By Ingrid Winter

*Less than a week ago
 he was lying on the floor
 helpless
 and motionless
 and he looked up
 at me
 and caught my heart
 as if it were
 a nimble fish
 and he never
 let go*

so now

I see him

everywhere-

walking through the aisles

at the grocery store

he stands

between the soup and

the canned vegetables

sitting at home

absorbed in my book

on a quiet evening

I look up

and he looks back

at me

walking up a hill

he is waiting at the top

gazing at the lake



he is sailing

through the waters

and

waking up

early in the morning

long before dawn

and before I open my eyes

I sense

his silent presence-

a figure of light

dispelling

the darkness

Photo Courtesy Alexa Boyes. Greenwood Wildlife Rehabilitation Center is a non-profit organization whose mission is to rehabilitate orphaned, sick, & injured wildlife for release into appropriate habitats. 303.823.8455.



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Heating Pads & Electric Blankets Safety

From Jim Plane – State Farm Insurance

Electric blankets and heating pads make cozy companions on chilly days. But they potentially could be a fire hazard if not used correctly. Before you plug yours in and snuggle up for the season, consider these electric blanket and heating pad safety tips from The Electric Blanket Institute and Electrical Safety Foundation International, as well as the Seattle Fire Department.

Electric blanket safety tips

Check the product label. Make sure your electric blanket is certified by a national testing laboratory, such as UL. You can also check the Consumer Product Safety Commission to make sure your electric blanket has not been recalled.

Keep the blanket flat while using it. Folds or bunched-up areas can create and trap too much heat.

Think about an electric blanket with auto-shutoff. If your blanket doesn't have a timer, turn it off before going to sleep.

Consider your bed. Never use an electric blanket on a waterbed or adjustable, pullout sofa, recliner, or hospital-style bed. Also don't use a heated blanket and a heated mattress pad at the same time. Overheating might result.

Safety concerns with electric blankets

Don't use an old blanket. Blankets and pads older than 10 years cause the majority of electric blanket and heating pad fires. That's because newer blankets are less likely to be worn through, plus they operate with rheostats. A rheostat controls heat by gauging both the blanket temperature and the user's body temperature.

Don't place anything on the blanket. This includes you unless the electric blanket is designed to be laid upon. Sitting on the electric blanket may damage the electric coils.

Don't use the spin cycle. The spin cycle's twisting, tugging and turning action might cause the internal coils in your blanket to be twisted or damaged.

Don't allow pets near your blanket. Cat or dog claws can cause rips and tears, which may expose the electric wiring of the blanket and create shock and fire hazards. If you can't keep your pet away, consider purchasing a low-voltage blanket.

Don't run cords under your mattress. It's tempting to keep cords hidden, but running them under the mattress creates friction that can damage the cord or trap excess heat.

How to store an electric blanket safely

Store the cords. Unplug the controls from the electric blanket and the wall. Place the control unit and cord in a small storage bag.

Fold loosely. Fold the electric blanket loosely, avoiding sharp folds and creases.

Use a storage bag. Place the electric blanket in a storage bag with the small bag containing the control unit on top.

Store on a shelf. Place the bagged electric blanket away but don't store anything on it to help avoid creasing the coils.

When used right, electric blankets help run your thermostat at lower temperatures without sacrificing any warmth or comfort. However, this is only true if the electric blanket or heating pad is well maintained and properly used.



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What The Farm Bill Means For The West

By Jessica Kutz High Country News Dec. 13, 2018

After a long journey through the Senate and House agriculture committees, the 2018 farm bill is expected to clear the president's desk soon. The bill, which is projected to cost \$428 billion over five years, is one of the largest spending packages in the country, doling out money for low-income nutrition assistance, crop insurance, commodity subsidies and conservation programs, among other things.

Drafting the bill is usually a bipartisan process, but this year the funding package was held up by House Republicans trying to increase work requirements for recipients of the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, and a last-minute push from Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke to authorize more forest management activities on public lands. But recently, the pressure to pass the legislation during Congress's lame-duck session forced


lawmakers to forego these more controversial moves in favor of getting the spending package signed into law. *State Sen. Don Coram walks through his hemp field in Western Colorado. Luna Anna Archey/High Country News*



The resulting legislation has important implications for the West. Here are the key takeaways: It will be federally legal to grow hemp. Sen. Mitch McConnell, the Republican poster child for industrial hemp, was able to pass his provision reclassifying the crop as a commodity into the final writing of the bill, which is big news for fledgling hemp growers

in Western states like Colorado, Oregon and California. The crop is seen as a possible agricultural savior for farmers, but growth in the industry has been hampered by federal rules banning hemp growers from accessing water rights and bank loans. Now that industrial hemp will be legalized on the federal level, it will be easier for growers to cultivate the crop much like any other commodity, and qualify for benefits like crop insurance. Every state in the West except for Idaho allows the cultivation of hemp in some capacity, whether it is for research or commercial use.

SNAP Benefits won't come with stricter work requirements — for now. The Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program, provides monies to over 8.5 million residents in the West to pay for groceries. But a Republican House provision creating stricter work requirements would have resulted in 2 million people nationally losing access to the program, according to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, a nonpartisan policy institute. After national outcry, these restrictions did not make it into the final



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language, leaving the program, for the most part, unchanged. But according to Politico, Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue is drafting a separate regulation, to be proposed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture after the farm bill passes, that would hamper states' abilities to waive work requirements for some SNAP recipients.

Farm-based conservation programs received good news, but at a cost. The bill preserved funding for the next five years for its main conservation programs: The Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), which provides financial incentives to farmers who increase conservation practices on their entire operations, and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), which provides conservation tools to farmers on a smaller scale, paying for things like infrastructure upgrades, or soil and water improvement projects. Alyssa Charney, a senior policy specialist with the National Sustainable Agriculture Coalition, an alliance of rural grassroots organizations, said both are important to promoting conservation on working lands in different ways, with CSP working to support conservation on an entire landscape and EQIP providing reimbursements to farmers for individual projects.

But while the bill's conservation title kept existing efforts running, the overall "wallet" for conservation programs will slim down starting in 2024, Charney said. In addition, while this bill didn't drastically cut current conservation funding levels, it also didn't make up for the \$6 billion cuts in the last farm bill. "The biggest concern (of the bill) is the funding aspect," Charney said. "We want to be setting ourselves up for future farm bills so that we can grow. The way that this bill funds those programs doesn't do that."

In New Mexico and Colorado, some farming communities will get more help. Acequias, which are networks of communally-run irrigation ditches used in New Mexico and Colorado, will now be eligible for funding under EQIP, which means farmers can apply for monies for technical assistance and infrastructure improvements to aid in water conservation, among other benefits.

For Colorado's Western slope, the farm bill holds another mini-victory. Overlooked in the passage of this ginormous spending package is the fact that Dolores County, population 2,064, located in the southwestern corner of Colorado, will be granted 4 acres of U.S. Forest Service land upon which to build a much-needed fire station. The new station will help the county, which is located near the San Juan National Forest, combat ever-more-frequent wildfires. According to a local news report, the station is also expected to lower homeowner's insurance rates for residents.

Jessica Kutz is an editorial fellow for High Country News.



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We are so thankful that even in the face of so much danger, buffalo still find their playful side and always live life to the fullest. *Photo by Stephany Seay, BFC.*

We give thanks that there are still wild buffalo walking the Earth. Buffalo that follow their migratory instincts and carry the wisdom of the ancients who do not bend or bow to human fences, boundaries, or prejudice. We give thanks for the wild buffalo's instincts to simply place one foot in front of the other and walk the land, regardless of government plans or artificial lines in the sand; a drive so deeply rooted in their time before time that man's shallow greed has not taken this from them. We give thanks that buffalo still roam, confounding certain humans' selfishly inflicted consequences. We give thanks for the last remaining buffalo that found shelter in Yellowstone's remote Pelican Valley barely 150 years ago; the twenty-three who were all that remained of tens of millions,

who ensured the survival and wild integrity of their prehistoric kind. We give thanks that buffalo have biologically withstood diseases brought by invasive cattle, their blood building resistance to the dark gifts from these



bovine invaders. We give thanks that it is still possible to look into the eyes of a wild buffalo and remember a time we forgot we once knew, and dream of its return, inspiring action to make it so. We give thanks that the land cries out for the return of wild buffalo, welcoming their homecoming when the hearts of humans open to the drumming of the buffalo's footsteps, and the land is again shared, healed and whole with their presence.

We give thanks for the abundance of snow that will soon come, snow that brings the life giving waters when the sun waxes and the rivers run fast and deep through the veins of the mountains and out to the sea. Bittersweet this gift, as the buffalo will also flow with the deepening snow, and this is as it should be, and though we know harm awaits them, we celebrate their life force and give thanks that they continue in their wild ways despite the obstacles. We give thanks for the persistence, resistance, and endurance of wild buffalo.

We give thanks for those who hear the call of the buffalo. We are grateful for the volunteers who come from around the globe to defend the buffalo, whether joining us for the first time, coming back year after year, or returning after an absence. We give thanks for everyone everywhere who cares about wild buffalo, celebrates their wildness, and takes action for their right to roam. We give thanks to all of you who make it possible for us to be here standing with the buffalo, bearing witness, sharing their story, making change. We give thanks for the realization that long-term perseverance and passion-turned-action will bring the necessary change we all seek. We give thanks for the ground we have gained for wild buffalo, like the south facing expanses of their Horse Butte birthing grounds, and for the awakening occurring in the hearts and minds of others who embrace wildness as the way. Roam Free!

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Year Of Wyoming Women

Wyoming Declares 2019 the Year of Wyoming Women as it Celebrates 150th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage

Ahead of the new year, the Wyoming Office of Tourism (WOT) recently announced 2019 as the "Year of Wyoming Women," as the state prepares to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage. On December 10, 1869, Wyoming territory passed the first law in United States history granting women the right to vote and hold public office - more than 50 years prior to the U.S. ratification of the 19th amendment.

With the milestone anniversary, Wyoming wants to encourage travelers to plan a visit to celebrate the history and the strong women of today. From Cheyenne to Rock Springs and Jackson to Sheridan, the state will mark the anniversary with activities, events, retreats and must-visit historic destinations that commemorate the spirit of Wyoming as the first frontier for women.

"We are proud to declare 2019 the 'Year of Wyoming Women,' as the home of many firsts for women in the country and the world," Diane Shober, executive director of Wyoming Office of Tourism. "Determination, resiliency and the pioneering spirit is built into the DNA of the West, so it's no surprise to me that the strong women of Wyoming helped to pave the way for women's suffrage. With significant events, including our state Capitol building reopening this coming summer, Wyoming is truly a top destination for travelers next year."

To help travelers plan their next Wyoming getaway, Wyoming has compiled suggestions for and a list of official events celebrating Wyoming women and the anniversary throughout the year. Travelers are also encouraged to use #ThatsWYWomen to share their experiences on social media and get more inspiration for how others are marking the anniversary.

Wyoming Women's History

While often referred to as the "Cowboy State," Wyoming's true nickname is the *Equality State* for its role in women's suffrage and throughout history. Wyoming has been home to many firsts for women including: First woman to vote in a general election in the U.S. (1870) - Louisa "Eliza" Swain - First women to serve on a jury (1870) - Laramie, WY - First female Justice of the Peace (1870) - Esther Hobart Morris - First female court bailiff (1870) - Mary Atkinson

First woman confirmed by U.S. Senate to serve in a federal position (1895) - Estelle Reel

First town governed entirely by women (1920) - Jackson, WY

First female elected governor (1925) - Nellie Tayloe Ross
Twenty years after the 1869 law passed, Wyoming sought statehood and it famously refused to enter the Union if women's suffrage was not upheld. And in 1890, Wyoming officially entered the Union as the 44th state and the first state to allow women these rights.

For more information about Wyoming's 150th anniversary of Women's Suffrage visit the award-winning site, TravelWyoming.com.

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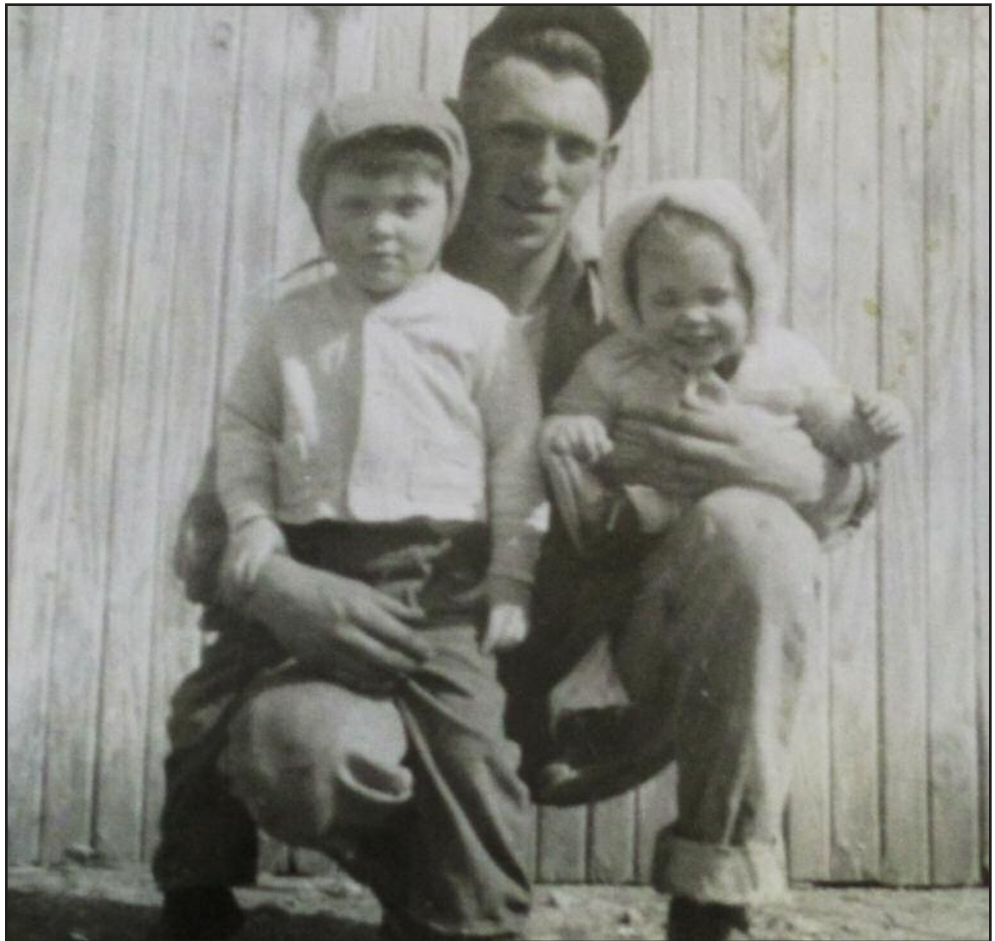
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Childhood Memories

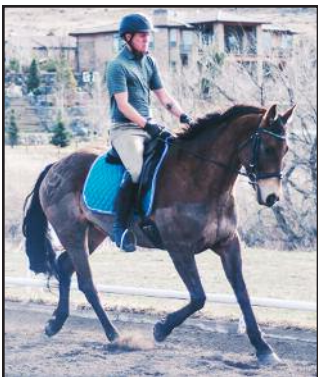
As a small child living on a farm in Eastern Kansas I have vivid memories that I'm guessing are all the more memorable due to them being the topic of conversations around the dining room or kitchen table with family. Tales about what I did or my brother did that brought laughter to the family with the telling of our adventures at holiday dinners.

On one particular occasion I can remember my father telling my brother he was being given a 'big boy' chore. Now we had to have been younger than seven years old but farm kids grow up faster because the chores of farm life are a necessity and even kids gets delegated to do things as soon as they are able. I was almost two years younger than my brother but I was already bringing in fresh eggs from the hen house every morning. A delicate practice for a child as eggs are easily broken on the walk back to the house if something distracts you from your chore.

The morning my brother was informed about his new



(Above, photo of my brother and I with my father on our farm when we were much younger than in this memory.) chore I chimed in and said I needed a 'big girl' chore (never



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one to be easily outdone by my older sibling). My father was used to this competition between us and after a moment said, "Well I'll think about it." This thought of getting a new chore meant for an older child consumed my thoughts all that day and the next morning at breakfast I asked my dad what he had decided.

He hesitated for a moment and said, "You know those two old milk cows that won't come in the barn on their own and I have to go out and chase them in to be milked? Well, you could do that for me." I remember being excited to have such an important chore and could hardly wait for the next morning to come around so I could show my father what a big girl I was by making his morning milking routine easier for him.

The next morning I ran down to the barn and found the old cows standing out in the pasture with full udders of milk but no matter what I did they would refuse to go into the barn. I tried using big sticks to poke them, yelling and then throwing rocks at them until they became agitated enough to chase me until I squeezed through the fence to get away from them. I waited to see what my dad would do to get them to go to the barn and he just got behind them and pushed and yelled at them to go in the right direction and slapped their butts to finish the job.

Since I was so little the cows just ignored any of my efforts and turned away until my father would come out and get them. Feeling defeated, I had almost given up hope when one morning my mother came down to the barn, bridled her horse while I was working on my chore and as she rode around the corner of the corral the cows suddenly took notice and before I knew what had happened mom had made those cows go to the barn by herding them with the horse.

Now I knew what had to be done, I just had to figure out how to do it by myself. My mother's quarter horse was one of the most agreeable equines, letting me ride her bareback and never giving me pause to climb onto her at any time. Usually someone else bridled her for me and gave me a boost up, but then I had to figure out how to get on her to move those cows without help because my mom was usually busy making breakfast or taking care of my little sister up at the house in early mornings.

So the next morning I grabbed a handful of grain that the horses loved, a horse halter and a lead rope. I looped the lead rope through the halter as if it were bridle reins and went to find my mom's mare. I put the handful of grain on the ground and as she nibbled it off

the ground I put the halter on her with the lead rope over her neck and lifted my leg over her head so I was facing her ears while she was still eating the grain. Once she got done eating the grain she lifted her head and I slid down her neck to be sitting on her back.

Being the tolerant horse she was it was no work at all to make her go around the back of the barn towards the two stubborn milk cows and simply encourage her make them go into the barn. The surprised look on my father's face when he saw I had found a way to do the 'big girl' chore was the best reward in the world. I had risen to his challenge and worked out the problem to help his mornings go quicker and easier. We all laughed about it at breakfast that day and I figured even at that tender age I had gained a new respect in my family's eyes and for myself that I'm sure serves me well even to this day.

In many ways farm life as a child is charmed, but it also served to give me an appreciation for animals, nature and independence.

By A. M. Wilks

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Proposal Weakens Water Protections

By Rebecca Leber - High Country News

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New Trump administration proposal weakens water protections: Dramatic changes to the Clean Water Rule will likely affect drinking water for more than one-third of Americans.

The Trump administration unveiled a proposal recently weakening federal water protections for millions of acres of streams, wetlands, and waterways that will likely affect the drinking water for more than one-third of Americans. While the Trump administration specifically targeted the 2015 Obama-era rule known as the Clean Water Rule, or Waters of the United States, the proposal goes further in rolling back environmental oversight than has occurred with any president since Ronald Reagan.

Inside the Environmental Protection Agency recently, the focus of a celebratory 90-minute event was not on water quality. Some two-dozen speakers from the Trump administration, including Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke and EPA Acting Administrator Andrew Wheeler, were joined by some members of Congress, to criticize the Obama-era rule as federal overreach. Senator Pat Roberts (R-Kansas) declared he was “nervous” when he finally entered the EPA for the first time in his four decades in Congress, claiming the EPA is usually a “four-letter word,” but now the agency can be renamed, the “Environmental Farm Protection Agency,” because of the new rule’s deference to agricultural interests. He was only one of the agency’s fiercest critics who spoke to the audience, many of whom were members of the American Farm Bureau Federation, a powerful agricultural lobbying arm.

The EPA and the US Army Corps of Engineers proposal, now open to 60 days of public comment, ([go to epa.gov](http://go.to.epa.gov) and submit your comments immediately)

dramatically restricts which bodies of water fall under the 1972 Clean Water Act regulations. The 2015 Obama rule expanded the definition to include 2 million more acres of streams and 20 million more acres of wetlands, triggering years of backlash and lawsuits led by agriculture, real estate developers, and other industries. The proposal announced in December will limit Clean Water Act regulations to major waterways, their tributaries, and adjacent wetland, but will exempt other wetlands and streams that flow seasonally during heavy rainfall. These would be subject to wide-ranging state and local

oversight, if any. The proposal also replaces a Bush-era rule that subjected some of these streams to regulations if they are significantly connected to navigable waters—a rule that has been in place for half the country.

Conservative critics have waged a proxy fight against the Clean Water Rule by framing it as government overreach undermining the rights of farmers and local government. A common talking point was to claim the EPA wanted to regulate “puddles” after it rained on farmland. But in some areas, the so-called puddles — now exempt from the Clean Water Act — involved over half the water flowing into major rivers, explains Blan Holman, managing attorney in Southern Environmental Law Center. “When you shrink that definition,

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you've now reduced the universe of waters that are protected," Holman tells Mother Jones. "If you're concerned about drinking water sources, you need to be concerned about what's flowing into those reservoirs and those rivers."

Obviously, acting EPA head Wheeler is not bragging that the rule will compromise water quality. "Our proposal would ensure that our water protections — among the best in the world — will remain strong while giving states and tribes the certainty to manage their waterways in ways that best protect their natural resources and economies," he said in his speech. When the rule is finalized there will be lawsuits challenging him on his claims that it will leave the water protections in the U.S. as strong as ever.

The announcement also marks a recent shift in the Trump administration's deregulatory push, as it is beginning to cement its legacy. Scott Pruitt was only able to kickstart dozens of rollbacks during his tumultuous tenure, since regulations can take as long to undo as they take to promulgate. Given Wheeler's likely Senate confirmation as the head of the EPA, the former coal lobbyist can see that mission through to the end, by replacing Obama-era rules with much weaker versions. Recently, the EPA has moved forward with undoing climate regulations for cars, and new and existing coal-fired plants. Meanwhile, the Interior Dept. has weakened the Endangered Species Act and is


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accelerating drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. There are mounting lawsuits from Trump's opponents challenging these decisions, and a handful of wins so far when courts have found agencies violated administrative procedures in their rush to deregulate. The agency's required public comment period often plays another role in the rule's fate—the first 2015 Obama proposal considered more than 1 million public comments. "I've been watching this circus for a while now and I don't hear any mention of science," Holman says. "They're drawing lines based on political desire." **The sixty day comment period started last month in the middle of December: go to epa.gov and submit your comment today.**

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Judgment

By Frosty Wooldridge

Higher Frequencies of Human Consciousness

Make your life like a mighty river of love flowing out of your heart. Such consciousness will return with a flood of friends, joy and happiness. *(This metal horse represents the intricacies of life interwoven into every work of art, every human being and every living creature on this planet.) Photo by FW*

While in high school, most of us made judgments of other students. Guys and gals always talked about someone else's foibles, failures or looks. "She thinks she's so hot," said one student. "He's a primadonna," said another. "Man, she's so fat, she can't squeeze through a barnyard gate," cried another. In college, you made comparisons and judgments. Others made them about you. At the office, fellow employees make judgments and more comparisons every day. "She doesn't know how to buy a dress," said one co-worker. "He doesn't polish his shoes and looks like a bum," said another. The list never ends.

During my own lifetime, I am guilty of making comparisons and judgments. For years, I always made comments of about fat guys and fat women. "Man, why is she wearing a dress that makes her look like a blimp in a hotdog bun?" "She gives Lycra a bad name." "That guy is so skinny, he's got to jump around in the shower to get wet." Then one day, I saw an obese lady in a wheel-chair driven around by an electric motor. I thought to myself, "How do you make a judgment of someone so obese they can no longer walk?" Do I feel good when I make such judgments? What do I get out of it?

It dawned on me that everyone in this life faces their own

demons, their pitfalls and their own challenges that I have no idea of their struggle. Thus, why should I send my verbal or mental negative energies out into the world toward them? Not only does it harm my thought patterns, but also it thrusts those negative thoughts into the field of life. What good does it do me or do them? If I speak to a friend, it only colors their minds about that person and, ultimately about me.

In your life, you will refrain from making judgments or comparisons once you understand the universal law of energy that flows out of your mind and back into your mind by your thoughts or words. The universe reciprocates your energy whether good or otherwise.

One of the points I learned on this life path: when you think on a higher level of trust, love and honoring—you engage higher vibrational frequencies of your mind. If you choose thoughts or verbiage on the negative scale, you lower your vibrational pulsations, which in turn, lower your trusting of the living process.

Please realize that you acquire the grit and grime of daily living. It covers your heart. It disappoints

you. It hurts your feelings. It may depress you. Yet, beneath all of it, you remain the perfect child of the universe. You may choose the higher vibrational frequencies to carry you to the next challenge. Listen for the higher frequencies at every juncture with word, deed or thought. Avoid the disease of judgment or comparison. Remember that preparation and opportunity equal coincidence. Listen to the voice of good in your river flowing from your heart. Move forward with spiritual integrity.

Finally, have you ever attended the symphony? Notice before the program, people chatter in a din of anticipation. The musicians practice with their instruments and all seems to be in chaos. But once the conductor gives three taps of his baton on the podium, the audience quiets. The musicians fall silent. The lights dim. The conductor takes center stage. You too may quiet your spirit in anticipation for the opportunity to hear and cooperate with a higher frequency of living. Move forward with integrity of thought and word. Pull out of the chaos with your mental "baton" to command the moment. Notice your life represents a "higher" symphony by your choices.



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Laws Over Free Speech

By Andrew Graham / WyoFile.com

**Wyoming's data trespass laws remain defeated.
The state did not appeal a ruling striking down portions
of the laws over free speech.**

*This story was originally published at WyoFile.com and
is republished here with permission.*

The deadline for Wyoming to appeal a judge's ruling that struck down portions of the controversial data trespass laws has passed without rebuttal from the state, according to a lawyer who challenged the law.

"We're pleased defendants have not sought to prolong their unconstitutional conduct," wrote David Muraskin in an email to WyoFile. Muraskin is a staff attorney with Public Justice who represented plaintiffs Western Watersheds Project, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the National Press Photographers Association.

The state had 30 days to file its appeal in the district court that ruled against it, a deadline that expired on Nov. 28 at midnight, according to Muraskin.

The decision to let the Oct. 29 ruling go unchallenged was

relatively simple, said the governor's chief of staff, Mary Kay Hill, recently. "There wasn't an awful lot of conversation about that," she said. "The governor's position is that if there is a solution that it would be best addressed by the Legislature," she said.

Legislative champions of the measure remain in office, Hill said. "There was a pretty strong group advocating in favor of (data trespass laws) and they are still here."

The statutes, passed by the Legislature in 2015 and amended in 2016, made illegal and enforced steep penalties for the collection of research data, photographs and other information from private lands and from public lands if private lands had been crossed to reach data-gathering sites. Environmental, animal rights and food safety groups joined with the National Press Photographers Association to challenge the data trespass laws in court in 2015, claiming they violated constitutional rights of free speech and equal protection under the law.

Judge Scott Skavdahl of the District Court of Wyoming issued a summary judgement upholding plaintiffs' free speech concerns. "The government has not proven a strengthening of the state's

(Continued on next page.)

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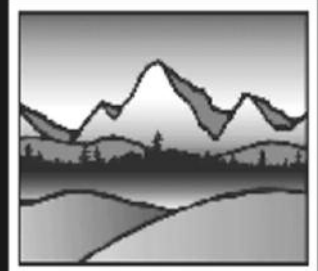
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trespass laws would not accomplish the same goals without infringing on protected speech,” Skavdahl wrote.

The judge struck down the section of the law that made it illegal to collect data from public lands if private lands had been crossed to reach them. In doing so, Skavdahl upheld concerns from witnesses that included WyoFile reporter Angus M. Thuermer Jr. along with environmental researchers.

In his affidavit, Thuermer wrote that the complex mosaic of public and private lands in Wyoming made for a high likelihood of inadvertently crossing a boundary. As such the threat of imprisonment or harsh fines for doing so had a chilling effect on his deadline driven work as a news photographer. Skavdahl agreed with that assessment.

The court found “plausibl(e)” the advocacy groups’ arguments that the inaccuracies of maps and GPS and the “intertwined nature of public and private lands in Wyoming” have led to some parties refraining from practicing their First Amendment rights out of a fear of the law, he wrote in his judgement.

Opponents of the law had argued it was written in part to deter science or other data collection that might cast ranching practices in a negative light. Though the state had tried to argue otherwise, Skavdahl concluded that the statutes had been written to curtail a certain type of free speech — “the collection of resource data relating to land or land use.”

“There is simply no plausible reason for the specific curtailment of speech in the statutes beyond a clear attempt to punish individuals for engaging in protected speech that at least some find unpleasant,” Skavdahl wrote.

While the judge ruled on the section dealing with crossing private land to reach public land, Wyoming’s traditional private land trespass laws remain intact and weren’t affected by the ruling. The judge did not rule on other sections of the controversial data trespass laws, meaning enhanced penalties for data collection made while trespassing on private land remain for now.

“The decision did not strike down those provisions,” Muraskin said. The judge did not issue any ruling endorsing the constitutionality of the other provisions either, Muraskin previously told the Sublette Examiner. The plaintiffs’ challenge focused on the crossing of private land to reach public land, considered the most onerous section of the law.

The judge’s ruling had sent a strong statement to Wyoming’s policy makers that the state chose not to appeal, Muraskin said.

“The district court correctly held that Wyoming’s laws targeting environmental data collection were some of the most repugnant attacks on free speech a state can pass,” Muraskin said. “It explained Wyoming offered no legitimate rationale for its efforts to suppress environmental advocacy, and that the state’s explanation that it was protecting private property, seemed to be nothing more than a façade.”

Andrew Graham reports for WyoFile from Laramie. He covers state government, energy and the economy. WyoFile is an independent nonprofit news organization focused on Wyoming people, places and policy.

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Piano Lessons in CCC pg 15 303.642.8423

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Summit Up Property Mgt. pg 12 303.618.8266

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Meyer Hardware pg 3 303.279.3393
The Silver Horse - pg 6 303.279.6313
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Colorado Water Wizard pg 9 303.447.0789
Doctor Water Well pg 30 303.438.6669

Power Update

January
2019

Board Approves Rate Changes

United Power's Board of Directors approved a rate change for 2019 that separates energy and demand charges and includes a modest 1.5-2% rate increase for most members. The new rates will be effective with January 1, 2019 electric use, so members will see these changes reflected on their February 2019 bills.

Since the cooperative began using the advanced metering infrastructure several years ago, we are now able to better measure every member's impact on the electric system. The new rates break apart the blended rate members have paid in the past, incorporating both an energy charge and a demand charge.

Demand refers to the maximum amount of electrical power that is being consumed at a given time, as opposed to energy which is the amount of power used over a period of time. The more power used at once, the larger the infrastructure needed to deliver that power.

The board weighs multiple factors and extensively evaluates its extensive cost of service study when considering rates for the coming year. These new rates allow United Power to more fairly charge members for both their energy consumption and their impact on the delivery grid.

The new rate structure will assign a one-dollar per kW charge to the demand component, and members will see a corresponding drop in the cost of the energy. Now members can affect their electric bill in two different ways – reducing their demand by staggering their use of appliances and by simply using less energy. So, while rates are increasing next year, the change in the rate structure gives members more power to control their bill than in the past.

United Power has addressed demand, and how to reduce it, multiple times in its monthly newsletter, the *United Newsliner*, available at our website, www.unitedpower.com.

Residential Rate (R1)			
2018		2019	
Fixed Charge	\$19.00	Fixed Charge	\$19.00
Energy (per kWh)	\$0.1076	Energy (per kWh)	\$0.1015
Demand (per kW)	\$0.00	Demand (per kW)	\$1.00

Residential Time of Use Rate (RTD1, RTD2)			
2018		2019	
Fixed Charge	\$19.00	Fixed Charge	\$19.00
On-Peak Energy (per kWh)	\$0.1540	On-Peak Energy (per kWh)	\$0.1540
Off-Peak Energy (per kWh)	\$0.0593	Off-Peak Energy (per kWh)	\$0.0539
Demand (per kW)	\$0.00	Demand (per kW)	\$1.00

NOTE: Demand does NOT take a day off. Your demand will be using the highest 15-minute interval at ANY time throughout the billing period, which can occur during either your on-peak or off-peak periods any day of the week (including holidays).



Scholarship Opportunities

Applications Due: Jan. 31, 2019

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 10 book scholarships. This year, United Power will award 17 scholarships for a total of \$19,500. Awards range 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 brief written essay is required, and the applicants primary residence must be in United Power's service territory.

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


Monitor Usage with the Power Portal



In the past year United Power has rolled out access to the Power Portal, a way for members to look at their energy use in near real time. The portal provides information about how the member is using power in 15-minute increments. This is a powerful tool to help members manage their energy use and see how they are impacting the power grid. Used in tandem with the demand rates, the Power Portal will provide the information members need to make good energy choices.

By using the Power Portal and monitoring how you use appliances in your home, you will have a greater ability to manage your energy costs than at any time in the past. **To register for the Power Portal, go to www.unitedpower.com/powerportal. You will need your account number and the four-digit PIN provided by United Power.**

**UNITED
POWER**

Your Touchstone Energy® Cooperative 

Member Services: 303-637-1300

Coal Creek Office: 303-642-7921

www.unitedpower.com

Thank you friends & clients for another successful year! Wishing everyone a Happy & Prosperous 2019!!!



223 Copperdale Lane
Impressive Remodel - 1.09 Acres
2 BD/ 3 BA 2,436 sq.ft. **\$469,000**



166 Hummingbird Lane
Remodeled Ranch - 1.3 Acres
3 BD/ 4 BA 3,192 sq.ft. **\$499,000**



616 Tunnel 19 Road
Divide/Gross Dam VIEWS! 8.9 Acres
3 BD/ 3 BA 3,319 sq.ft. **\$850,000**



BUY OR SELL A HOME with
Kathy or Janet & **USE**
the moving truck for **FREE**



Coal Creek Canyon Area
Gorgeous Log Home - 1.82 Acres
4 BD/ 4 BA 3,817 sq.ft. **\$1,100,000**



33888 Sky Vu Drive
Amazing Hm w/Longs Peak View!
4 BD/ 3 BA 2,248 sq.ft. 3.29 Ac **\$494,000**



200 The Lane Road
Spectacular Remodeled Mtn Home
3 BD/2 BA 1,423 sq.ft. 2.44 Ac. **\$429,000**



11437 Coal Creek Heights
Mtn Home w/City VIEWS of Denver
2 BD/2 BA 2,443 sq.ft. 1.47 Ac. **\$369,000**



606 Haul Road
Remodeled Mtn Home- Borders Nat'l Forest
3 BD/3 BA 3,600 sq.ft. 2.37 Ac. **\$574,900**



249 Rudi Lane
Custom Post & Beam 2.26 Acres
2 BD/ 3 BA 2,975 sq.ft. **\$420,000**



11648 Overlook Road
Custom Log Home 1.82 Acres
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,104 sq.ft. **\$400,000**



386 Chute Road
Perfect Horse Property 4.13 Acres
2 BD/ 1 BA 1,920 sq.ft. **\$395,000**



25 Olde Carter Lake Road
Log Sided Mtn Home w/ Garage
1 BD/ 1 BA 916 sq.ft. .32 Acre **\$286,000**



1280 Indian Peak
Custom Log Home - 4.2 Acres
3 BD/ 4 BA 3,300 sq.ft. **\$900,000**



11773 Hillcrest Road
Private, Cozy Mtn Retreat Remodeled
2 BD/ 2 BA 1.15 Acre **\$349,900**



33867 Ave De Pines
Beautiful Log Sided Hm - VIEWS
1 BD/ 1 BA 2.8 Acres **\$269,000**



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