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**FILED**

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Terri A. Lorenzon, Director  
Environmental Quality Council

Environmental Quality Council - Attention Joe Girardin  
122 West 25<sup>th</sup> Street  
Herschler Bldg.  
Cheyenne, WY 82002

“ADOBE TOWN “

Adobe Town - Justification for Wilderness Designation and Protective Management of a ‘Very Rare/Uncommon Area’.

I feel extremely obligated to step forward at this time and offer a strong statement of support for the Biodiversity Conservation Alliance’s ‘Very Rare or Uncommon’ petition to protect Adobe Town.

Many of us who often feel strongly about certain issues, just don’t take the time or make the effort to get involved. Adobe Town is one these issues I can no longer ignore. I am now totally dedicated to follow this important effort through to a successful conclusion. This action is long overdo and winning this battle is critical, as it may be instrumental in setting a precedent that can be utilized to save other natural wonders that are being threatened in many parts of Wyoming.

I have a B.S. Degree in Range Management (College of Agriculture-University of Wyoming 1962).

I first laid eyes on Adobe Town during the summer of 1961 (46 years ago!!!!). I was part of a Bureau of Land Management team charged with conducting a rangeland vegetation survey in what was then designated as the Shell Creek Unit, of which the far western part of the Unit included Adobe Town.

Before commencing the work our survey team, spent about a week traversing the Unit (750,000 acres) from east (Highway 789) to west (Adobe Town). The purpose was to orient the team concerning terrain, roads, vegetation types and practicing the survey method.

At the end of a long hard week (Friday morning) we stood on Powder Rim, looking north across Adobe Town to the Haystacks for the first time, what an awesome sight to behold - one that I have never forgotten to this day.

As the early morning sun began its slow march across the clear blue sky, the shadows began to lift and with the colors and shades changing hourly, the magnificent landscapes and character of Adobe Town unfolded before us. As the day wore on even the heat was bearable as it matched the rugged/remote aspect of the spectacular geological features and alien-like atmosphere that we were experiencing. One had the eerie feel of being temporarily placed on another planet. (Incidentally we had to survey most of the area on foot because, even two-track, roads were virtually non-existent)

The vast open space surrounding Adobe Town (Kinney Rim, Powder Mountain, Cow Creek Headquarters, Willow Creek Rim and Skull Creek Rim) neatly frames this unique and fascinating area - it will literally consume a person.

I worked in the BLM Rawlins District, which encompasses the Adobe Town 'Rare/Uncommon' petition area, for eleven years. As a Range Conservationist I spent two Summer field seasons (1961 & 1962) surveying vegetation in the Shell Creek Unit, which included Adobe Town. 1963 to 1967, I worked throughout the District. The next five years (1967-1971) I was the Area Manager in charge of the Baggs/Great Divide Resource Area (2.5 million acres). During that time I visited in and around Adobe Town on many occasions (by vehicle, helicopter and fixed wing aircraft) having to do with range use supervision, Wild Horse inventory, reservoir maintenance, wildlife counts, oil and gas development and other natural resource related work.

I rate the scenic/recreational values of Adobe Town right up there with many other deserving and better known attractions in the state such as, The Medicine Wheel, Red Wall Country/Hole in the Wall/Outlaw Caves, Hell's Half Acre, Killpecker Sand Dunes, Oregon/California Trail & Overland Trail, Red Desert, Jack Morrow Hills, South Pass and Atlantic City, and the Wyoming Range.

I strongly believe that Adobe Town and the surrounding area meet all of the 'Very Rare or Uncommon' attributes necessary to qualify for protection requested in this "petition". In fact all of the attributes are more than met including, the botanical category. There is a good chance, that with a more intense study of the vegetation associated with Adobe Town's harsh environment, that various unique/rare plants may be found..

After leaving The Rawlins District I transferred (1972) to New Mexico for four years as Area Manager of the Rio Grande Resource Area in northern New Mexico (One of my main duties was the intense management the Rio Grande "Wild and Scenic River" in northern New Mexico). I then spent four years in the Rock Springs District and then on to Colorado and finally retired in Cheyenne with thirty years of federal service.

Since retirement in 1986, I have engaged in numerous projects and activities of which only one has to do with Adobe Town. This was a tour business (Back Country Tours) providing four-wheel drive excursions (3 to 4 days) into Wyoming's rugged back-country. I conducted these tours for eight years (1991-1998). We took small groups (6 to 8 people) on personal natural resource type tours, highlighting scenic vistas, history, geology, archeology, vegetation, wildlife, wild horses, outlaw Trails and domestic livestock (Ranching).

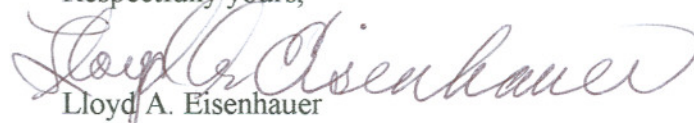
We also took Wyoming Division of Tourism personnel on show me trips with accompanying journalists

During the time we conducted these tours, Adobe Town and the wild horses that roam that area were by far our greatest tour attraction, We took very few tours that did not begin or end with Adobe Town. Without fail, once we got into the Haystack/Adobe Town/Powder Mountain area it was like pulling teeth to get the participants to leave. They often wanted to stay until dark, even postponing dinner for the chance to see one more band of wild horses or watch the setting sun as it disappears behind Kinney Rim, casting the entire Adobe Town Area in a strikingly, day ending purple/blue shadow - thats Adobe Town - "that is priceless".

As a side note the Adobe Town area, like various other natural attractions do have potential economic value. (See attached recent articles from High Country News reprinted in the Wyoming Tribune-Eagle)

In closing, I would strongly recommend that the "Council" approve this petition to protect and manage Adobe Town for the present time, until the Bureau of Land Management and the Wyoming Congressional delegation can take the necessary action to designate it a wilderness area.

Respectfully yours,



Lloyd A. Eisenhauer

P.S. -

I would also like to recommend expanding the area to the south to include the whole of Powder Mountain and Lower Powder Springs (location of the Butch Cassidy/Wild Bunch hideout), in other words make the south boundary the Colorado state line.

On the north I would extend the area (about 3 miles) to include the Overland Trail, La Clede Stage Station, Fort La Clede, Man and the Boy (a large geological landmark), Wild Rose Spring (cabin foundation & horse barn), Dug Springs (an important stop on the Overland Trail) and an Ancient wild horse trap.

Last, but not least, lets not forget the wild horses that have been roaming this area since the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, they should be recognized as a 'Very Rare or Uncommon' attribute and included in the protection and management of the "petitioned" area. They should also receive a high priority in the allocation of the available habitat and forage along with the other competing users (domestic livestock and wildlife) of the vegetation resource.

Copy to: Biodiversity Conservation Alliance

# Sometimes priceless really is priceless

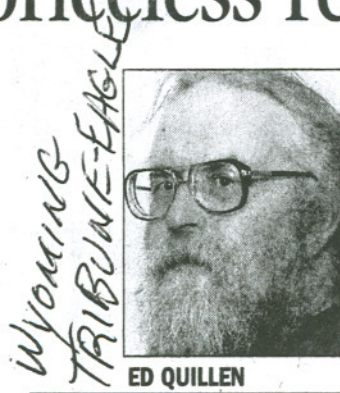
Most of us have seen those credit-card ads that go something like "Fishing license, \$40. Fly casting gear, \$480. Reeling in a rainbow trout in the wilderness under a 14,000-foot peak: Priceless."

But dollar signs can be associated with these "priceless" activities. Let's start with the rainbow trout. Rainbows are native to the West Coast, but have been introduced throughout the Mountain West, with a big assist from national fish hatcheries operated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Like any good federal agency, the Wildlife Service sends out press releases, including one that points out how "fishing for rainbow trout reels in big bucks." The agency commissioned a study by economist James Caudill, who examined stocking information from 11 national fish hatcheries in 2004 and evaluated the results.

As you might expect from a study commissioned by the people who operate hatcheries, these hatcheries provide a great return for taxpayers. The 11 hatcheries produced 9.4 million rainbow trout, inspiring nearly 4 million angler-days, which meant \$172.7 million in spending on licenses, food, gas, lodging, tackle, etc. That spending supported jobs, and the workers paid taxes.

Add it all up, according to the study, and "every dollar spent on rainbow trout production rises up through the economy fueling \$32.20 in retail sales and \$36.88 in net economic value." So that rainbow on the end of the line isn't just a magnificent creature, or even a tasty main course for a pan-fried outdoor dinner; it's also



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part of an economic engine that can drive for the long haul, with the net value of \$21.19 per fish.

What about the value of wilderness, or more accurately, nearby wilderness that you might see from a raft?

**What about the value of wilderness, or more accurately, nearby wilderness that you might see from a raft?**

Wilderness designation has been proposed for about 20,000 acres in Chaffee County in central Colorado. Years ago, it was identified as the Aspen Ridge Wilderness Study Area. But over time, it became the Browns Canyon Wilderness Study Area, even though all the land in question does not include the river in Browns Canyon. So even if Congress approves wilderness designation someday, the

river would not flow through the Browns Canyon Wilderness. Browns Canyon is a popular place for whitewater rafting, though, so the boundary doesn't matter to at least one river outfitter, Joe Greiner of Buena Vista, Colo.

At a hearing on wilderness designation earlier this year, he said, "I want to be able to promote that. I think it would be a great marketing angle for us: 'Come visit Browns Canyon Wilderness.'"

Ah, wilderness, the "marketing angle."

As for the majestic 14,000-foot peak in the wilderness behind a trout stream, it, too, is an econom-

ic factor. Colorado has 54 peaks whose summits exceed 14,000 feet above mean sea level. Most don't require special skills or equipment to climb; endurance and common sense will do. Thus they're popular destinations – so popular that tundra gets trampled and trails erode into gulches.

The Colorado Fourteeners Initiative is a nonprofit group that works to keep the big peaks from getting loved to death by educating climbers and establishing sustainable trails. In 2006, it worked with two recreation economists from Colorado State University to determine the economic value of having a big peak nearby.

After surveying climbers in Park and Summit counties, they learned that the average peak visitor spends \$191.61 within a 25-mile radius, and a total of \$221 on their Fourteener trip.

The view from the summit on a clear day might be priceless, along with that giddy light-headed summit exuberance produced by hypoxia, but now we also know that the Fourteener experience is worth \$221 to the general economy.

In all these calculations and marketing angles, we seem to forget that so many people volunteer their time and energy to improve cold-water fisheries, preserve wilderness and care for some trampled mountains. That is truly priceless and a gift to all of us, though doubtless somebody will someday come up with dollar amounts. That appears to be the American way, after all.

**Ed Quillen** is a contributor to Writers on the Range, a service of High Country News in Paonia, Colo. He writes and produces Colorado Central magazine in Salida, Colo.

# The West is always wild to the young

WYOMING TRIBUNE-EAGLE

By Gary Lantz

Writers on the Range

The thing I remember most about winter in the mountains above a town in New Mexico called Las Vegas was the silence. At times, it was so quiet that, as a shepherd from Montana pointed out, you could hear snowflakes slap against the pines.

The shepherd and I were fellow pilgrims whose lives intersected along the interstate in the early 1970s. He was hitchhiking south to a rendezvous in southern New Mexico. When I gave him a ride, I was nearly out of gas, low on money, and in desperate need of a job.

Work came, thanks to a dude ranch near the headwaters of the Gallinas River. From sunup to sundown, the days revolved around splitting firewood for tourist cabins, rolling big rocks into rivers to make pools for trout fishermen, caring for livestock, corralling runaway calves. Lodging consisted of a cabin with only a fireplace for heat. Still, it seemed like the Taj Mahal. I was young and my sleeping bag fairly decent Army surplus. At night, stars big as truck headlights offered companionship just outside the window, illuminating a chattering stream.

Weekends in town provided the company of a mongrel collection of fellow drifters, ranging from the spiritually malnourished to the bizarre – shaman wannabes, cattle-mutilation investigators, a very white man from New Jersey who claimed to be the incarnation of various Indian chiefs, alien abductees bearing

messages from interplanetary outposts.

Back on the job Monday morning, hard work in the woods provided a lifeline to the real world. The woodpile grew under sunny days interrupted by clouds draping themselves over white mountaintops, the stillness broken occasionally by horses, nickering for hay.

I remember that winter better than most because I learned to love that landscape like no other. Yet in retrospect, I'm sure folks throughout the West were relieved when the nationwide pilgrimage of young people to the region during the late '60s and '70s began to wane. As the years passed, many of the country's disillusioned either settled in to become a part of their adopted place or returned to where they'd drifted away from, there, as one Haight-Ashbury veteran put it, "to become their parents."

Recently, my son, back from Arizona and New Mexico and his own coming-of-age meandering, regaled us with his adventures. It made me think that today's young seekers have strayed little from the tie-dyed blueprint that my generation followed West. We talked of the "coolness" of places where he'd paused for communion, and my mind drifted back to a time when I, too, was young, eager and mostly unafraid, watching in awe as a bear ran over the mountain, and ravens gathered for a game of tag in a sky the color of blue stone.

Like so many of my generation who actually did become their parents, I complain nowadays about how former shrines are filling up

with ranchettes, real estate agencies and expatriates from urban areas; it's all driving prices far beyond my retirement fantasies. Of course, what I see as travesties have become native to my son's concept of the West today, even though they make my blood boil.

But my son doesn't feel cheated in the least. For him, there's still a lot of cactus flats and pine forest tucked away amid the West's ample vertical rock; enough, anyway, for him to go there, absorb the experiences he sought – and many he didn't – and return home a better and perhaps more tolerant person for having made the trip.

As an aging expatriate pilgrim whose time in church currently gets filed under the term vacation, I long to retain and eventually regain as much as possible of my old wild West. It seems sacrilege to price out people from places where young people yearn to migrate and the old seek to die, landscapes of our hearts and minds that call us to play, to pray, to grow and ultimately seek some sort of wisdom.

After 40 years of giving the subject ample thought, it just seems right that a nation prone to brag about a spiritual birthright ought to also keep its wild places holy – places where silence still lies deep, and snowflakes can still be heard when they slap against the pines.

Gary Lantz is a contributor to Writers on the Range, a service of High Country News in Paonia, Colo. He lives now in Norman, Okla.