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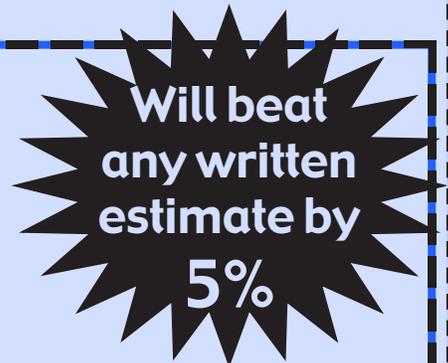
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Hummingbird in flight, photo
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An Underestimated Charm

By nature and wildlife photojournalist
Omayra Acevedo

Life has been quite the struggle as of late. I don't like complaining, so typically I escape from my struggles as best I can. Especially, when there is nothing I can do to steer them at the moment. I find myself drowning in my paintings and pushing my workouts to their limits. More often than not, however, I find myself disappearing to the place that matters most in my heart. Nature. Which is why being a nature and wildlife photojournalist is the greatest gift the earth has given me. There's no denying that if given the opportunity, I would spend the remainder of my life hugging trees, listening to the river as it dances by, watching the wind flirt with the trees, and talking to the wild things – even the ones I cannot always see. Someone once asked me what creature I would be if I could be any creature in the world. Let's face it, that's like asking a bird to only choose one favorite nectar flower. It's an impossible task. I would be a bear, a mountain lion, an owl, perhaps a bobcat or a fox, but today I would like to be ... a hummingbird.

There are over 325 species of hummingbird in the world. To choose which specific one I would be is to request that I only favor one star in the heavens. Why a hummingbird? How much time do you have? In my humble opinion, I believe hummers are not given enough credit for the life they live. We can learn so much from them. For example, they don't need much to live a happy life. The ability to fly and eat is enough to survive the vast planet we all live in. Some hummers can travel over 3,000 miles just to find food and shelter. Keep in mind not all hummingbirds migrate. Imagine, nonetheless, going on a journey over 4800 kilometers with up to 1500 feathers – which by the way, is the fewest number of feathers of any species in the world – and having to flap those feathers between 50-200 times per second. I don't know about you, but I'd stop killing myself over those things called push-ups. I'd burn

enough calories to eat whatever I please and tone up all at the same time. One hummingbird feeds between five to eight times per hour, and not just on nectar but also on small insects, spiders and tree sap. These faery-size birds must consume half of their weight in sugar daily. Someone please pass me the cake!!!

Did you know that the number of times they flap their wings depends on the direction of flight and air conditions?! I'm using the term 'flap' loosely, as hummers actually move their wings in a figure-8 rotation. They're very coordinated, and in my eyes extremely enchanting. A Rufous Hummingbird can fly on the back of other birds. Okay, maybe that part isn't true, but a Rufous Hummingbird can actually fly 500 miles nonstop. A hummer's heart beats roughly 1,200 times per minute; at rest a hummingbird takes 250 breaths per minute. This increases while in flight. A human takes anywhere between 12-20 breaths per minute. I'm not sure why people think we are smarter than anything else on earth when the human brain makes up only 2% of our body weight, and a hummingbird's brain makes up 4.2% of its body weight. Did you catch that? *(Continued next page.)*

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Highlander Wildlife

I seriously despise repeating myself to someone, so I am baffled, amazed and incredibly impressed that hummingbirds have not only no sense of smell, but acute hearing, keen eyesight and memory! They can remember every flower visited (even on migration routes), and they can figure out how long to wait between visits so flowers have time to generate more nectar. From my experiences, very few people have the ability to remember things. This is one of many reasons why I enjoy talking with nature. It's comforting to know I only have to say something once and be heard.

I know I'm strange. I will never deny that. What do you expect? I'm a writer with an obsession for all things nature. Including, cute little critters like hummers. Speaking of itty-bitty, a hummingbird's egg is smaller than a jelly bean. The nest is not much bigger, averaging a tad bigger than the size of a quarter. The female builds the nest typically at very high points, but some nests have been found on clotheslines. So be careful where, when and how you hang your laundry. Here's another charming little fact about these teeny flyers, some can breed with other species to create hybrid species. Making it even more difficult for simple-minded beings, like humans, to identify a species. And ... the other hummingbirds don't care. They don't make tiny little signs and hold protests against the other hummers. They just go about life minding their own business. I think that's just peachy-keen!

Hummers are so magical that a group of them has been appropriately named a Charm of Hummingbirds. I wish I were as charming as a hummingbird. I would be the cutest thing I ever saw. The smallest hummingbird has been measured at 2.25 inches long and weighing a mere three

grams; a nickel weighs 4.5 grams – just to put that into perspective for you. 150 ruby-throated hummers will equal one pound. Don't for one minute let their size fool you, however. They are some of the most aggressive birds in the bird kingdom. They will not hesitate to attack Jays, Crows and even Hawks; not only to protect their young, but also if their territory is infringed upon. They've been known to chase other hummers away from feeders. They've even been known to stab each other in the throat during mating season. Talk about fourplay – I kid! They do this to fight off other males. According to an endless number of studies, hummingbirds are also the only birds that can hover, fly backward and upside-down. They can reach speeds up to 30 miles per hour, and 60 miles per hour while diving. I could cover great distances going on a run that fast!

Whew! I think I could go on and on about hummingbirds. I truly do enjoy everything about them. The sounds they make, their colors, how many of them can be found at one time on a feeder, their speed, strength and agility. After reading and writing so much about hummers, I find myself a bit envious of them. I guess you can say I feel this way about most things in the natural world. Nature will forever and always be my home, my place of worship, my escape, my therapy, the place where I find a deeper meaning to life. It is the corridor between reality and fantasy; where I can not only see the world's most unbelievable contributions, but live vicariously through the eyes of the creatures that call it home. If only I could live there...like they do...forever... Wouldn't it be great if I truly were a hummingbird?

I fantasize, almost daily, about my ideal life. Even more so during times of struggle. I catch myself daydreaming about the perfect tiny log cabin in the middle of nowhere. Where every morning I wake to the sound of silence and drown in the sound of my own beating heart while I go for a run through the woods.

A place where the sights that surround me are filled with indescribable views.

A home where I can feel my spirit fly as freely as hummingbirds do; eat a ton of sugar and not be judged, come and go as I please whenever I so desire. Needing very little from society except to be left alone, just like a hummingbird; so small, yet strong, smart, majestic... and very much underestimated.



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Leave No Trace

By Marjorie "Slim" Woodruff

Though someone I met on an outback trail once gave me the honorific of the "Leave No Trace Nazi," I prefer the kinder title of "High Priestess of Leave No Trace." It allows for a less punitive ambiance. What's more, a priestess may confer benefits as well as smite wrongdoers.

The High Priestess is not pleased when she is confronted with cigarette butts, facial tissue, disposable water bottles (even those tied in a cute little knot), gooey energy-gel packets and their attendant tabs, or orange peels and apple cores. She wonders: Would these discards be welcome in the perpetrator's living room? And is not wilderness the living room for its full-time residents?

A High Priestess' work is never done, and so with a sigh and ancient curses muttered under her breath (and sometimes above it) she picks it all up. Wrappers, bottle tops (what happened to the bottle?), eggshells, plastic bags. More esoteric objects have included snowmobile boots, two full-size inflatable beds (at 9 pounds each), and a car door.

Gummy energy packets and cigarette butts are the worst. They are sticky and stinky, respectively. Orange peels at least make the trash bag smell nice. And no, though you keep trying not to know this, orange peels do not biodegrade quickly; it can take them up to two years to do so, in fact.

Once, along the trail, the High Priestess found an electrolyte-replacement bottle lying in full view, now filled with mud. The Priestess emptied it and left it to dry in the sun, intending to pick it up on the way out. Upon returning, she found that it had been joined by three single-use water bottles. Apparently this had become the home of disposable plastic bottles en route to their final resting place in the ocean. Seriously, people? You are supposed to be hikers! Buy a canteen!

Illegal campfires require their own etiquette. Also legal ones, if their creators are not following the principles of Leave No Trace. Sadly, it is not enough to just scatter the rocks. One must also clean out the trash, scatter, bury or carry out the charcoal and then camouflage the area.

One time, while dismantling a fire ring, the Priestess inadvertently uncovered a small and unhappy rattlesnake. At that point it was ordained that, in this case, "respect wildlife" would trump "minimize campfire impacts."

Rock squirrels are merely rats with good PR, but the tourists love them. Obviously, they (the rock squirrels, not the tourists) can't survive on nuts and berries alone, the old-fashioned way. They require Cheetos. When talking to animal-feeding perpetrators, I have learned not to waste time with the admonition that "our food is not good for wildlife" or "they will starve in the

(Continued next page.)

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Highlander Nature

winter when the tourists disappear.” Ask, instead, “Have you ever heard of hantavirus?”

There was a time in Zion National Park when a couple was sighted tempting a squirrel with an apple. The animal grabbed the fruit and ran. The Priestess vaulted over a rock wall, snatched the apple out of the squirrel’s surprised maw, and turned to the couple. “Perhaps,” she said, “you didn’t notice the sign RIGHT THERE which says do not feed the wildlife?” This might have seemed just a bit overzealous to the tourists.

Graffiti is exploding in the national parks. Perhaps because increased visitation leads to increased numbers of people With No Clue. Perhaps because social media allows these vandals to share their “art” with the world. Such antics are unsightly, but more importantly, they encourage the easily led mob to add their own decorations. Most of the time a squirt-bottle full of water and a stiff brush takes care of the problem (the graffiti, not the artists).

Cutting switchbacks destroys trails and can cause rockslides. A few years back, a hiker had to be air-evacuated from a Grand Canyon trail when short-cutters above him dislodged rocks that landed on his cranium with consequent ill effects. After a few reminders that this behavior is unsafe and irresponsible, the Priestess pulls out a phone and informs the perps that Park Dispatch has received a video of their malfesance. There is no Wi-Fi on the trail, of course, but do they really need to know that?

Occasionally, a miscreant is caught in the act of littering.

The Priestess then is all sympathy. “If you are too weak and exhausted to carry out this used facial tissue, perhaps I should call for rescue immediately!” This usually evokes a blank stare, or an occasional look of indignation, but it amuses the Priestess.

Even if the Priestess does not smite, perhaps Ma Nature will. There is, after all, such a thing as Karma. Treat the wilderness like a trash heap, and it may come back to bite you.

Those of us who pick up after others are often rewarded with fine weather, the best campsite, or just plain good luck. Those who trash the place may be rained out, or refused a permit. Bad luck may stalk them all their days on the trail. Malevolent spirits will plague them. Mother Nature bats last.

Marjorie “Slim” Woodruff is a contributor to Writers on the Range, the opinion service of High Country News (hcn.org). She lives and works at the bottom of Grand Canyon National Park.

Editor’s Note: I could not agree more with Slim and have for years touted the No Trace Camping philosophy to any and all. Every year our canyon residents have at least one Canyon Clean up, a day to scour the roadsides for litter to bag up and haul away. This practice is a valuable reminder that the NO LITTERING laws of long ago are ignored on a daily basis. So ironic to see a newly discarded beer bottle lying not too far from one of the orange trash bags diligently filled by a volunteer the day before.

I have much trouble understanding the mental disconnect of anyone who mindlessly tosses anything out a vehicle window while driving in our beautiful forests. But by far the worst offenders are the lit cigarette butts thrown out that might start a forest fire in our bedroom canyon communities or even in remote National Forest locations.

I’ve done my share of cleaning up campsites and it boggles the mind what folks leave behind after a trip to nature: broken down bicycle frames, damaged wooden doors, irreparable lawn furniture, coolers with broken tops, vehicle batteries, five gallon metal cans, kid’s destroyed toys, old tents, torn canopies, and the one thing I was unable to wrangle into my truck - a recliner rocker..



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The Next Generation Needs Public Lands

By Ernie Atencio

Experiences in the wilderness are crucial for troubled youth.

As I watch at-risk urban kids from Salt Lake City scrambling up slickrock canyons to see ancient Puebloan ruins, I see their faces come alive as they absorb their spectacular surroundings. Attitudes chill, eyes and smiles get wider. Something stirs within them.

These high school and college-age youth are spending a weekend at Hovenweep National Monument in southeastern Utah through a program called YouthWorks in the Parks, which hopes to make them advocates for public lands. Later in the weekend, they will rappel into a canyon on the southern fringe of Bears Ears National Monument. There, they will have to work together and contort their bodies in creative ways to squeeze through a sinuous slot canyon.

Many of these young people have never set foot in a national park; some have never camped out and seen the night sky. This ancestral homeland of Pueblo peoples with its strange and twisted landscape is new and wild to them. Until they saw it, it was utterly unimaginable to them. Now they are seeing the world through new eyes, and what they see is bigger than anything they had thought. I know these kids. I used to be one of them.

Before finding my way back to my northern New Mexico roots, I grew up mostly in inner-city Denver. I learned the tricks of the street, got involved in some risky and illegal activities, spent time in juvy, and dropped out of high school. When I finally forced myself back into the classroom, I just wanted a high school diploma.

An Outward Bound "hoods-in-the-woods" course changed all that. Three weeks of backpacking and mountaineering blew both my mind and my horizons wide open. Not long after, I was leading Outward Bound trips, working as a national park ranger, and teaching environmental education programs. Eventually, I got into conservation work, and along the way earned several more

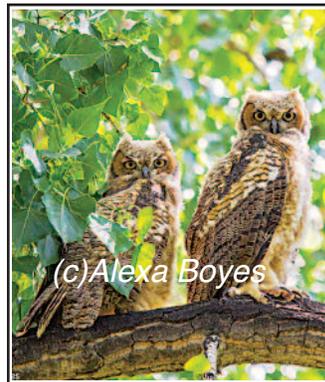
"terminal degrees."

During my recent weekend with young people from Utah, I saw the horizon shift in similar ways for these youngsters. There must be a direct correlation between experiencing the physical horizons of canyon country and finding greater vision and ambitions in life. I've seen it enough times to know it's true.

These kids are already on a good path. YouthWorks caught them before they slipped through the deep cracks in our educational and legal systems. They come into the backcountry confident and ambitious.

The group was fascinated to learn about modern-day cultural connections to this landscape. You could hear a pin drop as they listened to a Navajo guide explain his people's relationship to the Puebloan sites. He tells them that he ritually prepares himself before he visits one in order to honor its spirit. The kids marvel at how the ancestral Pueblo people and Indian people still live in tune with the natural world and the seasons. There is even some anger that they have not learned anything about this in school. One participant is amazed that these ancient ruins still stand, and that rangers and archaeologists work to protect them and explain them to the public. They are surprised to learn that this protected public land is their land. This idea of the commons is new but very welcome to young people who come from families whose own horizon does not usually include home

(Continued on page 11.)



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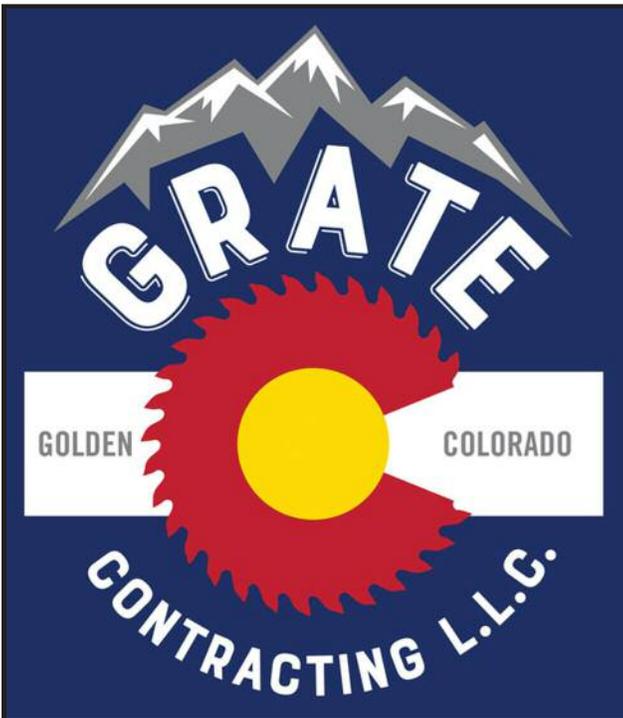
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Below: Kids visit Cedar Mesa in southeastern Utah
Four Corners School of Outdoor Education/Flickr user

ownership. And yet they learn on this weekend that they own part of a vast public estate.

The new Bears Ears National Monument, Hovenweep and our other tremendous gifts of public land hold all kinds of untapped opportunities, from broadening our experience of history and the outdoors to inspiring young people and helping them find their place in the world. As the weekend draws to a close, these young people may become the next generation of park advocates or find other ways to make the world a better place. But I realize that Youthworks in the Parks can only work if there are intact places to learn about and explore.

Beaming after his first trip to Arches and Canyonlands national parks, one young man says, "Now, there's this feeling that goes through me, and I get this strong urge to go."

Ernie Atencio is a contributor to Writers on the Range, the opinion service of High Country News. He is New Mexico program manager for the National Parks and Conservation Association.



Editor's Note: Contrary to opinions by some states that public lands should go back to being regulated by the states, this practice has shown that those public lands get sold off to the highest bidder, developers or energy companies. History shows public lands decrease at high rates when states have regulatory powers over them.

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Major Public Lands Settlement In Utah

By Tay Wiles

Thousands of miles of off-highway routes will get new travel management plans.

Thousands of miles of dusty two-tracks crisscross Utah's remote public lands. Some are historical routes, while others were carved more recently by backcountry recreationists in trucks and four-wheelers. Which roads should still be used and which should be abandoned to protect the environment has been a topic of intense debate for years. Now, Utah is one step closer to ending its roads controversy. Recently an eight-year lawsuit spanning 11 million acres and 20,000 miles of routes in southern and eastern Utah ended with a settlement. Ten environmental groups argued that Bureau of Land Management plans created in 2008 for Utah public lands were too heavily weighted to favor off-highway vehicle interests. U.S. District Court Judge Dale A. Kimball in Salt Lake City agreed, in part.

The San Rafael River proposed wilderness area in the San Rafael Desert travel management area.

RayBloxham/SUWA

Now, the BLM must review 13 travel management and five land use plans by 2025. Court orders requiring the BLM to re-do management plans are not uncommon, but the scale of the recent settlement is rare in the sheer acreage involved. The land affected stretches from Daggett County in the north down to the Arizona border, and from the Colorado border in the east to the town of Richfield in the center of the state. The area includes the San Rafael Swell, Nine Mile Canyon, Paunsaugunt Plateau, the Dolores River, Gemini Bridges and the Book Cliffs. "The agency certainly erred on the side of providing motorized access above many other concerns," Nada Culver, senior counsel and director of the BLM Action Center at the Wilderness Society, a plaintiff in the case, says. "In the legal standards, (the BLM must) minimize harm to

wilderness, wildlife, to riparian areas, water quality. If you apply those standards, I think it's fair to say you don't get to 20,000 miles."

The BLM will survey only about half of those routes, though. The settlement orders the agency to focus only on



the most sensitive habitat and cultural areas to determine two things: first, whether the designated roads actually exist (some were created over a century ago and have long since disappeared), and second, whether existing roads should be closed to motorized recreation. Roads that appear on BLM maps but have physically vanished can create damage nonetheless, from people crisscrossing landscapes in a futile search. Along with the surveys, the agency will include other federal, tribal, state and local agencies in developing new management plans, and conduct a public review process before creating new maps showing only approved routes. The agency will take into account wilderness characteristics of the land, archeological sites, and backcountry recreational opportunities.

Officials from the counties that intervened in the case — Kane, Carbon, Duchesne, Daggett, Grand, Emery, San Juan and Uintah — as well as the state of Utah, oppose the settlement. The compromise is "unfair and unreasonable,"

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the state argued in court documents, and infringes on recreational opportunities and residents' livelihoods. Some county commissioners are concerned about the settlement's potential implications for other litigation involving old roads traversing public land. Utah counties and the state are attempting to claim tens of thousands of miles of historical routes using a 151-year-old law, RS2477.



*The Muddy Creek proposed wilderness in the San Rafael Swell travel management area.
Ray Bloxham/SUWA*

While most of the settlement concerns roads, it also requires the agency to update its 2011 air resource management plan for Utah to make sure oil and gas impacts are sufficiently studied before approving future development projects in the Uintah Basin. The agency will have to update the plan within a year. BLM district offices in Moab, Price, Vernal and Kanab are all part of the settlement. The Monticello field office was excluded from the settlement because of the Bears Ears National Monument designation late last year. "It was going to be complicated to try to apply a settlement that was negotiated for lands outside a national monument to a field office with a national monument," Culver says. Richfield was also part of the lawsuit, but was dealt with in an earlier "test" case for the larger suit. The Richfield case concluded in 2013 in favor of the environmental groups.

While this settlement is a victory for proponents, the next step won't be easy: eight years of planning for millions of acres. Culver is optimistic, though: "We're glad that we get to move forward and improve the BLM plans — they really need it."

Tay Wiles is an associate editor for High Country News and can be reached at taywiles@hcn.org.



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The First In A Series Of Lawsuits

By Mark Trahant

Remember the “rule of law” invoked at Standing Rock? That was the phrase used over and over by law enforcement from North Dakota and Morton County. It was supposed to serve as a box to limit First Amendment and civil disobedience actions by water protectors opposing the Dakota Access oil pipeline crossing under the Missouri River.

But rule of law didn’t apply to treaty rights. Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier told The Bismarck Tribune that was beyond his job parameters. “That cannot be worked out in Morton County,” the sheriff told the newspaper. “That has to be worked out with the federal government.”

This statement was and still is nonsense. The Constitution

of the United States declares treaties to be the supreme law of the land. That’s higher than state law. And weightier than the claim of a property right on federal property. And significantly more potent than the urgency to construct an oil pipeline before the price of oil drops.

To enforce the so-called rule of law, virtual armies were sent in to arrest hundreds of people for speaking out. And today the county continues to cloud people’s lives, even manipulating the prosecution to ensure a guilty outcome without trial.

But here’s the thing: The Petrostate of North Dakota lost the rule of law argument a long time ago. It lost the debate when investigative reports showed that the state colluded with the company’s hired thugs to turn a powerful, beautiful and nonviolent protest into a “jihadist” moment. “As policing continues to be militarized, and state legislatures around the country pass laws criminalizing protest, the fact that a private security firm retained by a Fortune 500 oil and gas company coordinated its efforts with local, state, and federal law enforcement to undermine the protest movement has profoundly anti-democratic implications,” as reported by The Intercept last month.

All the company, the county, and the state, had to do was to be patient. Accommodate the camps. Learn from the community. Take heart from any lessons that might surface. Perhaps, even then, there would be disagreements, but at least there would also be respect. And there would have been an honorable place for the rule of law. Instead the company, state, and county, opted for might makes right.



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Recently a federal court had its own interpretation of the rule of law. U.S. District Judge James E. Boasberg wrote: “Lake Oahe holds special significance for the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River Sioux Tribes. Its creation necessitated the taking of approximately 56,000 acres of some of ‘the best land’ from Standing Rock’s Reservation, as well as 104,420 acres of Cheyenne River’s trust lands.

Today, Standing Rock members rely on Lake Oahe’s waters to service ‘homes, a hospital, clinics, schools, businesses, and government buildings throughout the Reservation’ and to support agriculture and industrial activities. The lake is also the primary source of water for the Cheyenne River Reservation. Both tribes consider the waters to be ‘sacred’ and ‘central to (their) practice of religion.’”

In other words: Water is life. And that notion is backed up by a treaty relationship between the Standing Rock and Cheyenne River nations. My favorite part of the ruling is that the obligation requires “early involvement.” Or as the regulations say, that “means that a tribal government is given an opportunity to comment on a proposed action in time for the tribal government to provide meaningful comments that may affect the decision.” Clearly that’s part of the rule of law, too.

So what now? There will be a continued legal back and forth. Some rulings will favor the tribes, others the pipeline company. And perhaps there will be a new Environmental Impact Statement. That’s expected and fits in with the rule of law.

This is a moment for the Dakota Access pipeline partners, the state of North Dakota and Morton County, to change tactics, too. This is the moment where the rule of law — and respect — can earn their way back into the conversation. I’d start by ending the criminal prosecution of water protectors. It’s excessive and clearly an affront because it so disrespected the rule of law. The company and state can start over, too, building on this court decision to start a new chapter.

So many lessons came from what happened at Standing Rock. Let respect for the rule of law be one lesson learned.

*Mark Trahant wrote this article for **YES! Magazine**. Mark is the Charles R. Johnson Endowed Professor of Journalism at the University of North Dakota and a member of The Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. He writes a regular column at **YES!**, where he is a contributing editor. On Twitter @TrahanReports. Courtesy High Country News.*



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Wildlife Predators Should Be Celebrated

By *Bethany Cotton*

The recent news that a beloved white wolf was shot — likely inside Yellowstone National Park — highlights the fact that even our most protected spaces are not always sanctuaries for rare wildlife.

Last year, just days after a court ruled that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service allowed politics to trump science when it refused to provide Endangered Species Act protections for wolverines, a rancher killed the first wolverine seen in North Dakota in 150 years. The wily traveling animal was the storied M56, who became Colorado’s first confirmed wolverine in generations when he arrived from Wyoming in 2009. M56’s death is emblematic of the tragic fate of many animals trying to reclaim lost habitats.

For wolves and wolverine, the risks of dispersing to former homelands are exceedingly high. You’ve likely heard of OR7, called “Journey,” the wolf that traversed Oregon and became the first seen in California in 85 years. Upon returning to southern Oregon, he encountered a female fellow wanderer; their family is known today as the Rogue pack.

Unfortunately, Journey’s story is the exception. Echo, the Grand Canyon wolf, was killed in Utah despite significant media attention to her presence. Again, she was the first confirmed wolf in the area in decades. Echo’s story was all the more compelling because dispersing animals are rarely female.

Even though Echo weighed 50 pounds more than a coyote and wore a bright orange radio-collar, a hunter shot her, claiming he thought she was a coyote. The government declined to prosecute, notwithstanding Echo’s protected status, citing its misguided “McKittrick Policy” under which wildlife killers are only charged when the feds can

prove their intent to target a protected animal.

These are the well known stories, but there are dozens more. Wolves are killed in Colorado, Kansas, and Iowa;



each time, they’re the first seen there in human generations. Shot without any repercussion, with the government failing to enforce Endangered Species Act safeguards.

These intrepid animals’ stories captivate the public. They have a larger-than-life presence in our minds and on the landscape. Perhaps they remind us of our own youth — how we felt setting out into the wide world to forge our path, seeking a new home, building a family.

Anthropomorphizing animals has its problems, but in many ways, we are not so different from Echo, Journey or M56. I’ve left my home in Oregon to work in wildlife conservation, first in Colorado, now in Montana. I, too, wander the West looking for the best berry patches, swimming holes and gorgeous mountain meadows. Sometimes I encounter a grizzly or wolf.

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They pose far less of a threat to me than my species does to them.

These iconic animals are more than emblems of hope, renewal and recovery. They have key ecological and conservation roles to play. That is, if we don't shoot them first.

Even grizzlies aren't safe. Scarface, Yellowstone's most famous bear, was shot in 2015, when he wandered outside the Park's invisible boundary. And in the last two weeks of May, two grizzlies were illegally killed in Montana. The first died at the hands of a careless-at-best black bear hunter in an area where grizzlies hadn't lived for decades. The second was shot and its body dumped off a bridge. Scarface and the other two died despite federal protections.

If the Yellowstone ecoregion's grizzlies are stripped of protection, this nightmare will come true regularly, sanctioned by our government not just tacitly, but explicitly.

If we allow Montana, Idaho and Wyoming to permit grizzly trophy-hunting seasons, the strongest animals — the best chance to breathe new life into imperiled gene pools and re-establish connectivity among remaining isolated populations — will die in the echo of high-powered rifle shots.

As in the bygone Wild West, the old guard's prevailing attitude is to shoot first, ask questions later. But unlike 100 years ago, we now know how important carnivores are to healthy, thriving ecosystems. And we've learned that it's not too late to restore the balance we foolishly upset.

M56, Scarface and Echo lived extraordinary lives. They overcame seemingly insurmountable barriers, both natural and human-made: crossing mountain ranges and highways, traversing landscapes fragmented by suburban sprawl, fossil fuel development and an out-of-control public-lands road network. Humans have destroyed much of the natural connectivity between habitats, yet these animals persevered: resilience incarnate.

Far too many dispersing animals meet untimely deaths, victims of human carelessness at best, and at worst, of disproven anti-carnivore myths. We should learn more from

their plight than just their individual extraordinary stories. The biggest impediment to the recovery of wolves, wolverines and grizzlies, and in turn to the benefits they bring back to the broken ecosystems on which we all depend, is us.

It's long past time we start showing respect to these incredible animals, lower our guns, raise our voices, and welcome them home.

Bethany Cotton is a contributor to Writers on the Range, the opinion service of High Country News (hcn.org). She is wildlife program director for the nonprofit WildEarth Guardians and lives in Missoula, Montana.

Editor's Note: The new effort by Colorado Parks & Wildlife to kill black bears and mountain lions in certain areas so the mule deer populations can increase is one of the most ill conceived and ecologically unsound senseless slaughters in recent times. Flying in the face of science and simply to promote hunting efforts our own state agency is practicing poor ecology.

This is a prime example of bad decisions based upon revenues from out of state license buyers. Simply put, the problem is too many people and a loss of habitat for the animal populations. Killing predators that keep herds in check and healthy is NEVER a good idea. The ecosystem needs the predators for both the prey and flora's health.



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*Previous Page: Top left: Kiwi.
Bottom Left: Cougar.
Top Right: Baby Ryder.
Bottom Right: Benny learns fetch.*

*This page: Top Left: Jenna with
Alpacas, also bottom right.
Bottom Left: Benny with Stogie!
Top Right: Handsome Jake.*

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Steps You Can Take To Improve Your Credit Score

From Jim Plane - State Farm Insurance

credit report. The longer your history of paying bills on time, the higher that portion of your credit score will be.

If you've been turned down for credit, made poor financial decisions in the past, or plan to apply for a mortgage, an auto loan, or a credit card, you might consider taking action to help improve your credit score.

Your credit score is a reflection of your reported credit history at one moment in time. It changes as new information is added to your credit report, or when you handle credit in a more responsible or less responsible manner.

The following five steps can help you raise your credit score:

Step 1: Pay your bills on time

Your payment history accounts for approximately 35% of your credit score more than any other factor. If you have a history of paying bills late, you need to start paying them on time. You can schedule automatic payments to help ensure you're never late again.

If you've missed payments, get current and stay current. Each on-time payment updates positive information to your

Step 2: Review your credit report

Errors happen, so review your credit report closely for: Accounts that aren't yours, Accounts with the wrong account date or credit limit listed, Names and Social Security numbers that aren't yours.

Addresses where you've never lived, Negative information, like late payments, older than seven years.

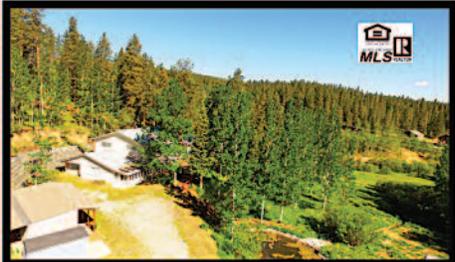
(Late payments can only legally stay on your credit report for seven years.)

Under the Fair Credit Reporting Act, the three national credit bureaus — Equifax, Experian, and TransUnion — and your creditors are responsible for correcting errors on your credit report. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) website has detailed steps for correcting errors, as well as a sample dispute letter.

If you find accounts that aren't yours and suspect you've been the victim of identity theft, you'll need to place a fraud alert on your credit report, close *(Continued page 22.)*

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those accounts and file a police report and a complaint with the FTC.

Step 3: Pay down your credit card balances

The amount of debt you have is heavily scrutinized for your credit score. Your total reported debt owed is taken into account, as well as the number of accounts with outstanding balances and how much available credit has been used. The total reported debt is compared to the total credit available to determine your debt-to-credit ratio. Your credit score can suffer if those numbers are too close together.

Your best plan for lowering your debt is to make a plan to pay it off. While it may seem like a wise move, don't consolidate debt onto one lower interest card. Credit inquiries and opening new credit can lower your credit score, at least in the short term. Closing old cards with high credit limits can also throw off your debt-to-credit ratio. If a new credit offer is too good to pass up, keep your total amount of credit available high by not closing any old credit cards.

Step 4: Use credit

You must use credit regularly for creditors to update your

credit report with current, accurate information. While paying with cash or a debit card may make it easier to keep to a budget, a cash-only lifestyle does very little to improve your credit score.

The easiest way to use credit is with a credit card, especially if you're trying to improve your score to qualify for an installment loan. If you have an old credit card, start using it responsibly again. A long credit history is a positive determining factor for your credit score, so making an inactive account active again may be advantageous.

Although you need to make a point to use credit regularly, only charge as much as you can pay off. Keep your credit balances low so as not to damage your debt-to-credit ratio.

Step 5: Monitor your credit report

Keeping a watchful eye on your credit report will let you see if your hard work is paying off. Credit monitoring allows you to keep tabs on account activity. You'll also be immediately tipped off about any fraudulent activity. The credit bureaus and FICO® offer credit monitoring services, which typically cost about \$15 a month to monitor all three of your credit reports and scores.



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A Crippled Hand

By Ingrid Winter

And I know that she is doomed

because she cannot spread her wing

and as the tears come

and roll down my face

I feel so helpless and I have no answer-

I only know

that I am imperfect

in so many ways

and yet I am allowed

to live

But I also know

that it would not

be fair

to let this bird go

to die a miserable

death

and so

I stroke her lovely

silky neck

over and over

whispering-

Farewell,

beautiful

*Look at your hand- either one and tell me how would you
feel if it were useless*

if you could not move it at all

You would be shocked

of course

but eventually you would

adjust - using tools

with one hand

typing on a keyboard

driving a car...

and for some tasks

you would need

to ask for help

But at no time

would your life

be in danger

With wildlife

things are different-

A Canada goose

coming to Greenwood

with a crippled wing will never fly again

and hence cannot be released

I am looking at her

alive

trusting us

looking at me with dark wise eyes

calm and dignified



and know that to me

you are perfect in every way!

*Photo Courtesy Alexa Boyes. Greenwood Wildlife
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Job Hunting? Work It Smarter!

By Valerie Wedel

Life changes – wow, does life change! Some (many?) of us are “displaced workers,” perhaps unemployed or underemployed. I think of my dad, who was very poor growing up, worked his way through college, joined the air force, and became a pilot. He created a comfortable, actually a very generous, living for his family.

Today, sadly some of us are making that journey in reverse. This writer is considered a “displaced worker.” After being mostly home with kids for many years and working part time, job skills for today’s full time career market can be sadly obsolete. This can make re-entering the workforce seriously challenging, let alone planning for retirement. Others of us are laid off, or perhaps already retired, and may have found the rocky economy decimated retirement accounts which had been thought secure. Or perhaps one is a young person, finished with high school and going to work. As a high school graduate today, how does one find work that pays well enough to earn a living?

If any of this sounds familiar, you are in very good company. Many folk, who may have thought we had made good financial or career decisions, are waking up to realize we have no financial security. Some of us are realizing this in our 50’s, some of us much younger. And some of us are older. This challenging time affects many of us, no matter our age.

Discovering you are poor when you thought you would be more financially comfortable can be very difficult to deal with. Feelings such as fear, shame, insecurity, even

depression or feeling unduly spacey and tired, all can raise their ugly heads. It can seem, on a bad day, as if one will never get back on one’s feet. These feelings are completely normal! They may appear and disappear like waves on a beach. Let the feelings flow, and keep the faith – you will succeed.

One solution is to study and learn new skills. The immediate question, for those of us un- or under-employed, is how to find and pay for training? How indeed...

There is a program that can help. Some of our tax dollars are actually, even still today, at work to help us! A chance conversation with a friend led to discovering the American Job Center, which is part of the Colorado Workforce Center. Eureka!

What, you ask, is The American Job Center? It is located in Golden and serves Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek Counties. This includes a full service career center, located very close to the Jefferson County Courthouse. Contact: Laramie Building, 3500 Illinois Street, Golden, CO 80401, Ph. 303.271.4791, <http://jeffco.us/american-job-center>.

Boulder County residents will want to find: Workforce Boulder County, located at 5755 Central Ave., Boulder, CO 80301, ph. 303.413.7555 (Office ID 4132). Both organizations are under the umbrella of Workforce Centers, which in turn are under the umbrella of the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE). The CDLE website is: <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cdle/wfc>.

So what are these Workforce Centers good for? Well, they are an amazing resource! And all the services are free to use.

By “free,” what is meant is that these are our tax dollars at work. As a resident of Jefferson County, I am becoming very good friends with the Jeffco American Job Center. It is staffed by knowledgeable and very kind people. There is a large workspace with computer stations, Internet, printers, fax machines, printers and photocopiers. These resources are typical of the job centers, and all are available to use for free, when you register with your local Colorado Workforce Center.

The Workforce Centers also offer a variety of free workshops and training. For example, the June and July, 2017 schedule for the American Job Center in Golden includes courses such as Excel, Word, Power Point, Outlook, resume writing, cover letter writing, interviewing skills, and more.

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Highlander Issues

Are your computer skills a bit out of date? You can tune them up here. All one has to do is sign up, and then show up.

One can also learn excellent skills for interviewing, networking, and how to meet employer expectations. Make your people skills stronger. According to one source, people skills, or "soft skills" have a huge impact on whether an applicant is hired – sometimes even more impact than one's technical qualifications.

There are computer bulletin boards that job hunters or employers can use to find each other. There are young adult services, for people aged 14 – 24. These include building job-readiness skills, connecting with potential employers, and help to win post-secondary certificates. Veterans and their spouses are especially welcome. Colorado provides "priority of service" - you get to go to the front of the line! - If you are a veteran or eligible spouse, and are job hunting or seeking new skills.

If you are in the happy position of employer looking for skilled employees, the Colorado Workforce Centers are also focused on helping you. Their top stated goals include improving local workforce recruitment and retention. They want to help you find well-trained applicants, from a 'ready-to-work talent pipeline.' By helping put well-trained local people to work locally, this program wants to help us achieve a great local economy.

The Colorado Workforce Centers provide a marvelous resource for those of us who are job hunting. It is also good to remember to take very good care of yourself. Be gentle... take time to walk by the creek, and enjoy spring flowers and warm weather. Listen to the wind in the trees.

Enjoy resting in the shade and smelling the perfume of our many varieties of pine trees... Perhaps slowly sipping a mug of tea or coffee. Or even just enjoy a mug of our awesome well water. Famous deep rock springs – from our own wells! Small pleasures can help one get through, when wild times are afoot. And consider making friends with your very own Colorado Workforce Center.

About the writer: She lives in Coal Creek Canyon, and is returning to work after raising a family. She also enjoys playing Celtic harp here & there to relax & share healing energy.

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Don't Just Stand There, Do Something!

By Carla Wise

My first thought, on entering the hall, was, "Wow, she doesn't look like an endowed-chair environmental law professor." This was back in the fall of 2006, when I went to hear Mary Christina Wood speak. She was about my age, with long chestnut hair, a warm expression, and no makeup. I've since marveled that I was even there that night. I live in a college town, and good talks are not unusual. But I had a young daughter at the time, and this may have been the only evening lecture I attended that entire year.

Wood, also the mother of young children, was eloquent. She understood in a way I was just starting to grasp that climate change, if left unchecked, would soon threaten the health, safety and life support systems of our own kids, as well as that of future generations and everything else in the natural world. I left the lecture hall deeply shaken.

Three things I remember clearly: First, I was impressed with her moral clarity. Second, in an answer to a question about what to do about the approaching climate crisis, she said, "Do something, do anything, just don't do nothing." And third, I remember that I lay awake that night, fearing for my daughter's future.

In an effort to compel the government to protect the climate on behalf of present and future generations, Wood was developing a legal theory based on the "public trust doctrine." I had heard of this doctrine when I worked on water issues in national parks. But I don't believe anyone

had tried to apply it to the earth's atmosphere before.

The basic idea is that the government has a responsibility to protect vital natural resources for the benefit of all. By allowing polluters to destroy a stable climate, the government is failing to do its duty, and the courts can compel the government to act. It seemed like an elegant argument.

At that moment, I was contemplating a career change, from conservation biologist to environmental writer. I contacted Wood, interviewed her and wrote one of my first stories, "Climate Revolutionary: Creating a legal framework for saving our planet," which was published in High Country News on May 12, 2008. I have no doubt that encountering Mary Wood helped inspire me to become a climate writer and, in time, a climate activist.

Meanwhile, Wood wrote a book, *Nature's Trust: Environmental Law for a New Ecological Age*, developing her legal theory. Her work provides the theoretical foundation for the global litigation approach advanced by an organization called "Our Children's Trust." It works with youth across the country and around the world to bring legal action to compel governments to reduce greenhouse gas pollution and stabilize the climate system.

Just two days after this year's election, a group of 21 young Americans won the right in federal court in Eugene, Oregon, to sue the fossil-fuel industry and the U.S. government based on Wood's approach. According to U.S. District Judge Ann Aiken, these young people have the right to seek the protection of the climate on behalf of all

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youth and future generations. Similar lawsuits are being brought in other states and countries as well.

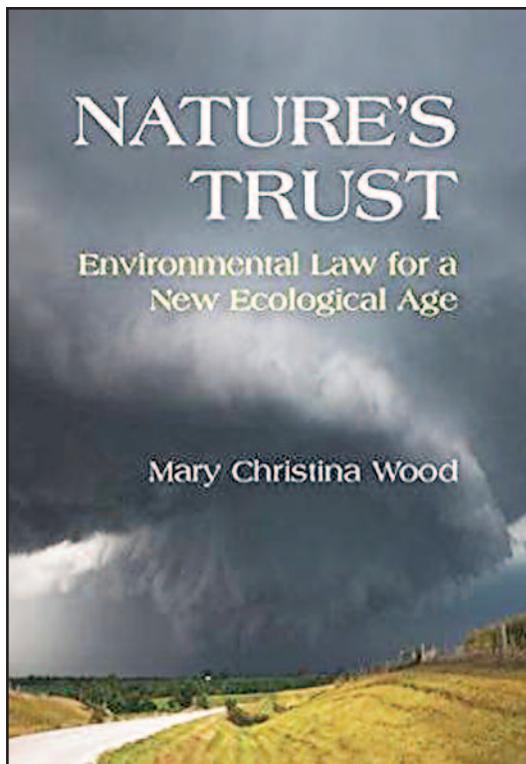
As for me, one thing led to another. Replaying Wood's words, "Do something, do anything, just don't do nothing," started a shift in my heart and my head. I began learning and writing more about climate change. In time, this led me to writing a book about responding to climate change and becoming a volunteer climate activist. Today, I spend a large portion of my time lobbying for a carbon fee and dividend law to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

So this is a story about how a lucky meeting changed my life. It is also a story about how one woman — an extraordinary environmental law professor — has influenced the world. This doesn't take into account all the other ways she may have changed lives. So this is really a lesson about hope.

The only lesson I learned from Donald Trump's election is that we cannot ever know the future. All the professional pundits predicted he would lose, and many of us believed them. I think I finally understand that there is absolutely no way to know what will happen tomorrow or next week or next year.

But it is possible to look back and see the small choices that mattered, to realize you never know where they may lead. So my advice is to do something, do anything, just don't do nothing. This is the only way to plant seeds that might — just might — grow into progress toward a world in which our children can survive and thrive.

Carla Wise is a contributor to Writers on the Range, the opinion service of High Country News (hcn.org). She lives and writes in Oregon.



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Can Private Money Solve Public Water Problems?

By Emily Benson

(See photo next page - EcoFlight.)

Private investment in public works isn't a new idea: In 2014, former President Barack Obama launched an initiative focused on partnerships between public agencies and private companies to boost infrastructure financing and innovation. Now, President Donald Trump is calling for more such collaborations, and even outright privatization, in an attempt to shore up the nation's aging highways and water systems.

Water infrastructure, for both drinking and irrigation, is especially in need of improvement in the arid West. Amid a wave of aging reservoirs, treatment plants and pipelines, and a Congress unwilling to pony up funding to fix them, the Bureau of Reclamation is considering private investment as a possible solution. While some municipalities in the U.S. have partnered with private companies on water projects, such deals are almost non-existent on the federal level.

Colorado's Paradox Valley hosts a series of collection wells and an injection well that reduce the salt load in the Dolores River, a tributary to the Colorado.

Critics note that there's a significant potential downside — private companies are beholden to their bottom line, and their goals may not always line up with the public interest. If the company goes bankrupt, for example, public-private partnerships can end up being costly for the public.

The Bureau of Reclamation recently held a meeting with industry representatives and asked for their feedback on five water infrastructure projects in the West that the agency says might benefit from private involvement or even ownership. The exchange was intended to gauge industry interest in this type of arrangement, and while the Bureau may ask for development bids in the future, it hasn't yet done so. Here are the five potential projects the agency highlighted:

The project: Kachess Drought Relief Pumping Plant, Yakima River basin, Washington. Estimated cost: \$200 million.

What it would do: The Kachess Reservoir supplies irrigation water to farms. It's much deeper than its gravity-fed outlet, though, creating a tantalizing untapped water source. A proposed floating pump station would allow water districts to reach almost twice as much water during droughts as they now can. The Bureau of Reclamation anticipates finding a private company to design, build, finance and maintain the pumping plant, while it or local water districts manage operations.

The project: Eastern New Mexico Rural Water System, east-central New Mexico. Estimated cost: \$527 million.

What it would do: This pipeline project would funnel water from the Ute Reservoir south to a handful of towns and counties that rely on the overdrawn Ogallala Aquifer. The federal government is footing the majority of the bill, but completing the project may take decades. The Bureau of Reclamation hopes to speed things up by finding a private partner to design, build, finance and manage the



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pipeline system, while the local water authority retains ownership.

The project: Paradox Valley Unit, Colorado River basin, Colorado. Estimated cost: Unknown. What it would do: The shallow groundwater beneath western Colorado's Dolores River is naturally much saltier than seawater. The Paradox Valley Unit facility sucks up that groundwater before it can



enter the Dolores, a tributary of the Colorado River, and injects it deep underground for disposal. But the injection well is causing more than 100 small earthquakes each year, prompting the Bureau of Reclamation to evaluate alternatives such as evaporation ponds or desalination. The agency is also considering a partnership that would transfer much of the control of the project — and the financial risks associated with it — to a private company.

The project: Yuma Desalting Plant, Colorado River basin, Arizona. Estimated cost: Unknown. What it would do: The Yuma Desalting Plant, located just upstream of the U.S. - Mexico border in southwestern Arizona, removes salt from agricultural runoff before it hits the Colorado. That treated water counts toward the amount the U.S. must send to Mexico, but when it's not running, untreated runoff is shunted to another location and not counted. If the plant operated more often, the U.S. would be able to use treated water to meet some of its obligation, allowing more water to stay in Lake Mead. The Bureau of Reclamation is studying other treatment options, including building a new facility, retrofitting the old one and finding a private partner to design, finance, build, run and perhaps own the project.

The project: Arkansas Valley Conduit, lower Arkansas River basin, Colorado. Estimated cost: \$400-600 million. What it would do: This 227-mile pipeline system was authorized in 1962 to provide clean drinking water to towns and rural areas in southeast Colorado, but never

built. In 2009, Congress agreed that the federal government would pay for the project, with local funders repaying 35% of the cost over 50 years. However, only a fraction of the money needed for the conduit has materialized, leading the Bureau of Reclamation to consider a private partnership.

Emily Benson is an editorial intern at High Country News.

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Buffalo Migrate to Summer Habitat inside Yellowstone

Without any government bullies pressuring them, all of the buffalo who were enjoying freedom on Horse Butte and surrounding lands have migrated to their summer habitat inside Yellowstone National Park. After all the years of being relentlessly chased from their calving grounds, wild buffalo have once again shown humans that patience is a virtue.

Those sickening, industrial strength hazing operations were never necessary, as the buffalo have proven once again. While it is always sad to see our buffalo friends leave, we take heart in the fact that they were able to do so of their own accord. We have worked very hard for this, and the buffalo have endured so much to finally reach the point where they can choose for themselves when and where to go, as any free being should. For two years now, we have come to know calves for which hazing is something only heard of in stories. As the years go by and the buffalo become more comfortable on these lands, it will be interesting to see if they will linger longer, or if they will always return to Yellowstone for the summer. We look forward to learning from them, and we will continue our fight to gain more ground on lands outside Yellowstone's borders.

We know the buffalo will return by fall or winter and their return is always a miraculous event. Unfortunately for many it is a time of killing instead of a celebratory welcoming. When they migrate back into Montana, what will await them? The peace and tranquility they found in spring will transform into the cold dangers of rifles and traps. Now is the time to put pressure on Montana and

Yellowstone, because we know they intend to kill again. Another important lesson from the buffalo is that there is



strength in numbers. Let us be like them. We have to bolster our numbers, increase our strength and fight harder than ever for these gentle giants. We need you to help us find wild buffalo advocates wherever you may roam, tell them what is happening to the last wild buffalo, and let

them know the buffalo need their help.

Can we count on you to find five to ten friends this summer, ask them to join our email list, get newsletters (coming soon!) in their hands, and let them know about volunteer and advocacy opportunities with us? As we grow, so do our chances of realizing the ultimate victory of wild and free buffalo roaming the lands that are their birthright.



Call to help our cause: Yellowstone National Park Superintendent Dan Wenk 307-344-2002 and

Montana Governor Steve Bullock 406-444-3111.

It is scientifically and ecologically a fact that the herd needs to be at least 5,000 strong to maintain genetic viability. Every year Montana and Yellowstone politically motivated slaughter tactics to cull the herd weakens the entire herd. Let nature take its natural course, let the grizzly populations cull the sick and injured bison. Let the wolves live by taking the buffalo winter kills that happen to the aging or sick individuals of the herd for their young wolf pups. It is past time for humans to get out of the equation.

Living A Life Worth Remembering

By Frosty Wooldridge

Totally blind in his teens, American Erik Weihenmayer became the first sightless person to climb Mount Everest. He continued until he climbed the highest peaks on all seven continents. Bob Wieland lost his legs to a bomb blast in Vietnam, but walked across America on his hands coast-to-coast. Time: three years, eight months, six days! Later, he hand-cycled west to east and east to west across America. Not finished, he became the first double amputee to complete the Hawaii Ironman Triathlon. He ran the New York, Boston and Chicago Marathons that took him five days to finish each race. At 67, he again hand-cycled coast-to-coast across America.

American Aimee Mullins, 37, without legs below the knees since childhood, races track, models and gives motivational speeches. She said, "True disability is having a crushed spirit." She redefines what a woman can be and what she can accomplish.

Wilma Rudolph, sickly as a child, wore braces, but became the first woman to win three gold medals at the 1960 Olympics where they celebrated her as the world's fastest woman.

Your choices in life transform you from the banal to the poetic—even to the noble. Wasn't it Shakespeare's character "Shylock" a moneylender in the "Merchant of

Venice" who spoke these words that ring out in the 21st century, "If you prick us, do we not bleed? And if you tickle us, do we not laugh? It is our humanity and all the potential within it that makes us beautiful."

With those words ringing into the rafters of your mind, how will you live a life worth remembering?

If you're 20 years old, you enjoy choices to lead an epic life that propels you to heroic memories. By age 30, you burned through your 20s and may relish some epic moments. By 40, you you're half way through. Have you lived a life worth remembering? Or, did the "mid-life crisis" hit you square in the eyes—leaving you with a panicky feeling? By 70, your after-burners exhausted themselves, leaving you in a gentle glide to your final moments.

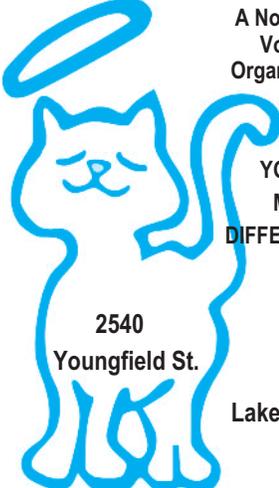
If you live on this side of 40, are you creating a remarkable life for yourself? Do you live on any "searing the edges?" Are you carving out some extraordinary physical, intellectual or spiritual expression of yourself?

What made the above four "ordinary people" overcome their horrific physical conditions? What drove them to greatness?

Remember this: if something doesn't challenge you, you won't change. Therefore, instead of *(Continued next page.)*

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watching an average of 29 hours of television weekly by the majority of Americans, create challenges in your life that propel you to more “noble” encounters. If you divide 29 hours by 7 days, that equals an extra 4.1 hours daily to think about, dream about and participate in activities or challenges outside your comfort zone.

Opportunities: weight training to build a healthy body, cross training to run a triathlon this summer, or buy a canvas, paints and brush to dabble with a painting roiling around in your ingenious mind. You might enter a pottery class to find your talents at throwing pots with intricate designs. How about becoming a chef?

On the intellectual front, read books that interest you. Enroll in a class in jewelry making. Enter a mechanic’s class to repair old cars. Most cities feature “Free University” classes to incorporate dozens of arts, hobbies and other classes to fit your propensities and passions. How about joining the Peace Corps or Americorps?

In this life, discover what makes your life worth remembering. What will they say at your memorial service?

“She (he) lived with exuberance, imaginative energy and



a song in her heart,” smiled the preacher. “She entered the realm of potential and opportunity to live a grand and glorious life. She wasn’t lucky; she chose her destiny. We remember her nobility through her actions.”

(Four kids in a country town walking down the street. How will their life histories turn out? Will they live lives worth remembering?) Photography by Frosty Wooldridge

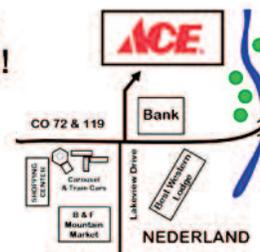
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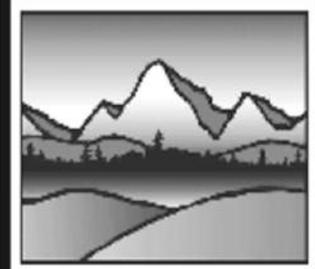
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For more information and to download a rebate application, click on Rebates under the 'Energy Programs' tab at www.unitedpower.com.

Always Call Before You Dig—Dial 811

Whether you are planning to do it yourself or hire a professional, smart digging means calling 811 before each job.

Homeowners often make risky assumptions about whether or not they should get their utility lines marked, but every digging job requires a call – even small projects like planting trees and shrubs.

If you hit an underground utility line while digging, you can harm yourself or those around you, disrupt service to an entire neighborhood and potentially be responsible for fines and repair costs.

For more information about the new Call Before You Dig number, visit www.call811.com.



**Know what's below.
Call before you dig.**

Customer Service: 303-637-1300

Coal Creek Office: 303-642-7921

www.unitedpower.com

Other Homes Coming Soon! Call For Details!

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