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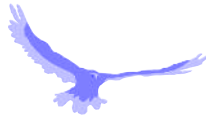
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Public Hearing March 14th On Gross Expansion

County Commissioners to hear Denver Water's appeal regarding county review of the Gross Reservoir Dam Expansion Project

Commissioners to accept public testimony at a hearing on **Thursday, March 14** on Land Use Director's determination that the Moffat project is subject to "1041" local review.

(Boulder County, Colo.) — The Board of County Commissioners has scheduled a public hearing for **Thursday, March 14 at 4:30 p.m.** in the Commissioners' Hearing Room to consider Denver Water's appeal of the Boulder County Land Use Director's decision that the Gross Reservoir Expansion Project is not exempt from the county's Areas and Activities of State Interest (1041) Review.

What: Board of County Commissioners' Public Hearing

When: Thursday, March 14 beginning at 4:30 p.m.

Where: Boulder County Courthouse, 1325 Pearl St., Third Floor, Boulder

Hearing Details: This is a Public Hearing for the Board of County Commissioners to determine whether the Boulder County Land Use Director erred in his decision that the proposed Gross Reservoir Expansion Project is subject to 1041 (local government) review.

The public hearing will focus on the limited scope of the determination and is not a hearing or decision on the perceived impacts or merits of the reservoir expansion project.

Online Sign-up for Speaking Times at the Public Hearing: On Thursday, Feb. 14 at noon the online sign-up forms for Individual Speakers and Pooled-Time Speakers became available at bit.ly/GrossDamExpansion. All sign-ups will be placed in order based on the time they are received. Those wishing to sign up for pooled time will need to include the names and addresses for anyone donating time to the pool.

In-Person Speaker Sign-ups:

Members of the public will be able to speak at the hearing whether or not they have signed up online in advance of the hearing. In-person speaker sign-ups will be taken beginning one-hour in advance of the hearing start time and will include individual speakers and pooled-time speakers. The county commissioners will continue to take public testimony until all speakers have had an opportunity to comment.

Written comments may be submitted through the online Gross Reservoir 1041 Review Determination Com-

ment Form or mailed to the Boulder County Commissioners' Office, P.O. Box 471, Boulder, CO 80306 by noon on Tuesday, March 12, in order to be considered by the Board of County Commissioners prior to the March 14 public hearing. Land Use Director's Determination- On Oct. 12, 2018, Denver Water requested that Boulder County Land Use Director Dale Case determine whether Denver Water's proposed Gross Reservoir Expansion Project is exempt from Article 8 of the Boulder County Land Use Code, pursuant to CRS § 24-65.1-107, because the land was zoned for use as a reservoir in 1974 (prior to the State's adoption of 1041 regulations). Director Case determined that the project is subject to review under the Land Use Code. The Director found that the statutory exemption did not apply. On Oct. 30, 2018, Denver Water submitted additional information and requested that the Director reconsider his decision. On Jan. 18, 2019, the Director Case affirmed his initial determination that the project is subject to 1041 review. Denver Water has appealed that decision to the Board of County Commissioners.

The County Commissioners have set a **public hearing for Thursday, March 14 at 4:30 p.m.** pursuant to the Boulder County Land Use Code to consider Denver Water's appeal. Background of Colorado's "1041 Powers" or "1041 Regulations" - Colorado law grants "1041 powers" to local governments to identify, designate, and regulate areas and activities of state interest through a local permitting process. The general intention of these powers is to allow for local governments to maintain their control over development projects even where the development project has statewide impacts.

Editor's Note: While it is a personal decision on whether to speak - it should be your civic duty to attend this event. If you live near Gross Reservoir and like your peace and quiet, this hearing may well decide if you can keep it.

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BoCo 1041 Regulations Are Foolproof

By Jeff Thompson

By now, just about everybody in Boulder County and surrounding locales knows about the hearing March 14 before the Boulder County Board of Commissioners. Denver Water asked Boulder County's Land Use Director, Dale Case, for his confirmation that the Moffat Collection System Project, or "Moffat Project," is exempt from the requirements of Article 8 of Boulder County's Land Use Code. Land Use Director Case determined that the Moffat Project is not exempt from the requirements of Article 8. Denver Water has appealed Director Case's determination to the Board of Commissioners as it is allowed to do under Article 8. **Denver Water's appeal is the subject of the March 14 hearing.**

Article 8 is generally known as the "1041 Regulations" because the state Areas and Activities of State Interest Act, which authorized, and in fact encouraged, Boulder County to enact the provisions of Article 8 of Boulder County's Land Use Code, began in the state House of Representatives as House Bill 1041. The Areas and Activities of State Interest Act grants Boulder County authority, and encourages it, to regulate the Moffat Project, provided Boulder County's zoning regulations as of May 17, 1974, when the Act became effective, did not zone the land on which the Moffat Project would be developed for the use contemplated by the Project. Boulder County's authority to regulate the Moffat Project would include the authority to deny Denver Water a permit for the project if it does not meet the standards and requirements of Article 8 of its Land Use Code.

Denver Water contends that Boulder County's zoning regulations as of May 17, 1974 did in fact zone the land on which the Moffat Project would be developed for the use contemplated by the project, and therefore what has become known as the "zoned land exception" in the Areas and Activities of State Interest Act applies to the Moffat Project. To be more specific, Denver Water contends that the construction of dams was a permitted use under Boulder County's zoning regulations as of May 17, 1974 for all or part of the land on which the Moffat Project

would be developed, and because the construction of a dam necessarily includes or entails everything the construction and operation of the Moffat Project would involve, the construction and operation of the Moffat Project falls within the zoned land exemption.

In Denver Water's October 12, 2018 letter requesting Director Case's determination that the zoned land exemption exempts Denver Water from the requirements of Article 8 of the Boulder County Land Use Code, Denver Water cited the decision of the Colorado Court of Appeals in *Droste v. Board of County Commissioners of the County of Pitkin* as legal authority or support for its position. However, Denver Water ignored the two most important aspects of the Court of Appeals opinion in that case.

First, the Court of Appeals explained that even if the zoned land exemption applies, and therefore the Areas and Activities of State Interest Act does not authorize the land use regulations of a local government, that does not mean that other statutes or grants of authority do not authorize local governments to apply land use regulations to projects such as the Moffat Project. Specifically, the Local Government Land Use Control Enabling Act grants broad authority to local governments such as Boulder County to regulate land use. Boulder County's Article 8 regulations state that they are authorized by the Local Government Land Use Control Enabling Act, among other statutory grants of authority. Therefore, the Moffat Project is not exempt from Article 8 of Boulder County's Land Use Code even if the zoned land exemption applies.

Second, the Court of Appeals explained that adopting a broad interpretation of the zoned land exemption under the Areas and Activities of State Interest Act, as urged by Denver Water, would defeat the intent of the Local Government Land Use Control Enabling Act to give broad authority to local governments to plan for and regulate the use of land. A broad interpretation of the zoned land exemption would also defeat the intent and purpose of the Areas and Activities of State Interest Act. Denver Water is asking the Commissioners to adopt the broadest possible interpretation of the zoned land exemption. In fact, when

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one considers what the Moffat Project entails, one would be forced to conclude that Denver Water has interpreted the zoned land exemption beyond the point of absurdity.

As explained in Save the Colorado’s Petition for Review of Agency Action filed in the United States District Court for the District of Colorado, the Moffat Project would constitute the tallest dam in the history of Colorado; serve as the largest construction project ever in Boulder County and cause extensive environmental damage on both sides of the Continental Divide. The project would double the surface area of the existing Gross Reservoir. Impacts in Boulder County would include destruction of wetlands; loss of Forsythe Falls on national forest lands; elevation of mercury levels in Gross Reservoir; compromise fisheries below the dam by releasing extremely cold water into South Boulder Creek; clear cutting and removing approximately half a million trees, including patches of old growth forests; using explosives and mining to extract as much as 1.6 million tons of rock for construction of the new dam at an on-site quarry; constructing and operating an on-site concrete plant; engaging in around-the-clock construction activities for at least four years; creating constant safety and health hazards from heavy truck traffic with associated dust, air and noise pollution; and compromising the quality of life of thousands of landowners, residents and visitors drawn to the South Boulder Creek area for the quiet, solitude, and scenic beauty that now exist in the area.

Denver Water contends that all of the above activities and their impacts fall within the zoned land exemption simply because the construction of dams was a permitted use under Boulder County’s zoning regulations as of May 17, 1974 for all or part of the land on which the Moffat Project would be developed. That would indeed stretch the zoned land exemption beyond the point of absurdity. Boulder County’s web page for the March 14 hearing indicates that the purpose of the hearing is not to consider the environmental impacts or merits of the Moffat Project. However, the Commissioners cannot fairly or reasonably decide whether the Moffat Project is exempt from the requirements of Article 8 of Boulder County’s Land Use Code without considering what the Moffat Project entails. Accordingly, I would say all of the activities and impacts listed above are relevant to the purpose of the March 14 hearing.

This is not Denver Water’s first attempt to get around Article 8 of Boulder County’s Land Use Code.

Most Highlander readers recall the fiasco they created in December of 2012. They convinced Commissioner’s Deputy Michelle Krezek and Assistant County Attorney Conrad Lattes that the use of an intergovernmental agreement proposed by Denver Water, or IGA, in lieu of processing an application under Article 8, would better serve Boulder County and the residents living in the vicinity of Gross Reservoir.

The Commissioner’s Deputy and Assistant County Attorney told the Commissioners that this “is especially true given the fact Denver Water argues that our 1041 Authority is preempted by the FERC and Corps permitting and licensing processes, and if challenged in a court of law and the argument sustained, Boulder County would have no ability to regulate the impacts of the Project.” A surprise hearing before the Commissioners was called to consider the IGA, without the notice required by Article 8 for such a hearing and just a few days before Christmas.

The courthouse was packed for this “Christmas Hearing” by angry residents of Coal Creek Canyon and many other areas of Boulder County. The preemption argument was shot down then, and it remains shot down, because both the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or “FERC,” and the United States Army Corps of Engineers, or “the Corps,” have conditioned their approval, or will condition their approval, on Denver Water’s obtaining Boulder County’s approval for the project under Article 8. The Commissioners, who seemed ready to approve the IGA, backed down and took no action on the IGA.

Boulder County’s 1041 Regulations are foolproof. There’s no way around them. Boulder County’s Board of Commissioners can stop the Moffat Project whether Denver Water likes it or not.



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Spring Equinox

By Valerie Wedel

Do you ever watch shadows dance along your window sill? How about that gorgeous winter sun? Sunlight flows in through south-facing windows all winter long, decorating the floor, lighting our houses, warming us. Molte Bene! Do you also have east facing windows?

Mornings while making coffee, eastern sun flows through my kitchen window. Each winter our Colorado morning sun shines from the south and east. The left side of the window jamb glows, leaving the right side dark. Gradually as winter continues, morning light flows towards the middle of the sill. Around late March, light beams more or less straight onto the middle of my east-facing windowsill. By midsummer, light has shifted as our sun has moved to the north. The wall along the right side of the window lights up each morning, and the left side is in shade.

In that moment when morning sunlight is more or less in the middle of my kitchen window, day and night are equal. One day in late March, day and night will be equal. That day is the Spring Equinox. This year, it is March 20 at 3:58 pm, Mountain Time. On this day Spring begins!

Has anyone else up here had the fun of standing a raw egg, still in it's shell, right up on its end? Of course, you say, this never works. Raw eggs always roll onto their wide side. They simply won't stand on end... Except for two very special days each year. Try it yourself this Spring Equinox. Stand a raw egg on the table or floor, and watch. No tricks, no cheating! Only at the moment of Spring or Fall Equinox, and perhaps 30 minutes on either side, will this work. (Full disclosure – you need a level surface, and may want to put a piece of cloth down. Also, voice of experience here...if you decide to use a clock behind the egg, and take a photo with the egg standing up showing the time, don't let your cat knock the clock over and squish the egg.)

Why? Why does the sun move on my window sill? Why does a raw egg stand on end twice a year for about an hour,

but no other time?

Something very special happens with our earth. Our lovely blue marble spins through space, traveling around the sun. While flying and spinning, the axis of our planet points at an angle. Our slightly egg-shaped planet does not stand straight up and down. Scientists tell us the angle is 23.5 degrees. We are tilt.

This wonderful tilt gives us our seasons. During the summer we in Colorado are closer to the sun and get more light, and less dark. In the winter the opposite happens. If you live on the other side of the world, say in Australia, or anywhere south of the Equator, the seasons are reversed.

The boundary between day and night is mysterious. Scientists today call this boundary the "terminator." Because of our earth's 23.5 degree tilt, every day of the year but for two, that boundary of day and night does not make a straight line between north and south poles. We have summer and winter as our tilt changes, while we spin around the sun. But at the Spring Equinox, and also the Fall Equinox, we happen to be exactly lined up with the sun. For just a little while, just a moment twice each year, that shadow boundary of day and night makes a straight line between the poles.


This year, on March 20, at 3:58 pm, right here in Coal Creek Canyon, this mysterious boundary of day and night will line up and touch North and South poles at the same time. And you will be able to stand a raw egg on it's end, just at that moment. Why?

The Spring Equinox has been celebrated throughout history, by civilizations all over our planet. It is celebrated as a time of rebirth and renewal. In ancient Sumer (present day Iraq) 5000 and more years ago, this was New Year. This was the time that the Sumerian Goddess Inanna returned from the underworld, bringing new life to the land.

In ancient Egypt, Spring Equinox was celebrated as New Year also. The Sphinx, a giant, lion shaped sculpture carved in ancient Egypt, is believed to have originally been



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sculpted with a woman's head. Using computers and archaeoastronomy, we now believe her gaze looked to the rising sun on the Spring Equinox, before the end of the last ice age, over 10,000 years ago. (Some scientists now believe she was carved perhaps 15,000 years ago. The stone she is carved of shows distinctive erosion patterns only made by lots and lots of water, and the last time that existed in ancient Egypt was during the last ice age.)

All over the British Isles, giant earth and stone observatories were built thousands of years ago. Amazingly, these giant stone and earth creations have stone carvings that are lit by rays of sun, only at certain times of the year – like the Soltices and the Equinoxes! Amazingly, thousands of years later, these observatories and calendars still work!

In the southwest of our own country, in a place known to us as Chaco Canyon, amazing stoneworks also track the sun. Actually, in Chaco Canyon the same buildings and monuments track the moon also, with purely amazing geometry.

Today, Persian people still celebrate Naw Ruz, Persian New Year, on the Spring Equinox. Hebrew people celebrate Purim. Hindu people celebrate Holi. Easter now falls in April, thanks to calendar changes made centuries ago. But originally Easter was celebrated on the Spring Equinox. It is, all over the world, from our most ancient days to the present, a time of rebirth and renewal. A time of meditation. A time of hope.

No matter economy, politics, or crazy weather, we can take pleasure in watching the patterns of the sun. There is comfort knowing that what ever crazy mischief we people

Highlander Astronomy

get up to, our lovely planet still spins around the sun. The sun continues to light our days, warm our summers, and bring us life. And nights continue to cool us off, and gently hold us in peaceful darkness. Perhaps the mystery of our little egg, standing upright on end, only at this very special time of year, shows us we too can hold new balance.

Happy Spring Equinox!

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Editor's Note: This year, in 2019, the full moon supermoon comes less than four hours after the arrival of the March 20th equinox, making this the closest coincidence of the March equinox and full moon since March 20, 2000. This March 2019 full moon gives us the first of four full moons in one season (between the March equinox and June solstice.)

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Mountain Biking As An Act Of Resistance

By Raksha Vasudevan Feb. 14 -High Country News

As an immigrant seeking a place to belong, I couldn't have felt more out-of-place than when I moved to America shortly before the 2016 presidential election. And as the vitriol escalated, I never expected to find solace on two wheels.

Here's how it happened: Nearing 30, I found myself yearning for a previous life. As an international economist, I lived and worked in Africa for most of my 20s. But after a while, I longed for familiarity, to not be instantly labeled and treated as an outsider because of how I looked and spoke: a South Asian woman with a North American accent. I missed, too, my home in Canada. Jobs in international economics are rare in North America, so I was delighted when I found one in Denver in September of 2016. Colorado seemed to offer everything I wanted: a short flight to my mom in Calgary, the mountains, and a climate that made it easy to be outside year-round. Only after I arrived, in a daze of reverse culture shock, did I look up the statistics: 80% of Denver's population was white. I was nearly as much an outsider here as I'd been in Africa.

That sense of alienation only mounted after Donald Trump's unexpected victory. The day after the election, I wanted desperately to go to the mountains, far away from

people who had chosen a leader who seemed to hate people like me — people of color, immigrants, women. But, like most women of color in Colorado, I'd realized after I got here that I earned a disproportionately low salary. Given Denver's growing cost of living, I could only visit the mountains when my few car-owning friends did — and none of them wanted to leave their homes that day.

In the following weeks and months, as rhetoric and violence against people of color escalated, I hesitated to go beyond the city, into rural areas, where diversity was likely to be even lower, making me all the more visible. The lack of crowds — something I used to love about wide open spaces — now scared me, my sense of adventure troubled by visions of being attacked and left in the forest. In Fremont, California, a South Asian woman who went hiking just a few weeks after the election returned to find her car window shattered and a note calling her a "Hijab wearing b——" who should "get the f—— out." I debated leaving, perhaps returning to Canada. But that seemed like a defeat, a confirmation that people like me didn't belong in the outdoors — or anywhere in America.

Things began to change in the spring, when a mountain-biking friend convinced me to try it. "There's nothing that makes you feel more alive," he said. That's what the outdoors had always done for me — before it started to appear both inaccessible and hostile, reserved for people with specific levels of material wealth and melanin. Partly to challenge my own perceptions, I rented a bike and started riding with him. Immediately, I was hooked: the searing uphill climbs, the adrenaline of hurtling downhill. There was no time for self-consciousness, no opportunity for other trail-users to ask, "Where are you from?" I started saving to buy a used mountain bike. But once again, in outdoor gear shops and biking groups, surrounded by pale-skinned people with visibly larger budgets, I felt not only poor but out of my depth.

Despite the challenges, I kept biking precisely because I

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didn't fit in on the trails, the sports shops or groups. Yet I craved a future where I did. After all, people of color and immigrants also pay taxes that fund state and national parks. We, too, deserve the sight of forest green and sky interrupted only by mountain peaks — and to have a choice in how we experience the landscape, whether by foot, bike, horseback, kayak or some other way. But I wasn't willing to wait for everything to become easily accessible for people like me — I had to start now. And perhaps by doing so, I'd help to create that future.

Still, that dream is continually threatened. Recently, a friend and I traveled to western Colorado to bike, Mesa County's trails being among the best in the country. On the drive to the trailhead, we passed at least three trucks with MAGA stickers. I knew Mesa County had voted 64% Republican in the 2016 election. At the trailhead, I sat in the car for a long time before setting off, filled with trepidation.

On the trail, I stopped to take a picture of yucca clinging improbably to slanting canyon walls. A man in a camouflage shirt walked towards me. As he got closer, he



blinked noticeably, as if surprised to see someone like me there. But he nodded as he passed by, and I released the breath I hadn't known I'd been holding.

All my worries — money, my U.S. visa, the perceptions and reactions of others — were still with me on the trail, sometimes bubbling up, but gradually dissolving the longer I biked. The trail demanded my attention urgently — jagged switchbacks, tree roots swelling up suddenly from the soil—and at other times, gently. The wind brushed my scalp through my helmet vents. A jaybird call broke the slog of pedaling uphill. A flash of red appeared as my front tire passed blooms of Indian paintbrush. I couldn't have anticipated any of it, yet it was exactly what I needed.

Raksha Vasudevan is an economist and writer living in Denver.

Though confident while out riding on trails, Raksha Vasudevan constantly pushes up against a culture of mountain biking that is predominantly white and higher income. Photo Courtesy of Raksha Vasudevan

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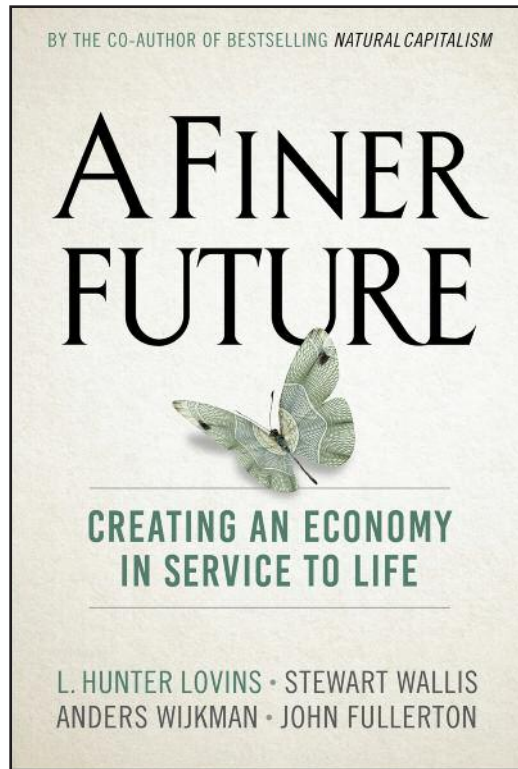
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She Foresees A Finer Future

By Diane Bergstrom

polio vaccines require it. Polio is still circulating in Afghanistan, and millions of children had not been

Excusing myself, I reached in front of a young man perusing titles in the **Staff Picks** section at the Boulder Book Store, to select L. Hunter Lovins' latest book, *A Finer Future: Creating An Economy In Service To Life*. He watched me choose, and commented, "That looks interesting," lofting an opening into the air between us. I bit, recognizing a challenge to do the proverbial 17 second elevator pitch on Hunter's work, her recent author talk at BBS, and my phone interview with her the following week. Stories stick better than resumes, so I told him her answer to my question, what country (of the 30 where she has lived) did you enjoy the most? Without hesitation, she replied, "Afghanistan." Why, was my next obvious question? She was there for four years starting in 2003, consulting on the infrastructure rebuilding process, while emphasizing economic sustainability. In cooperation with Asian Development Bank, the Telecom Development Company Afghanistan, known as Roshan, was interested in erecting cell towers all over the country. She advised them on solar powered towers so electricity could be generated, and gas emissions be avoided. Electricity would support refrigeration, and



vaccinated. She suggested that village midwives be trained as EMTs to reduce the 25% death rate of women in childbirth. With phone service, they could also request additional medical transport or advice. Through electricity-powered computers, curriculum could be downloaded and schools could be established. I realized, as I am outlining each of her points, I am pushing imaginary pins into a circle in the air. Listening attentively, he nodded and suggested, "They might use Raspberry Pi Zero (\$5 credit card-sized computer)," on the last point about schools. Another young person who gave me hope, CU student Casey, also left BBS that night with a copy of the book. Hunter explained those strategies were "genuine development." It's a

prime example of her building human and technology networks in order to develop sustainable solutions to solve environmental and societal challenges. As the political climate worsened, halting many infrastructure efforts, Hunter's stateside team urged her to come back. By 2010, Roshan was expanding their mobile network, using solar photovoltaic panels to power telecom towers. Hunter said when she was informed of this, she had to admit, a happy tear was shed.

At 15, she decided Colorado was her home base. She earned degrees in Law, Political Science and Sociology, then went on to teach, speak, and consult around the world. She's written over 15 books, authored hundreds of articles, received dozens of awards and honorary degrees, and was named *Time* magazine's **Hero for the Planet**. She is a professor at Bard College in New York for the MBA in Sustainability program, where each course integrates sustainability into the core business curriculum, incorporating the question: How can we build or transform our businesses so that they are in business to solve the

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pressing social and environmental problems of our time? She has advised a diversity of governments and industries from the King of Bhutan to Clif Bars. She cofounded the think-and-do tank Rocky Mountain Institute, co-leading it for 20 years, and in 2002, she formed a Boulder-county based non-profit, **Natural Capitalism Solutions**, www.natcapsolutions.org. Their mission is to empower communities, companies, and countries to implement more regenerative practices profitably. Buy her book through this site or at a locally owned book store. At the bottom of the front cover, under the authors' names, there is a notation, *A Report To The Club Of Rome*. The Club was founded in 1968 and includes politicians, diplomats, scientists, economists and business leaders from around the world. Their mission is to promote understanding of global challenges facing humanity and to propose solutions through scientific analysis, communication and advocacy with holistic, systemic and long-term perspective. Their first report, **The Limits To Growth**, published in 1972, sold 30 million copies and is the best-selling environmental book in history. The Club's response to humanity's predicament supports the notion that we're all going to die, and Hunter's response is, "Yes, but not today!" I asked her how she got into all of this, what started her on her path? She explained her mother had helped organize the coal

mine workers in Kentucky while her father had mentored Cesar Chavez and Dr. Martin Luther King. She clearly remembers her mom telling her they were NOT eating grapes. She still hesitates when offered them. "It's what you did," she reflected, "you make it better than you found it."

"When rabbits are threatened, they flee; when humans are threatened, we entrepreneur," she said, adding, "the only way we will go forward is together." Hunter explained the substantive book outlines how we got into this mess, the narrative of neoliberalism that created the mess, the new story we'll craft together for the future, the technologies that are available now, the policies needed at the individual, city, state, and national levels, and what we can do individually to have a finer future. Our challenge is to not fixate on the problems. She mused, "You can get yourself in a bad mood if you think about this stuff. Our job is to show we can do it better." Her former boss, David Brower, also former executive director of **Sierra Club**, founder of **Friends of the Earth** and the **League of Conservation Voters**, essentially the father of the modern environmental movement, often told her, "Despair is a sin."

While at the BBS, Hunter stated over the next decade we could be facing the "mother of economic disruptions" while incumbent industries of oil, gas, (Continued on next page.)

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coal, nuclear, and cars fail. She asked the audience to think about where their money is invested. Most traditional money market funds have interests in these industries. She noted the site, www.change-finance.com, a fossil fuel free exchange traded fund. She also believes we have unordinary opportunities, especially in Colorado with our new governor, Jared Polis. She said, “We have the opportunity now to transform our world in ways we never had before,” and asked us what kind of community do we want to live in and what it takes to make it happen. She referred to regenerative family farmer, Gabe Brown, who rolled back climate change effects by making changes for his North Dakota farm’s soil health, and has made the farm wildly successful. His book is *Dirt To Soil: One family’s journey into regenerative agriculture*. At a time when agriculture desperately needs young people, Gov. Polis has appointed 28 year old Kate Greenberg to head the Department of Agriculture. She is a former farm worker and intends to put more young farmers on the land. Hunter said we have to figure out how to keep local farms viable; when we buy cheap food grown elsewhere, it’s unsustainable. She challenged subsidies and questioned if they’re the best place to put money. Usually the money goes to industrial farms instead of family farms. She shops local organic farms and gets to know the farmers, and praised Woody Tasch’s Slow Money Groups, <https://slow-money.org>, a non-profit that promotes SOIL which stands for slow opportunities for investing locally. For a tax deductible donation of \$250, or more (farmers join for \$25), you can join and help choose local farmers and food entrepreneurs to receive 0% loans to support local food systems.

Hunter absolutely believes there is hope, indicating that economics are on our side and as a result, more and more people are getting on board. She boiled it down to, “You be a part of the transition, you’re going to make more money.” Disturbingly, she pointed out the moral compass alone doesn’t change public discourse but can be altered when profits and prosperity are connected. Then mindsets can change and actions will follow. (*Bury The Chains: Prophets and Rebels in the Fight to Free an Empire’s Slaves*; Adam Hochschild) She pointed out that building a regenerative economy is happening; regenerative industries are growing as others are declining, notably in Colorado. Our industrial agriculture is declining, while we are the 9th largest organic food producer in the US and our output doubles every year. Natural foods are bringing in four times the money as our extractive industries. The state’s outdoor industry revenues exceed the combined revenues of the mining, timber, oil, gas and coal industries. Arts and Culture create more jobs and revenue than oil and gas operations. Interestingly, 85% of Colorado’s economic activity is generated in four Denver metro counties. Hunter wants everyone to be active in

their city, state and bio region to create sustainable change. She used the examples of Boulder and Ft. Collins that have proven that economies can increase by lowering carbon emissions, called climate ecology. "Market forces will drive us in this direction because it's simply more profitable," she said. Between 2005-2016, Boulder's gross domestic product (GDP) went up 49% while carbon emissions went down 13%. Ft. Collins' GDP went up 25% while their emissions went down 21%, resulting in \$1 million savings over 10 years. She will be calling Will Toor, newly appointed Executive Director of the Colorado Energy Office, to ask how we are going to get to 100% renewable energy. She'll also be reminding Governor Polis of his campaign promises and what we want to happen. Politics is a contact sport. Hunter advised that we need to keep them on task and remind them it would be untenable not to listen.

"The good news is what could crash the economy is what we will solve," she said, "We are on track to solve the climate crisis at a profit." She outlined two ways which will be essential, stating this will happen for fundamental economic reasons. The first is to transform our society to 100% renewable energy by 2030 or soon after. The second action will be to shift to regenerative agriculture which takes carbon out of the air and puts it back into the soil. This will enhance the profits of our farms and ranches. She reiterated that we will be able to solve the climate crisis at a profit but not if we don't manage it well. She explained we are in a degenerative state now, moving through sustainability to restoration and eventually becoming regenerative. Quoting Fullerton, she said nature is sustainable because it is regenerative, adding nature creates conditions conducive to life, "Nature operates in place. Most importantly, you honor place. We need to focus on sharing prosperity on a healthy planet."

I asked her what she left out of the book that she wished she could have included. Her answer was hundreds of pages of footnotes documenting all the claims in the book in real life situations that resulted in more profits while delivering a higher quality of life.

We talked about the need to involve more young generations and she told me that anxiety disorders are now affecting between 25-30% of young people who don't have hope and are just going about their lives. "Our job is to show them there is a way forward," she said. I asked her for advice, specifically for young people who already are trying to make a difference in these challenging times, and feeling

frustrated. She suggested they need to remember this is not a sprint, it's a marathon. To celebrate the small wins, understanding it's a lifetime's work, though we have immediate urgencies, i.e. less than 10 years to address the climate crisis. Every individual has to find what they need to make them go on. When we've given it all, we need to nap, rest, regenerate and identify what will do it for us: a walk in nature, a glass of whiskey, being with friends, a puff on a pipe. (I told her she sounded like Mollie Ivins, who would have approved of that advice.) She said to remember the hundreds of examples of what people are doing now, all proof points where change is working, it's happening. She ended her talk at BBS with, "We are not greedy bastards because (historically shown) pre-humans cared more for the group than individual, and cared for the elderly and disabled. We are stronger through our diversity and we are stronger because we care. When you feel caring, it's what makes you human...and that will allow us to move forward." To a finer future!



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What Is Stopping Climate Action?

By Brian Calvert Jan. 21 - High Country News

We've become the agents of our own undoing.

We are at a strange moment in history. On the one hand, a sizable percentage of Americans do not believe in human-caused climate change, as though facts can be rejected at will. On the other hand, people who do understand the implications of a warming planet seem incapable of doing much about it. Our politics will not allow it: Conservatives continually block climate change legislation, while liberals have done little to prioritize it. And yet, the future lurks ahead of us, promising a warmer world, where crops shift, seas rise and species die out. We humans, being such intelligent apes, will probably survive, and I suppose there's some comfort in that.

But it's worth asking, at this moment, what is stopping climate action? During the 2018 midterms, the state of Washington was asked to vote on a fee that would have curbed emissions of carbon dioxide, the tricky little molecule that puffs from smokestacks and car exhaust and traps the sun's energy in the atmosphere, creating the "greenhouse effect." As Associate Editor Kate Schimel

reports in a High Country News' cover story, the fee — seen by many as a tax — failed. The question is: Why? Like a detective in a noir mystery, Schimel goes in search of Initiative 1631's killer, examining the usual suspects — the oil and gas lobby, for example — and seeking clues among researchers, policymakers and activists. What emerges is a terrible plot twist: The culprit (spoiler alert) is us.

Homo sapiens are the greatest of apes, and we have mastered the art of survival. Our eyes evolved to scan the savanna for predators, our hands to make stone tools and field-butcher carrion. Our language helped us learn from our mistakes, to tell complicated stories by firelight. We developed our minds and leaped from an agricultural revolution to an industrial one. We've made amazing discoveries and invented complex systems, such as capitalism, to organize millions of people under tribal ideologies. But somewhere along the way, we became the agents of our own undoing.

The death of Washington's carbon tax teaches us a tough lesson: We have not yet learned to survive ourselves. For all our smarts, we are still dumb animals, unable to properly imagine the threats of the future, unable to act. The last great lesson we must learn, then, is how to outsmart ourselves. We must begin an ecological revolution, to find a way of being in the world that does not utterly consume it. Our politics, our policies, our habits, rituals, beliefs — all the stories that we tell ourselves — these must be realigned if the world as we know it is to survive us. It won't be easy, and there will be casualties, like Initiative 1631. But that does not mean we should give up. The time to act is now. It always will be.

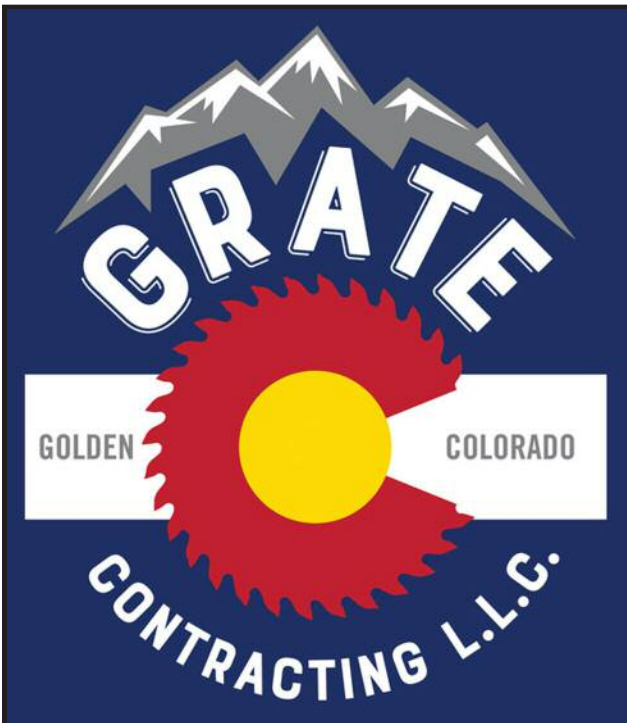
Editor's Note: Ask the average person, "What is the major source of pollution in the world today?" Nearly all will answer with some version of why and what they think is the problem. But few will take personal responsibility by answering with PEOPLE. Overpopulation is the answer to the question.

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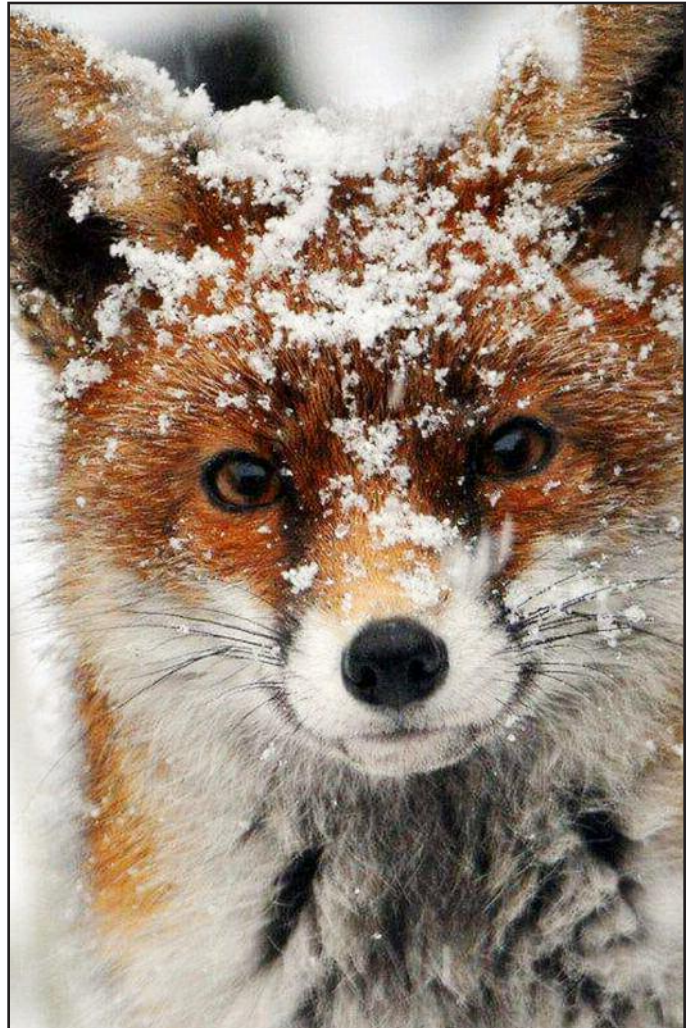
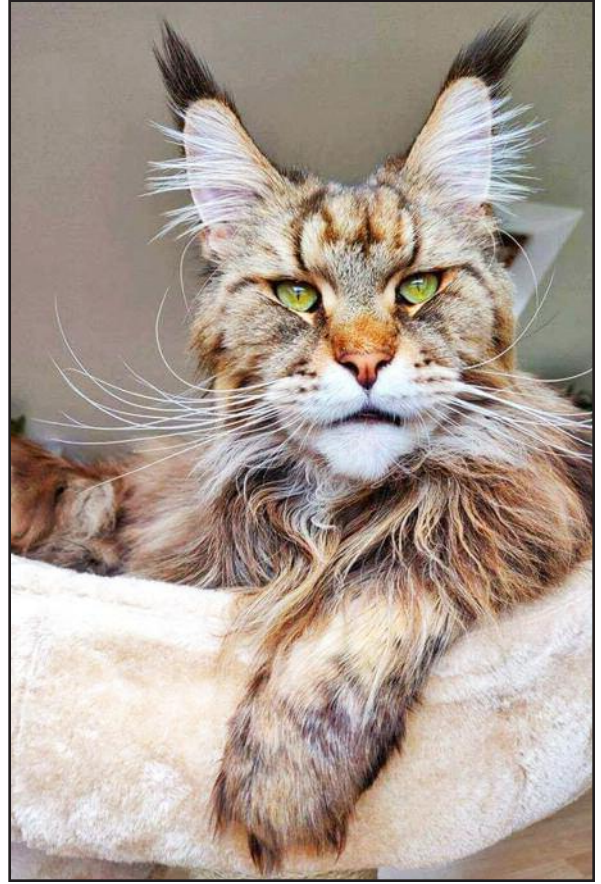
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Cold Climate Water Damage

From Jim Plane State Farm Insurance

Why is excessive snow on your roof a concern? What are ice dams? What causes attic condensation? And if you've had these, what can you do? Why should you worry about snow on your roof? Heavy loads of ice and snow on your roof can create serious problems. These include: injuries from snow and ice falling from sloped roofs, roof collapse, especially on flat roofs, carbon monoxide poisoning resulting from blocked chimneys and vents, water damage from ice dams that form on the edges of roofs and in gutters.

What are ice dams?

When the temperature in your attic is above freezing, snow on the roof will likely melt. When the snowmelt runs down the roof and hits the colder eaves, it refreezes. If this cycle repeats over several days, the freezing snowmelt builds up and forms a dam of ice, behind which water pools up into large puddles, or 'ponds.' The ponding water can then back up under the roof covering and leak into the attic or along exterior walls. The right weather conditions for ice dams are usually when outside air temperatures are in the low 20s (°F) for several days with several inches of snow on the roof.

What causes condensation in your attic?

Condensation of water vapor on cold surfaces in attics can cause wood to rot, which can lead to costly repairs. Condensation in the attic typically occurs when warm, moist air migrates or is directed into the attic from living spaces below. Research indicates unusually high humidity in the home's living spaces is strongly associated with attic condensation problems. What are some warning signs to watch for? Recognize the signs of stress when too much snow and ice has accumulated on your roof or when you have too much condensation in your attic: sagging ridgeline, drooping ceilings, water leaks on interior walls and ceilings, jammed doors, cracked interior walls near the center of your home, or creaking sounds.

Building codes have some requirements that attempt to prevent the problems of ice dams and attic condensation. But codes don't address all the issues, and many houses are built without following building codes. First and foremost, it's your builder or designer's job to understand the relationship of humidity and air movement when designing and constructing the house so these problems don't occur. Nevertheless, there's more you can do. Here are a few simple steps that can help prevent snow build up on the roof, ice dams and condensation in your attic: Bathroom and kitchen exhaust fans, as well as dryer vents, should never be discharged into the attic space and always discharged outside. You may have an adequately ventilated attic, but this won't matter if the bathroom exhaust fan

dumps warm moist air directly into the attic space. This could result in condensed water vapor freezing onto cold attic materials, which will eventually thaw creating wet attic materials resulting in damage in the attic and inside the home.

Minimize ceiling mounted fixtures below the attic that create the need for holes in the drywall or plaster ceiling. Properly seal ceiling penetrations to make them airtight taking care to follow manufacturer clearance requirements for flues, chimneys, and recessed light fixtures.

It is critical to keep soffit vents free from obstructions to allow the natural flow of cool outside air into the attic space to replace the warmer attic air that rises and flows outside the ridge and/or roof vents. This flow of air will keep the attic cool and free of moisture build-up.

Removing ice and snow from your roof is a dangerous job. Avoid injury by hiring a professional to remove snow and ice from the roof and fix the problem before it leads to property damage and expensive repairs. Here are some tips though to keep in mind: Add insulation to your attic to help prevent your home's warm air from escaping into unheated attic spaces. If replacing your home's roof, have a self-sealing membrane installed under the shingles to help prevent water damage from ice dams. On metal roofs, install snow guards above entrances.

What not to do.

While it might be tempting to try a quick-fix to break up that ice dam, don't get too eager; not only is it dangerous on your roof, but you can also cause a lot of damage, especially in the colder months. Here are some things to keep in mind: Do not routinely remove snow from the roof or attempt to "chip away" the ice of an ice dam. It will likely lead to shingle damage. Do not routinely use salt or calcium chloride to melt snow on a roof. These chemicals are very corrosive and can shorten the life of metal gutters, downspouts, and flashings. Keep gutters clean of leaves and other debris. This will not necessarily prevent ice dams, but clean gutters can help drain away ice melt as it makes its way to the gutters during a thaw.



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What Wildfire Can Teach Us

By Joshua Zaffos - High Country News

Dave Cantor's house in the hills outside Fort Collins usually draws friends for barbecue, horseshoes and recreational shooting on July 4. Last July 3, though, Cantor sifts through its ashy remains, tripping over a downed power line and catching rotten whiffs from a freezer pried open by black bears.

Cantor, who co-owns a string of coffee shops, fled the day the 87,000-acre High Park Fire blew up in early June, with just his "dogs, guns, hard drive and a bag of dirty clothes." But Cantor, who's lived here since 1998, wasn't extremely worried; he and his neighbors had diligently cleared trees and brush around their properties on Whale Rock Road — creating what's known as "defensible space" — and used fire-resistant building materials.

Such measures are meant to protect structures from wildfire, and people in fire-prone areas have increasingly adopted them over the past decade. Despite Whale Rock residents' efforts, though, 40 of the 54 widely dispersed houses there were reduced to rubble. Whether the destruction caused by recent wildfires is a sign of inadequate execution or the failure of fire-safe strategies is a topic that researchers, firefighters and policy analysts are now debating.

"We have a pretty wide lack of awareness for the realities we'll be subjected to when we move into these types of locations," says Jack Cohen of the U.S. Forest Service's FireLab in Missoula, Mont. "At this point, we need to change the perception of houses being victims of fire to one of them being fuel."

Over the last 20 years, roughly 250,000 people have moved into Colorado's wildland-urban interface, where houses infiltrate forests, often in modern subdivisions. One out of every four homes in the state is in a high-risk fire zone, according to an analysis by **I-News Network**, a Colorado investigative journalism outlet. At the same time, wildfires have ballooned in numbers, size and intensity due to fuels buildup and drought. It's the same around the West. Such communities account for much of the destruction during extreme blazes as well as for spiraling firefighting costs, which disproportionately go toward protecting lives and houses. The High Park Fire killed one woman and destroyed 259 homes. In late June, the 19,000-acre Waldo Canyon Fire tore through a Colorado Springs suburb, demolishing nearly 350 homes and killing an elderly couple.

Cohen studies how structures ignite during blazes. His work contributed to the development of **Firewise**, a

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program of the nonprofit National Fire Protection Association, which offers guidelines to help safeguard homes. Cantor and many of his neighbors used them to guide their thinning efforts. Neighborhoods that go further and adhere to a set of specific rules are recognized as official **Firewise** Communities; there are hundreds in Western states.

Forest managers and firefighters have supported such efforts since the passage of George W. Bush's 2003 Healthy Forests Restoration Act, which created community wildfire protection plans to evaluate risks and thin forests. Around Fort Collins and Colorado Springs, managers offered house-by-house assessments to identify hazards and to plan for fire responses and evacuations. Similar initiatives aid fire preparedness in communities in Arizona, New Mexico and Washington. Stimulus funds have continued outreach and paid for thinning.

Geoff Butler, a captain with the Poudre Fire Authority, serving Fort Collins and surrounding areas, says inventories of year-round residents and the locations of gates and water resources have increased firefighter safety during the recent fires. Whether the exercises improved resiliency of rural houses is a matter for closer study. "Given the events of the last few years, we have very fertile ground for research on (Colorado's) Front Range," Butler says.

The Colorado Springs fire marshal used federal funds to rank fire risks for the 36,000 homes in the foothills of Pikes Peak and otherwise assist homeowners. One official **Firewise** neighborhood, Cedar Heights, followed program practices, thinning trees in nearby open spaces, and didn't lose a single home during the Waldo Canyon Fire. Individual efforts in other areas, specifically the decimated Mountain Shadows subdivision, proved less effective. It's hard to say why one subdivision burned and another didn't. But fire-safe measures are often hamstrung if only some residents employ them. And most fire-minded landowners, including those on Whale Rock, pick and choose which practices suit them — hardly ideal, says Cohen. Plus, the gradual implementation isn't keeping up with the population boom in the wildland-urban interface.

The federal government isn't doing much better at insulating neighborhoods from fire danger on surrounding public land. "A lot of acres have been treated, but they've been dispersed across the landscape," says Tony Cheng, director of Colorado State University's Colorado Forest Restoration Institute. In order to be effective, scientists say, thinning should cover larger areas, and break up the density and distribution of timber and brush that fuel flames.

Efforts on public and private lands are often poorly coordinated, according to Cheng's research of community wildfire plans in eight states, including Colorado, Montana, Oregon and California. Federal projects tend to occur where managers can most accessibly clear fuels rather than

in places that pose the worst hazard but may be more expensive. Prescribed burns are a cheap alternative to thinning, but are generally "politically unsavory" near neighborhoods, Cheng says, thanks to those few that expand out-of-control.

Just as society developed fire-safety codes for apartment buildings, theaters and other public spaces, basic rules, such as requiring mountain subdivisions to have multiple access points, should be no-brainers, says Tom Cova, a University of Utah geography professor who studies development patterns in fire-prone areas.

Still, Cohen and others believe education rather than regulation will encourage adoption of **Firewise** principles. "Cultural understanding of fire needs to evolve if we're going to navigate an uncertain future, including the climate," says Cheng.

Back at the end of Whale Rock Road, Cantor notes that roughly half of his neighbors don't plan to return. He wants to rebuild, however. He scans thick stands of charred and beetle-stricken pines and considers which trees to cut next summer. "That's what I've been doing for 14 years, thinning the forest around my house," he says. "But if there's a firestorm, it doesn't really matter."

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Things remain quiet on the front lines, in both the Gardiner and Hebgen Basins. We had a pretty intense snowstorm come through both Basins recently, which we thought for certain would trigger migration, but, once again, the buffalo showed us that just when we think we know, they have other things to teach us. Gardiner patrols last week were keeping an eye on three mature bulls who were inching their way into the Basin, moving onto the school's football field, and north to a place we call Powerline Flats. This is the southernmost point where, if Yellowstone's trap is open, buffalo can be in danger. But, these bulls were pretty comfortable just sticking around the area, and have since moved south again, a little deeper into the Park.

As we reported, we were also keeping a close eye on a solitary mom & calf pair, who had been staying safe, hunkered down on private land known as the Chapman Easement. Even so, their visibility was enticing a handful of hunt parties, who were just hoping and waiting for this lone pair to move into the hunt zone. These buffalo have since left the Chapman Easement, and patrols reported that it could have been a mountain lion who convinced them to leave. A cat was spotted in that area, along with a couple of deer that this beautiful feline was dining on. Vulnerable, alone without the rest of their family group, the mama buffalo decided that her calf was not safe, so she did what she needed to do and vacated the premises for a few days. Then, patrols reported seeing them back at the Chapman Easement.

The day before the storm hit, we thought things were about to change for the worse: we were scoping the high hills that drop down into the Gardiner Basin, and we counted no less than 200 buffalo in those hills, looking poised for migration. We thought for sure that the strong winds and blizzard conditions would certainly bring them down the mountains towards the danger zone. After all, significant snow accumulation was predicted, and the winds were coming from the north, and buffalo tend to always face into a storm. The following morning, however, expecting to see hundreds of buffalo, except for the two



small groups we'd been watching we saw no other buffalo anywhere. Instead of moving into the Basin, they had turned around and headed back into the Park.

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Victories Don't Guarantee Justice

By Jonathan Thompson- Feb. 14 - High Country News

Without a just transition, the Navajo Generating Station closure will have harmful consequences.

Last year, climate-hawk billionaire Tom Steyer forked out more than \$23 million to support an Arizona ballot initiative that would have required the state's utilities to get half their power from renewable sources by 2035. Arizonans for Affordable Energy, a front-group for the state's largest utility, Arizona Public Service, spent nearly \$38 million in opposition. The initiative — which failed — was the most expensive ballot measure campaign in the state's history.

Meanwhile, a group called Save Native American Families, funded by the Navajo Nation, spent an additional \$785,000 opposing the measure. This might seem odd. After all, it's becoming more and more clear that the ravages of environmental degradation — climate change included — have a disproportionately large impact on Indigenous people, people of color and the poor.

Yet too often, the victims of the very efforts to stem that degradation come from disadvantaged communities. A fuel tax takes a greater portion of the income of someone driving an old beater between two jobs than it does from a wealthy, SUV-driving gas-guzzler. If you don't own a house, you can't take advantage of rooftop solar incentives, and yet may have to pay for your wealthier neighbors via increased electricity costs. And the great coal phase-out has

failed to faze coal corporation executives, who pay themselves multimillion-dollar bonuses while yanking health insurance and retirement benefits out from under retired miners.

This can be the result of badly crafted policies or of wily corporate polluters who have managed to shift the burden of environmental policies onto those in the lower income brackets. Regardless, the dynamic often results in environmental justice coming at the expense of economic justice. But it doesn't have to be that way.

Take the case of the Navajo Generating Station in northern Arizona. In early 2017, the majority owner of the plant, the Salt River Project, announced that it would shut down the plant at the end of this year, forcing the closure of the Kayenta Mine on Black Mesa, which is currently operated by Peabody Energy. The closure comes primarily because the plant is no longer profitable, but pollution-control requirements played an indirect role by increasing the operating costs. It is a major environmental victory, keeping more than 14 million tons of greenhouse gases out of the atmosphere annually along with a slew of other harmful pollutants. It also represents a dire threat to the communities that have come to rely on the revenue from the plant and the mine. The closure will do away with as many as 900 jobs, 90 percent of which are currently held by Native American workers, in a region where unemployment hovers around 50 percent. It would also eliminate more than \$50 million in royalties and other revenue to the Navajo Nation (Continued on next page.)

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and Hopi Tribe.

As a result, members of both tribal governments have fought to keep the plant open. They've sought outside purchasers to no avail, and they've appealed to the federal government, which owns 25 percent of the plant, to intervene. And now the tribe's own Navajo Transitional Energy Company is looking to purchase both coal mine and power plant and keep it running — and polluting — for decades to come.

Indigenous opposition groups, such as ToNizhoniAni, Diné CARE and Black Mesa Water Coalition, have made concerted efforts to stop the purchase, because it would mean taking on financial risk while also allowing the plant and mine to continue to inflict harm. Meanwhile, the major

outside environmental groups that have badgered the Navajo Generating Station for years — and remain deeply



The Navajo Generating Station, near Page, Arizona, silhouetted at sunrise. Cathy/CC via Flickr

invested in keeping the plant closed — are in a difficult position. Any interference with the plant's purchase would constitute an attack on sovereignty and a continuation of the same resource colonization that brought the power plants and mines to the Navajo Nation in the first place. Yet if the environmental groups stand idly by, they risk allowing serious environmental and human harm to continue.

There is a middle way, though. Environmental groups can work with the affected communities, the polluting companies and the relevant governments to push the current owners to live up to their moral duty and repair the damage they've done, to make amends for historical land and resource theft, and to patch up the economic hole their departure leaves. They can help pave the way for a just transition away from coal, one in which a solid framework is provided for affected communities to exercise agency and move forward to a greener and more economically robust future.

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the corporate owners live up to their legal obligation to adequately reclaim both the power plant and mine sites, a commitment that will keep hundreds of jobs active for several years after closure. And even though they are not legally obliged to do so, the corporate owners have a moral duty to take the reclamation further by healing the damage caused by dumping nearly 1 billion metric tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and poisoning the land, the air and the water — along with the people and other creatures — in the plant’s vicinity. The damage can’t be reversed, nor can much of the mess be cleaned up. But the corporations that are responsible can contribute to the healing by creating a just transition fund that could retrain power plant workers, provide loans for green energy entrepreneurs in the affected community, or perhaps go toward tribally developed utility-scale projects, such as the solar plant recently constructed by the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority near Kayenta, Arizona. This healing process can begin by restoring water rights and transferring transmission lines to the Navajo and Hopi nations as soon as the plant closes.

Such an initiative does not come cheap. But the money not only exists; it is owed to the tribal citizens who have been bilked by corporations for decades. Peabody began mining on Navajo and Hopi land on Black Mesa in the 1960s, displacing families and destroying grazing lands and cultural artifacts, sucking up groundwater at a rate of 1.3 billion gallons per year, and shipping the coal — which was owned by the tribes — off to the Navajo and Mojave power plants. In return, the tribes received just 2 to 6% royalty for the coal, an amount that was finally increased to the still-below-standard rate of 12.5% in 1984. There it has stood since, another product of the bad-faith negotiations that were facilitated by the federal government.

“Royalty” is a euphemism that is employed to obscure what is really going on here: For nearly five decades, these corporations have paid mere pennies on the dollar to wreck tribal land, take the coal that belongs to the citizens of the Hopi and Navajo nations and burn it in power plants that, in turn, poison the land and people of those very same nations. By not adequately compensating the tribes for their coal, the coal company and its customers have cheated the tribes’ citizens out of billions of dollars.

The resulting cheap power lights up the neon of Las Vegas, while the Colorado River water that the plant’s electricity pumps has enabled Phoenix

and Tucson to sprawl into the desert, enriching the operators of the Southwest’s growth machine: real estate developers, mass-production homebuilders, the automotive industry, the corporate shareholders, the ratepayers and the executives. Arizona Public Service, 14% owner of the generating station, raked in half a billion dollars in profit last year. And then there’s that \$63 million squandered on the renewable energy initiative campaign. That money could have offset a year of the tribal government revenue lost owing to the plant’s closure. That same amount could have bought and installed more than 4,000 solar systems in low-income households, providing hundreds of jobs while cutting emissions. The Navajo Generating Station and the coal mines on Black Mesa were built on a foundation of theft and colonialism. But closing them down will not help unless it is done in a just way, one that heals old wounds rather than opening new ones.

*Jonathan Thompson is a contributing editor at High Country News. He is the author of **River of Lost Souls: The Science, Politics and Greed Behind the Gold King Mine Disaster.***

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Dead Pines Drive New Herbicide Rules

By Carl Segerstrom Feb. 13 - High Country News

What began in 2013 with a few dead trees has become a major die-off along the highway that winds through the Cascade Range, connecting the verdant floor of the Willamette Valley to the high desert of central Oregon. Over 1,400 ponderosa pines, some centuries old, have been killed, and more are expected to die. State and federal investigators blame their deaths on roadside spraying of the weed-killer aminocyclopyrachlor, or ACP, by Oregon's Department of Transportation.

Toxic levels of ACP can still be found in area trees six years after the nearby roadside was last sprayed. The chemical is a known tree-killer whose label warns against letting it come into contact with the roots of desirable trees. But weed control specialists question whether other factors, like road de-icer and drought, might be involved.


The grove of dying trees has thrust a chemical known for

its destruction on Midwestern golf courses and backyards nearly a decade ago into the spotlight in Oregon — exposing divides between state and federal pesticide regulation, and between environmental challenges on either side of the Cascades. Now, Oregon regulators are clamping down on a chemical that federal regulators banned under one name, but continued to license under another. As environmental advocates from the Willamette Valley spearhead an effort to ban ACP and reduce pesticide use overall, public works officials from central and eastern Oregon are asking to keep a chemical they say is important for managing invasive plants that threaten native ecosystems, agricultural operations and roads.

Originally, ACP was sold by DuPont under the brand name **Imprelis**. When Imprelis came on the market in late 2010, it was a disaster: More than 30,000 customers complained of dead trees, and DuPont estimated that its liabilities would be in the hundreds of millions of dollars. DuPont soon yanked **Imprelis** off the market, shortly before the Environmental Protection Agency banned the herbicide in 2011. One might imagine trees nationwide breathed a collective sigh of relief, knowing the chemical had been given the death penalty.

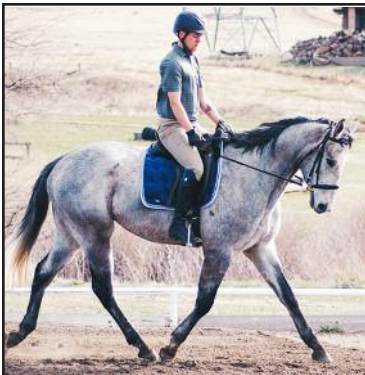
But DuPont had also registered the same tree-killing chemical under a different brand name, **Perspective** and was later sold to Bayer, stayed on the market in part because it has different label instructions, which warn against spraying it near the root systems of "desirable" trees. And, until recently, there was no public outrage, because **Perspective** is marketed for public uses, such as roadside spraying, rather than more visible ones like lawn

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State regulators, however, placed a temporary ban on the product in September, as the dead pines made headlines. Now, the Oregon Department of Agriculture is in the process of finalizing a rule that severely restricts the herbicide.

The new rule would prohibit roadside spraying of ACP, and limit its use to small patches or confined areas like mining and industrial sites. Rose Kachadoorian, the program manager for the state's pesticide licensing program, said the Oregon Department of Agriculture is "weighing the risks and benefits" and acting with an "abundance of caution" in its proposed restrictions. Kachadoorian, the president-elect of the Association of American Pesticide Control Officials, said Oregon is the first state to put such comprehensive limits on ACP-based products.

But public-works managers who use ACP in central and eastern Oregon say the ban ignores the realities they face. "I feel like we can put a buffer around trees, but let's not take it out of the hands of people in eastern Oregon," where the arid climate means many areas are treeless, said Matt Wenick, weed coordinator for Grant County.

Wenick and Don Farrar, weed officer for Gilliam County in Oregon's wheat belt along the Columbia River Basin, said ACP helps them control invasive species like leafy spurge, using fewer applications and avoiding older, more toxic chemicals. "It can't hurt things in this area," a wheat field-dominated landscape, where pesticides already play a major role in shaping the environment, Farrar said. "Invasive species should be a bigger deal for people who care about the environment

than herbicides."

Pesticide watchdogs and environmental health advocates, like Lisa Arkin, executive director of the nonprofit Beyond Toxics, would like to see Oregon completely ban ACP and implement plans that prioritize non-chemical controls for weeds and other pests. In 2013, state lawmakers passed legislation to promote such procedures, but Arkin said official practices don't match the law's intent.

Still, Arkin said, the new rule shows Oregon's Dept. of Agriculture is stepping up on environmental protection. "Oregon is a leader for restricting ACP," she said. "But they're leading after a tragedy of old-growth pines being killed and an unknown amount of ongoing damage." The harm to the environment and the cleanup costs, which will be paid for by taxpayers, "could have been avoided if EPA had taken action to take this chemical off the market in the first place."

Carl Segerstrom is a contributing editor at High Country News, covering Alaska, the Pacific Northwest and the Northern Rockies from Spokane, Washington.

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The Short Attention Span Of A Child

I've been sharing my childhood memories over the last few months and my brother reminded me of a couple of stories that refreshed my recollection of events funny and shared at the family reunions we used to have. Living on a farm in Eastern Kansas we had animals, but not really pets. As soon as my brother and I were old enough, and that meant able to walk to the chicken coop and back or the milking barn and back up to the house by ourselves, well we were given chores. There are so many chores on a farm that has animals; pigs, chickens, milk cows and heifers, along with horses, dogs to kill rats and dogs to protect the farm from coyotes.... But none were really in the house type animal companions.

One of the first chores I was given as a little girl was gathering eggs, a challenge even for an adult – to get them back to the house without breakage. A chore my brother hated was slopping the hogs so as soon as I was big enough (they thought) I was delegated to drag a bucket of table scraps down to the pigpen. It was near the chicken coop so it seemed natural for whoever was to gather eggs to also slop the hogs. I did okay when there weren't many table scraps and the bucket wasn't heavy, but one day the bucket was heavy and so to heft it up high enough to tip it into the

trough I stepped up onto the first rung of the pigpen wooden fence to give myself enough height to make sure the contents of the bucket fell into the trough.

Well, it just so happened the big sow had many piglets running around all excited to get to the slop that I lost focus and let the bucket pull me right over the fence and into the pigpen. Chaos ensued and the sow started pushing me around in the mud and muck (without stepping on me I realized) to get to the bucket. I clawed my way up and back to standing but had been hollering loud enough while being shoved around by the sow that my Dad had come a runnin' from the barn to find me covered in slop, pig shit and mud.

He reached in over the fence and pulled me to safety. But that was my last day slopping the hogs. My brother teased me for a long time about eating with the pigs, but he was left to do the hog-slopping job on his way to the barn to help with the milking. I never regretted losing that chore and those pigs were always getting out of their pen and running amok out in the sweet corn field next to the house. It was a real hassle to find them and round them back up to go into their pen. We had to use willow switches to swat them and often it didn't work until my Mom would break down to offer them some feed to entice them back to the trough. Just like horses – shake a can of grain in their hearing and they came a runnin' knowing they would get a sweet treat (sweeter than green corn on the cob) if they just bellied up to their feed trough.

One of my favorite things as a child on that farm was to play in the hayloft of our big barn. It was filled with bales of hay, so seemed like a fort to my brother and me. We would hide from each other after doing our chores while my dad was still milking the cows and crawl around the bales of hay sneaky like until we heard my Dad give a holler that he was going to the house for breakfast. Usually Dad beat us out of the barn as it took some time to crawl to the ladder and get down and out of the hayloft.

One morning in winter we lingered too long and came out of the barn on the corral side so we had to climb a gate to run up to the house. I was closer to the gate so climbed it

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and started my run to the house when I heard my brother yell that he was caught on the gatepost in the middle. Sure enough I turned around and he was hanging off the post because his coat had gotten caught. His feet were only inches from ground but he was thrashing around with his arms sticking straight out useless to help himself get uncaught. He yelled at me to go get Dad and I turned to run up to the farmhouse.

Once I got my coat off, washed my hands and sat down to breakfast my Mom and Dad both said, "Where's your brother?" My answer was – "Oh my gosh, he's stuck on the gate." Dad jumped up from the kitchen table and went running out the back door. By the time he and my brother got back to the farmhouse kitchen my brother was red faced with snot running down his nose from crying. He gave me a look I will never forget – it said – "You forgot me?" I was probably only four or five years old and he a year and a half older, but a pivotal place in our young lives. The story of me forgetting him hanging on the gate was told and retold for years at family get togethers, causing both of us great humiliation and family members tears of laughter at our plight.

The other memorable story about our huge barn on the farm had to do with us playing up in the hayloft again. One of those mornings we were playing hide and seek amongst

the hay bales was a very rude awakening for me. I was crawling along hiding from my brother and looked off to one side to see a huge snake body, not a head or tail but a snake body bigger than my torso as a little girl. I couldn't see the whole snake and that shook me to my core. I scrambled down the ladder and ran to where my Dad was milking to entreat him to go 'kill the snake' which he usually did any time I asked. We had rattlesnakes so it was not unusual for Dad to grab a hoe and go dispatch the odd rattlesnake to make it safer around our farm.

This day was different and kept me from ever playing in the barn hayloft again. Dad said to me, "That snake lives here honey, he is older than I am." I could not imagine my daddy not removing the 'snake threat' as he had always been known to do. My first ecological lesson, he told me how that snake had a job: to keep rodents from eating cow feed and eating rats that spread disease. I was appalled and ran to the farmhouse complaining to my Mom about the 'big snake' daddy wouldn't kill. She upheld the dictate that the Bull snake lived here and belonged to the farm and barn as a protector of feed from rodents. It was an eye opening into the world of ecological places for all animals, snakes included. It also gave me a new appreciation for snakes, but even little garter snakes that my cat brings in are impossible for me to pick up.

By A. M. Wilks



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Cleaning Up Rivers

By Frosty Wooldridge

The Mississippi River sweeps millions of bottles, cans, tires, oil, plastic bags and containers, along with junk of every description, and chemicals into the Gulf of Mexico 24/7. From Minnesota where it starts as a six foot wide, 15 inches deep stream, it travels 2,552 miles and drops 1,772 feet through nine states until it rushes into the ocean. At its mouth, the Mississippi River creates a 10,000-mile "dead zone" where most vertebrate marine creatures cannot live because toxic waters contaminate their habitat.

(Right - Chad Pregracke cleaning up the rivers he loves).

LivingLandsandRivers.org livinglandsandwaters.org

How do I know? Over 15 years ago, my friend Gary and I canoed the Mississippi River beginning at its humble source in Lake Itasca, Minnesota. At first, perfect beauty greeted us until we hit the first homes and towns along the river. From there, bottles, cans, plastic bags, plastic containers, cars, sofas, tires, machinery, paper, cups, used diapers and hundreds of other pieces of trash passed by my eyes. We carried two large plastic trash bags and filled them every day. We dumped them at trashcans in the small towns we passed along the way.

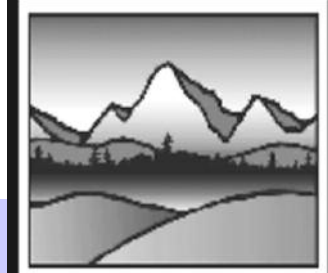
At the end, I wrote a commentary asking the Minneapolis Star Tribune and the Pioneer Press to engage civic leaders,

Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, high schools, Rotary and Lions clubs to form teams to clean up Old Man River. I asked them to consider a 10-cent deposit-return law for all soda



pop, beer and liqueur bottles like Michigan's successful law. The editors and publishers of both papers refused to publish my commentary. **Hard fact: 70% of Americans refuse to recycle anything.** A large percentage of them toss anything, anywhere, at any time. McDonald's and Pizza Hut customers throw the most trash out their car windows. Plastic water bottles, beer and soda containers

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litter the landscape by the trillions!

Once, my preacher spoke about the Herculean efforts of Chad Pregracke on his quest to clean up the Mississippi River one piece of trash at a time. Americans along the river toss their debris one piece at a time and Pregracke intends to pick it up “one piece at a time.” Pregracke ran into the same roadblocks with his efforts to engage government and civic clubs: they ignored him.

“At the age of 17, he started making calls to government agencies to notify them of the problem, assuming someone would take care of it. Year after year passed by and the problem only worsened. In 1997 Chad decided that, if no one else was going to clean up the river, he would.”

Visit his website: www.LivingLandsandWaters.org

Since 1998, Chad engaged 60,000 volunteers to retrieve 6,000,000 (million) pounds of trash of every description. He expanded his work to the Ohio and other rivers.

On his website: “Chad’s vision, charisma, non-stop work ethic and natural leadership garnered him an abundance of awards and honors over the years. Most notably, Chad was the recipient of the Jefferson Award for Public Service, America’s version of the Nobel Prize, in June 2002. Chad accepted this award in the United States Supreme Court in Washington D.C. with other award recipients: Rudolph Giuliani, Bill and Melinda Gates, and Lilly Tartikoff.”

Chad’s teams picked up 13 football fields worth of 1 foot thick Styrofoam; 8,800 feet of barge cables; 1,095 chairs;

19,700 balls; 63—250-gallon drums; 83,900 bags of trash; 5,800—55 gallon drums and thousands of other articles tossed by mindless Americans. The list runs down the page like a ticker-tape parade of embarrassment. Chad Pregracke authored: ***From the Bottom Up: One Man’s Crusade to Clean America’s Rivers***. To purchase a copy of the book, please call the office at (309) 496-9848.

This brings up the most important point: we Americans must begin to clean up our country “upstream” by changing ourselves from a “throw-away” society to a “recycling-return” society. All the cleanups in the world won’t solve the core problem: millions of Americans tossing their containers and trash. We need to help Chad expand his work into the “deposit-return” container laws like the State of Michigan. We need to transform from plastic bags use to cotton bag use. It’s evident that millions of Americans don’t care where they toss their trash. Economic incentives change that behavior very effectively. Michigan’s rivers, lakes and roadways remain pristine because an army of kids scours the landscape for 10-cent return containers.

If you’re the kind of person who cares about North America’s environment and beauty, sign on with Chad Pregracke’s team. Start your own team in your own city or state. Expand your powers by forming groups that create change. Model your work after Chad’s work. He will help you and your community.

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Power Update

March
2019

Electrical Safety this Spring

With snow still covering the ground in some parts of our mountain territory and more in the forecast, it may be hard to believe spring is just around the corner. The arrival of spring means a host of returning electrical safety precautions when working or playing outside.

Here are few quick spring electrical safety tips from Occupational Health and Safety (OH&S):

- Always keep power cords and electrical equipment away from water or other wet areas. Water and electricity don't mix, and can cause serious injury if not careful. It's important to check wiring that could have become exposed during the winter, especially when it's near a water source.
- Look up and look out for power lines. Make sure you're aware of nearby power cords when working outside. As a general rule, keep your body and all tools and materials at least 15 feet from any overhead power lines at all times. Don't let kids play near power lines, especially with kites or drones.
- Call before you dig. Perhaps this is the summer you're finally putting up the new fence around your yard or property. Calling 8-1-1 before you dig can save you from digging into underground utility lines.

- As trees bud, they can grow into power lines. Keep your trees trimmed to avoid contact with power lines. If you are unsure of how and when to remove tree limbs or if you need to report a tree limb in contact with a power line, call United Power at 303-637-1300.
- Before every use, inspect power tools and electric lawn equipment for frayed power cords, broken plugs and weathered or damaged housings. Don't use damaged equipment until it has been repaired properly. Keep tools unplugged and stored in a dry area when not in use.

Spring is also a good time to have an electrical inspection done on your home. In the winter, homeowners are more likely to overload circuits. An overloaded circuit occurs when there are too many devices plugged into a particular circuit, exceeding its safety rating. When using space heaters, for example, nothing else should be plugged into the circuit because they alone draw the recommended safety rating.

Overloaded circuits can cause damage to wiring, especially in older homes with electrical systems that weren't designed to handle today's typical load, creating a potential fire hazard.



2019 Annual Meeting & Director Election

Wednesday, April 17, 2019

Riverdale Regional Park
(Adams County Fairgrounds)
9755 Henderson Road
Brighton CO 80601

The Annual Meeting & Director Election is a special opportunity for members to celebrate United Power's successes over the past year with one another and cooperative leadership.

Event Schedule:

4:30 p.m. | Registration, Dinner & Entertainment

6:30 p.m. | Meeting, Election Results, Prizes

More information available at
www.unitedpower.com.

Candidate Forums



United Power will host the following Meet the Candidate Forums where members can learn more about each of the candidates vying to serve on the Board of Directors. The following events are free to members. Light refreshments will be served. RSVPs are not required.

MONDAY, MARCH 18, 2019 | 6:30 p.m.

Adams County Fairgrounds – Waymire
9755 Henderson Road
Brighton, CO 80601

TUESDAY, MARCH 19, 2019 | 7:30 a.m.

Ft. Lupton Recreation Center
203 S. Harrison Ave.
Ft. Lupton, CO 80621

THURSDAY, MARCH 21, 2019 | 7:30 a.m.

Coal Creek Canyon Community Center
31528 Highway 72
Golden, CO 80403

FRIDAY, MARCH 22, 2019 | 7:30 a.m.

E.L.F. Grill
108 8th Street
Dacono, CO 80514

**Dates and locations may be subject to change.*

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St. Patrick's Day Celebration

Saturday March 16th 5:00pm to 7:30pm

CCCIA Hall 31258 Coal Creek Canyon



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



1111 Elysian Field Dr. #D. Lafayette
Condo backs to Coal Creek Open Space
1 BD/ 1 BA Top Unit 826 sq.ft. **\$250,000**



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



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



216 Debra Ann Road
Remodeled Mtn Home - VIEWS
2 BD/ 2 BA 1,800 sq.ft. **\$390,000**



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**



114 Old Logging Road
Gorgeous Remodeled Mtn Home - VIEWS
3 BD/ 2 BA 2,429 sq.ft. **\$519,000**



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**



Coal Creek Canyon
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**



Kathy Keating
CRS, ABR, GRI
EcoBroker
Broker Associate
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