

DINOSAUR DAMMED: AN ANALYSIS OF THE  
FIGHT TO DEFEAT ECHO PARK DAM

by

Debra Elaine Jenson

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**STATEMENT OF DISSERTATION APPROVAL**

The dissertation of **Debra Elaine Jenson**

has been approved by the following supervisory committee members:

<b>Kimberley Mangun</b>	, Chair	<b>May 1, 2014</b>
		Date Approved
<b>Glen M. Feighery</b>	, Member	<b>May 1, 2014</b>
		Date Approved
<b>Sean T. Lawson</b>	, Member	<b>May 1, 2014</b>
		Date Approved
<b>David J. Vergobbi</b>	, Member	<b>May 1, 2014</b>
		Date Approved
<b>Matthew Baker</b>	, Member	<b>May 1, 2014</b>
		Date Approved

and by **Kent Alan Ono**, Chair/Dean of

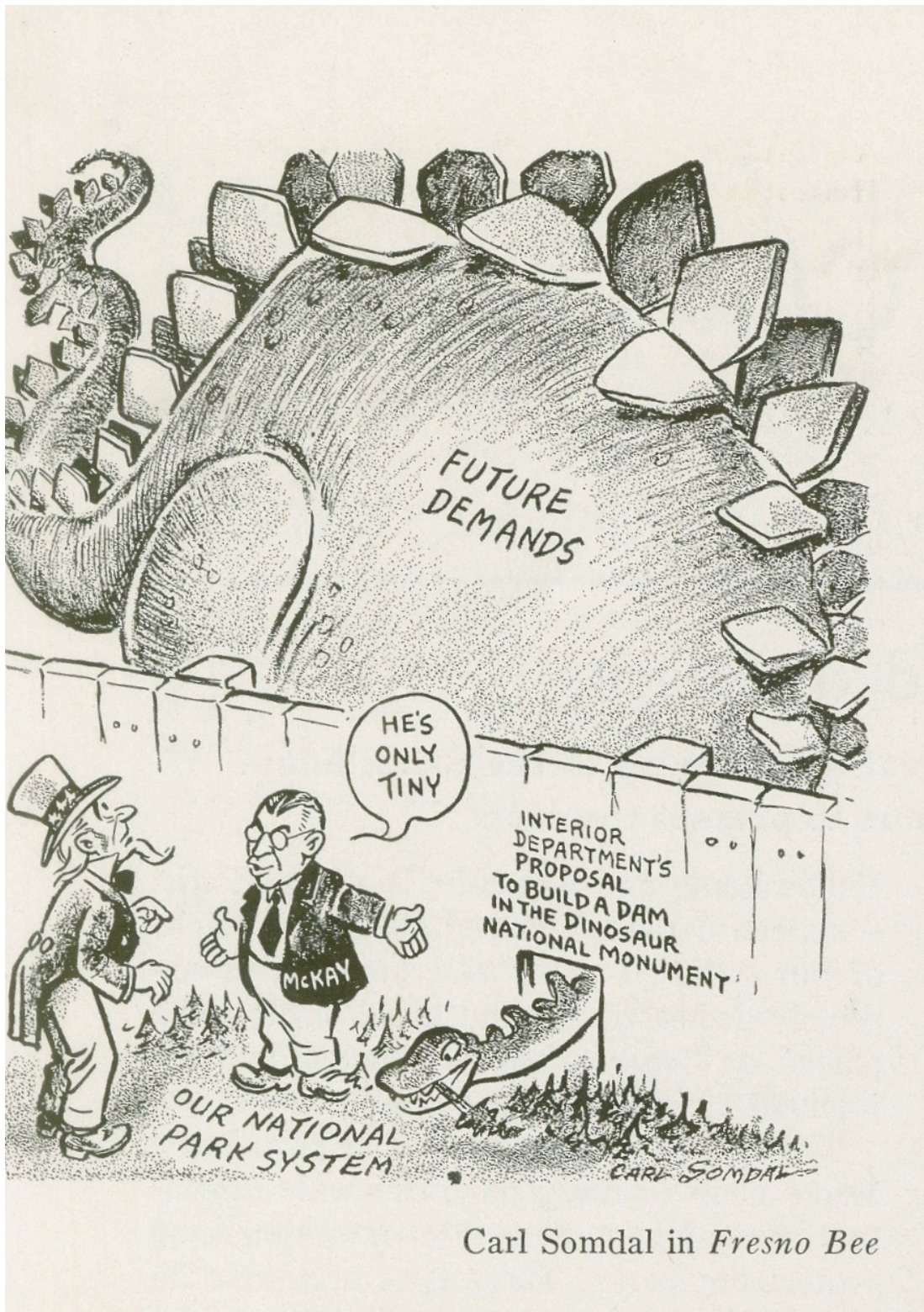
the Department/College/School of **Communication**

and by David B. Kieda, Dean of The Graduate School.

## ABSTRACT

In the early twentieth century, the United States Bureau of Reclamation proposed a series of dams along the Colorado River to help control the violent and destructive fluctuations of the river that ran through six western states. The sites of two of the dams, Echo Park and Split Mountain, were located inside Dinosaur National Monument (a little known and rarely visited area straddling the border between Utah and Colorado). Conservation organizations across the United States joined together to fight the Echo Park and Split Mountain project. One coalition, the Council of Conservationists, consisted of nine groups including the Sierra Club, the American Planning and Civic Association, and the Wilderness Society. These nine groups used their official publications to reach out to their members, rallying them to act in defense of Dinosaur National Monument and the National Park System as a whole. This dissertation analyzes the nine publications from 1950 to 1956—the years of the most heated debate—for a better understanding of the strategies and themes used in this, the first successful campaign of the modern conservation movement.

To my family.  
You know who you are.



Carl Somdal in *Fresno Bee*

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: WHAT POWELL SAW

Standing opposite the rock, our words are repeated with startling clearness, but in a soft, mellow tone, that transforms them into magical music. Scarcely can you believe it is the echo of your own voice. In some places two or three echoes come back; in other places they repeat themselves, passing back and forth across the river between this rock and eastern wall.... Some of the party aver that ten or twelve repetitions can be heard.”

—John W. Powell, *The Exploration of the Colorado and Its Canyons—1869*

On the border between Utah and Colorado, the Yampa and Green Rivers meet in the shadows of 800-foot rock walls that rise so dramatically they appear to go on forever. John Wesley Powell, one of the first white Americans to explore this region, was delighted and thrilled at what he saw as he and his team rode the rapids. Powell’s team named the confluence of the two rivers Echo Park (later to be named Steamboat Rock because of its striking similarity to the prow of a ship) and they camped there for almost a week before continuing down the Green River.

Voices of the past still linger along the Green River—etched into the walls in petroglyphs just off the banks and in the voices of campers and river enthusiasts that still reverberate across the river in Echo Canyon. Farther south, after the Green merges with the Colorado River in southeastern Utah, the water has carved miles of canyons, breathtaking arches, and natural crossing points for humans migrating and exploring the landscape. But here, the echoes come from below millions of acre-feet<sup>1</sup> of water. Cave

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<sup>1</sup> An acre-foot is the amount of water it would take to cover an acre of land with water one foot deep.

drawings and family dwellings now lie beneath the surface of Glen Canyon Reservoir. The etchings in stone made by members of the Powell expedition down the river are now covered by the “lake” that bears their leader’s name.

During the twentieth century, the flow of Americans cut a wide path across the continent, settling in Western states, establishing urban and suburban oases in vast deserts, changing the landscape like its own river. World War II turned this stream of people into a torrent, with military projects, army bases, and massive population growth in the desert states of Utah, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. This human swell created new areas of habitation that led to a dual need for water and power, and rivers were diverted from the ancient pathways that had steadily whittled vast canyons into the landscape to run in more convenient patterns. Dams were erected in an effort to satisfy the exploding needs of power and irrigation. New pathways were created and old landmarks were destroyed. Engineers created rivers and lakes with the construction of a dam, even as they erased hundreds and thousands of years of human history.

The importance of this body of water cannot be overstated. The Colorado River stands as one of America’s great rivers, with water flowing through seven states from the Rocky Mountains to the Gulf of California.<sup>2</sup> The Colorado and its tributaries reach roughly 22 percent of the land in the United States, yet according to Susan Neel, “The Colorado River is a geographical irony because the land through which it flows is the most arid region in America—an area once called the Great American Desert. . . . There was water in this desert land but it cared not for the needs of man.”<sup>3</sup> Even more important

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<sup>2</sup> United States Bureau of Reclamation, “Upper Colorado River Basin,” [www.usbr.gov/uc/](http://www.usbr.gov/uc/), (accessed April 1, 2013).

<sup>3</sup> Susan M. Neel, “Utah and the Echo Park Dam Controversy” (master’s thesis, University of Utah, 1980), 14-15.

to the people of the Colorado River Basin was the fact that the river was not like the great rivers of the East—miles across with a smooth surface suitable for a steamboat or Huck Finn. For the people who lived and farmed along the Colorado, it indeed was a “natural menace” that taunted them with its unpredictable flow, frequent flooding, and crashing rapids that smashed boats to smithereens and took a person involuntarily miles downstream.

Following World War II, the demand for water in the West reached a pitch that could not be ignored—an estimated eight million people were transplanted to these desert states, creating boom towns including Denver, Los Angeles, and Las Vegas—and the Bureau of Reclamation and the Department of the Interior hatched a plan to harness the Colorado River through a series of dams stretching from northern Colorado down to Arizona.<sup>4</sup> Engineers and planners from the Bureau approached this as a way to conquer an enemy, writing, “Yesterday the Colorado River was a natural menace. Unharnessed, it tore through deserts, flooded fields, and ravaged villages. . . . Man was on the defensive. He sat helplessly to watch the Colorado River waste itself, or attempted in vain to halt its destruction.”<sup>5</sup> The plan, known as the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP),<sup>6</sup> was hatched in the early 1940s but was officially introduced in Congress in 1953. The plan included proposed dams all along the Green, Yampa, and Colorado Rivers to divide and supply water to the states of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and

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<sup>4</sup> Mark W. T. Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, *The Colorado River: “A Natural Menace Becomes a National Resource” – A Comprehensive Report on the Development of the Water Resources of the Colorado River Basin for Irrigation, Power Production, and Other Beneficial Uses in Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, and Wyoming* (Washington, DC, 1946), 25.

<sup>6</sup>This project is also referred to as the Upper Colorado River Storage Project in legislation and media accounts.

Utah.<sup>7</sup> Two of the recommended dams, Echo Park and Split Mountain, were located *inside* Dinosaur National Monument and consequently, a showdown began.

Though historians agree that this fight—the first to see multiple groups join together to form a coalition and successfully defeat a public policy—is the birth of the modern conservation movement, more than fifty years later, the importance of the Echo Park fight seems to have faded for the public.<sup>8</sup> Research on the controversy around this specific piece of the CRSP has focused on political history of water development projects, laws related to water development and use, local reactions to and strategies for building the dams, historical retellings of the overall debate including transcripts from the Congressional record, personal correspondence of major policy makers, and the war of words waged in the major newspapers of the time.<sup>9</sup> This project attempts to fill a research gap by analyzing the publications—newsletters and magazines—of nine national environmental groups to understand the ways they communicated about the CRSP and Dinosaur National Monument to their publics.

Public outcry is often referenced as a major factor in the defeat of the Echo Park and Split Mountain dams and the groups advocating for Dinosaur were instrumental in mobilizing their members. This moment provided “the biggest defeat the western water

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<sup>7</sup> Wallace Stegner, *This is Dinosaur: Echo Park Country and Its Magic Rivers* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1955).

<sup>8</sup> Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness*. Use of the term “movement” will be avoided in this project, due to the emerging study of social movements and new social movements. However, it must be noted that during the actual campaign to save Echo Park, several groups called themselves a movement and as such, the term may appear occasionally.

<sup>9</sup> For other works on this topic, see Richard E. Baird, “Politics of Echo Park and Other Water Development Projects in the Upper-Colorado River Basin—1946-1956.” (PhD diss., University of Illinois, 1960); Gary D. Weatherford, Phillip Nichols and Dean E. Mann, *Legal-political History of Water Resource Development in the Colorado River Basin*, 35(7) 1974, National Science Foundation Lake Powell Research Project Bulletin; Neel, “Utah and the Echo Park Dam Controversy”; Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness*.

lobby had suffered until then”<sup>10</sup> and is seen as the moment when “this activist brand of conservation ... began to transform into environmentalism.”<sup>11</sup> Yet the voices of the grassroots effort, especially how environmental groups communicated with their members, have been only a footnote in previous treatments of the fight. In the historical analysis of this first conservation battle waged by the new recreation-class in America, the voices of the actual coalition members seem to be missing and this study seeks out those voices.

### *The National Park System and the West*

The idea that the United States would protect and conserve areas of scenic or historic places was first established in 1790 when the District of Columbia was authorized, along with several National Capital Parks, the National Mall, and the White House.<sup>12</sup> The first national park—Yellowstone—was designated in 1872, setting aside scenic areas in Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. In 1906 the drive to protect sites, particularly in the Southwest, led to the Antiquities Act giving Presidents authority to set aside “historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest” as national monuments.<sup>13</sup> By 1916, the Department of the Interior was responsible for nearly forty monuments and reservations and a movement was

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<sup>10</sup> Marc Reisner, *Cadillac Desert* (New York: Penguin Books, 1986), 295.

<sup>11</sup> Hal K. Rothman, *The Greening of a Nation? Environmentalism in the United States Since 1945* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1998), 46.

<sup>12</sup> National Park Service, “National Park System Areas Listed in Chronological Order of Date Authorized Under DOI,”

<http://www.nps.gov/applications/budget2/documents/chronop.pdf>, (accessed August 12, 2012).

<sup>13</sup> *American Antiquities Act of 1906*, 34 Stat 225, 16 U.S.C. June 8, 1906, 431-433

brewing to preserve even more, larger areas. Congress established the National Park Service in the Organic Act of 1916.<sup>14</sup>

The story of the national parks, however, is not one without controversy. It is, in fact, one filled with turf wars, power struggles, larger-than-life personalities, good intentions, and (naturally) money. The lion's share of national park acreage is located in the Western United States,<sup>15</sup> but many Westerners do not often look on these designations as positive, or even legal.<sup>16</sup> Most locals saw the designation, which came with limits on use and access, as an economic liability. Tourism would not replace the money that agriculture and industry could provide: initially, visits to national parks were for the wealthy and adventurous. Most parks and monuments had limited access points, travel was difficult, and the activities were dangerous. And it was just plain expensive. For a family to visit Yellowstone National Park in the days before the family automobile required quite an effort, and expenditure; a luxury that was out of reach, particularly during the Great Depression.<sup>17</sup>

In the middle of the twentieth century, a postwar boom allowed middle class Americans to shift their focus from immediate survival and life-sustaining activities to attention to leisure and so-called luxury recreation. And Americans—celebrating an end to war rationing of gas and rubber and enjoying a new highway system—hit the road to

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<sup>14</sup> *Organic Act of 1916*, 39 Stat F35, 16 U.S.C. §1, August 25, 1916.

<sup>15</sup> According to the United States Census Bureau, of the 84.3 million acres of National Parks, over twenty-million of those acres are located in the eleven western states.

<sup>16</sup> For a historical example of local displeasure over parks and monuments, see C. H. Vincent and P. Baldwin, *National Monuments: Issues and Background* (New York: Novinka Books, 2004).

<sup>17</sup> Elmo Richardson, *Dams, Parks, and Politics: Resource Development and Preservation in the Truman-Eisenhower Era* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1973).

vacation in large numbers.<sup>18</sup> These travelers, encouraged by a newfound economic stability, visited the national parks in record numbers: In 1930, three million people visited national parks; by 1955, that number had grown to 62 million. According to historian Lee Whittlesey, “There weren’t enough campgrounds. There weren’t enough hotels. There weren’t enough souvenirs. There weren’t enough anything”<sup>19</sup> when in 1948 over one million people visited Yellowstone National Park.

The national parks became the playground of Americans, many of whom came from other regions to enjoy, for a spell, nature in its primeval state and then returned to their homes in Midwestern and Eastern states. As environmental historian William Cronon described it:

One of the things that happened in the 1950s with the explosion of families in cars taking their kids on the road to visit the national parks was that more and more American children grew up with the national parks as a formative part of their childhood. And I think we often forget that, in fact, one of the aspects of the national parks that is most important to our American-ness, to our patriotism, is the fact that they are landscapes of origin and of childhood for so many Americans. They are the places where we grew up. They are the places where we experienced our families in some of their most intimate locations. And where our families and our childhoods connected to what it means to be an American.<sup>20</sup>

Americans were finding themselves in these parks, creating a love affair with the places and the memories they held.

National parks and monuments were not, however, safe from all threats. As Alfred Runte has described it, the areas set aside by the NPS were often subject to the “worthless lands” idea: “Although Americans as a whole admit to the ‘beauty’ of the national parks, rarely have perceptions based on emotion overcome the urge to acquire

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<sup>18</sup> Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness*.

<sup>19</sup> Dayton Duncan and Ken Burns, *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*. DVD. Directed by Ken Burns. Hollywood: Paramount Home Entertainment, 2009.

<sup>20</sup> Duncan and Burns, *The National Parks: America’s Best Idea*.



wealth.”<sup>21</sup> The deep canyons and rushing waters that often made them so deserving of preservation also tended to make them attractive for other purposes. Even the most prominent jewels in the system—Yellowstone and Grand Canyon—had been targeted as perfect locations for industrial “improvements,” including dams. And in 1913, the City of San Francisco won the rights to dam the Tuolumne River in Yosemite National Park’s Hetch Hetchy Valley, over the vocal opposition of John Muir and other conservationists.<sup>22</sup> Beyond the scenic beauty of the valley, Muir and his colleagues argued that as part of Yosemite, Hetch Hetchy was protected from overdevelopment and (in this case) utter devastation. Their case was unsuccessful and part of the national park was deluged with water held back from the dam.

At about the same time water began filling the scenic valleys of Hetch Hetchy, paleontologists were uncovering one of the largest caches of dinosaur fossils on U.S. soil. In 1915 President Woodrow Wilson created a new national monument just east of tiny Vernal, Utah, to protect eighty acres surrounding a bed of recently discovered bones. According to the National Park Service, Dinosaur National Monument was the thirtieth national park or monument established (and the twenty-sixth in a Western state). This section of land would be the largest reserve of dinosaur bones in North America. Management and protection of the monument was handed over to the National Park Service one year later. Finally, in 1938, enormous sections of the Green and Yampa Rivers, more than 200,000 acres of soaring canyons such as Split Mountain, dramatic rock formations including Steamboat Rock in Echo Park, and magnificent scenery was

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<sup>21</sup> Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 49.

<sup>22</sup> Roderick Nash, *Wilderness & the American Mind*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001).

grafted onto the monument. According to Mark T. R. Harvey, “The preserve covered more than 360 square miles of northeast Utah and northwest Colorado, yet only a small corner contained deposits of dinosaur fossil bones. ‘Dinosaur’ was simply a misnomer.”<sup>23</sup> The monument, from its creation and expansion, was mislabeled and misunderstood.

In addition to being poorly named, Dinosaur National Monument had another hurdle: it was basically in the middle of nowhere. Uintah County, Utah, was home to 10,300 people in 1950. That’s only a fraction of the more than one million people who visited Yellowstone National Park in the same year.<sup>24</sup> Vernal, the closest city to Dinosaur, was a small town with a median family income of \$4,863 annually. The town—known to outsiders only as a footnote in the escapades of Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid—was dependent on mining, oil drilling, and agriculture for survival, and water was limited.<sup>25</sup>

### *Water and the West*

The first Anglo-Saxon settlers of record in this desolate region were Pardon Dodds, Morris Evans, and Dick Huffaker, representatives of the U.S. government. Sent to serve as a liaison with Indian nations, Dodds and crew settled in the area nestled in the Uinta Mountain Range and close to the Green River.<sup>26</sup> As more settlers moved west across the continent, it became abundantly clear that water would be scarce to find, difficult to manage, and impossible to keep. The rivers moved swiftly, dangerously, and they ran unpredictably. Like a system of arteries and veins, the water was tangled

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<sup>23</sup> Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness*, 15.

<sup>24</sup> The Yellowstone Page, “Yellowstone National Park Statistics,” <http://www.yellowstone-natl-park.com/stats.htm>, (accessed August 6, 2012).

<sup>25</sup> Judy Oaks, *Meet Vernal* (New York: Bonanza Books, 1981).

<sup>26</sup> Oaks, *Meet Vernal*.

throughout the land. Fights over when and where a river could be dammed or diverted began early and continued in earnest for decades. As early as 1878, major figures such as John Wesley Powell were urging the federal government to intervene and decide the fate of the Colorado River.<sup>27</sup> When Congress passed the Reclamation Act of 1902, it was an attempt to establish federal authority over the water management in the West, but what it really did was heighten the resentment of many people in Western states—they wanted the water without having to beg some New England senator for even a teaspoon.<sup>28</sup>

By 1922, the year of the Colorado River Compact, delegates from the basin states met to divvy up the water. The compact split the basin into two regions with the line between drawn at Lee’s Ferry in Arizona and devised a mathematical scheme for distributing the water. States in the Upper Colorado River Basin (UCRB) committed to allowing “75 million acre-feet of water to reach the lower basin every decade, or in more practical terms, 7.5 million acre-feet every year.”<sup>29</sup> This compact would frame water decisions for the foreseeable future and would be used to defend the need for water storage projects and dams in the UCRB to help guarantee enough water stayed upstream.

One federal law was not going to solve a problem rooted in a controversy that spanned generations. Settlers to this arid landscape struggled to irrigate the water from its raging source, and as more and more people came to the West, the debate grew more complicated. The unpredictable nature of the Colorado River varied so wildly from year to year meant that there was virtually no way to plan for dividing up the water equally among the states. With the water flowing from the Rockies in Northern Colorado, rushing

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<sup>27</sup> Norris Hundley Jr., *Water and the West: The Colorado River Compact and the Politics of Water in the American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

<sup>28</sup> Reisner, *Cadillac Desert*.

<sup>29</sup> Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness*, 27.

through and feeding tributaries in six parched states before emptying into the Gulf of California, there were heated arguments over which state was entitled to what amount of water. At the northern end, Coloradoans felt a sense of ownership over this water whose source was the Rocky Mountains. They were wary of signing onto any agreement that bound them to allow a specific amount of water to flow downstream, because they knew—more so, perhaps, than anyone else—how truly random that flow could be. People in the Upper Basin States (Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico) felt that the water they used to irrigate farmland benefited the country as a whole, and they feared that Lower Basin States (Arizona, California, and Nevada) were overdeveloping and would soon come to demand more water than was available.<sup>30</sup> Meanwhile, Lower Basin States residents were concerned that without some agreement, there was nothing to stop officials of Upper Basin States from simply damming up everything north of the Four Corners<sup>31</sup> until eventually nothing would be flowing in those riverbeds and the Southwest would be permanently parched.<sup>32</sup> As Helen Ingram explains, “The landowner’s

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<sup>30</sup> The controversy around the division of the water is complex, but can best be understood when evaporation rates are explained. The federal government was planning large storage projects along the rivers of the United States, with the Army Corps of Engineers largely managing rivers in the Midwest and East and the Bureau of Reclamation in the West. These projects created large, man-made lakes, and depending on their size the lakes lost tens- even hundreds-of-thousands of acre-feet of water annually to evaporation. California, for example, benefited greatly when Hoover Dam was constructed and Lake Mead was created. Arizonans felt that California’s water rights were based on the gross amount of water they took in, while California felt it was a net quantity. This is but one example of the complexity of water policy (and a simple one at that), but in desert states people battle fiercely over every drop. For more information on this battle, see Reisner, *Cadillac Desert*.

<sup>31</sup> The geographical area where the borders of Utah, Colorado, Arizona, and New Mexico meet.

<sup>32</sup> John Upton Terrell, *War for the Colorado River: Volume One The California-Arizona Controversy* (Glendale, CA: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1965).

inclination to claim all the water on his premises created special problems in the arid West where upstream development could leave downstream users high and dry.”<sup>33</sup>

The move to harness nature was not one of lock-step unison across the country, however. The debate over how to equally divide the waters of the arid West included whether and how to protect the national parks and monuments. But it also involved a debate between Eastern and Western states. Beyond concern for the actual water, Westerners were proud of the fact that they had built the West and they believed it belonged to them.<sup>34</sup> In an apparent contradiction, however, they also wanted federal projects to help modernize the land, creating easier access to water, power and transportation. Many local leaders were aware of the economic boom that had come as a result of projects in the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA), “the showpiece of the New Deal’s resource program,” and they wanted a piece of the action, as it were.<sup>35</sup> But many Westerners were also distrusting of any federal control over that land. Norris Hundley described it as an “attempt to get the purse without the purse strings.”<sup>36</sup> This desire came into natural conflict with Senators and Representatives from the East, who objected on the grounds of preservation or fiscal responsibility. Battles over wise use, multiple use, or just plain use of natural resources would see dividing lines shift depending on the details, but generally speaking, the loudest voices in the West called for exploitation of resources to serve the greater good while Easterners argued against the federal government paying

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<sup>33</sup> Helen Ingram, “Patterns of Politics in Water Resources Development” *Natural Resources Journal* 102, (1971), 104.

<sup>34</sup> Reisner, *Cadillac Desert*.

<sup>35</sup> Richardson, *Dams, Parks, and Politics*.

<sup>36</sup> Norris Hundley Jr., *Water and the West: The Colorado River Compact and the Politics of Water in the American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975), xii-xiii.

for projects that would both destroy landscapes and benefit only Western states.<sup>37</sup>

According to Ingram, “Localities in the same river basin or adjacent basins where diversion is possible fiercely compete for water supply and development funds.”<sup>38</sup> As the battle raged out West, the fight for funding and congressional approval erupted in Washington, D.C.

### *Waging War: Modernization and Water*

During the early twentieth century, the United States experienced a cultural shift that brought new emphasis on national growth and expansion, modernization and technology. As Bob Reinhardt described it, “Deeper cultural emphases on economic growth and ideological consensus combined with anxieties about national security to create an environment marked by both hope and fear.”<sup>39</sup>

In a nation waging a Cold War, policy decisions were often fueled by fear and water policy was no exception. According to Hal K. Rothman, “Dams in particular could be construed as nationally important in the context of the Cold War, at its height in the 1950s; they were a symbol of the might of American industrialism, and the energy they produced could be harnessed in an instant to fight the Soviet threat.”<sup>40</sup> Both sides of the debate hurled accusations of communism at each other—supporters of Reclamation

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<sup>37</sup> This is not to say that all Westerners supported Reclamation projects. One prominent example is Bernard DeVoto, a native Utahn, historian, and journalist who argued passionately against the large federal projects and in favor of conservationists. DeVoto’s position caused great ire in his home state and even led the *Salt Lake Tribune* to denounce him and declare him no longer welcome or safe in Utah. See Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness*, 94.

<sup>38</sup> Ingram, “Patterns of Politics in Water Resources Development,” 103.

<sup>39</sup> Bob H. Reinhardt, “Drowned Towns in the Cold War West: Small Communities and Federal Water Projects” *The Western Historical Quarterly*, 42, no. 2 (2011):149-72.

<sup>40</sup> Hal K. Rothman, *The Greening of a Nation? Environmentalism in the United States Since 1945* (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1998), 38.

projects claimed that opponents were failing to contribute to the nation's defense, while opponents of the same projects argued that using federal money to build hydroelectric dams and create a government monopoly of the market was the very definition of communism.<sup>41</sup> There was precedent, however, in the Tennessee Valley Authority (TVA). As part of the New Deal, the federal government financed large dams throughout the valley to produce hydroelectric power for residents and scientists. As Thomas Robertson described it, "The TVA, a crucial part of the Manhattan Project, came to symbolize governmental resource planning for national security purposes."<sup>42</sup> Each part of the federal government felt an obligation to contribute to the nation's military preparedness, particularly in the West where work on the atomic bomb demanded more accessible hydroelectric power. Large dams along the Columbia River in the Pacific Northwest were necessary for factories that produced aluminum for airplanes and the plutonium used in the bombs.<sup>43</sup>

The war effort and industrialization had led to an economic boom and America's prosperity was due, in large part, to its citizens' ability to conquer nature. Everywhere people turned, they were confronted with a new and impressive example of Yankee know-how creating a more livable space. The first cover of *Life* magazine, published in 1936, featured a photograph of the Fort Peck Dam on the Missouri River in eastern Montana. During the 1930s and '40s, the covers of *Fortune* magazine included artists' renderings of new freeway systems, an iron smelter, a city skyline bathed in neon, and a dammed river viewed from above. Articles extolled the virtues of capitalism and the

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<sup>41</sup> Richardson, *Dams, Parks, and Politics*.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Robertson, "'This is the American Earth': American Empire, the Cold War, and American Environmentalism," *Diplomatic History*, 32, no. 4, (2008): 561-84.

<sup>43</sup> Reinhardt, "Drowned Towns in the Cold War West."

technological advances made with New Deal water projects. The romanticized coverage of industrialization in major magazines is just one example of the new American spirit of controlling nature and using it for modernization.<sup>44</sup> These magazines reached millions of American homes and provided not only a stylized version of industry, but text filled with business boosting and—though Publisher Henry Luce was a staunch conservative—reluctant support of New Deal programs.<sup>45</sup> Michael Augspurger has argued that these magazines and the images they presented played a major role in defining the relationship among business, professionals, and the general public: “The stress on unity and commitment to the nation may have blurred the political rhetoric and ideals of various groups, but the core political beliefs remained.”<sup>46</sup> The “core beliefs” presented in both these magazines were capitalism’s ability to improve the lives of Americans and its importance over other considerations, including environmental concerns.

Water policy presented a perfect quandary: the decision between proper use of resources and environmental conservation. American environmental thought is often centered on the distribution of public versus private goods. As William Sunderlin presented it, the issue is whether a market system is guided by an invisible hand and as such represents the best for the majority or if the value of the environment is in its uniqueness to each individual person.<sup>47</sup> Bob Pepperman Taylor divided it as a pastoral

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<sup>44</sup> Examples and reproductions of the covers of *Life*, *Fortune*, and *Time* magazines can be found at <http://www.life.time.com> and Spivey’s Rare Books <http://www.spiveysbooks.com>.

<sup>45</sup> Chris Vials, “The Popular Front in the American Century: *Life* Magazine, Margaret Bourke-White, and Consumer Realism, 1936-1941,” *American Periodicals*, 16, no. 1, (2006): 74-102.

<sup>46</sup> Michael Augspurger, *An Economy of Abundant Beauty: Fortune Magazine and Depression America* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2004), 130.

<sup>47</sup> William D. Sunderlin, *Ideology, Social Theory, and the Environment* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2003).



versus progressive view.<sup>48</sup> The pastoral view is represented by Henry David Thoreau and his belief in wilderness as idyllic and inspirational. According to Thoreau, people cannot truly live in cities and communities, they need the solitude and escape of wilderness to remain centered and moral. Thoreau's view is that nature is something to be left untouched.<sup>49</sup> Conversely, Gifford Pinchot was seen as the champion of early twentieth-century environmental thought—a theory that sees nature as something to be appreciated, but managed. Pinchot's belief was that scientific management could be used to create a system that both protected beauty in nature and provided valuable resources for consumption. The two theories approach the relationship between humans and nature very differently.

This question of how humans have interacted with and discussed the environment is central to the topic of public policy. It is a debate over the purpose of wilderness and its resources, and whether or how they should be used. The very existence of the Department of the Interior, whose purpose was to protect important natural and historical sites and the National Parks System, would suggest that the latter view holds greater sway in the U.S. Since the twentieth century, public policy in the United States has trended toward Pinchot's wise use theory. Elmo Richardson described postwar environmental policy as based on

protecting forests, soil, and water supply, and in constructing roads and other facilities near thousands of communities. Only a few purists objected to the way in which these projects altered the ecology of the areas involved. Most Americans—whether Democrats or Republicans—were pleased that the work enhanced property values and aided local businesses.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Bob Pepperman Taylor, *Our Limits Transgressed: Environmental Political Thought in America* (Lexington: University Press of Kansas, 1992).

<sup>49</sup> Henry David Thoreau, *Walden and Other Writings*, ed. Joseph W. Krutch. (New York: Bantam, 1981).

<sup>50</sup> Richardson, *Dams, Parks, and Politics*, 2-3.

By 1940 it was clear that developing natural resources for economic and tourist purposes would be a major government initiative, and projects were proposed at an almost astronomical rate.<sup>51</sup> These projects would not be without detractors, though, and by the 1950s those detractors had found each other and, for the first time it seemed, they were organized.

Since the beginning of the nation, the American people have been noted as a nation of joiners. Alexis de Tocqueville noted that

Americans of all ages, all conditions, all minds constantly unite. Not only do they have commercial and industrial associations in which all take part, but they also have a thousand other kinds: religious, moral, grave, futile, very general and very particular, immense and very small; ... if it is a question of bringing to light a truth or developing a sentiment with the support of a great example, they associate.<sup>52</sup>

Americans who wished to advance an idea or a cause could find a group of likeminded individuals with whom to join and work toward a common ideal: And what de Tocqueville noted in the 1800s continued on into the 1900s. The early half of the twentieth century was a time growth not only in industry, but in civic association. Robert Putnam noted that, with the exception of the decade surrounding the Great Depression, the number of social organizations in the United States grew each year.<sup>53</sup>

The American economic and civic boom reached a crescendo in the late 1940s and '50s and membership groups took full advantage of this new community boosterism. According to surveys conducted in 1961 and 1965, 80 percent of Americans identified themselves as a member of at least one voluntary association and nearly half (46 percent)

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Alexis de Tocqueville, trans. Henry Reeve, *Democracy in America*, (New York: Colonial Press, 1890) 114.

<sup>53</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

belonged to three or more groups.<sup>54</sup> Groups of the 1950s and 1960s were characterized by individual memberships, local chapters, and high levels of commitment.<sup>55</sup> Organizations kept in close contact with members through the use of regular newsletters or magazines. These magazines—often free with the price of an annual membership, but also available to the public with a paid subscription—kept members informed about important issues, provided tips for making one’s hobby more successful, and issued reports on the groups’ activities. In the days before Twitter, Facebook, and a group website, this was a common mode of communication for membership groups.<sup>56</sup> The ability of groups to influence members to act would prove important in policy battles and by the 1950s the principal rule of public activism would be to “fight battles in the press where the public can make its own decisions.”<sup>57</sup> The battle over Dinosaur National Monument would be fought in the press, but its army would be mobilized in the publications of the organizations.

### *Study Design and Method*

Almost from the moment the Bureau of Reclamation proposed the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP), there was opposition from conservation groups. But it wasn’t until 1949, after the Bureau and local newspapers in Salt Lake City, Utah, and Denver, Colorado, began promoting the project that conservationists launched a vigorous campaign involving political pressure and public action. Many groups concerned with wilderness issues joined together to wage a five-year public campaign to stop the dams in

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<sup>54</sup> Nicholas Babchuk and Alan Booth, “Voluntary Association Membership: A Longitudinal Analysis,” *American Sociological Review* 34, (1969): 31-45

<sup>55</sup> Putnam, *Bowling Alone*.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Rothman, *The Greening of a Nation?*, 46.

Dinosaur.<sup>58</sup> As environmentalist Roderick Nash noted, “Friends of the wilderness realized that their only hope lay in carrying their case before Congress and the public.”<sup>59</sup>

Conservation groups, which had fought unsuccessfully to save Hetch Hetchy, saw the CRSP, and Echo Park and Split Mountain Dams specifically, as another move to sidestep the National Park Service (NPS).<sup>60</sup> The NPS found itself in the familiar scenario of scrapping against fellow agencies in the Department of Interior for attention and resources. The Bureau of Reclamation, the agency behind the CRSP, had a track record of attempting to locate projects in various national parks<sup>61</sup> and the NPS was largely hamstrung in the fight. It was a battle for the soul of the national parks: If national parks were not free from development and dam building, what land was?<sup>62</sup>

In November 1955, a group of organizations formed a coalition known as the Council of Conservationists (CoC) to fight certain components of the Colorado River Storage Project. The CoC had ten major groups: the American Museum of Natural History, the American Nature Association, the American Planning and Civic Association, the Audubon Society, the Conservation Foundation, the Izaak Walton League, the National Park Association, the National Wildlife Federation, the Sierra Club, and the

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<sup>58</sup> Neel, “Utah and the Echo Park Dam Controversy.”

<sup>59</sup> Nash, *Wilderness & the American Mind*.

<sup>60</sup> While both Echo Park and Split Mountain dams were part of the CRSP, the battle centered largely on Echo Park because the Split Mountain dam was dependent upon the Echo Park project—killing Echo Park would kill them both.

<sup>61</sup> After the Hetch Hetchy dam in Yosemite National Park, the Bureau of Reclamation proposed projects in other parks including Grand Canyon National Park, Glacier National Park, Capitol Reef National Monument, Arches National Monument, and Olympic National Park. Richardson, *Dams, Parks, and Politics*.

<sup>62</sup> Jared Farmer, *Glen Canyon Damned: Inventing Lake Powell and the Canyon Country* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1999).

Wilderness Society.<sup>63</sup> This coalition brought together groups dedicated to the preservation of historical artifacts, committed to proper planning and conservation of land, protection of primeval parks in the national park system, and concern for wild areas as habitat for animals.<sup>64</sup>

This dissertation expands on a previous pilot study that analyzed the public communication of a coalition of the members of the CoC and their resistance to the proposed Echo Park and Split Mountain Dams as part of the CRSP.<sup>65</sup> The initial study used a sample of articles from the Audubon Society's *Audubon Magazine* and the Wilderness Society's magazine *The Living Wilderness* from the years 1952-1956. The study revealed that the Wilderness Society, with an avowed mission to protect wild areas in the United States, dedicated much more print space than the Audubon Society to Dinosaur National Monument. Second, the coverage in both magazines showed similar patterns of message framing in the three distinct areas of collective action frame theory.<sup>66</sup>

First, conservation groups made a conscious choice not to fight the entire CRSP, but instead they focused on protecting Dinosaur National Monument as a bellwether for

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<sup>63</sup> The Conservation Foundation is no longer an organization of record and no primary sources could be located for analysis.

<sup>64</sup> This dissertation will use terms such as "environmentalist," "preservationist," and "conservationist" interchangeably, as the groups self-identified themselves using all three. While scholars have since drawn distinctions between the terms, in an effort to preserve the historical accuracy, this project will use the labels they selected for themselves.

<sup>65</sup> Debra E. Jenson, "The Campaign Against Echo Park Dam and Collective Action Frame Theory: A Historical Analysis," *Southwestern Mass Communication Journal*, 25 (Spring 2010): 69-81.

<sup>66</sup> Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, "Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization," *International Social Movement Reserves* 1 (1988): 197-218. Collective action frame theory suggests that organizations that successfully motivate supporters to action do so by using three frames for messages: diagnostic, prognostic, and mobilizing. These frames identify the cause and solution to the problem, as well as suggest specific action for constituents to make.

future encroachments on the national park system. Next, the groups engaged in prognostic framing in two major ways: by challenging the technical data regarding evaporation rates presented by the Bureau of Reclamation and by identifying an alternative site that was both outside a national monument and had a lower evaporation rate. Finally, conservation groups engaged in mobilizing behavior by encouraging people to write letters, send telegrams, and ask friends to write on behalf of the threatened national monument.<sup>67</sup> The pilot study showed that the Wilderness Society and Audubon Society used similar communication frames in the battle over Echo Park, but multiple groups and organizations rose in opposition to the project.

This qualitative historical study analyzes how CoC member organizations communicated directly with their members by examining the magazines or newsletters published by the organizations during the most contentious years of 1950-1956. The primary sources included eight magazines and one regular newsletter and their content: traditional articles, editorials, letters to the editor, illustrations, and reproductions of correspondence between government officials. The magazines ranged from full-color publications that featured largely entertainment and informative articles to a bi-weekly newsletter that had no illustrations but reported in detail on roll-call votes and reports on subcommittee hearings. This dissertation also analyzes several key primary sources that were discovered during the pilot study, including a handwritten note from Howard Zahniser, executive director of the Wilderness Society, that was published in an issue of *The Living Wilderness*, urging individuals to contact their government representatives about the CRSP. The analysis attempts to understand the struggle waged by

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<sup>67</sup> Jenson, "The Campaign Against Echo Park Dam and Collective Action Frame Theory."

environmental groups through analysis of the messages they sent directly to their members and most ardent supporters. It has been studied as an example of local political groups attempting to logroll their federal representatives into a publicly-funded dam that would bring about a local economic boom and create a new destination for recreation.<sup>68</sup> The fight has been used to demonstrate the influence that water use has had on American policies on preservation and conservation.<sup>69</sup> It has also been analyzed through the communication of elites, between conservation leaders and government representatives, and has been pointed to as the birth of the modern conservation movement.<sup>70</sup> Previous treatments of the Echo Park Dam controversy have largely excluded these gems possibly because they were focused on the politics or the so-called Great Men of the day. The preservation of Dinosaur National Monument was due, in large part, to public outcry—as Nash noted, the mail running to House members was 80 to 1 against the dam.<sup>71</sup> Including in this analysis the organizations that engaged in the public campaign, which helped drive this sentiment, can give a unique glimpse into the strategies and even the emotional nature of the communication.

The historical method used in this study involved gathering all issues of the magazines and newsletters listed above for the seven-year period, 415 issues in total. Each issue was reviewed to collect any items that referenced the CRSP, Dinosaur National Monument, Glen Canyon, Echo Park or Split Mountain dams, or the CoC. The items ranged from editorials to multipage articles with photographs, from reproductions of congressional testimony to letters to the editor written by members. Once collected,

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<sup>68</sup> Neel, “Utah and the Echo Park Dam Controversy.”

<sup>69</sup> Richardson, *Dams, Parks, and Politics*.

<sup>70</sup> Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness*.

<sup>71</sup> Nash, *Wilderness & the American Mind*.

these items were then photocopied for detailed reading and analysis. The study focuses on how the CoC members used their publications to build an argument against encroachments into the NPS and motivate their readers to become personally involved in the campaign. Combined, these resources reveal new information about the campaign to save Dinosaur, and by extension, the Park Service. This information is useful in understanding one of the first major victories of the modern environmental movement and identifying communication strategies that have already proven successful in achieving policy change.<sup>72</sup>

The battle over Dinosaur National Monument in the 1950s is an important moment in the conservation movement in the United States, but it has been, for the most part, lost to the annals of history for environmentalists. Such an event, with its importance to a political movement and the modern history of the Western United States, should be given greater attention and analysis. As Richard Bradley put it, “Echo Park really kind of put conservation on the front page for the first time, instead of something back with the obituaries.”<sup>73</sup> The campaign gave activists a long-awaited victory over a powerful government agency and helped to create the modern environmental movement. This dissertation will give a more in-depth understanding of the campaign, the groups involved, and the strategies used to wage the battle.

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<sup>72</sup> While organizations had effected change—as in the case of the birth of the Audubon Society following a campaign to encourage women not to wear hats with real bird feathers—the Echo Park battle is recognized as one of the first examples of a coalition of multiple groups achieving environmental policy change.

<sup>73</sup> Duncan and Burns, *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*.



### *Chapter Outline*

Chapter 2 will address historical methodology. The value of historical work lies in examining “our feeling for the relationship of events in time, both for the continuity of human experience and its immense variety.”<sup>74</sup> The long, slow soak of historical work allows researchers to attempt to view the past truthfully, with as little influence from the present as possible. History puts the events of the past in context so that we may understand the importance of what has happened and the role it plays in what is happening now.

Chapters 3 through 11 will investigate the publications of nine of the Council of Conservationists. Each of the groups published either a magazine or a newsletter and the 415 total issues gathered were then analyzed for any reference to Dinosaur National Monument, Echo Park Dam, the Colorado River Storage Project, or the CoC. The reading examined the organization’s communication to members to understand the strategies and themes that mobilized these members.

Chapter 12 will provide an overview of the major themes that appeared throughout the campaign as a whole, to explain the most prominent arguments used. The conclusion will compare the findings of this campaign from the 1950s and relate them to current policy discussions. The debates around environmental legislation and administrative programs rage on today—from attempted alterations to the Antiquities Act of 1906 to the Keystone Pipeline and oil leases in national park territory—it is possible that the arguments used to motivate the public to act in defense of the environment could

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<sup>74</sup> R.J. Shafer, *A Guide to Historical Method: Revised Edition* (Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1974), 1.

be informative to present-day activists of all topics. This dissertation will work to connect successful strategies of the past in an effort to better prepare the activists of the future.

## CHAPTER 2

### HISTORICAL METHOD AND THEMATIC ANALYSIS

Our histories serve the double purpose, which written histories have always served, of keeping alive the recollection of memorable men and events.

—Carl Becker, *Everyman His Own Historian*

To appreciate the role of environmental organizations in the defeat of the Echo Park Dam project, this dissertation requires collection and analysis of documents more than fifty years old. The value of such an endeavor can be found in Carl Becker's conundrum that history is the "unconscious and necessary effort on the part of 'society' to understand what it is doing in the light of what it has done and what it hopes to do."<sup>75</sup> In the years before email blasts, Facebook pages, tweets on Twitter, and flash mobs, how did organizations mobilize their publics for policy change? A historical analysis of the communication of these environmental organizations can provide greater understanding of past successful (and unsuccessful) attempts to influence policymakers, and achieve policy change. In short, historical analysis can provide context for present-day challenges.

Questions abound inside the community of historical researchers as to the use of theory and quantitative information in historical research, the role of the researcher, and the relationship between scientific research methods and generalization of historical

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<sup>75</sup> Carl Becker, "Everyman His Own Historian," *The American Historical Review* 37 (Jan. 1932): 235.

knowledge.<sup>76</sup> One vital question for historians centers on the purpose of history. Is it a field of study for elites and ivory-tower academics? Norman Wilson identifies six reasons for studying history, including “showing that change is one constant of the human experience,” “highlighting differences over periods of time,” “depicting the past as a foreign land and revealing the evolution to the present,” “showing how historically conditioned our own situation is” to “understand ourselves as part of a society formed through time,” and finally, to “create a collective memory that does not overburden us.”<sup>77</sup> All of Wilson’s reasons revolve around the uniqueness and interconnectedness of the human experience. Knowledge of history highlights how similar we are—both across physical borders and time—and how those humans who have come before us created the society in which we live. It has been argued that “there is a demonstrated need for more comparative studies that assess communication behavior and issues across multiple cultures and longitudinally.”<sup>78</sup>

Because we are dependent on the recollections and records left by others, others whose witness and memory are dependent on context and creed, we cannot ever truly *know* what occurred in the past. Historians attempt to satisfy “our feeling for the relationship of events in time, both for the continuity of human experience and its immense variety.”<sup>79</sup> However, understanding the history of humans and how we came to be the creatures we are in the cultures we inhabit has proven valuable. Kitson Clark

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<sup>76</sup> Communication history and history will be used interchangeably in this study.

<sup>77</sup> Norman J. Wilson, *History in Crisis? Recent Directions in Historiography* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1999), 4-6.

<sup>78</sup> Tony Atwater, “Communication Theory and Research: The Quest for Increased Credibility in the Social Sciences,” in *An Integrated Approach to Communication Theory and Research*, ed. Michael B. Salwen and Don W. Stacks (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1996), 543.

<sup>79</sup> R. J. Shafer, *A Guide to Historical Method: Revised Edition* (Homewood, IL: The Dorsey Press, 1974), 1.

declared that, “In very many matters the labours of scholars have produced a version of history which is a better guide to what really happened, a more secure basis for thought and action.”<sup>80</sup> Good historical work will not only ask an interesting question, it will also find a new way to answer that question through new sources and narratives or new analysis.

One of the most important things historians do is to use past events to give context to contemporary discussions.<sup>81</sup> This context has “aided man to adjust his life to a changing world, and the study of history in particular affords a mental discipline that helps him meet new problems soberly and intelligently instead of emotionally and superficially.”<sup>82</sup> There are those who claim, though, that these new problems are not exactly new. As R. J. Shafer argued, “the greatest function of historical study is as an addition to experience, tending to an appreciation of the existence in the past of the race of many confrontations with problems similar to our own.” This leads to an “elimination of the supposition that all current problems are uniquely terrible in the history of man.”<sup>83</sup> History has the ability to allow humans to look at themselves in relation to their progenitors and perhaps to enlighten the impact of decisions yet to come. This study investigates past experiences from one of the earliest campaigns of the modern conservation movement: the fight to stop the federal government from building two dams inside Dinosaur National Monument as part of the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP). This project is an exploration of the communication environmental groups used

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<sup>80</sup> Kitson Clark, *The Critical Historian* (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1967), 10.

<sup>81</sup> Michael Sweeney, “Everyman His Own Historian—Not! A Defense of Our Profession—And a Plea for Its Future.” *American Journalism* (Winter 2006), 143-148.

<sup>82</sup> Homer C. Hockett, *The Critical Method in Historical Research and Writing* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1967), 4.

<sup>83</sup> Shafer, *Guide to Historical Method*, 14.

in the 1950s to mobilize their members in defense of the National Park System and will provide a window into the ways groups conversed in the past.

The study of history has gone from aiming for exact reproduction dependent upon eyewitness accounts, to a focus on authority figures establishing appropriate accounts of history. Both treated history as something that would follow a predictable line. The discipline then made a move away from authority and began focusing on evidence, even at the risk of displeasing the power structure. According to Homer Hockett, “The historian like the geologist interprets past events by the traces they have left; he deals with the evidences of man’s past acts and thoughts. *But the historian, no less than the scientist, must utilize evidence resting on reliable observation.*”<sup>84</sup> While other researchers have addressed the controversy surrounding Dinosaur and the CRSP, most have done so through the lens of government elites and policy-makers. Analyzing the communication strategies of conservation groups, largely outside the power structure, gives new understanding to the way nonelites talked about the controversy and the way it was presented to conservationists.

The historical method is unique in that it cannot possibly hope to attain objective reproduction of its subject. To say that historical research is subjective should not be mistaken as being unreliable or untrue; as such the aim is “to get as close an approximation to the truth about the past as constant correction of his mental images will allow, at the same time recognizing that that truth has in fact eluded him forever.”<sup>85</sup> The research process has been parsed and detailed by many a historical scholar. For Louis Gottschalk, there are four steps: subject selection, source collection, source verification,

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<sup>84</sup> Hockett, *Critical Method*, 8. Original emphasis.

<sup>85</sup> Louis Gottschalk, *Understanding History: A Primer of Historical Method*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1969), 47.

and source extraction. Topic selection should focus on a researcher's ability to investigate the subject and its significance both to the past and society today. When collecting sources, researchers should aim for primary sources whenever possible because "they are contemporaneous . . . in close proximity to some past occurrence."<sup>86</sup> The value in a primary source lies in its relationship to the topic, and its ability to give "first-hand understanding."<sup>87</sup> Secondary sources, while valuable, are more susceptible to questions of authenticity—a major concern when interpreting events of the past. Because the process involves interpretation, the rigor of historical research is occasionally challenged. David Sloan and Michael Stamm counter that there are ways to ensure academic precision. They include gathering a "sufficiently exhaustive" collection of sources, recognizing "possible alternative explanations," and understanding the "various geographical, economic, religious, social, cultural, and political forces" that helped shape the issue or event.<sup>88</sup>

Gottschalk's four steps are dependent on the researcher to determine the authenticity of the information and artifacts gathered and then to uncover some new information or identify a new vantage point around the subject. Extraction requires a willingness to abandon the major narratives of history. Several scholars have urged researchers to move beyond traditional interpretations of events to create a new cultural history.<sup>89</sup> This should look past the dates and names of prominent actors and seek to give context, flesh, and feeling to the actions. One example of this research is James W.

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<sup>86</sup> Wm. David Sloan and James D. Startt, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Northport, AL: Vision Press, 2010), 194.

<sup>87</sup> Sloan and Startt, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*, 196.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid*, 236.

<sup>89</sup> For an impassioned argument in favor of unique interpretations of historical narratives, see J.W. Carey's "The Problem of Journalism History," *Journalism History* 1 (Spring, 1974), 3-5, 27. A more recent review of Carey's argument, and the many responses it inspired, can be found in David Paul Nord's "James Carey and Journalism History: A Remembrance," *Journalism History*, 32, (Fall 2006), 122-127.

Davidson and Mark H. Lytle's tracing of the evolution of the historical narrative of Andrew Jackson.<sup>90</sup> They begin with Fredrick Jackson Turner's landmark theory of the American West and his claim that Jackson's behavior is evidence of this Frontier Spirit, providing ample support for Turner's conclusions. But Davidson and Lytle then compare the frontier Jackson to later research that gave a strong argument for the foppish Jackson or even the class-warrior Jackson. Both theories were originally presented as evidence of a larger theme of Jackson's time, but Davidson and Lytle argue they actually mirror the presentism of the researchers. The many interpretations of Jackson lead to the conclusion that historical research will never be exact in the same way the natural sciences are. Past events have sometimes been interpreted in terms of modern values and concepts. Indeed, there is no single version of history.

Another challenge to the historical method lies in the gathering of primary sources. In her thirty years of research on the life and career of public relations practitioner Doris E. Fleischman, Susan Henry admits to over-reliance on official, sanctioned sources, including books authored by her husband, the PR pioneer Edward Bernays. Once Henry gathered and analyzed private, unpublished documents from Fleischman's later years, she discovered a more complete picture of the woman that gave context and explanation to her life as a whole. Henry argues that historians need to expand their focus to include outside and unofficial sources. Researchers must learn to search beyond the traditional items of record: *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times* can only tell us so much about events of the day. In order to fully understand a historical subject, researchers need to turn to personal or unofficial sources of

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<sup>90</sup> J. W. Davidson and M. H. Lytle, Jackson's Frontier—and Turner's," in *After the Fact: The Art of Historical Detection*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston: McGraw-Hill).



information. By analyzing the publications of the member groups of the Council of Conservationists, instead of the media representations and legislative records of the campaign, this study will provide a more complete picture of the strategic communication and specific messages used to mobilize their publics.

This dissertation will utilize a thematic analysis to interpret the publications of CoC groups to better understand the campaign to defeat the proposed Echo Park and Split Mountain dams inside Dinosaur National Monument. Thematic analysis is a “method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in rich detail.”<sup>91</sup> This method is noted for its flexibility—allowing researchers the freedom to read sources deeply to identify essential ideas and supporting subcategories—as well as its rigor, requiring multiple passes at analysis and interpretation.<sup>92</sup> Thematic analysis has been used in several disciplines, including health sciences and history.<sup>93</sup> While it is new to communication, it is ideal for research that works to provide a nonlinear description and interpretation of narrative materials that is not limited or driven by previous theoretical claims.<sup>94</sup>

The deep, close reading of sources in historical research is time consuming and differs from quantitative research in that it does not begin with a theoretical framework.

In order to avoid being limited to previous conceptions of characters and events,

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<sup>91</sup> Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology,” *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3 (2006): 79.

<sup>92</sup> Mojtaba Vaismoradi, Hannele Turunen, and Terese Bondas, “Content Analysis and Thematic Analysis: Implications for Conducting a Qualitative Descriptive Study,” *Nursing & Health Sciences* 15 (September 2013): 398-405.

<sup>93</sup> For a historical use of thematic analysis, see Steven Wallech, Craig Hendricks, Anne Lynne Negus, Peter Wan, Touraj Daryaei, and Gordon Morris Bakken, *World History, A Concise Thematic Analysis* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013).

<sup>94</sup> Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, 399.

researchers attempt to approach their topic with the proverbial “blank slate.” According to David Sloan and Michael Stamm,

the good historian does not set out with a theory and marshal facts to fit it. The best history is always a search for truth. As facts are gathered to find the truth, they may lead to a theory, but theory should never be used to determine facts. Interpretation arises instead from the gathered facts.<sup>95</sup>

This inductive approach to research is especially appropriate for understanding groups that have been marginalized or operate outside of the mainstream. Historians who have studied progressive issues have addressed this problem—researching the struggle of “equality against the powerful forces of wealth and class.”<sup>96</sup> Theory is often developed through a lens of the powerful. Environmental groups, first labeled as such in the 1960s, operate and attempt to create social change in a “dominant social structure [that] is more responsive to powerful upper-class interests and less likely to heed the call for change when it comes from outside its own class.”<sup>97</sup> During the Dinosaur fight, the disparate conservation organizations that made up the Council of Conservationists would have been seen as neither upper class nor mainstream. They were not the policymakers, they were the outside agitators attempting to persuade their publics.

The narrative materials analyzed for this dissertation were the membership publications of the groups comprising the Council of Conservationists (CoC) from 1950 to 1956. While the Dinosaur controversy raged, CoC groups published more than 400 issues of magazines and newsletters. These materials were gathered from libraries across the western United States. Each issue was read for any items related to Dinosaur National Monument, Echo Park or Split Mountain dams, the Colorado River Storage Project, and

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<sup>95</sup> Sloan and Stamm, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*, 24.

<sup>96</sup> Sloan and Stamm, *Historical Methods in Mass Communication*, 34.

<sup>97</sup> Julia B. Corbett, *Communicating Nature: How we Create and Understand Environmental Messages* (Washington, D. C.: Island Press), 285.

recreation areas in Eastern and Southern Utah including Glen Canyon and Navajo Canyon.<sup>98</sup> All articles related to these topics were then photocopied and organized chronologically by publication.

The second read of the materials looked for unique passages. A passage was deemed unique if it possessed originality, a repetition from another source, or if it used a distinctive appeal. These passages were then entered into a spreadsheet for labeling. For each publication, passages were read individually and a label was assigned. Initial categories identified included “national park system,” “value,” “spiritual,” “alternatives,” “bureaucracy,” and “posterity.” If a passage did not fit in a category already identified, a new category that best described that passage was created. Next, passages were reviewed by category to ensure similarities existed and to rule-out repetition or overlap.

To identify major themes for each publication, categories were then analyzed for overarching ideas. For example, the categories of “spiritual” and “beauty” often expressed a larger idea of the “value of nature to humanity” and so were combined into one larger theme of “Value of Nature.” The passages in that theme were mined for compelling and representative examples of the narrative of the newsletter or magazine. The themes of each publication were then compared to identify any similarities across groups or explainable differences between groups. In all, of the hundreds of articles, thousands of passages were read for categorization and thematic analysis. As recurring themes were identified, frame theory emerged as a way to study the overall communication of the groups.

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<sup>98</sup> Both were sites of another proposed CRSP dams. Glen Canyon Dam, that created Lake Powell, would be the bargain that conservationists struck to save Dinosaur.

Framing theory is the idea that “an issue can be viewed from a variety of perspectives and be construed as having implications for multiple values or considerations.”<sup>99</sup> Linguist George Lakoff argued that a frame includes “a message, an audience, a messenger, a medium, images, a context, and especially, higher-level moral and conceptual frames.”<sup>100</sup> Each of these elements helps create our understanding of an event or idea. Beyond the interpretation, though, Dennis Chong and James Druckman argue that frames have the ability to “affect the attitudes and behaviors of their audiences.”<sup>101</sup> If, as Julia Corbett argued, the goal of conservation groups is to create social change, then framing would be an appropriate theoretical concept for examining the communication of these groups. Indeed, researchers have found that not only are frames used by groups, but that the public responds to frames and can form opinions that match those frames.<sup>102</sup> Robert Benford and David Snow claimed that framing is “a central dynamic in understanding the character and course of social movements.”<sup>103</sup> Finally, according to Jennifer Jerit, differing groups will frame an issue differently. This includes varying framing strategies from political elites and policymakers compared to interest groups. These frames are discussed fully in the conclusion chapter.

The battle to keep dams out of Dinosaur National Monument was waged by conservation groups across the country. The groups varied greatly in area of interest and

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<sup>99</sup> Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman, “Framing Theory,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (June 2007): 104.

<sup>100</sup> George Lakoff, “Simple Framing: An Introduction to Framing and Its Uses in Politics,” *Rockridge Institute* 14 (2006).

<sup>101</sup> Chong and Druckman, “Framing Theory,” 109.

<sup>102</sup> Arjen E. Buijs, “Public Support for River Restoration. A Mixed-Method Study into Local Residents’ Support for and Framing of River Management and Ecological Restoration in the Dutch Floodplains,” *Journal of Environmental Management* 90 (June 2009): 2680-2689.

<sup>103</sup> Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, “Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment,” *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26, no. 1 (2000): 612.

expertise, as well as style and formality. Yet nine organizations joined together to stop a billion dollar federal project that was considered by many to be vital, to the survival of Western states and even the country itself. This campaign is one of the first for modern conservationists in America. And its victory was the death knell for Glen Canyon, one of the greatest recreation losses in the history of the United States. Analyzing the communication strategies used by a consortium of disparate conservation groups, and how they out-maneuvered two powerful federal agencies and passionate local lawmakers, will help provide a greater understanding of the events themselves, and possibly a blueprint for future environmental campaigns.

## CHAPTER 3

### THE SIERRA CLUB: HOW DAVID HELPED SLAY GOLIATH

People, more than we'll ever know, were writing the letters and showing the pictures and riding the river and telling the other people who wrote still more letters and talked to still more people all of whom, in the nameless but undeniable aggregate, chalked up the National Park System's biggest victory.

—David Brower, *Sierra Club Bulletin*

On a cold Wednesday in January 1954, Sierra Club Executive Director David Brower stood before the House Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation. He scribbled furiously at a blackboard. Brower had been invited back to testify for a third time in two days. At several points during the Tuesday hearing, committee members expressed concern that they were getting lost in the math. The solution was to find the only blackboard available at the Capitol Building so that lawmakers could see the numbers clearly. He was called back once a chalkboard could be found. He had been attempting “to demonstrate to this committee that they would be making a great mistake to rely upon the figures presented by the Bureau of Reclamation when they cannot add, subtract, multiply, or divide.”<sup>104</sup> He was not claiming any great amount of knowledge; rather, he was showing that “a man who has gone through the ninth grade and learned his arithmetic”<sup>105</sup> could see that the Echo Park dams were a bad idea.

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<sup>104</sup> Brower testimony, House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Hearings on H.R. 4449 et al. on CRSP* (1954), 824.

<sup>105</sup> Brower testimony, 824.

During his testimony, Brower introduced a dizzying array of figures and used basic math skills to demonstrate that storage and evaporation rates of various dam sites of the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) were incorrect. The calculations were being used to justify building two dams inside Dinosaur National Monument. The transcript of the Sierra Club leader's testimony reads like a story problem—riddled with numbers and equations—but the evaporation errors “became a major source of embarrassment for the Department of Interior.”<sup>106</sup> And Sierra Club Executive Director David Brower became the face of the Echo Park fight.

The Sierra Club was founded by John Muir and the poet Robert Underwood Johnson. The two had formed a strong friendship in the late 1880s and joined forces to lobby for the preservation of major wilderness areas in California. By 1892, thanks in large part to the men's efforts, Yosemite was the first area set aside for protection and preservation by the United States government. Future efforts to dedicate other national parks would be as easy and the two soon decided that a coherent argument for an organized conservation program in the United States was necessary.<sup>107</sup> They founded the Sierra Club in 1892. Initially, it was a collection of educated outdoor enthusiasts who met regularly with the goal “to do something for wilderness and make the mountains glad.”<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>106</sup> Jon M. Cosco, *Echo Park: Struggle for Preservation* (Johnson Printing: Boulder, CO, 1995), 73.

<sup>107</sup> Michael P. Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club, 1892-1970* (Sierra Club Books: San Francisco, 1988).

<sup>108</sup> Linnie Marsh Wolfe, ed., *John of the Mountains: The Unpublished Journals of John Muir* (1938: Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), quoted in Michael P. Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club, 1892-1970* (Sierra Club Books: San Francisco, 1988).

In addition to the establishment of national parks, the club “devoted itself to the study and protection of national scenic resources.”<sup>109</sup> As the conservation issues that faced the nation changed and evolved, so did the organization. Early on, the Sierra Club had to declare a guiding principle on wilderness use. Would they follow a Pinchot-inspired style that focused on management and utilitarian development for economic benefit? Or would the group continue to follow Muir’s more naturalist view of saving the trees because trees could not save themselves? The hope was to find a balance between use and preservation because “idealistic members believed that these were not conflicting aspirations.”<sup>110</sup>

In 1893, the club launched the *Sierra Club Bulletin*, its official national publication. The magazine was 3½ inches wide and 8 inches long. Issues varied in page length and featured a diverse range of subjects, from burro trips through the mountains of Peru to a hike through the Himalayas. The magazine also included announcements of Club-sponsored adventure trips. Much of the content was unsigned. Throughout the Dinosaur campaign, the *Bulletin* experienced an annual shuffling of editorial staff, but the Sierra Club had steady guidance from two prominent conservationists, David Brower and Richard Leonard.

Brower and Leonard were both avid mountaineers from Berkeley, California. Richard Leonard was a lawyer who used his courtroom experience to help further his environmental objectives.<sup>111</sup> In 1953, Richard Leonard was preparing to take over as president of the Sierra Club, and he had a plan to grow the organization. The Sierra Club had previously operated on an annual budget of \$50,000 and had roughly 7,000 members

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<sup>109</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1953, 2.

<sup>110</sup> Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club*, 17.

<sup>111</sup> “Sierra Notes,” *Sierra*, Nov-Dec. 1993.



(the vast majority from California). Leonard saw the possibility of bringing the club out of the Golden State and making it a national group that could move policy at the federal level. He proposed that the board of directors authorize a salary for a fulltime executive director, and David Brower was just the person for the job. He was a University of California dropout whose military service had earned him a Bronze Star.<sup>112</sup> During the Dinosaur fight, Brower served as chairman and editor of the *Sierra Club Bulletin*. He had been an active member of the Club for years, and was now driving the content of the publication. By 1953, the budget had doubled.<sup>113</sup> And by 1960, the membership reached 77,000.<sup>114</sup>

Richard Leonard described himself as “a voice of moderation and compromise.”<sup>115</sup> David Brower, on the other hand, was proud to be labeled as radical: “Radical should be good. Radical has something to do with roots. I believe in roots, good roots. Roots are always going on beyond, they’re not stuck where they are.”<sup>116</sup> Yet these two men, with their vastly different personalities, led the Sierra Club through a period of unprecedented growth that coincided with the battle to save Dinosaur National Monument. Brower believed that the leaders of environmental groups could come together to stop “the wreckers.”<sup>117</sup> He was instrumental in forming the Council of Conservationists. Leonard saw the campaign as a “a return to the magnificent battles that

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<sup>112</sup> David Kupfer, “David Ross Brower,” *Progressive*, May 1994.

<sup>113</sup> Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club*.

<sup>114</sup> Kupfer, “David Ross Brower.”

<sup>115</sup> “Sierra Notes,” *Sierra*, Nov-Dec. 1993.

<sup>116</sup> Kupfer, “David Ross Brower,” 39.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid*, 39.

were fought by John Muir and William Colby.”<sup>118</sup> That battle was waged, in large part, in the pages of the *Sierra Club Bulletin*.

Between 1950 to 1956, the *Sierra Club Bulletin* dedicated a considerable amount of coverage to the Dinosaur controversy. Nearly eighty items in the magazine discussed the topic, including a pamphlet about the proposed dams. Over the next three years, the content consistently consisted of between five and ten stories each year. But from 1954 to 1956, at least fifteen stories addressed the topic. The first item was published in the July 1950 issue and informed readers of Interior Secretary Oscar Chapman’s decision to authorize the Dinosaur projects. In the September magazine, editors declared that the monument was “of high national park caliber and that every effort should be made to protect it.”<sup>119</sup> One month later, the resolutions of the annual convention of the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs included a statement to “reaffirm strongly the national policy that our national parks, national monuments and formally dedicated wilderness areas shall be reserved for the primary purposes as set forth.”<sup>120</sup>

The February 1951 issue included several Echo Park items. One highlighted nine “Danger Spots” in conservation, and “the spectacular and colorful canyons in Dinosaur National Monument” were number one.<sup>121</sup> Another item chronicled the unceremonious removal of National Park Service Director Newton Drury.<sup>122</sup> Drury had been embroiled in conflict with the leader of the Bureau of Reclamation and it had cost him his job. Conservationists saw this as an omen for dealing with the entire Department of the Interior. Readers were also given additional content in February. A pamphlet titled “Will

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<sup>118</sup> Cohen, *The History of the Sierra Club*, 146.

<sup>119</sup> “Board of Directors Meets at Norden,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, September 1950, 5.

<sup>120</sup> Federation Convenes at Norden, *Sierra Club Bulletin*, October 1950, 4.

<sup>121</sup> “Danger Spots,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1951, 15-16.

<sup>122</sup> “Mr. Drury’s Departure,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1951, 17.

You DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM?” was distributed with the magazine.<sup>123</sup> This eight-page pamphlet was dedicated to the proposed dams. The argument was that the parks belonged to the people and the dams “would flood this entire area and submerge all of Steamboat Rock except a small island at the top.”<sup>124</sup> It also included a map of the monument and the locations of the two proposed dams. The seventeen conservation organizations that had helped sponsor the publication were listed on the back of the pamphlet. Of those groups, eight were members of the Council of Conservationists (the only group missing was the Audubon Society).

The April *Bulletin* featured a speech delivered at the 1951 Second Wilderness Conference Dinner sponsored by the Sierra Club.<sup>125</sup> Howard Zahniser—executive director of The Wilderness Society and editor of *The Living Wilderness*—was the speaker. He encouraged the audience, and by extension readers of the *Bulletin*, to be aware of and active in the fight against threats to America’s wild spaces. By June, the club had held its annual organizing meeting. The *Bulletin* included the news that officers were speaking out publicly against the Dinosaur dams. The October magazine had similar information relating to the board meeting where the “officers and the Editorial Board were authorized to plan a strong campaign in support of the National Monument, to be presented through the *Sierra Club Bulletin*.”<sup>126</sup>

The Dinosaur debate was prominently covered in the December 1951 issue. The opening pages reprinted items from the *Denver Post*. The *Post* editorial board had

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<sup>123</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1951. Original emphasis.

<sup>124</sup> “Will You DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM?” *Sierra Club*, February 1951.

<sup>125</sup> Howard Zahniser, “How Much Wilderness Can We Afford to Lose?” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, April 1951, 5-8.

<sup>126</sup> “Board Meets at Norden,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, October 1951, 9.

lambasted Interior Secretary Oscar Chapman for appearing to waiver in his support of the Echo Park project. During a speech at the Audubon Society's annual dinner, Chapman had said, "I sincerely hope that we might work out a solution whereby the Split Mountain and Echo Park Dams need not be built in Dinosaur National Monument."<sup>127</sup> The *Denver Post* editorial staff argued that "from all standpoints, including the prevention of the loss of water through evaporation, Echo Park and Split Mountain provide the best available sites."<sup>128</sup> They declared that Chapman's "switch in attitude requires a fuller explanation than he has given so far."<sup>129</sup> This editorial appeared on page 5 of the *Bulletin*, and was followed on page 6 by a response from J. W. Penfold of the Izaak Walton League. Penfold argued in the *Post* that the editorial was "not quite fair nor entirely accurate."<sup>130</sup> He defended Chapman, stating that he was fulfilling his "public responsibility with vision, honesty ... and courage."<sup>131</sup>

Next readers were given excerpts of Chapman's speech so they could judge for themselves whether the dam was necessary. He called for cooperation and welcomed conservationists' "continued support in our efforts to guard and manage wisely the resources entrusted to us."<sup>132</sup> Excerpts from yet another talk by a Truman administration

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<sup>127</sup> "Address of Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman at the Annual Dinner Meeting of the National Audubon Society, New York City, November 13, 1951," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1951, 9.

Oscar L. Chapman. 1951. "Address [on national park, water resources and wildlife policies of the Department of the Interior] of Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman at the Annual Dinner of the National Audubon Society," *Pamphlets on Water Resources*; v. 4, November 13, 1951.

<sup>128</sup> "Reversing His Field," *The Denver Post*, November 15, 1951.

"The Dinosaur Controversy: Reversing His Field," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1951, 5.

<sup>129</sup> "Reversing His Field."

<sup>130</sup> "The Dinosaur Controversy: Guest Editorial," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1951, 6.

<sup>131</sup> "The Dinosaur Controversy: Guest Editorial," 6.

<sup>132</sup> "Address of Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman," 9.

official immediately followed. Assistant Secretary of the Interior Dale E. Doty had spoken at the annual dinner of the Sierra Club and declared that he hoped alternative plans could “eventually be worked out to avoid the use of that National Monument for water storage purposes.”<sup>133</sup> Readers of the *Sierra Club Bulletin* were hearing directly from bureaucrats and conservation leaders regarding the Colorado River Storage Project and its proposed dams.

It would take a full year for Dinosaur to reappear in the *Bulletin*. The December 1952 issue featured Stephen Bradley’s account of floating the Green and Yampa Rivers through the monument. He had joined a party of nine novices as they rode the waters with the help of noted river guide Bus Hatch. Bradley described Dinosaur as “some of the most arrestingly beautiful canyon country in America.”<sup>134</sup> Bradley was an avid skier and kayaker. As the manager of Winter Park Resort in Colorado, a ski resort, Bradley was a supporter of wilderness development for recreation.<sup>135</sup> By the end of the trip, he was incredulous that “anyone could propose the construction of Echo Park Dam as long as he knew and appreciated the unique beauty which the dam would forever seal from our view.”<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> “Remarks of Assistant Secretary of the Interior Dale E. Doty, at the Annual Dinner of the Sierra Club, Los Angeles, November 10, 1951,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1951, 11.

Dale E. Doty, “Remarks on National Park and Conservation Policies and Activities of the Dept. of the Interior of the Hon. Dale E. Doty, Assistant Secretary for the Department of the Interior at the Annual Dinner of the Sierra Club,” *Pamphlets on National Parks*; v. 8, November 10, 1951.

<sup>134</sup> Stephen J. Bradley, “Folbots Through Dinosaur,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1952, 1.

<sup>135</sup> Bradley Foundation Genealogies, “Stephen Joseph Bradley,” <http://www.bradleyfoundation.org/genealogies/Bingley/tobg161.htm>, (accessed March 10, 2014).

<sup>136</sup> Stephen J. Bradley, “Folbots Through Dinosaur,” 6.

Also appearing in the December magazine was a paper, written by Charles C. Bradley (older brother of Stephen Bradley), on the importance of conservation. Bradley was a geologist at Montana State College and had delivered a paper at the faculty forum in January 1952. He argued that it was important for the public to “clearly understand the two values ... wilderness for study and conservation.”<sup>137</sup> He called on his colleagues to “throw a little of your weight with some organization like the Wilderness Society which is putting up such a grand sustained intelligent battle.”<sup>138</sup>

The *Bulletins* of 1953 included several stories about resolutions regarding Dinosaur and a cover photo of a boatload of river riders dwarfed by the cliffs that hung over the Yampa River. The annual convention of the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs adopted a

reiteration of support of three 1951 resolutions on which action is still to be taken. This covers (a) Prohibition of any project for storage or delivery of water within or which may adversely affect National Parks and Monuments; (b) Opposition to the proposed dams in the Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>139</sup>

Two months later, the report from the quarterly Board of Directors meeting gave the directive that the Club would be active in the campaign to protect wild areas, and specifically to protect Dinosaur.<sup>140</sup> The September 1953 “Summer Roundup” informed readers that “180 Sierra Club members idled and sped down 84 miles of the Yampa and Green rivers.”<sup>141</sup> The river trips were a direct rebuttal to the repeated claim that the canyons and rivers were too treacherous for the public to enjoy. Throughout the year, readers were also encouraged to get a closer look at Dinosaur by registering for the 1954

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<sup>137</sup> Charles C. Bradley, “Wilderness and Man,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1952, 62.

<sup>138</sup> Charles C. Bradley, “Wilderness and Man,” 67.

<sup>139</sup> “Federation Notes,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1953, 5.

<sup>140</sup> “Directors’ Actions, February Meeting,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, March 1953, 5.

<sup>141</sup> “For the September Record,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, September 1953, 3.

outings through the monument.<sup>142</sup> And if they could not ride the river themselves, the *Bulletin* advertised dates and locations for showings of Phillip Hyde's photographs from Dinosaur.<sup>143</sup> Hyde, a member of the Sierra Club, has been called the "underappreciated master landscape photographer of the 20th century."<sup>144</sup>

The coverage in 1954 was frequent and fierce. The cover of the February *Bulletin* featured the Rainbow Recess, a prominent rock formation on the Yampa River. Beneath the picture, the caption warned that there was "Trouble in Dinosaur."<sup>145</sup> Editors declared that

the rainbow canyons of the Yampa and the Green, corridors through a primitive paradise unequalled anywhere, are a unique gem of the National Park System. They are now needlessly threatened. You can prevent their destruction.<sup>146</sup>

The issue began with a review of the 16mm color film, "Wilderness River Trail."<sup>147</sup> This film was produced to showcase the beauty and power of Dinosaur National Monument. The next article posed the question: "Two Wasteful Dams—Or a Great National Park?"<sup>148</sup> Editors argued that the dams were not urgent or necessary and then challenged readers to contact legislators in defense of Dinosaur. A brief note was added to the top of the very next page. It presented an alarming scenario in which the "demand for Colorado

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<sup>142</sup> "The 1954 Wilderness Outings: Preliminary Announcement," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, November 1953, 5.

<sup>143</sup> Miscellany, *Sierra Club Bulletin*, March 1953, 2.

<sup>144</sup> Sierra Club, "History: Philip Hyde," [www.sierraclub.org/history/philip-hyde/](http://www.sierraclub.org/history/philip-hyde/), (accessed March 30, 2014).

<sup>145</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, cover.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>147</sup> "New Color Film on Dinosaur, Ready February 1," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 2.

Produced by the Sierra Club, this film can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JfyFC8CX1Nc>, (accessed April 10, 2014).

<sup>148</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 3.

River water will increase until it eventually exceeds the supply.”<sup>149</sup> Beneath the note, editors listed five main arguments against the dams and detailed responses to claims in favor of the dams.<sup>150</sup> The article presented General Ulysses S. Grant III’s expert opinion on the project, including his counterproposal and evaporation calculations. However, the editors noted that “it is not up to the conservationist to devise specific alternates and compute data concerning them.”<sup>151</sup> The back cover of the February 1954 issue labeled the Echo Park dam as wasteful and called on members to help protect the park system for posterity.

By May 1954, the House Interior and Insular Affairs Committee had voted on the Upper Colorado Project. It had squeaked by with a vote of 13-12. Coverage in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* included a timeline leading to the vote and an article featuring David Brower’s litany of arguments against the dams.<sup>152</sup> He argued five main points: power, agriculture, water storage, precedent, and beauty. Brower claimed that dam proponents were using suspicious math and spurious assumptions to rush through the project. And he cautioned that the dams would create ugly fluctuating reservoirs that would destroy the spirit of the monument.<sup>153</sup>

Artistic renditions of Dinosaur were becoming popular. Two side-by-side illustrations appeared on the same page of the May magazine. The images were drawings of Dinosaur National Monument’s Steamboat Rock and Kings Canyon’s mountain peaks. The sketches were hazy and gray, except for the very top, representing the high-water

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<sup>149</sup> “Today’s Thought for the Future,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 5.

<sup>150</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 5.

<sup>151</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 11.

<sup>152</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1954.

<sup>153</sup> David Brower, “Arguments on Parade,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1954, 4.



lines of the reservoirs that would “drown our parks” if proposed dams were approved.<sup>154</sup> The issue also encouraged readers to view the Sierra Club’s movie *Wilderness River Trail* as it was shown to conservation groups across the country.<sup>155</sup> The last article presented information from the Board of Directors meeting. David Brower had just completed his testimony before the House Subcommittee and the board praised “the Executive Director’s outstanding effectiveness in the Dinosaur campaign.”<sup>156</sup>

The June 1954 *Bulletin* read like an unofficial Dinosaur promotional magazine. It presented, in full, the text of David Brower’s testimony before the House Subcommittee on Interior and Insular Affairs.<sup>157</sup> Titled “Preserving Dinosaur,” Brower’s testimony had tremendous impact on the proceedings. He expressed a “hope that ample time will be allowed for the very thorough scrutiny such a proposal needs before the nation as a whole commits itself to the very complicated and necessarily costly project which is before you.”<sup>158</sup> The next item was an essay comparing the Dinosaur project to the destruction of Hetch Hetchy earlier in the century.<sup>159</sup> Robert Cutter’s essay countered that Hetch Hetchy had created “just another dammed artificial lake,” and that Dinosaur would be another.<sup>160</sup> David Brower added to the conversation with his “Footnote to Hetch Hetchy.”<sup>161</sup> He

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<sup>154</sup> “Don’t Let Them Drown Our Parks,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1954, 5.

<sup>155</sup> “Wilderness River Trail,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1954, 5.

<sup>156</sup> “Director’s Meeting, May 1: Organization, Park and Forest Problems,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1954, 13.

<sup>157</sup> David Brower, “Preserving Dinosaur,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, June 1954, 1-10.

<sup>158</sup> David Brower, “Preserving Dinosaur,” 2.

<sup>159</sup> Robert K. Cutter, “Hetch Hetchy—Once Is Too Often,” *Serra Club Bulletin*, June 1954, 11-12.

<sup>160</sup> Cutter, “Hetch Hetchy—Once Is Too Often,” 11.

<sup>161</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, June 1954, 13-14.

argued that “just as in Dinosaur, it was not necessary in Hetch Hetchy to choose between water or scenery.”<sup>162</sup>

Publisher August Frugé’s river journal from his 1953 ride down the Yampa and Green Rivers included details of one of the Sierra Club-sponsored trips to Dinosaur.<sup>163</sup> The journal gave readers an intimate portrait of the monument, its rivers and canyons, and its wildlife residents. It read like a novel, at times lazy and peaceful, and at others roaring and exhilarating. A photo essay spanning sixteen pages compared before-and-after images from Hetch Hetchy and photos of Dinosaur’s wild rivers and steep canyon walls.<sup>164</sup> The essay included captions describing the beauty and then devastation of dams and warned of the same in Echo Park.

The only other news about Echo Park in 1954 in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* came in a report on the annual meeting of the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs. This group, of which David Brower was an active member, issued a series of resolutions, including one “urging that Dinosaur National Monument be given National Park status, and opposing the sacrifice of unique and irreplaceable values there.”<sup>165</sup>

Coverage of the Dinosaur controversy in 1955 began in January with the news that the Sierra Club had established a nonprofit organization under California law. This move, approved by the Board of Directors, was designed to give the Club more freedom to “take the message of conservationists directly and vigorously to Congress, without fear of violating the tax laws.”<sup>166</sup> Tax laws in the 1950s did not “permit the Sierra Club to

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<sup>162</sup> David R. Brower, “Footnote to Hetch Hetchy,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, June 1954, 13.

<sup>163</sup> August Frugé, “River Journal: Yampa and Green Rivers, 1953,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, 15-26.

<sup>164</sup> “Once is too Often: A Picture Story,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, June 1954.

<sup>165</sup> “Federation Acts on Conservation Issues,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, October 1954, 6.

<sup>166</sup> Richard M. Leonard, “We Defend the Parks,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1955, 5.

carry on a full-scale legislative campaign, either state or national, to protect our parks.”<sup>167</sup>

The nonprofit status of an organization could be threatened if said organization engaged in too much direct government lobbying. And if that status was lost, donations would no longer be tax deductible. In order to address this legal minefield, the Sierra Club announced a restructuring plan:

As a wise precaution, the Board of Directors of the Sierra Club, at their meeting in February 1954, at the beginning of the Dinosaur controversy in Congress, passed formal resolution instructing members of the Sierra Club *not* to solicit, collect, or receive contributions in connection with the fight to protect Dinosaur National Monument. Thus the Sierra Club has been fully protected up through the end of the 83rd Congress. Now, however, a “new look” is essential for the serious battles to preserve our national park system.<sup>168</sup>

This change was accompanied by the establishment of two umbrella organizations. The Trustees for Conservation was a coalition created for Western organizations, while the Council of Conservationists united mostly East Coast groups.<sup>169</sup> These two groups provided the legal protection many of the conservation groups needed to engage in much more aggressive direct lobbying. Items in the *Bulletin* implied that there was an East/West division in the labor between the two groups. The Sierra Club is the only group of the Council of Conservationists to mention the Trustees, and it is the only group of the CoC headquartered west of the Mississippi. This suggests Sierra was the only organization to be officially part of both the Trustees of Conservation and the Council of Conservationists.

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<sup>167</sup> Leonard, “We Defend the Parks,” 3.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>169</sup> David Perlman, “Our Winning Fight for Dinosaur,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1956, 5.

Another article in the January issue named Dinosaur the “number one issue of the year.”<sup>170</sup> David Perlman, a Sierra Club member from a local California chapter, gave background and context for the fight and then vowed that “the Sierra Club will continue its campaign, in print and wherever it finds an appropriate forum, to present the principles involved, and the facts.”<sup>171</sup> A photo spread in the issue showed the consequences of building a dam and creating a reservoir.<sup>172</sup> Images showed the impact of fluctuating water levels of Lake Mead and then predicted “in Dinosaur National Monument, what the dams would destroy—white water, green oases, grand canyons.”<sup>173</sup> Other items in the *Bulletin* highlighted the activities of local groups in the Club’s primarily Californian membership. Chapters from across the state were engaged in the fight to stop the Echo Park dams in several ways, including public showings of *Wilderness River Trail* and group discussions for community members.<sup>174</sup>

The back cover of the March 1955 issue featured an article by David Perlman in which he wrote that “the battle to save Echo Park from the dam-builders is turning into an extraordinarily bitter one.”<sup>175</sup> By May, Dinosaur was on the cover of the *Bulletin*, with the caption, “Dinosaur: Hour of Decision.”<sup>176</sup> In the lead article, David Brower warned that “only the House can save a great park.”<sup>177</sup> And later in the magazine, the recommendations of the Club’s Fourth Biennial Wilderness Conference included support

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<sup>170</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1955, 11, 14-15.

<sup>171</sup> David Perlman, “Number One Issue of the Year: River Canyons or Dinosaur Dams,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1955, 15.

<sup>172</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1955, 12-13.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> “Chapters Active on Local, National Tasks,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1955, 22-23.

<sup>175</sup><sup>175</sup> David Perlman, “Razzle-Dazzle on the Colorado,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, March 1955, 8.

<sup>176</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1955, cover.

<sup>177</sup> David Brower, “Dinosaur: Hour of Decision,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1955, 3.

for appropriations to fully fund the national parks and a “pledge to continue opposition to the inclusion of the Echo Park Dam in the Upper Colorado Storage Project.”<sup>178</sup> Finally, the back cover featured a review of Wallace Stegner’s *This is Dinosaur: Echo Park Country and Its Magic Rivers*. The reviewer asked whether the Dinosaur issue would, for the National Park System, be “a milestone or a headstone.”<sup>179</sup>

By the end of 1955, the Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs had met again, and once again passed resolutions in support of Dinosaur National Monument and the entire National Park system.<sup>180</sup> The November issue also warned that Utah supporters of the Echo Park dams were ramping up their activities to convince legislators to vote for the project.<sup>181</sup>

The Dinosaur controversy was covered prominently in 1956, beginning with ten items in the January magazine. The January issue was “devoted to a review of the year 1955, presenting leading problems in the preservation of parks and wilderness from the point of view of the Sierra Club.”<sup>182</sup> Donald Teague, a reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, presented readers with several ways they could help move the work along, including visiting national parks and monuments.<sup>183</sup> The activities of the Council of Conservation groups, in defense of Dinosaur, were recounted. Brower described the campaign as a concert, and the Sierra Club was “one of the instruments that played in that

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<sup>178</sup> “What the Conference Recommended,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1955, 6.

<sup>179</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1955, back cover.

<sup>180</sup> “Federation Convention at Idyllwild,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, November 1955, 3.

<sup>181</sup> Fred Smith, “What We Must Do,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, November 1955, 5.

<sup>182</sup> “Conservation Year,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1956, 2.

<sup>183</sup> Donald Teague, “These Are Ways You Can Help...” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1956, 2.

concert.”<sup>184</sup> Next, Perlman talked about the fight. He spoke of a “new mobilization of conservation resources” and predicted a victory that would last for generations.<sup>185</sup>

Throughout the campaign, dam supporters had claimed that the opposition, and the conservation movement even, were a small minority. Sierra Club member Dana Abell responded in an opinion piece in January 1956. Abell admitted that the numbers of people who would call themselves conservationists were limited, but she wondered “whether we might not find that our minority point of view is shared by an overwhelming majority of American citizens.”<sup>186</sup> Several short items related to Dinosaur were scattered throughout the January issue. They ranged from an advertisement for the publicity book *This Is Dinosaur* to a *San Francisco Chronicle* cartoon featuring a stampeding dinosaur chasing down a man in a suit carrying a banner that read “DAMS IN NATIONAL PARKS.”<sup>187</sup>

The Sierra Club’s Green and Yampa River trips were advertised in the March 1956 *Bulletin*. They had been part of the Club’s summer outings agenda for three years and were becoming an important element of the campaign to give citizens a firsthand view of the monument to demonstrate its beauty and value. The cover of the June 1956 issue featured a photo of a riverboat navigating the Hell’s Half Mile rapid at the entrance to Lodore Canyon. Inside the magazine, the Sierra Club published a recommendation that the United States Forest Service conduct a Scenic Resources Review. This review would study the wilderness and wildlife of the parks and their “intangible values which are

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<sup>184</sup> David Brower, “The Sierra Club on the National Scene,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1956, 3-4.

<sup>185</sup> Perlman, “Our Winning Fight for Dinosaur,” 8.

<sup>186</sup> “Dana Abell, “Are We Really a Minority?” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1956, 19.

<sup>187</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1956, 7.

steadily increasing in importance to our culture.”<sup>188</sup> The idea was to demonstrate the importance of the national park areas to America as a country and its citizenry. The same issue included a resolution from the Club’s Board of Directors to support the proposed Dinosaur National Park. In September 1956, the back cover, called the Bulletin Board, informed readers that “**The inclusion of Echo Park Dam in the Upper Colorado River Project was decisively defeated**—a crowning conservation victory.”<sup>189</sup>

### *Building a Coalition*

Coverage in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* of Dinosaur National Monument, the Colorado River Storage Project, and the proposed Echo Park dam featured three major themes. Each of the themes would appear in at least one of the Council of Conservationists publications. The first theme was an emphasis on the conservation movement and a call for members to mobilize in defense of the monument, often using the language of war. This mobilization featured a unique trend, though, in a call for members to actually visit the monument. The second theme focused on the value and benefit of the National Park System, both to the nation and its citizens. This theme was characterized by the spiritualization of nature. The third theme addressed the logic of the proposal, especially focusing on the mathematical dueling of the bureaus and agencies entangled in the debate.

The first theme in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* coverage emphasized the important action of the conservation organizations and their members scattered across the nation. Using battle terms, “Brower and the Sierra Club's directors foresaw in 1954 that the fight against Echo Park would need new political armaments. So they alerted other

<sup>188</sup> David Brower, “Scenic Resources,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, June 1956, 5.

<sup>189</sup> Bulletin Board, *Sierra Club Bulletin*, September 1956, 8. Original emphasis.

conservation groups and the arms were forged.”<sup>190</sup> The groups used weapons that included lobbying and public mobilization, but that required some changes for the Sierra Club. The leaders of the Club helped create the Council of Conservationists and Trustees for Conservation. These groups were created to publicly lobby elected officials. The campaign to move members was much more public, though. Writers in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* were the first to refer to this coordinated effort as a “movement.”<sup>191</sup> Richard Leonard called the Trustees for Conservation “a new fighting arm of the conservation movement.”<sup>192</sup> And David Perlman called the Dinosaur campaign “the most critical in all the history of the conservation movement.”<sup>193</sup> The campaign was important not only to save Dinosaur, but it was the beginning of a greater movement.

Another hint that something larger was afoot can be found in the diversity of the groups and the wide range of topics appearing on the radar. Geologist Charles Bradley described this:

We hear of a nation-wide battle in which the Nature Lovers try to preserve Dinosaur National Monument from the 'predatory' Bureau of Reclamation, and at the same time we hear of a women's club in a midwestern city waging a lesser battle to preserve the yellow lady-slipper from the predatory dairy cow. Organizations like the Wilderness Society and the Audubon Society spring up and grow in strength as wilderness and wildlife diminish to the vanishing point.<sup>194</sup>

For the leaders of the Sierra Club, this new movement would be a big tent that welcomed any group or individual who desired to preserve a piece of nature. Bradley’s language is threatening and warns of the importance of strength in numbers. Nature was being preyed

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<sup>190</sup> David Perlman, “Our Winning Fight for Dinosaur,” 5.

<sup>191</sup> As noted in Chapter 1, there is academic debate regarding when something becomes a “movement,” but it is clear from the language used in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* that its writers and the Club leaders believed they were a movement, regardless of current academic definition.

<sup>192</sup> Richard M. Leonard, “We Defend the Parks,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1955, 3.

<sup>193</sup> David Perlman, “Number One Issue of the Year,” 11.

<sup>194</sup> Charles C. Bradley, “Wilderness and Man,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1952, 59.



upon by larger entities. Whether it be organizations fighting the Bureau of Reclamation, or proper ladies battling to save a flower from trampling livestock, this would be a David-versus-Goliath battle and the more cooperation the better. The assortment of the groups was seen as a strength, and not a weakness. Brower described it as a

new unity among conservationists, which the proponents of Echo Park dam ran head into in what became the most important battle for the national park idea since the invasion of Hetch Hetchy. The many organizations who joined to protect Dinosaur were disparate in kind.<sup>195</sup>

Connecting Dinosaur to the previous sacrifice of Hetch Hetchy created a narrative of continuity.

The diversity in the coalition was part of what allowed the Sierra Club to play such a role. Modern readers may not remember that the Sierra Club was still considered a California group in the 1950s. Between 1954 and 1955, the membership grew from 8,306 to 9,175 but was still overwhelmingly located in the Golden State.<sup>196</sup> The comparison to Hetch Hetchy would have hit home especially hard for Sierra Club members, so many of whom had seen either the beauty of the valley or the destruction wrought by its dam, or both.

In the fight to save Dinosaur, the many different groups played different roles. The campaign was compared to a concert and the Sierra Club was one of many organizations playing an orchestrated part. The strength was that each group was recognized for its unique focus and that of its members. According to Brower, this “combined harmony produced a magnificent symphony and we shall need to keep the score at hand and play it again from time to time.”<sup>197</sup> The strategies and tactics used to

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<sup>195</sup> David R. Brower, “The Sierra Club on the National Scene,” 4.

<sup>196</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, March 1955, 2.

<sup>197</sup> David R. Brower, “The Sierra Club on the National Scene,” 4.

protect Dinosaur were just the beginning of a movement—and if successful, would be used in future campaigns.

The editors of the *Sierra Club Bulletin* declared to readers that “*Now* is the time for all good conservationists to come again to the aid of the National Park System, which is gravely threatened.”<sup>198</sup> Repeatedly, the call was issued to “lend a hand”<sup>199</sup> or “do your part.”<sup>200</sup> The drive for conservationists to be publicly active in the campaign may have been daunting. The environmental movement did not gain public recognition until the 1960s and Dinosaur was one of the first campaigns.<sup>201</sup> Private citizens were encouraged to act because “the voice of the individual conservationist, out where the grass roots grow, is what counts now.”<sup>202</sup> Sierra Club member Donald Teague urged readers to “be proud that you are a conservationist. Don't be afraid to express yourself.”<sup>203</sup> The writers and editors of the *Bulletin* recognized that in the debate over placing dams in Dinosaur, the “conservationist backbone will need stiffening, to put it mildly.”<sup>204</sup> They were attempting to rally and embolden the troops.

One of the greatest challenges conservationists faced was the appearance that somehow supporting the dam was patriotic, and opposing it was not. One item warned that the country was

drifting dangerously close to the vortex of a third world conflict, a sixth column of speculators, profiteers, and exploiters is beginning to stir. Since this column

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<sup>198</sup> “Dinosaur Bill Out of Committee,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1954, 3. Original emphasis.

<sup>199</sup> *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, front cover.

<sup>200</sup> David Brower, “Arguments on Parade,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1954, 4.

<sup>201</sup> Julia B. Corbett, *Communicating Nature: How We Create and Understand Environmental Messages* (Washington, D. C.: Island Press).

<sup>202</sup> “Dinosaur Bill Out of Committee,” 3.

<sup>203</sup> Donald Teague, “These Are Ways You Can Help...” 2.

<sup>204</sup> David Perlman, “Razzle-Dazzle on the Colorado,” 8.

ostentatiously waves the shining banner of patriotism it will require utmost vigilance of the part of leaders and public.<sup>205</sup>

The war language was inspirational and accusatory. In technical terms, the sixth column is the strategic use of citizens to engage in spreading falsehoods and rumor to confuse the enemy.<sup>206</sup> The patriotism that dam proponents were displaying was false. The dams would sacrifice greater values and natural resources than would be created. There were repeated calls for “vigilance.”<sup>207</sup>

Conservationists were being asked to join the campaign—to personalize it—by participating directly. Writers encouraged people to arrange for showings, both private and in local public libraries, of Philip Hyde’s photographs of Dinosaur National Monument. The displays had been highly successful in cities across the country.<sup>208</sup> Another way to get involved was to “help in scheduling showings [of *Wilderness River Trail*] as soon as possible.”<sup>209</sup> Editors argued that people who saw the film could not “stand idly by while they try to destroy Dinosaur.”<sup>210</sup> And once people decide to get involved, they were urged to use “all the methods of communication you can arrange for. Let your organizations know—if you have time to—what you’re going to do to help.”<sup>211</sup>

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<sup>205</sup> “For the February Record,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1951, 3.

<sup>206</sup> Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. “Sixth Column,” <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sixth%20column>, (accessed April 8, 2014).

<sup>207</sup> “For the February Record,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1951, 3.

“Board Meets at Norden,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, October 1951, 9.

“New Color Film on Dinosaur, Ready February 1,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 2.

Dinosaur: Hour of Decision. Only the House Can Save a Great Park,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1955, 3.

<sup>208</sup> “Wilderness River Trail,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1955, 5.

<sup>209</sup> “New Color Film on Dinosaur, Ready February 1,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 2.

<sup>210</sup> “New Color Film on Dinosaur, Ready February 1,” 2.

<sup>211</sup> “For the Defense of Dinosaur—An Outline,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 6. Original emphasis.

By far the most common suggestion was for readers to write their Congressman. The thinking was that “there are enough Congressmen against Echo Park dam—this is the feeling—to kill it *if the conservationists make themselves heard in time.*”<sup>212</sup> Readers were encouraged to

write the ending to this story. You can help. You can write to your congressman and to your senators. You can write them to DELETE ECHO PARK AND SPLIT MOUNTAIN from any bills authorization dams, and furthermore to ADVOCATE AN AMENDMENT TO PROTECT OUR NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM *from all such invasions.*<sup>213</sup>

Readers were not only asked to write, they also were given very specific instructions. They were told to “*always write as an individual.* It is better to write a good letter than it is to send a form letter used by a group.”<sup>214</sup> In a speech, Charles C. Bradley told his Montana State colleagues, “*tomorrow* you could go on record for wilderness preservation by writing your representative, Mike Mansfield, a strong letter asking him to be sure to delete Split Mountain and Echo Park sites.”<sup>215</sup> Readers were encouraged to write directly to “Congressman William H. Harrison, chairman of the subcommittee, for the record. The President and your Congressmen should also know your wishes.”<sup>216</sup>

In such a long campaign, the call for letter writing could have been repetitive, but David Brower addressed the exhaustion that may have set in. He addressed the risk that conservationists “got tired. ‘Write a letter? I wrote one or two last year’ seems to summarize an attitude prevalent in many places. Last year’s letters did a good job last

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<sup>212</sup> Dinosaur: Hour of Decision. Only the House Can Save a Great Park,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1955, 3. Original emphasis.

<sup>213</sup> “Will you DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our National Park System?” Original emphasis.

<sup>214</sup> Donald Teague, “There are Ways You Can Help...” 2. Original emphasis.

<sup>215</sup> Charles C. Bradley, “Wilderness Man,” 66. Original emphasis.

<sup>216</sup> “Two Wasteful Dams—Or A Great National Park? *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 4.

year, and were filed out of sight last year.”<sup>217</sup> The mobilization efforts had been effective before, and they would be again. As the campaign moved to a close, David Perlman claimed that victory had come in large part because “letters began pouring into Congress, as they had the year before.”<sup>218</sup>

The mobilization in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* had one unique aspect not seen in any other Council of Conservationist groups. The Club pushed members and *Bulletin* readers to visit Dinosaur National Monument and share that experience. Dam proponents often argued that the monument was inaccessible and dangerous. They claimed that a dam would tame the river and create a space for safe recreation. To help dispel this myth, the Club organized several trips down the Yampa and Green rivers. In 1953, several groups of Sierra Club members had run the rivers, without incident, and to their great entertainment. Martin Litton’s account of one of these trips was printed in an August issue of the *Los Angeles Times*. Litton’s story included photos from the trip and described his four-year-old daughter and seven-year-old son as “merrily riding rubber boats through the ruggedest canyons the Green River has to offer—in the heartland of Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>219</sup>

During the hearings on the Colorado River Storage Project, Utah Congressman William Dawson (R) presented several letters from Vernal locals as evidence of the threat rivers posed to riders.<sup>220</sup> The *Bulletin* editors countered that “none in the Sierra Club

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<sup>217</sup> David R. Brower, “Dinosaur: Hour of Decision,” 3. Original emphasis.

<sup>218</sup> David Perlman, “Razzle-Dazzle on the Colorado,” 6.

<sup>219</sup> Martin Litton “Children in Boats Run Utah Rapids,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 30, 1953.

<sup>220</sup> House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, *Hearings on H.R. 4449 et al. on CRSP* (1954), 853-855.

parties, whose ages ranged from 4 to 77, will agree."<sup>221</sup> During his statement before Congress, David Brower addressed Representative Dawson directly:

You used the word “treacherous” to describe the rivers. I think that the 200 Sierra Club members who went down them over the course of a single month last summer would like me to disagree with your application of the word. It could be used far better to describe Highway 40. We were all delighted to get off that treacherous highway and to settle back and relax in those safe boats.<sup>222</sup>

Brower then invited Dawson to join the Club next summer for a trip down the river.

Dawson was not the only official invited, and “it was again agreed that it was important to interest civic leaders in taking river trips to Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>223</sup>

The trips were designed to give individuals a firsthand glimpse of the monument in all its grandeur, to fully demonstrate its value to the American people. But Club officials recognized that not everyone would be able to make the trip, so they encouraged readers to share their experience:

If you take a trip to an area that is under controversy, give your local newspaper an account of the trip and mention briefly what the controversy is about. Most people on vacation send postal cards to friends. Why not mention that someone wants to build a dam in the canyon shown on the front of the card?<sup>224</sup>

The trips, or firsthand accounts of the trips, would give Americans a better understanding of the monument, the system as a whole, and the rights of all Americans to enjoy them. It would create ownership—it is hard to destroy something when you feel a connection to it. David Brower predicted that it would help create more people who would “fight for this right—the present-day Thoreaus and Leopolds and Marshalls?”<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>221</sup> “For the September Record,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, September 1953, 3.

<sup>222</sup> David R. Brower, “Preserving Dinosaur Unimpaired,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, June 1954, 9.

<sup>223</sup> “Organization, Park and Forest Problems,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, May 1954, 13.

<sup>224</sup> Donald Teague, “These Are Ways You Can Help...”<sup>2</sup>

<sup>225</sup> David R. Brower, “Preserving Dinosaur Unimpaired,” 3. (Names reference Henry David Thoreau, Aldo Leopold, and Bob Marshall.)

The second theme discovered in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* coverage of the Echo Park dam was a focus on the value of the national park system. That value was expressed in the spiritual and cultural benefits it provided the American people. The great challenge was the need "to make more and more people aware of the beauty and inspiration found in the out-of-doors. If this can be done, the threats to our National Parks, Monuments, and Wilderness Areas will diminish."<sup>226</sup> Dinosaur National Monument, and the National Park System as a whole, were often described as having "unique and irreplaceable values."<sup>227</sup> The dams "would destroy the park value of the canyons of Dinosaur National Monument."<sup>228</sup> The National Park System was a radical idea that had originated in and distinguished the United States. No other country before had engaged in this kind of preservation on such a scale, and to risk it was to risk something that made America unique. The National Park System was a defining piece of American "cultural heritage."<sup>229</sup>

According to the National Park Service, the effects of the dams on "values of national significance would be deplorable."<sup>230</sup> Of those values, the beauty of the place was of "great natural significance."<sup>231</sup> August Frugé described the canyons as "an ever-changing panorama, the 100,000,000-year masterpiece of the surging river."<sup>232</sup>

Comparing the canyons to an ancient piece of art suggested its value was incalculable.

The dams would submerge a Picasso or Monet and similar to a museum display,

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<sup>226</sup> Donald Teague, "There Are Ways You Can Help," 2.

<sup>227</sup> "Federation Acts on Conservation Issues," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, October 1954, 6.

<sup>228</sup> "Two Wasteful Dams—Or a Great National Park?" *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 3.

<sup>229</sup> "Should the Club Stop Growing?" *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1953, 6.

<sup>230</sup> "Two Wasteful Dams—Or a Great National Park?" 3.

<sup>231</sup> David R. Brower, "Preserving Dinosaur Unimpaired," 4.

<sup>232</sup> August Frugé, "This is Dinosaur: A River Journal," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, June 1954, 16.

conservationists were “assuring that the best of our scenery is not to be sold, or given, or destroyed, or altered. It is to be preserved unimpaired for the enjoyment of this and future generations.”<sup>233</sup> To change the monument would decrease its value—the writers and editors of the *Bulletin* made repeated calls to keep the monument whole and leave it “unimpaired.”<sup>234</sup> Other terms would convey the same message: “WE CAN HAVE THE UNSPOILED MONUMENT AND THE ADDED FACILITIES TOO.”<sup>235</sup> And David Perlman called for action to “preserve inviolate the scenic heart of a lonely unit in the national park system.”<sup>236</sup> The term inviolate suggests a wholeness and purity of an almost spiritual level. Many writers and editors argued “that these superbly precious parts of our native landscape should be preserved, unimpaired, unchanged, uncommercialized—held sacred for the inspiration, education, health, and enjoyment of generation after generation.”<sup>237</sup> Using religious words to describe the untouched state of the monument helped associate nature to God, and expressed a deeper value to be protected.

The spiritualization of nature was a recurring idea when discussing the value of the National Park System and its areas. As David Brower described it:

The axiom for protecting the Park System is to consider that it is dedicated country, hallowed ground to leave as beautiful as we have found it, and not country in which man should be so impressed with himself that he tries to improve God's handiwork.<sup>238</sup>

Hallowed ground is a place where we worship and commune with nature. We learn about ourselves, our heritage, and our Maker. The canyons and rivers were “cathedral corridors

<sup>233</sup> David R. Brower, “Preserving Dinosaur Unimpaired,” 2.

<sup>234</sup> “For the October Record,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, October 1950, 4.

“Two Wasteful Dams—Or A Great National Park?” 3.

<sup>235</sup> “Will You DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our National Park System?” Original emphasis.

<sup>236</sup> David Perlman, “Number One Issue of the Year,” 11.

<sup>237</sup> “Will You DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our National Park System?”

<sup>238</sup> David R. Brower, “Preserving Dinosaur Unimpaired,” 9.



of stone” and evidence of a higher power. A belief that men could improve areas made by God was hubris. Brower warned that pride would cost the American people an “important a spiritual and inspirational asset we do have in our national park system.”<sup>239</sup> The language created a sense of devotion for protecting the monument.

The sanctity of nature was discussed often. Readers were encouraged to help “turn back this threatened invasion, by reaffirming in Congress the sanctity of the areas of the Nation has dedicated for preservation.”<sup>240</sup> This spiritualization of nature included calls for the public to recognize that America needs more “wilderness to slake the thirsty spirit of man.”<sup>241</sup> Citizens were living in a busy, chaotic society and nature offered benefits for “the good of our souls even if those delights don’t affect the Dow-Jones average, and produce nothing but a little relief from tension, maybe.”<sup>242</sup> Editors wondered,

cannot the planning include a balance that will give recognition to what could be called spiritual values, and to the continuance of things that, once changed, cannot be changed back again within any of the generations we can foresee now?<sup>243</sup>

The plan failed to acknowledge that dollars per acre-foot were not how God’s creations were measured. And the permanence of the dams was a further affront: for this generation to lose its soul was its own choice, but to steal that inspiration from the future was not. The wisdom of a plan to build a dam inside a national monument was sketchy at best. And articles in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* often focused on the soundness.

The third theme discovered in the Dinosaur National Monument coverage centered on the plan’s logic. Many of the stories presented the competing calculations of

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<sup>239</sup> David R. Brower, “Preserving Dinosaur Unimpaired,” 5-6.

<sup>240</sup> “Will You DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our National Park System?”

<sup>241</sup> Charles C. Bradley, “Wilderness and Man,” 64.

<sup>242</sup> “This is the Issue,” back cover.

<sup>243</sup> “For the September Record,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, September 1950, 3.

the government agencies. These conversations often included a call for the dams to be placed in alternative sites. The wisdom of the project was a major concern. Stephen Bradley explained that

to plan five dams, three of them outside the monument, and then to insist that Echo Park should be built first, when still other dams could be built outside the monument at less cost, yet store more water and generate more power--that seemed to defy all logic.<sup>244</sup>

Conservationists believed that the dams were being pushed at the expense of common sense. Writers argued that Secretary McKay “has been rushed into accepting a not-very-well-educated guess; his recommendation, based on that guess, may itself be a needless waste of nearly eighty million dollars of your money.”<sup>245</sup> The citizens owned this land, and the rush was going to be expensive. Not only that, but the project was irreversible—or as Brower put it, “You can't unfry an egg. A dam in Dinosaur would really fry one.”<sup>246</sup> An oversimplified analogy, to be sure, but the implication was that engineers were making a rash and unalterable decision. The necessity of the dams was perplexing to many conservationists and the rush only gave them more to worry about.

Wisdom dictated that such an important decision should be approached carefully and slowly. Utah newspapers and local dam proponents were arguing passionately for the dams. Brower replied that

they are entitled to their opinion, but we do not accept that as a disinterested opinion. When I am sick I go to a doctor, not an engineer, and when I want studied opinion on park values, I go to people who have made the study of those values a career (reserving the right to disagree).<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>244</sup> Stephen J. Bradley, “Folbots Through Dinosaur,” 6.

<sup>245</sup> David R. Brower, “Preserving Dinosaur Unimpaired,” 4.

<sup>246</sup> David R. Brower, “Preserving Dinosaur Unimpaired,” 4.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid*, 4.

The leaders of the Council of Conservationists groups, such as General Grant, were the experts and they were presenting Congress with multiple reasons to slow the project. The plan to build the dams should be approached thoughtfully and with prudence. As James Penfold wrote:

Secretary Chapman would be doing less than his duty were he to recommend to Congress, and to the people of the nation, that it reverse its clearly stated policy that national parks be protected until he is in a position to prove beyond doubt that such action is inescapable.<sup>248</sup>

The idea that government agencies would be acting so rashly was a dereliction of duty. And Assistant Secretary of the Interior Dale E. Doty seemed to agree. While speaking at the Sierra Club's Annual Dinner, Doty declared his belief that

surely we can afford to use a little more ingenuity, a little more time or even a little more money, if necessary, in figuring out complex engineering projects, when by so doing we preserve for Americans some samples of their scenic and cultural heritage.<sup>249</sup>

For conservationists, one of the most frustrating aspects of the planning was the math. Ulysses S. Grant III challenged the calculations of the Bureau of Reclamation. His work was presented in great detail in the *Bulletin*, including the tables that demonstrated the errors made by government engineers.<sup>250</sup> David Brower's Congressional testimony that had proven so powerful was drawn from these calculations. His statement, reproduced for readers, included Brower's wish to "see what happens if they [the Bureau of Reclamation] go over their pages of figures with a well-oiled slide rule to see if there are as many critical errors on the other pages."<sup>251</sup> The implication was that old ideas were being resurrected to justify the project, and the facts were being ignored. Editors claimed

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<sup>248</sup> James W. Penfold, "Guest Editorial," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1951, 7.

<sup>249</sup> "Remarks of Assistant Secretary of the Interior Dale E. Doty," 11.

<sup>250</sup> "Some Alternates," *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, 11.

<sup>251</sup> David R. Brower, "Preserving Dinosaur Unimpaired," 9.

that “competent engineers have stated that there are other places, not in the National Park, that would serve as a site just as well.”<sup>252</sup>

The argument was that “Echo Park and Split Mountain dams are not necessary now, and will probably never be necessary. Alternate sites exist.”<sup>253</sup> Even if the calculation errors were not as egregious as Grant and Brower suggested, the dams were still not a good idea. A *New York Times* editorial, reprinted in the February 1951 *Bulletin*, declared that “the fact is that there are alternative sites that, while possibly not quite so desirable in certain respects, would have the overwhelming merit of leaving untouched for posterity one of the country’s most magnificent scenic wilderness regions.”<sup>254</sup> And Assistant Secretary Doty stated his “hope that alternative plans can eventually be worked out to avoid the use of the National Monument for water storage purposes.”<sup>255</sup> David Brower put the idea plainly when he declared that “equal amounts of water for local irrigation can be impounded equally well at other sites.”<sup>256</sup>

Another concern with placing these dams inside Dinosaur National Monument when there were so many viable alternatives was that it would set a precedent. It would be

far too easy for those seeking money and power simply to plan more dams and higher levees to cure floods, and then to point out in hysteria that water is so essential a part of life that to avoid drought every flat acre, even in our national parks, must be immediately flooded, even though a more careful examination would show alternative sites which could store the entire run-off of a watershed at lower cost and with more efficient utilization of water.<sup>257</sup>

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<sup>252</sup> “For the April Record,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, April 1951, 11.

<sup>253</sup> “This Is the Issue,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1954, back cover.

<sup>254</sup> “Mr. Drury’s Departure,” *New York Times*. February 14, 1951.

“Mr. Drury’s Departure,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, February 1951, 17.

<sup>255</sup> “Remarks of Assistant Secretary of the Interior Dale E. Doty,” 11.

<sup>256</sup> “Will You DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our National Park System?”

<sup>257</sup> Richard M. Leonard. 1952. Review of *Water—Or Your Life*, by Arthur H. Carhart. *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1952, 100.

The planning and development of projects would be held to a much lower standard in the future if these projects were allowed to be rushed through, justified with specious reasoning and bad math. And this would all be at the exclusion of alternative projects that would better fit the need, and the expense of an irreplaceable part of nature. The Sierra Club was working to save Dinosaur National Monument.

Compared to other Council of Conservationist groups, the Sierra Club waged one of the most aggressive campaign against the Echo Park dam. The eighty-seven items of coverage in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* were second only to the National Parks Association, and by just one article. The steady coverage focused on mobilizing its members to act to defend the monument, the value of the National Park System as a whole, and the foolhardy nature of the Echo Park dam plan. As one of the most visible groups, the Sierra Club and its leader, David Brower, were prominent in the battle and the *Bulletin* provided readers a thorough and detailed picture of the campaign.

## CHAPTER 4

### AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY:

#### A NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM

Shall we preserve our National Parks and Monuments as originally intended for the benefit of all, or shall we hand them over one by one to powerful special interests?

—Richard H. Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes...”

The Colorado River rushes and rages through several Western states: the only major source of water in the desert landscapes. Early White settlers to Utah arrived to find an inhospitable scene and made it the first order of business to divert a stream in the Salt Lake Valley and irrigate land. Having cultivated 1.5 million acres of land by the end of World War II, it was clear that “to Utahns, wilderness was not to be gawked at; it was to be subdued and made productive.”<sup>258</sup> But not every river in the West could be controlled: the Colorado’s swift currents, thrashing rapids, and hairpin turns made its water a source of fear, and by the 1950s, the river was known more for its destructive force than anything else. The Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) was designed to tame that water for the benefit of Utah, Arizona, and Colorado, but the dams of the project were controversial. Though the Colorado River was located in the West, many of the organizations involved in the fight to defeat the project were headquartered on the

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<sup>258</sup> Jon M. Cosco, *Echo Park: Struggle for Preservation* (Boulder, CO: Johnson Printing), 19.

other side of the country. One of those groups, the American Museum of Natural History, was founded and based in Central Park in the middle of New York City.

During the late 1800s, the City of New York underwent a cultural revolution. Private donations and municipal investments combined in such ventures as Central Park (800 acres of green space in the middle of the city) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art (intended to mirror other houses in Paris and holding nearly 200 ancient works of art in the first few years). This effort to benefit the community as a whole by providing greater access to education and science for all has been called an “age of broad social improvement.”<sup>259</sup> At the same time, Albert S. Bickmore, a lifelong lover of nature, was organizing a society that allowed wealthy donors to sponsor field expeditions and samples of scientific research to display. The goal was to allow the public to enjoy the wonders of the world in the “immediate vicinity of their homes.”<sup>260</sup> Bickmore had grown up along the coast of Maine, spent his childhood observing and interacting with nature, and had dedicated his education to botany, sociology, and zoology. One of his most cherished memories was being allowed to peruse a small copy of *Goldsmith’s Natural History, Abridged*. In his autobiography, he wrote, “I have treasured it almost as if it were a sacred relic.”<sup>261</sup>

Bickmore went on to found the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), an institution dedicated to the idea that nature should be experienced, studied, and understood by all people. Since 1869, the mission of the AMNH has been “to discover,

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<sup>259</sup> Lyle Rexer and Rachel Klein, *American Museum of Natural History: 125 Years of Expedition and Discovery* (Harry N. Abrams, Inc.: New York), 24.

<sup>260</sup> Rexer and Klein, *American Museum of Natural History*, 24.

<sup>261</sup> Albert S. Bickmore, *Albert S. Bickmore: An Autobiography with a Historical Sketch of the Founding and Early Development of the American Museum of Natural History* (Unpublished manuscript, 1908), 6

interpret, and disseminate information about human creatures, the natural world, and the universe through a wide-ranging program of scientific research, education, and exhibition.”<sup>262</sup> In the early years, these goals were accomplished through regular lectures on various zoological and sociological topics, yearly expeditions, and annual reports to members. However, as the membership grew and technology advanced, so too did the demand for more regular and convenient communication. The museum began publishing *Natural History* in 1936.

F. Trubee Davison, an aviator and former Assistant Secretary of War for Air who had graced the cover of *Time* magazine in 1925, served as president of the museum from 1933 to 1951. But from 1951 to 1956, Alexander M. White led the AMNH (the years covering the Echo Park fight). White, a lawyer, loved history and described himself as having “a sportsman’s interest in the out-of-doors—sailing, hunting, and fishing.”<sup>263</sup> Albert E. Parr served as the director of the museum for the entirety of the controversy. In that role, Parr drove the overall research and preservation goals, and helped to determine the long-term academic and social values of the museum. The *Natural History* staff stayed relatively stable for the seven years of this analysis. The personal commitments and continuity of both museum leadership and magazine editorial staff suggested an organization with great stability and a consistent message in the magazine.

Measuring 8½ inches wide and 11 inches long, the monthly magazine’s goal was to bring readers “the best in scientific thought and opinion in exploration, research, and the world of nature.”<sup>264</sup> In *Natural History*, readers would see a full-color front and back

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<sup>262</sup> American Museum of Natural History, “About Us,” <http://www.amnh.org/about-us>, (accessed July 30, 2012).

<sup>263</sup> *New Yorker Magazine*, February 9, 1952, 24.

<sup>264</sup> *Natural History Magazine*, March 1954, 2.



cover, tri-color illustrations, and articles about topics including wildlife, preservation efforts in museums, and natural phenomena. The goal of the museum, and its magazine, was to educate members and the general public about major findings in the natural world around them. Alexander M. White, President of the American Museum of Natural History during the fight over Echo Park Dam, had expressed interest in building the museum into a “national institution, instead of just a New York one.”<sup>265</sup> In his annual report to members, White expressed a desire to broaden the museum’s interest areas. The battle over Dinosaur fit perfectly with its overarching goals:

It was only natural that an institution devoted to the preservation, display, and study of specimens of all aspects of nature should also feel a strong concern for the conservation of the living species. Our museum has therefore played a prominent part in the conservation movement from its earliest beginnings in this country... [and has] broadened from the preservation of species to the protection of entire environments, of soils and forests, and of plant and animal communities.<sup>266</sup>

The CRSP—with its national scope, danger to landscape and species preservation, and threat to important antiquities—was just the type of issue that fit with the founding principles of the museum. The interest was also practical, apparently. As president of the museum, White was concerned with the fiscal solvency of the institution and he made it clear that he desired to address more national and international issues in an effort to help *Natural History* “attract national advertising” and therefore broaden its appeal to donors.<sup>267</sup>

There is nothing that shows that the leaders of AMNH had ever been to or expressed interest in Dinosaur National Monument prior to 1950, yet during the years of the Echo Park fight, *Natural History* published six articles that mentioned Utah, five of

<sup>265</sup> *New Yorker Magazine*, February 9, 1952, 24.

<sup>266</sup> American Museum of Natural History, Annual Report, 1950, 25-26.

<sup>267</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

which discussed Dinosaur National Monument or Echo Park.<sup>268</sup> (This collection of articles was, by far, the smallest sample of all the groups.) However, one interesting characteristic of this coverage was its contextualization of the issue. For example, one article describing the beauty of Utah's Needles recreational area<sup>269</sup> included a reference to the controversy over Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>270</sup> The story was focused on a trip to see the scenic rock formations, but the author made a clear effort to mention the threat to Echo Park and the damage the dam would cause. *Natural History* coverage featured two detailed articles and letters of opinion regarding the proposed projects from readers. Also of interest is that Richard Pough, who would later go on to found the Nature Conservancy, was the author of both in-depth articles that were published.<sup>271</sup> His items resembled editorials, though were never labeled as such. They presented facts about the controversy, updates on the status of the proposal, and his passionate disapproval of the dams.

Though the Dinosaur dams were first officially proposed in 1950, the proposal to build dams inside a national monument was more than four years old when the AMNH charged into the debate. The first mention of the CRSP came in a full-page, full-throated attack on the idea of building a dam inside a fixture of the National Park Service. The

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<sup>268</sup> One article from the June 1950 issue was about Glen Canyon and Rainbow National Monument. This article was included in the count because of Glen Canyon's role in the CRSP, and the eventual compromise that saved Echo Park. However, the article did not mention either Dinosaur National Monument or Echo Park.

<sup>269</sup> National Park Service, "Canyonlands National Park," <http://www.nps.gov/cany/index.htm>, (accessed August 2012). This area, located in southeastern Utah just outside of Moab, would become one of the five districts of the Canyonlands National Park in 1964.

<sup>270</sup> Joyce Rockwood Muench, "Threading Utah's Needles," *Natural History*, December 1954, 457.

<sup>271</sup> At the time these articles were published, Pough was serving as Chairman of the Department of Conservation and General Ecology for the American Museum of Natural History.

argument centered on a preservationist version of the domino theory: if a dam were built inside the boundaries of a national monument, it would open the entire National Park System to industrialization. According to Pough, the issue was “one of the most crucial conservation issues ever to threaten the policies of our National Park system.”<sup>272</sup> For the American Museum of Natural History, the importance of the National Park System was supreme, both in its value to citizens present and future, and also in its place in the bureaucracy, the first time the proposed dams were discussed the battle lines were drawn:

The whole concept of our National Park System is at stake in this case. Either we regard the areas entrusted to its care as a sacred trust to be passed on, unblemished, to coming generations as a precious part of our American heritage, or we can expect to have them all artificialized in time.<sup>273</sup>

Throughout the campaign, *Natural History* writers would point to the proposed dams as symbolic of the degradation of the system as a whole. Authors would call the “power facilities, and building that would go with it, an eyesore that has no place in any part of the National Park System.”<sup>274</sup> Further, they would claim that to allow such a breach was tantamount to abandoning the scheme as a whole because “status as a National Monument guaranteed this [unimpaired preservation]. Such areas are legally protected.”<sup>275</sup>

The first article on the Dinosaur controversy appeared in the March 1954 issue and featured a five-inch photo of Steamboat Rock<sup>276</sup> captioned, “A WONDER OF THE

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<sup>272</sup> Richard H. Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” *Natural History*, February, 1955, 60.

<sup>273</sup> Richard H. Pough, “Would You Dam Dinosaur National Monument?” *Natural History*, March 1954, 144.

<sup>274</sup> Pough, “Would You Dam Dinosaur National Monument?” 144.

<sup>275</sup> Richard H. Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” *Natural History*, February 1955, 61.

<sup>276</sup> Steamboat Rock, a rock formation 1,000 feet high that juts out into the waters where the Green and Yampa meet, is one of the iconic images of Dinosaur. The proposed Echo Park Dam would have submerged more than half of the rock, leaving only the top 500 feet visible.

WORLD.” The headline—in bold—asked, “Would you DAM Dinosaur National Monument?” Even though the article was just one page long, its visual elements were a clear condemnation of the proposed dam in Echo Park. Expressing his strong opinion, Pough, Chairman of the Department of Conservation and General Ecology at the museum, called the dams “questionable” and “unnecessary” and predicted “the construction scars, power facilities, and buildings that would go with it, an eyesore that has no place in any part of the National Park system.”<sup>277</sup> For Pough, Dinosaur was a place of beauty and wonder, but it had been abandoned and abused by Congress’s refusal to appropriate proper funding for the Monument’s maintenance. He further claimed that “development of the Upper Colorado Valley does not require the construction of dams in the Monument.”<sup>278</sup> Through the use of words such as “questionable,” “absurd,” and “selfish,”<sup>279</sup> Pough expressed clear disdain for the plan to build a dam inside a national monument.

The following month, *Natural History* included five letters to the editor, ranging from 200 to 750 words, in response to Pough’s article. Each detailed passionate support for Dinosaur National Monument and strong opposition to the proposed dams.<sup>280</sup> The first of the five published letters was written by Frank E. Masland Jr. of Carlisle, Pennsylvania. He spoke of defending Dinosaur when he “wrote to Secretary Douglas McKay, who is a friend of mine.” Masland argued “that we owe a debt to those who follow us, not to destroy these unique opportunities for inspiration and education.”<sup>281</sup>

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<sup>277</sup> Richard H. Pough, “Would You Dam Dinosaur National Monument?” 144.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>280</sup> Letters, *Natural History*, May 1954.

<sup>281</sup> Frank E. Masland Jr., Letters, *Natural History*, May 1954, 194. Masland’s letter is significant when understood that he was a prominent business owner in Pennsylvania and

Two other letters mentioned contact with government officials. One author—a recognized expert on nature and conservation—claimed to have written a letter to Interior Secretary Douglas McKay. While another wrote,

As many others have no doubt also felt it their duty to do, I have ventured to express this view in a letter to President Eisenhower. . . . I have urged the President, before concurring with him [Secretary McKay], to please consider very carefully the eternal effect it will have on one of the most unique and scientifically valuable wilderness areas we still possess—Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>282</sup>

Other letters included one written by the son of an engineer who enclosed (and *Natural History* published) a letter from his father, Milo B. Williams, detailing the construction and erosion problems with the Dinosaur dam sites.<sup>283</sup> The letter from the elder Williams argued that Dinosaur was a park “of great economic and historical value,” and as such its preservation was more important than any short-term benefits from a reservoir that would only be profitable and beneficial until, after years of buildup, it “is completely filled with earth.”<sup>284</sup> Yet another letter, submitted by nature author Carol H. Woodward, provided a more spiritual view on the matter. Woodward, a known expert on the flora of North America, had written several books on the subject.<sup>285</sup> Though she does not mention ever visiting the area, she argued that its destruction would be “a disaster for the people of the United States.” In the case of Dinosaur National Monument, “all that

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served in the National Park Service, helping to establish Everglades and Canyonlands National Parks. 1,270 acres of preserved land in Perry County, Pennsylvania are established as the Frank E. Masland, Jr. Natural Area. Archives and Special Collections Dickinson College Carlisle, PA COLLECTION REGISTER

Name: Masland, Frank E. Jr. (1895-1994) MC 2009.4 BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

<sup>282</sup> A. C. Hart, Letters, *Natural History*, May 1954, 194.

<sup>283</sup> Woody Williams, Letters, *Natural History*, May 1954, 238-239.

<sup>284</sup> Milo B. Williams, in Woody Williams, Letters, *Natural History*, May 1954, 238-239.

<sup>285</sup> Examples of Woodward’s work include *The Wise Garden Encyclopedia*. 1953. New York: Wm. H. Wise & Co. and *Hardy Ferns & Their Culture*. 1940. New York: NY Botanical Garden.

matters here is the one lasting value—peoples’ spiritual need for the magnificence that only untouched nature can provide.”<sup>286</sup>

These letters, that reference communication with government officials and are written by readers of note and everyday citizens alike, would likely serve as encouragement for others to do the same. Anecdotes of contact with policy makers made interacting with a legislators and bureaucrats less frightening and more socially acceptable. Just one month later, the deluge of constituent messages over the proposed dams was mentioned as the reason the CRSP had not been passed to date: “Thousands of telegrams flashed across the country—destination Washington. Congressmen, senators, the Secretary of the Interior, and even the President were urged to preserve Dinosaur.”<sup>287</sup>

In February 1955, a three-page article featuring a full-page photo of Steamboat Rock argued against the proposed dams and pleaded for conservationists to rise up and contact government officials to save the national monument. In this, Pough’s second Dinosaur article, he presented the history of the monument and the various government entities involved in the debate. He felt a responsibility to describe “chiefly the conservation arguments, but evidence has also been given against Echo Park Dam on economic and engineering grounds.”<sup>288</sup> He focused a great deal on the project’s bureaucratic entanglements that included Congress, the Bureau of Reclamation, Department of Interior, Army Corps of Engineers, and National Park System. Pough referenced these complicated relationships again when he wrote that, “In 1951, the Bureau of Reclamation asked the Army Engineer Corps to pass upon the practicality of the Upper Colorado River Storage Project.” He also added: “On March 9, the Under

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<sup>286</sup> Carol H. Woodward, Letters, *Natural History*, May 1954, 194.

<sup>287</sup> Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” 61-62.

<sup>288</sup> Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” 61.

Secretary of the Interior admitted a further error of 95,000 acre-feet in the rate of evaporation. On April 16, the Acting Assistant Reclamation Commissioner revealed an additional error of 45,000 acre-feet.”<sup>289</sup> The layers of government red tape and inter-agency squabbling were a major complaint of conservationists during the campaign.

The magazine’s coverage of the Dinosaur controversy concluded in December 1955 when a small paragraph that declared the dispute over appeared on the last page of the issue.<sup>290</sup> As *Natural History* reported it, “The controversial proposal to build Echo Dam in Dinosaur National Monument in contradiction to the immunity that National Park Service lands legally enjoy from such structures has ceased to be an issue, at least temporarily.”<sup>291</sup> The new CRSP bill would be introduced without Echo Park Dam, and conservationists had been victorious.

### *Beauty and the Bureaucracy*

Analysis of the *Natural History* articles about the Echo Park dam fight revealed three major themes in the coverage: first, bureaucratic entanglements kept Dinosaur National Monument from thriving and caused confusion between government agencies; second, the sacred beauty of nature and the importance of preservation for future generations; and third, the importance of citizen action in public policy.

Many of the arguments authors made in *Natural History* were largely institutional—either in reference to the National Park System and its precarious position, or to the relationship between, and the red tape that bound up, the NPS and fellow government agencies. The magazine seemed to be framing the cause of the controversy

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<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> “Echo Park Dam,” *Natural History*, December 1955, 556.

<sup>291</sup> “Echo Park Dam,” 556.

around Dinosaur National Monument as a case of the basic structures of government failing, or deliberately ignoring their founding missions. Opponents to the dam argued in the magazine that legal status as a national monument meant that protection should be the default policy. As author Richard Pough put it, “The ideals under which the National Park System was created put the burden of proof squarely on those who want to invade Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>292</sup> This argument seems to focus not on the business interests that were vying for the right to build and operate power facilities on the Colorado River and not on the local communities clamoring for the economic boom that inevitably comes with a major construction project; rather, it alludes to the ongoing bureaucratic wrangling.

The focus on the supreme nature of the National Park System and its benefits to the American people as a whole fits perfectly with the AMNH’s conception of itself as a national organization and its goal to bring nature to individuals, regardless of their location. The concentration would extend beyond the sacred nature of the parks, but *Natural History* would also argue against the spending priorities of the national government and the entanglements that come with federal policy discussions. *NH* argued that preservationists were not simply fighting a powerful business lobby and local boosters, they were running head on into interdepartmental turf wars that had existed for decades, some even since their inception, and their fire was aimed at several groups. First, they blamed Congress for having “failed to provide the National Park Service with the necessary appropriations.”<sup>293</sup> Next, they turned to the Bureau of Reclamation, which they claimed had designs on Echo Park—“although knowing that existing laws prevented

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<sup>292</sup> Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” 61.

<sup>293</sup> Pough, “Would You Dam Dinosaur National Monument?” 144.



it”—and had recruited the Army of Engineers who were “known for their enthusiasm about building dams.”<sup>294</sup> Perhaps even more scandalously, Pough accused the Bureau of deliberately ignoring scientific and environmental data to gain Congressional authorization for the project.

Pough made repeated references to the closely divided Congress and the tendency of dam supporters to use parliamentary procedure to their own gain. But he then listed examples of how citizen activity had rallied in an attempt to save the monument. He argued that “conservation-minded citizens have been forced to wage an expensive campaign to save what is guaranteed by law.”<sup>295</sup> Pough referenced the multiple policymakers who had received communication from constituents. Thousands of messages made their way to legislators and bureaucrats, arguing for protection of a piece of the National Park System. For Pough, the battle was important because

the loss of this issue will expose other National Park areas to invasion by special interests. Seventeen other projected dams are now pending in eight National Parks and Monuments. Authorization of Echo Park Dam would be the go-ahead signal.<sup>296</sup>

It was clear to Pough that the fight to save Dinosaur National Monument, and keeping other protected areas out of the crosshairs, hinged on public interest and mobilizing that public to engage policymakers.

The argument was made that a powerful lobbying force for supporters of the dams was gathering. Pough introduced conservationists to the many challenges they were facing from “advocates of the Bureau of Reclamation’s project [who] have now amassed

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<sup>294</sup> Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” 61.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

<sup>296</sup> Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” 62.

a war chest and have carefully mapped their strategy.”<sup>297</sup> He also informed readers of the deep pockets and strategies of groups representing big business and local interests in the Colorado River Basin states who were beginning a propaganda campaign aimed at the public, but mostly at legislators where “the showdown will come in the 84<sup>th</sup> Congress.”<sup>298</sup> Though not specifically named in *Natural History*, dam proponents had established the Upper Colorado River Grass Roots, Inc., “an entity representing thousands of citizens dedicated to gaining approval of the CRSP. Adopting the nickname ‘Aqualantes’<sup>299</sup> (meaning ‘water vigilantes’), it churned out an impressive variety of news releases and pamphlets testifying to the unmatched qualities of the site.”<sup>300</sup> It is likely that these are just the types of activities to which Pough was referring and *Natural History* was a perfect weapon in response to the pamphlets of the opposition.

A second theme that emerged in the *Natural History* coverage was a tendency to humanize the monument. Perhaps because the AMNH had a holistic approach to nature as an integral and fulfilling part of the human experience, items in *NH* often referred to the disfiguring impact a dam and reservoir would have on the land. Throughout the articles words appeared that underscored the physical beauty of the monument and the negative effect of development. Pough wrote of “construction scars,” canyons being “marred” by an “ugly, fluctuating reservoir,” and of the importance of leaving this place “unblemished.”<sup>301</sup> Further, Pough argued that

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> This group was active in printing and distributing pamphlets and flyers, letter-writing, and testifying in Congress in support of Echo Park Dam.

<sup>300</sup> Mark W. T. Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1994), 200.

<sup>301</sup> Pough, “Would You Dam Dinosaur National Monument?” 144.

in 1938, this unit of our National Park System was enlarged with the primary purpose of preserving unimpaired the spectacular canyons of the Green and Yampa Rivers. Status as a National Monument guaranteed this. Such areas are legally protected from disfiguring developments of all sorts.<sup>302</sup>

The idea of a “disfiguring development” brought a human quality, almost as if to say that the monument would experience shame or embarrassment if such a project were constructed. This tendency to humanize nature is not without theoretical support. Deep ecologists argue that “because of our belief that human interests are fundamentally more important than the interests, needs, and integrity of nature, we have shamelessly exploited and damaged the natural world.”<sup>303</sup> It also draws on the Japanese idea of Shintoism in which all organisms and structures exist equally—gods “are embodied within forests, streams, rocks, wind, and mountains.”<sup>304</sup>

*Natural History's* third theme showed in repeated printed calls to action to readers. This fits well with the history of the organization as a membership group built on the principle of citizen activity and its founding goal of providing a space for the public to be more involved with nature and the land around them. Multiple hints, and many direct appeals, for direct citizen contact with government representatives appeared in the magazine and citizen action was often identified as the only line of defense for Dinosaur National Monument. The first item that discussed the proposed dams concluded with the following rallying cry:

It is the duty of every citizen to let the Honorable A. L. Miller, Chairman, House of Representatives Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, House Office

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<sup>302</sup> Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” 61.

<sup>303</sup> Bob Pepperman Taylor, *Our Limits Transgressed: Environmental Political Thought in America* (1992: The University of Kansas Press), 196.

<sup>304</sup> Julia B. Corbett, *Communicating Nature: How We Create and Understand Environmental Messages* (2006: Island Press: Washington, D.C.), 53.

Building, Washington 25, D.C., and his own Congressman, know how he feels about the matter.<sup>305</sup>

This call, published in March 1954, is significant for two reasons. First, it presents the issue as something about which citizens must form an opinion; and, second, it gives the official title and address of the most powerful member of Congress on the issue. The magazine was clearly trying to make activation a requirement, while providing the information to readers made it a simple task as well.

In the battle to preserve important spaces, *Natural History* romanticized the fight by labeling conservationists “defenders of Dinosaur” and “minutemen” and even asking the public for “active, behind-the-lines participation” in the fight. Referencing popular Revolutionary War heroes helped create the idea that readers of *Natural History Magazine* were the only hope for saving Dinosaur National Monument, and the National Park System as a whole. For as *Natural History* claimed in one of its impassioned call to arms: “AS DINOSAUR GOES, SO GO THE OTHERS.”<sup>306</sup> And finally, they rallied readers with lines such as, “The opening guns in the battle for Dinosaur have been heard across the nation, but the outcome is in doubt. One thing is clear: it will be a war of conflicting principles.”<sup>307</sup> To describe the issue as important to the point of patriotic duty is powerful. To provide the requisite information for performing that duty is empowering.

The coverage in *Natural History* demonstrated concern that complicated government structure created a tangle of agencies and committees, making it incredibly easy for bureaucrats to exploit appealing resources. Unfortunately, the places that so tempted engineers and technicians were often found inside the national parks and

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<sup>305</sup> Pough, “Would You Dam Dinosaur National Monument?” 144. It should be noted that the language of the time used the term “he” to refer to any mixed audience.

<sup>306</sup> Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” 61-62.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid*, 62.

monuments—problematic when considering that the fixtures of the system were set aside because they were beautiful or historically important. The idea that the National Park System was created to preserve important places for future generations was a major focus of the AMNH coverage, and that theme was used to influence readers to lend their voices to the chorus of opposition to the Colorado River Storage Project.

Compared to the other organizations of the Council of Conservationists, the American Museum of Natural History devoted the least amount of space and the fewest articles to the CRSP and the fight to save Dinosaur National Monument. This does not mean, however, that *Natural History* was not a passionate voice in the army. And luckily for the museum's members and supporters, the AMNH was not the only group rallying its troops. Others were also issuing a call to arms to protect the monument and the system as a whole.

## CHAPTER 5

### AMERICAN NATURE ASSOCIATION: THE DINOSAUR DOMINOS

Most of the “self-appointed guardians” have been fighting invasions similar to your Dinosaur project for years. They have been fighting them because they represent a great many of your fellow citizens who feel that we should pass on to coming generations a few examples of what primitive America possessed in unspoiled grandeur, and with them living specimens of the animals, flowers, and trees native to them.

—“Let’s Be Fair, Mike”

On a hot July morning in 1952, hundreds of citizens from nearly twenty different states gathered along the shores of the Colorado River to hear Michael W. Straus, US Commissioner of Reclamation, speak at the dedication of the Granby Pumping Plant.<sup>308</sup> The plant resembled a 16-story building and housed three 6,000 horsepower pumps. When it was powered up, it forced water uphill into a reservoir providing water to half the state of Colorado.<sup>309</sup> In his speech, Straus told the revelers who stood in the shadows of the great turbines that Granby would be proof of the, “magic of reclamation’s multiple-purpose development.”<sup>310</sup>

But Straus would do more than extol the virtues of the water projects meant to harness the country’s wild rivers. In his speech, “He cited the long, bitter battle over the Colorado river which still rages between California and Arizona and prevents further

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<sup>308</sup> “Critics of Reclamation Peril West, Straus Says,” *Denver Post* July 21, 1952, sec. A.

<sup>309</sup> Northern Colorado Water Conservancy District, “Farr Pumping Plant Dedication Program.” June 18, 1994.

<sup>310</sup> “Critics of Reclamation Peril West, Straus Says.”

water development for drouth [*sic*] stricken areas of both states.”<sup>311</sup> The dedication of the plant was a landmark moment for Westerners who desired water for agriculture and farming. And according to Straus, the plant would pave the way for other large water projects along the Colorado that he believed would help the West “emerge from its colonial status of yesteryear and come into its rightful heritage.”<sup>312</sup> Straus’s prediction would prove telling for the battle over Echo Park Dam. This speech would place him in the center of one of the most heated exchanges in the controversy. That exchange would take place in several publications of the Council of Conservationists, including the American Nature Association’s *Nature Magazine*.

The American Nature Association began in Washington, D.C., in 1919 as “a non-profit-making organization dedicated to furthering the practical conservation of the great natural resources of America.”<sup>313</sup> The Association saw, among other things, “protection of our National Parks against exploitation for private gain” as its duty.<sup>314</sup> From 1923 to 1959, the association published *Nature Magazine*, a publication that “offered its readers a cornucopia of products advertised to enhance their outdoor experiences.”<sup>315</sup>

Between 1950 and 1956, the ANA seemed to enjoy a good deal of stability. During the fight over the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) and the effort to save Dinosaur National Monument, known conservationist Richard Westwood served as both president of the association and editor of *Nature Magazine*. Westwood represented the

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<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

<sup>312</sup> “Critics of Reclamation Peril West, Straus Says.”

<sup>313</sup> American Nature Association, *A New Development in Natural Science Pedagogy: Nature Magazine as a Current Text for Classroom Instruction in Natural Science...*, (Washington, D.C.: American Nature Association, 1936), 29.

<sup>314</sup> American Nature Association, *A New Development in Natural Science Pedagogy*, 29.

<sup>315</sup> Gregg Mitman, *Reel Nature: America’s Romance with Wildlife on Film* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), 5.

United States at the 1952 International Union for the Protection of Nature in Venezuela,<sup>316</sup> and was an active campaigner for environmental issues with correspondence appearing in the *Saturday Evening Post* and *The Nation*.<sup>317</sup> He eventually edited a book, *This Is Nature*.<sup>318</sup> In 1960, Westwood was honored with the Wildlife Society Conservation Award “for work of the nature study society and the establishment and growth of the International Union for the Protection of Nature and as editor of *Nature Magazine*.”<sup>319</sup>

*Nature Magazine* was intended “to stimulate public interest in every phase of nature and the out-of-doors, and devoted to the practical conservation of the great natural resources of America.”<sup>320</sup> The monthly publication was offered to members of the ANA. The magazine was 8½ by 11 inches and had a full-color cover. Its content—through articles, photographs, and illustrations—was dedicated to giving readers an up-close look at flora and fauna. Articles were most often one to two pages in length and several regularly occurring columns included the book reviews, Nature in Print, and the news update, Contents Noted. The magazine was absorbed into *Natural History Magazine* in 1960 and the American Nature Association apparently disbanded.

During the debate, *Nature Magazine* featured more than twenty-five articles that addressed Dinosaur National Monument, the proposed Echo Park and Split Mountain

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<sup>316</sup> International Union for the Protection of Nature, Proceedings and Reports of the Third General Assembly, September 3-9, 1952.

<sup>317</sup> Richard Westwood, "Letters." *Saturday Evening Post* August, 22, 1959, 4-6. Richard Westwood, "Letters." *Nation* December 19, 1959, 456-461.

<sup>318</sup> Richard Westwood. *This Is Nature* (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Publishing, 1959).

<sup>319</sup> “Conservation Education Award,” The Wildlife Society, <http://www.wildlife.org/who-we-are/awards/conservation-education>, (accessed July 5, 2013). The Union is now known as the International Union for Conservation.

<sup>320</sup> *Nature Magazine*, April 1950, 4



dams, or the plan for developing the Colorado River. Some items were major stories with illustrations. By nearly two-to-one, the Contents Noted entries—monthly collections of five or six brief stories on the topic of conservation that were often casual, yet pointed, and signed by the editor—were the lion’s share of the coverage in *Nature Magazine*. The material of the editorial page, though, was part of the Dinosaur fight as well.<sup>321</sup> Several unsigned editorials argued against the dams and featured scathing criticism of government officials and local dam proponents.

*Nature Magazine* entered the debate over Dinosaur in 1950 with a one-page editorial titled “Dinosaur Monument Threatened.” The piece included the history of the area and detailed the proposed water projects. Editors expressed concern that “a short-sighted drive for exploitation ... robs all Americans for the benefit of a few.”<sup>322</sup> The editorial also introduced what would be a recurring argument in the ANA’s campaign: the National Park System domino theory. There was a concern that allowing a dam in one obscure, rarely visited monument would set a precedent for future developments in other fixtures. It was evident that “letting down the barriers that protect one area weakens the defenses of all such reservations against the greed of exploiters.”<sup>323</sup> If the spaces of the National Park System were not safe, what was next?

It was nearly a year before Dinosaur would reappear in *Nature Magazine* in January 1951. Noted conservationist Harvey Broome had been active in several important environmental fights, included working to establish the National Wilderness Preservation

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<sup>321</sup> *Nature* ran a regular feature, similar to a newspaper editorial column that gave opinion statements regarding events and issues of the day.

<sup>322</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Threatened: An Editorial,” *Nature Magazine*, April 1950, 201.

<sup>323</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Threatened: An Editorial,” 201.

System.<sup>324</sup> Broome joined the fight when he gave a detailed account of his visit to the monument. He wrote a moving narrative that spanned more than four pages and included a full-page photo of the monument's Whirlpool Canyon. Taken from 2,800 feet above at Harper's Corner—a rock formation that creates a hairpin turn for the Green River after it has merged with the Yampa River—the overlook is located at almost the exact center of Dinosaur National Monument. From the point of the corner, one can see 800-foot-high Steamboat Rock, Echo Park where the rivers merged, and Whirlpool Canyon after the turn. Dave Canfield, Supervisor of Dinosaur National Monument, and his wife led Broome's three-day journey through Dinosaur. The story describes the first day's encounter with the Monument as

a maze of rugged country—great thick slabs of strata emerging from under Blue Mountain at a slight tilt and rising gradually to an abrupt edge which marked the canyons proper. But the canyons were so contorted that looking across at them and not directly down upon them, it was long before we made sense of what lay before us.<sup>325</sup>

Broome rapturously described “a hue rivaling the blue of eastern mountains, but with more purple in it” and “wilder, more violent colors.”<sup>326</sup> He then asked the question, “What is stirring the minds of those who would blandly hide these exquisite delineations behind mountains of water?”<sup>327</sup>

The story continued to detail the three days of adventure and beauty that the party experienced. The group, including leaders of The Wilderness Society and the Sierra Club,

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<sup>324</sup> The Wilderness Society, “Founders: Harvey Broome,” <http://wilderness.org/bios/founders/harvey-broome>, (accessed August 21, 2013). Broome was active in the fight to establish the National Wilderness Preservation System, and was president of The Wilderness Society from 1957-1968.

<sup>325</sup> Harvey Broome, “Dinosaur National Monument,” *Nature Magazine*, January 1951, 36.

<sup>326</sup> Broome, “Dinosaur National Monument,” 36.

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid*, 36.

was surrounded by “a stupendous wall of rock a thousand feet high,” “two rivers, each emerging from its own private, fantastic canyon,” and “stone, twisted like taffy, which seemed violent and tumultuous.”<sup>328</sup> When addressing the controversy, Broome was quick to admit that his knowledge of the area was limited but “the scene was so tremendous, I did not regret that I knew but little of the geology of the place.”<sup>329</sup> In closing, he lamented the idea of any action that would change the canyons or wild rivers of the Monument.

The first half of 1951 was marked by a controversial event that sent shockwaves through the environmental community: the resignation of American National Park Service Director Newton Drury. The battle over Echo Park had created a rift inside the Department of the Interior, home to both the Bureau of Reclamation and the National Park System. While the skirmish took place inside the department, the tension left Drury vulnerable to a forced demotion, which he declined. Instead he headed west to lead the California State Parks Department.<sup>330</sup>

Following Drury’s resignation, Straus gave his speech at the dedication of the Granby plant in which he railed against the selfish interests of those who opposed the dams. Interior Secretary Oscar Chapman met with conservationists and the National Park System issued a report on alternative sites outside the system. Nine months had elapsed without mention of Echo Park or Dinosaur National Monument in *Nature* Magazine. But in October 1951, Howard Zahniser’s column “Nature in Print” reviewed Devereux Butcher’s *Exploring Our National Parks and Monuments* and tied it to the importance of the conservation movement:

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<sup>328</sup> Broome, “Dinosaur National Monument,” 52.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>330</sup> Jon M. Cosco, *Echo Park: Struggle for Preservation*. (Boulder: Johnson Books, 1995).

To see this interest reflected in the publication of more and better books on the national parks is particularly gratifying, not only because thus are multiplied the numbers of those informed citizens who will demand national park protection, but also because the opportunities for experiencing these superlatively precious areas of our preserved wilderness in the writings of others are likewise thus increased.<sup>331</sup>

Zahniser was not only a book reviewer for *Nature Magazine*, but during the Echo Park controversy, he also served as executive director of The Wilderness Society and editor of the Society's magazine *The Living Wilderness*.<sup>332</sup> He was the founding editor of *National Parks* magazine and published four books and an environmental newspaper. He concluded in the column that, "to know these areas merely in literature or photography is to want them safeguarded." Zahniser was an expert in the field of conservation and he believed that the public support for environmental causes depended largely on educating the people first. His goal was to help

define in unmistakably clear terms the significance of the national parks—to make understandable to all who read and think that in wilderness preservation is not merely a provision for an especially pleasant and healthful sort of recreation, but, more deeply, the maintenance of access to the sources of our true living.<sup>333</sup>

Zahniser's concern was that the public would not understand the true value of the wild areas set aside until they had been raided, and that the damage would be more than financial—it would be spiritual.

During the remaining years of the fight to preserve Dinosaur, the coverage in *Nature Magazine* fell largely into two categories: brief paragraphs in the Contents Noted news section, and editorials. The use of editorial content "can serve as a forum for

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<sup>331</sup> Howard Zahniser, Nature in Print, *Nature Magazine*, October 1951, 394.

<sup>332</sup> "Devereux Butcher, 84, a Park Preservationist," Obituaries, <http://www.nytimes.com/1991/05/25/obituaries/devereux-butcher-84-a-park-preservationist.html>, (accessed August 21, 2013).

<sup>333</sup> Howard Zahniser, Nature in Print, 394.

readers and allow an organization to create, frame, and shape public opinion.”<sup>334</sup> Because opinion pieces are designed to help influence the public and move them to action, they often include emotive appeals and fiery rhetoric. Not surprisingly, the editorials in *Nature* were marked by emotion mixed with logical arguments against the proposed dams.

The first editorial, titled “Let’s Be Fair, Mike,” was a direct response to the speech Straus gave at the Granby dedication in July 1952.<sup>335</sup> It was a celebratory occasion that Straus used to launch a blistering attack on the efforts of environmentalists to stop the two dams inside the monument. He described activists as sitting in

air-conditioned caves overlooking Central Park in New York, Lincoln Park in Chicago, and Boston Commons . . . these self-appointed guardians have taken it upon themselves to safeguard the canyons of Dinosaur National Monument for the handful of brave souls who dare to explore the area by boat.<sup>336</sup>

Straus continued by attacking the preservation effort. He claimed that environmental groups believed “that the highest use of your [local citizens] area and resources is a museum and cemetery for Dinosaur bones.”<sup>337</sup>

The October 1951 editorial fired back that this claim was “of course, a below-the-belt blow—and you know it, Mike . . . The small area where the prehistoric remains are would not even be touched by the flooding, but the incomparable canyons would.” The editorial also noted that, “intimating that those of us who are defending the Monument oppose the Colorado River Basin development is, of course, a deliberate distortion. We have pointed out alternative and less costly sites.” The writers returned in kind by using the column to list several of the major organizations in the battle, including the Audubon

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<sup>334</sup> Barbara Diggs-Brown. *The PR Styleguide: Formats for Public Relations Practice*. (Boston: Wadsworth, 2013), 149.

<sup>335</sup> Text of the speech was not available in any archives, but newspaper reports on the dedication appeared in *The Denver Post* on July 21, 1952.

<sup>336</sup> “Let’s Be Fair Mike,” *Nature Magazine*, October 1951, 425.

<sup>337</sup> “Let’s Be Fair Mike,” 425.

Society, Izaak Walton League, and the National Wildlife Federation, and groups in the Council of Conservationist. The editorial observed that many of these groups had “long stood against precedent-establishing invasions of national parks and monuments for power and irrigation projects. Air-conditioning is not an issue, but truth is.”<sup>338</sup> The writers took this opportunity to counter Straus’s characterization of the opposition as having unrealistic expectations and being insensitive to local interests. The piece ended by attacking Straus head on: “When it comes right down to cases, Mr. Commissioner, we do not trust you.”<sup>339</sup>

The next editorial, published in the February 1952 issue, traced the evolution of the arguments over the dams in Dinosaur. Filled with details on the saga of the proposed Colorado River Storage Project, the editorial helped provide readers history and context. First, the committee hearing was discussed as entailing “imposing testimony by Senators and Congressmen in support of the plan, giving it a distinctly political aura.” Second, a report on the activities of major decision makers claimed that, “defenders of national park areas had not been idle. A representative committee met with Secretary Chapman and asked that opportunity be allowed for them both to study the area, and to present an engineer’s report on the matter of alternative sites.”<sup>340</sup> The committee hearing provided a clear example of the two sides in the debate over Echo Park, but it also gave the opposition a chance to show its teeth. It was an impressive array of individuals, including engineer Ulysses S. Grant III, David Brower of the Sierra Club, and Ira Gabrielson of the Izaak Walton League, that lined up to defend Dinosaur National Monument and the entire

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<sup>338</sup> “Let’s Be Fair Mike,” 425. A comma was omitted in the quotation to improve readability.

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid*, 425.

<sup>340</sup> “An Open Mind,” *Nature Magazine*, February 1952, 89.

system. This strategy helped to legitimize the opposition by establishing a record of the fight and connecting the ANA to other prominent conservation groups.

The editorial reminded readers that in April 1950, newly appointed Secretary of the Interior Oscar L. Chapman had held a public hearing about the dams during which a number of people spoke on behalf of the project: senators and representatives from Utah, Colorado, and other basin states, Bureau of Reclamation staffer N.B. Bennett Jr., and Clifford H. Stone, director of the Colorado Water Conservation Board all spoke on behalf of the project.<sup>341</sup> Opponents of the dam also testified. Representatives from the Izaak Walton League, the Sierra Club, the National Audubon Society, and other Council of Conservationist groups stated their objections: “opponents of these dams were many, representing conservation organizations that recognized the dangerous precedent involved.”<sup>342</sup>

This editorial presented a cautiously optimistic view of the Echo Park campaign. Writers observed that “we have no idea as to what decision Secretary Chapman will eventually reach, but we believe that it will be an honest decision as he sees it.” And it concluded with an assessment of Secretary Chapman’s performance on the controversy: “So far as the Secretary of the Interior is concerned we know that he has been open-minded and we salute him for it.”<sup>343</sup>

Throughout 1952 and most of 1953, the Colorado River Storage Project made slight bureaucratic progress, but in December 1953, Interior Secretary McKay announced approval of the CRSP and the dams in Dinosaur. Legislation was introduced in January 1954; by March, President Eisenhower had announced his approval of the plan and

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<sup>341</sup> Jon M. Cosco, *Echo Park: Struggle for Preservation*, 122.

<sup>342</sup> “An Open Mind,” 89.

<sup>343</sup> *Ibid*, 89.

vocalized support of Echo Park.<sup>344</sup> The editorial staff of *Nature Magazine* tackled the issue in a 1954 piece titled “Echo Park Dam Threat.”<sup>345</sup> The writers lent a sense of urgency when they observed, “As this is being written,” and then declared that “this dam is an unwarranted invasion of the National Monument, and that alternative sites are not only practicable but desirable.”<sup>346</sup>

For the first time in *Nature Magazine*, an editorial clarified an important point regarding the opposition: Supporters of the Echo Park dam, particularly basin-area lawmakers, had been painting opponents as fighting against the entire Colorado River Storage Project. Editors responded by pointing out that

this latest threat to the integrity of one of the areas under the administration of the National Park Service has mobilized conservation organization and conservationists in opposition to the plan. This is not, however, opposition to the Colorado River Project, because the need for water storage is obvious.<sup>347</sup>

This important moment in the controversy is not the first time alternatives were mentioned, but it is the first official declaration of support for the CRSP as a whole. By allowing that dams were a necessary part of water management in the basin region, environmentalists could broaden the coalition to include Westerners who needed water but also wanted to preserve the National Park System.

*Nature Magazine* published another editorial about Echo Park in May 1954. It summarized a speech by Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson given at the North American Wildlife Conference.<sup>348</sup> Gabrielson was a prominent voice in the conservation movement—he had, among other things, served as the first director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and

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<sup>344</sup> Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2000).

<sup>345</sup> “Echo Park Dam Threat,” *Nature Magazine*, March 1954, 145.

<sup>346</sup> “Echo Park Dam Threat,” 145.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, 145. The word “otherwise” was omitted for clarity when reading.

<sup>348</sup> The text of this speech was not available in a search of the papers of Ira Gabrielson.



as president of the Wildlife Management Institute. He presented a laundry list of complaints about the environmental policies of the Eisenhower Administration. The editorial observed that the speech was notable for its “stern words, indeed, and, coming from one of the country’s leading conservationists, and a Republican, they command serious attention.”<sup>349</sup> He discussed the various maneuverings of federal departments regarding the Dinosaur fight, but found “the brightest spot in the picture to be ‘the Congress itself, which has refused to go along with these attempted raids.’”<sup>350</sup> Finally, he attempted to inject a sense of duty into the argument by claiming that

only as you and your fellow citizens, who believe in maintaining and managing these public lands continue to take an active interest, can these lands be maintained for public use for the generations yet to come. If you relax your vigilance and your effort, they will melt away, and once they are gone it will be difficult, if not impossible to replace them.<sup>351</sup>

The editorial closed by expressing “trust that Gabe’s charges will serve to alert all conservationists; that they will receive careful attention on the part of those now charged with administering and protecting our natural resources.”<sup>352</sup> Gabrielson’s opposition to the Echo Park Dam and his pledge to help lobby Congress and Department officials lent a sense of authority to the ongoing fight.<sup>353</sup>

The May 1954 issue also contained an urgent article advising readers that at press time, Congressional action to permit the dams was imminent and that administrative approval would follow. Conservationists were warned that the National Park System was

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<sup>349</sup> “Harsh Words from Gabe,” *Nature Magazine*, May 1954, 257.

<sup>350</sup> “Harsh Words from Gabe,” 257.

<sup>351</sup> *Ibid*, 257.

<sup>352</sup> *Ibid*, 257.

<sup>353</sup> Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, U.S. Geological Survey, “Bios,” <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/resshow/perry/bios/GabrielsonIra.htm>, (accessed August 27, 2013).

under attack and “the scene of battle is now transferred to the floor of Congress.”<sup>354</sup> The article urged readers to act to save the Monument: “If you wish to stop the dangerous precedent represented by the building of Echo Park dam, let your Congressman and Senators know how you feel about this plan.”<sup>355</sup> The seemingly last-minute nature of the placement and direct request for action in this brief story make it noteworthy in the coverage. The American Nature Association was one of a chorus of groups joined together to encourage its members to mobilize in defense of Dinosaur and the entire National Park System.

The final editorial, published in *Nature Magazine* in October 1954, defended the idea and purpose of the National Park System. Editors argued that “to those of us who hold that these areas have been set aside to protect, for a high purpose and for posterity, outstanding bits of our great country, this is a critical situation.”<sup>356</sup> This piece presented a strong rationale “to prevent the serious precedent that would be established by the erection of a great dam in Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>357</sup> Other threats to the National Park System were addressed, including a proposed tram in Mount Rainier National Park, and connected to a larger debate around the federal government’s responsibility to protect and preserve these spaces. The major danger in the proposed Echo Park dam was that it would be the first in a series of dominos to fall when “the door is thrown wide open for the same sort of improper recreation exploitation of the whole system of parks and

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<sup>354</sup> “Harsh Words from Gabe,” 257.

<sup>355</sup> *Ibid.*, 257.

<sup>356</sup> “Whither National Parks,” *Nature Magazine*, October 1954, 425.

<sup>357</sup> “Whither National Parks,” 425.

monuments.”<sup>358</sup> A dam was not the only threat—the entire system had to be protected from permanent alteration to any of its areas.

This editorial also saw a return to the emotional prose that was familiar in the beginning of *Nature Magazine*’s coverage of Dinosaur. The piece compared a ski lift in a national park to “a juke box beside the altar of one’s church. Both would be a sacrilege. We stand before the altars of our churches in worship of our Lord.”<sup>359</sup> Another National Park fixture, Mount Rainier, was described as “a great masterpiece and manifestation of God through Nature.”<sup>360</sup>

In October 1955, Howard Zahniser would use the “Nature in Print” feature to simultaneously review the Council of Conservationists’ promotional book, *This Is Dinosaur* by noted conservationist Wallace Stegner, and to make the case for the importance of the battle.<sup>361</sup> Zahniser called it “the greatest controversy that American conservationists have faced in the four decades during which the United States has owned a National Park System.”<sup>362</sup> The beauty of the photographs in the book and the message of the value and possibility of recreational activities were mentioned, but the focus of this review was on the history of the fight and the reasoning behind it. Zahniser observed that “the proposed Echo Park Dam [is] not only a possible desecration of a superlative part of the still remaining American wilderness, but also a threat to an instrument of public policy which has been devised to protect such areas.”<sup>363</sup> And he predicted that, “an acquaintance with the book—at home or in a public library—will better enable a

<sup>358</sup> “Whither National Parks,” 425.

<sup>359</sup> *Ibid*, 425.

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid*, 425.

<sup>361</sup> Wallace E. Stegner. *This Is Dinosaur: Echo Park Country and Its Magic Rivers* (New York: Knopf, 1955).

<sup>362</sup> Howard Zahniser, Nature in Print, *Nature Magazine*, June-July 1955, 284.

<sup>363</sup> Howard Zahniser, Nature in Print, 284.

conservationist to communicate his influence to his Congressman.”<sup>364</sup> *This Is Dinosaur* was designed to explain the history, geology, and natural beauty of the monument.

Stegner and the CoC encouraged supporters to share the book with neighbors and friends.

Zahniser’s review transitions from his overview of the battle to save Dinosaur to the CoC’s efforts in the fight. Once again, readers were asked to

write to their representatives in Congress, urging them to oppose the whole Colorado River Project, because the Senate has now made Echo Park Dam a part of this project, and then would let the Council of Conservationists know what each Congressman said in reply, it would greatly facilitate the further efforts to protect this superb area, and the policy through which the American people are seeking to preserve it and the other natural areas which they cherish.<sup>365</sup>

The book review has a poetic style, as can be seen in passages such as, “All who can, will wish to own this volume, to see for themselves so vividly and clearly represented the character of these deep canyons that have become the center of such a momentous controversy.”<sup>366</sup> However, Zahniser made it clear that the book was meant not only for the fight; rather, it was a work of art that would inspire readers for years to come.

Dinosaur National Monument featured prominently in *Nature Magazine* beyond the editorial page, appearing a dozen times in the Contents Noted section. This coverage was limited to news briefs, but it contained detailed information such as updates on the movement of the proposal through the various government agencies and the bill’s progress in the Senate and House. The coverage was a mix of fact and opinion. For example, readers were informed that, “Another legislative proposal that did not receive action is that seeking approval for the building of Echo Park Dam in Dinosaur National

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<sup>364</sup> Ibid, 285.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid, 285.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid, 285.

Monument. Conservationists expressed no regret that this is delayed and, too, must reappear in the new Congress.”<sup>367</sup>

Quite often, Contents Noted items called readers to action, arguing that

the conservation forces, opposing Echo Park Dam as a dangerous precedent because of its exploitation of a National Park Service area, will have to stay in there and punch. Winning one round, or even several rounds, does not win a fight because a knockout blow is always possible.<sup>368</sup>

The section served as a quick update on the controversy and provided guidance to readers as to the most appropriate means for influencing the situation. Occasionally, it pointed readers to other sources of information on the controversy as well. For example, “We were happy to see an effective pictorial layout and an excellent article by Martin Litton in *The Los Angeles Times* for last December 16 exposing the drive to invade Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>369</sup> *Nature* coverage included several references to other groups and publications that helped make the case against the Echo Park dams. This helped create an aura of power in numbers and added to the ANA’s credibility by aligning itself with other prominent environmental organizations.

The final word on the Echo Park controversy came in October 1956 when *Nature Magazine* included a short paragraph describing the Winter-Spring 1956 issue of *The Living Wilderness*.<sup>370</sup> The Wilderness Society magazine featured a “complete and historic review of the controversy.”<sup>371</sup> The article also recommended “it is important that the whole story of the battle for the integrity of the area should thus be compiled and

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<sup>367</sup> Contents Noted, *Nature Magazine*, October 1952, 399.

<sup>368</sup> Contents Noted, *Nature Magazine*, January 1955, 7.

<sup>369</sup> Contents Noted, *Nature Magazine*, February 1952, 63.

<sup>370</sup> This issue of *The Living Wilderness* had a cover dedicated to the resolution of the Echo Park Dam controversy and twenty pages detailing hearings and the significance of the Echo Park controversy. This issue is covered in Chapter 11.

<sup>371</sup> “Echo Park,” *Nature Magazine*, October 1956, 444.

preserved.”<sup>372</sup> Readers were given contact information to order a personal copy of the Wilderness Society’s publication, once again sharing resources with other CoC member groups, increasing the reach of messages in the battle over Dinosaur National Monument.

### *The Duty to Defend*

Three themes were identified in the coverage of *Nature Magazine* over the course of the Echo Park dam controversy: supremacy of the areas in the National Park System, the risk of a domino effect, and the public’s responsibility to act to protect the monument. To underscore the themes, the American Nature Association used strategic language and poetic appeals describing the beauty of the area and spiritualization of nature, war metaphors and the language of fighting, and pragmatic arguments regarding the wisdom of the project and its supporters. These themes combined to keep readers apprised of the battle and move them to action.

The first major theme identified in *Nature Magazine* was the supremacy of the National Park System and its value to the citizens of the country. The coverage of Echo Park included declarations such as: “these areas, having been set aside for their outstanding character, should not have to be protected, month by month and year by year, by their friends. Areas in the national park system are the property of the American people.”<sup>373</sup> The idea of character suggests value and quality, and declaring supporters “friends” helps forge a bond between readers and the monument. If readers established a relationship with the area, they would be more likely to act in its defense. Both the value and relationship would be extended and deepened with repeated use of the term “posterity” in the coverage. Writers argued that Dinosaur National Monument was “a

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<sup>372</sup> “Echo Park,” 444.

<sup>373</sup> Contents Noted, *Nature Magazine*, March 1952, 119.

reservation worthy in every respect of being preserved for posterity.”<sup>374</sup> Also, “these areas have been set aside to protect, for a high purpose and for posterity, outstanding bits of our great country.”<sup>375</sup> The areas of the National Park System are supreme and stewards of the land should guard them for themselves and the generations yet to come.

Beyond the legal standing of the National Park System, there was more to the areas than simply recreation and present-day needs. The magazine attempted to

define in unmistakably clear terms the significance of the national parks—to make understandable to all who read and think that wilderness preservation is not merely a provision for an especially pleasant and healthful sort of recreation, but, more deeply, the maintenance of access to the sources of our true living.<sup>376</sup>

People must reach a realization of the “meaning and true value of these areas unspoiled” and that “no representative of the public can sanction or even tolerate the despoliation of these national treasures.”<sup>377</sup> The environment is a living thing to be protected and valued; it was “exquisite” and “incomparable.”<sup>378</sup> These terms, often used to describe rare jewels or works of art, suggested that the land was irreplaceable and placed a sense of worth, and even pricelessness, to the land. Giving areas of the park system deeper meaning than simple recreation helped connect readers to Dinosaur and the fight to save it. These areas—with their colors like stained glass windows and places like altars—were akin to temples, and they were a part of the reader.

Spiritualization of nature was increasingly used in the coverage. Wilderness was identified as one of the “sources of our true living”<sup>379</sup> and compared to the “altar of a

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<sup>374</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Threatened: An Editorial,” *Nature Magazine*, April 1950, 201.

<sup>375</sup> “Whither National Parks,” 425.

<sup>376</sup> Howard Zahniser, *Nature in Print*, 394.

<sup>377</sup> *Ibid.*, 395.

<sup>378</sup> Broome, “Dinosaur National Monument,” 36.

<sup>379</sup> Howard Zahniser, “Nature in Print,” *Nature Magazine*, October 1951, 394.

church.”<sup>380</sup> The language described Dinosaur as a place where people met to worship, approach their Creator, and experience their most sacred moments. The spiritualization of nature in this way made protection of the impeccable national park areas a responsibility of the system. One author in particular worked to draw readers in to the beauty and grandeur of the monument. Harvey Broome provided some of the most stirring descriptions of the National Park System, and Dinosaur in particular. His three-day trip to the monument brought out the poet in him:

It was a vulcan’s pit of creation—raw and baking with heat—shouting out its story of colossal upheaval, and of rending, tearing, everlasting attrition. Little was said. These scenes spoke louder than our own futile thoughts. And each of us was oppressed, I think, that any men could wish to submerge—or alter one whit—these incomparable canyons.<sup>381</sup>

It is hard to read this description of the land, so violent and dramatic—even drawing on the power of Roman Gods to forge weapons out of fiery pits—without believing that something of deeper meaning exists in the land. Readers were presented with the idea that Dinosaur was a place that would humble any mortal and should be approached with caution.

Broome’s other descriptions of Dinosaur evoked otherworldly beauty: the “rolling blue-green sea of sagebrush,” the “bright blooming flowers,”<sup>382</sup> and the “wheeling and dipping of white-throated swifts” of the “plunging canyons.”<sup>383</sup> For many who would never visit the monument, this colorful imagery would have felt little doubt that the area was of great value and had to be protected. Broome’s article included two photographs of

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<sup>380</sup> “Whither National Parks,” 425.

<sup>381</sup> Broome, “Dinosaur National Monument,” 52.

<sup>382</sup> *Ibid*, 35.

<sup>383</sup> *Ibid*, 52.



the monument, but they were black-and-white and could not fully represent the grandeur. His language painted the mental picture and provided a record for posterity.

The parks and monuments under the purview of the National Park System were some of the most frequently visited places in the country. But not Dinosaur National Monument. Far from any major city and surrounded by dirt roads that were dangerous in the summer and impassable the rest of the year, this monument was virtually unknown and unseen by the public. This compounded the work ahead for the Council of Conservationists: they had to mobilize the public in defense of a relative mystery. The efforts of Broome and other writers at *Nature Magazine* to paint a vivid picture of the beauty and grandeur of the monument, to connect its value to something deeper than money, and to present it as a vital part of the park system, were likely influential in motivating readers to act in defense of Dinosaur.

The second major theme discovered in *Nature Magazine's* coverage was a warning of a domino effect and the necessity of protecting the rest of the parks from invasion. Articles and editorials in the magazine repeatedly warned that if a dam was placed inside a national park or monument, it would create a precedent for the entire system to be developed. In one editorial, for example, the author lamented that, "Assaults upon the integrity of National parks and Monuments follow the same pattern ... Letting down the barriers that protect one area weakens the defense of all such reservations against the greed of exploiters."<sup>384</sup> This argument may have resonated with readers who were hearing the Cold War rhetoric of the early 1950s.

Early in the controversy, the "Dinosaur domino theory" appeared, and it was oft repeated. Writers predicted that, "these dams are an entering wedge for piecemeal

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<sup>384</sup> "Dinosaur Monument Threatened: An Editorial," 201.

devastation of national parks by the Bureau of Reclamation.”<sup>385</sup> Writers also warned that citizens must “prevent the serious precedent that would be established by the erection of a great dam in Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>386</sup> Readers were given examples to demonstrate the validity of this fear. In one article, they were told that Interior Secretary McKay had

ridiculed the claim that this dam would be a precedent and a threat to other National Parks. No one is going to build a dam in Yosemite, for example, he said. Now we find that the Merced Irrigation District of California has revived plans for a hydroelectric power project on the south fork of the Merced River. This would flood a portion of Yosemite National Park.<sup>387</sup>

If ever there was a moment for nature enthusiasts to learn from their history, this was it. And it demonstrated how necessary it was to protect Dinosaur as precedent against further intrusion because once one park or monument fell, the others would follow: like dominos.

The foreign policy of post-World War II America had been focused on stopping the march of communism across Eastern Europe. By 1947, President Harry Truman had declared in front of Congress that American support for countries under threat of communist influence was the only way to stop the threat from reaching our shores.<sup>388</sup> By 1952, the newly established National Security Council (NSC) was forewarning that the threat was more widespread than Truman had declared. Official policy on Southeast Asia cautioned that

it would be immediately necessary to prevent the loss of any single country from leading to submission to or an alignment with communism by the remaining

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<sup>385</sup> Contents Noted, *Nature Magazine*, February 1952, 63.

<sup>386</sup> “Whither National Parks?” 425.

<sup>387</sup> Contents Noted, *Nature Magazine*, February 1955, 63.

<sup>388</sup> US Department of State, Office of the Historian, “Truman Doctrine,” <http://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/TrumanDoctrine>, (accessed September 9, 2013).

countries of Southeast Asia and Indonesia. Furthermore in the event all of Southeast Asia falls under communism, an alignment with communism of India, and in the longer term, of the Middle East (with the probable exceptions of at least Pakistan and Turkey) could follow progressively. Such widespread alignment would seriously endanger the stability and security of Europe.<sup>389</sup>

More than a year later, the Eisenhower administration would publicly address its concern that Communists had waged war across Southeast Asia and if the United States did not help stop the countries from falling “the free world eventually will be forced to its knees.”<sup>390</sup> The term “domino theory” did not enter the American political arena until President Eisenhower warned in 1954 that “you have a row of dominoes set up, you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is the certainty that it will go over very quickly. So you could have a beginning of a disintegration that would have the most profound influences.”<sup>391</sup> This rhetoric that warned of falling pieces, one after the other, if not for intervention and defense of American values, mirrors the pattern of language that appeared in *Nature Magazine* throughout the fight to defeat the Echo Park dam project.

Another example of the domino theory argument is found in the blistering reply to Reclamation Commissioner Mike Strauss. Editors wrote:

We know that you want very much to get your toe in as many national park and national monument doors as you can. Doing the job you plan for Dinosaur would be a handy precedent to cite to justify other invasions of park areas for similar purposes.<sup>392</sup>

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<sup>389</sup> “United States Objectives and Courses of Action With Respect to Southeast Asia,” Report to the National Security Council by the Executive Secretary. S/S-NSC files, lot 63 D 351, NSC 5405 Series. January 16, 1954.

<sup>390</sup> “Nixon Reports: If Communists Win Asia, Free World Is Threatened,” *U.S. News & World Report*, January 1, 1954, 68.

<sup>391</sup> Public Papers of the Presidents: Dwight D. Eisenhower, 1954, 383.

<sup>392</sup> “Let’s Be Fair, Mike,” 425.

There appeared to be little doubt in the minds of the editorial staff that the Echo Park Dam proposal was a ploy designed to gain entry to the National Park System and make way for future projects. There was also a suggestion that politicians were out to grab this piece of public land so they could grab more land later on.

The threat to Dinosaur was a threat to the system at large and the government was failing to protect it. The agencies and departments had a “responsibility . . . to preserve and wisely administer the handful of areas foresightedly set aside for all time.”<sup>393</sup> It was an egregious lapse in judgment for the Department of the Interior to sacrifice a national monument in exchange for a few kilowatts of power and *Nature*’s coverage called it “short-sighted”<sup>394</sup> and “ill considered.”<sup>395</sup> Finally, it was argued that dams were a “violation of the wise general policy to protect all National Park and Monuments against such encroachments.”<sup>396</sup> Several government agencies had the stated purpose to safeguard public lands, and yet the ANA coverage saw a serious abdication of power and influence in the proposal.

The domino theory was often expressed in the language of war. Readers were told repeatedly that, “Conservationists have steadfastly fought this invasion of an outstanding area in the National Park System.”<sup>397</sup> Certain words were common in the magazine, with “invasion” appearing fourteen times in the twenty-six articles. Battle metaphors were invoked too.<sup>398</sup> An April 1950 editorial observed: “The integrity of these areas *must* be maintained. Letting down the barriers that protect one area weakens the defenses of all

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<sup>393</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Threatened,” 201.

<sup>394</sup> *Ibid*, 201.

<sup>395</sup> “Whither National Parks? An Editorial,” 425.

<sup>396</sup> “An Open Mind,” 89.

<sup>397</sup> “Dinosaur National Monument,” 263.

<sup>398</sup> Use of the term “invasion” would be a trend in other publications. See Chapter 8 for a more full analysis of the social and cultural explanation.

such reservations against the greed of exploiters.”<sup>399</sup> Readers were urged to “hold the line”<sup>400</sup> against those who would “destroy Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>401</sup> The argument centered on a belief that “the case against the inclusion of this particular site [Echo Park] on the grounds of dangerous precedent in the invasion of a National Monument has been bulwarked by competent presentation of alternatives.”<sup>402</sup> Beyond the clear warning of a “precedent,” terms such as “invasion” and “bulwarked” suggest a medieval fortress. Painting a violent and even “dangerous” scenario, and predicting that more would follow, made the readers of *Nature Magazine* the “guardians”<sup>403</sup> and “defenders”<sup>404</sup> of that fortress.

While the coverage of the fight focused on the battle, it was also clear that something could be done to win: the third theme of the Echo Park coverage was a public responsibility to act in defense of a national monument. The threat to Dinosaur was a threat to the system and “if you wish to stop the dangerous precedent represented by the building of Echo Park Dam, let your Congressman and Senators know how you feel about this plan.”<sup>405</sup> Ownership of the monument belonged to the public, placing responsibility for protecting the monument in the hands of the public:

Areas in the national park system are the property of the American people. It is a travesty that agencies of the government that represent these people should seek to injure the parks. But since they do, the areas should have thrown around them a legal barrier of unquestionable strength.<sup>406</sup>

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<sup>399</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Threatened: An Editorial,” 201. Original emphasis.

<sup>400</sup> “Harsh Words from ‘Gabe,’” 257.

<sup>401</sup> “An Open Mind: An Editorial,” 89.

<sup>402</sup> “Echo Park Dam Threat: An Editorial,” 145.

<sup>403</sup> “Let’s Be Fair, Mike,” 425.

<sup>404</sup> “An Open Mind: An Editorial,” 89.

<sup>405</sup> “Dinosaur National Monument,” 263.

<sup>406</sup> Contents Noted, *Nature Magazine*, March 1952, 119.

Though the reader would likely never see the place, “those of us, all over the United States, who own this Park, equally with the people of Washington, also have an important stake in its preservation.”<sup>407</sup> The language used to mobilize the public in defense of Dinosaur focused on the public ownership and protection of the land. Each citizen was a stakeholder in the war of words being waged, and for the writers of *Nature Magazine*, geography mattered little: the parks belonged to all Americans.

The battle over Echo Park dam was often presented as a case of small-town folk versus the rest of the country. Coverage featured complaints that “a local, special and selfish interest is magnified—often distorted—all out of proportion to the greater national interest.”<sup>408</sup> Though Dinosaur was located next to a small Utah town, it was ultimately a national monument, and the American Nature Association’s national members had a part to play in defending it. Occasionally, it was argued that support for the dam was “local selfishness that sees benefit from a temporary ‘boom’ during the construction period.”<sup>409</sup> By questioning the motives and wisdom of the supporters, connecting their pro-dam stance to short-term gain, greed and even foolishness, the ANA’s coverage suggested that the only intelligent option was to stop the Echo Park project.

*Nature Magazine* underscored the important theme of public responsibility by mobilizing its readers to vote-out members of Congress as a threat:

Visitors to our National Parks, recreational users of our National Forests, supporters of our National Wildlife Refuges constitute a considerable percentage of our people. They are voters, too, and as such naturally scan the record of candidates on conservation issues, and vote accordingly.<sup>410</sup>

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<sup>407</sup> “Whither National Parks,” 425.

<sup>408</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Threatened: An Editorial,” 201.

<sup>409</sup> Contents Noted, *Nature Magazine*, March 1952, 119.

<sup>410</sup> Contents Noted, *Nature Magazine*, January 1955, 7.

This strategy would be successfully utilized decades later by other groups. The National Rifle Association frequently encourages readers to exercise their civic duty and vote, but to base voting decisions on the issue positions of specific candidates.<sup>411</sup>

Over the six years members were mobilized, the theme of public responsibility was evident in attempts to mobilize conservationists. Readers were drafted into service with such assignments as writing politicians, educating friends, and checking issue positions and voting accordingly. They were encouraged with comments such as, “Conservationists thus have a tense and immediately pressing responsibility to make their influence felt by their representatives in Congress.”<sup>412</sup> The members of the ANA did not have a vote in Congress: their impact would be made indirectly. Readers were told that “if you wish to stop the dangerous precedent represented by the building of Echo Park Dam, let your Congressman and Senators know how you feel about this plan.”<sup>413</sup> The attempts to rally people often included terms of wisdom and besmirched the intelligence of those who supported the dam.

Another rhetorical strategy used to mobilize the public was to demonstrate that the proposed project was unwise. The problem was not just that a dam would be built, but that the dam was being defended with bad math. In its coverage, the ANA drew on experts from other Council of Conservationist organizations such as the Sierra Club’s

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<sup>411</sup> The NRA has long rated candidates by their voting records and encouraged members to vote in elections based on those ratings. The effectiveness of this strategy has been debated, but its use and power is not. For a more in-depth analysis of this strategy see James G. Gimpel, “Packing Heat at the Polls: Gun Ownership, Interest Group Endorsements, and Voting Behavior in Gubernatorial Elections,” *Social Science Quarterly*, 79, no. 3 (1998), 634-648; or Robert J. Spitzer. *The Politics of Gun Control* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House, 1995).

<sup>412</sup> Howard Zahniser, “Nature in Print,” *Nature Magazine*, June-July 1955, 284.

<sup>413</sup> “Harsh Words from Gabe,” 263.

David Brower<sup>414</sup> and Ulysses S. Grant III, of the American Planning and Civic Association.<sup>415</sup> Both had argued that the math in the proposal for Echo Park was based on “unproved and dubious”<sup>416</sup> claims. But it was not just the government whose common sense was in question.

Items in *Nature Magazine* often questioned whether Echo Park Dam supporters were informed enough to be making any judgment about the project. The accusation that dam-backers were uninformed was a thinly veiled attempt at questioning their intelligence. It was nearly unimaginable to the writers of *Nature Magazine* that anyone would disagree that these areas were valuable and should be protected. When the American Nature Association pointed out that its opposition was only to the fixtures inside the national monument, it also questioned the wisdom of supporters:

For those of us who have fought through the years to preserve the integrity of the National Park System it is difficult to realize that there is a substantial body of seemingly intelligent opinion that cannot understand that high purpose.<sup>417</sup>

The rhetoric of the coverage of the Echo Park dam fight suggested that any clear-thinking, informed citizen would oppose the dams inside Dinosaur. The language was not always so subtle, and occasionally devolved into simple name-calling. One such notable passage read:

To our thinking, preservation and jealous administration of our natural resources—for the benefit of all the people, today and tomorrow—is a completely non-partisan matter. To consider these resources on any other basis is stupid.<sup>418</sup>

And once a citizen reached this opinion, the next natural step would be to join the cause to defend the monument.

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<sup>414</sup> Sierra Club Bulletin, 1955, 40(1)

<sup>415</sup> Planning and Civic Comment, 1954 20(1)II

<sup>416</sup> “Let’s Be Fair, Mike,” 425.

<sup>417</sup> “Whither National Parks,” 425.

<sup>418</sup> “Harsh Words from Gabe,” 257.



*Nature Magazine* covered the controversy with passion and pragmatism for seven years. Articles and editorials on the fight were filled with artful descriptions of the landscape and nature itself, moving readers—who had likely never seen Dinosaur—to connect with the monument and join the fight. The threat to the monument, and the National Park System as a whole, were featured prominently in the language of war. And conservationists were responsible for defending the land.

The *Nature Magazine* coverage of the fight to save Dinosaur National Monument struck a balance between pathos and logos, and inspired readers to act to stop the dams. As one of nine groups in the Council of Conservationists, though, the American Nature Association relied on other organizations to help make the logical case.

## CHAPTER 6

### NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY: DINOSAUR GOES TO THE BIRDS

We also will hear Theodore Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot and the other great Republican conservationists of a half-century ago turning in their graves.  
—*Audubon Magazine*

In the eighteenth century, French monarch Marie Antoinette was known for wearing items with elegant bird plumage at court. By the 1850s, bird feathers were a popular fashion that had swept across the United States and Europe. The relative ease with which milliners were able to capture birds and pluck their feathers made the style both fashionable and affordable. This new trend was not without its consequences, though, and by the 1870s, bird populations of several species reached dangerously low levels.<sup>419</sup> In response to this trend, Boston socialite Harriet Hemenway “launched a campaign [in 1896] for bird protection that would serve as the foundation for the modern National Audubon Society.”<sup>420</sup> Hemenway had a history of political activity. She and her associates worked to “pick out names of fashionable ladies who would be most likely to wear birds on their hats . . . then contacted them directly, asking them if they would be willing to give up their hats and join a society dedicated to the protection of birds.”<sup>421</sup>

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<sup>419</sup> Kathy S. Mason. “Out of Fashion: Harriet Hemenway and the Audubon Society, 1896-1905,” *Historian*, 65, no. 1 (2002): 1-14.

<sup>420</sup> Mason. “Out of Fashion: Harriet Hemenway and the Audubon Society,” 2.

<sup>421</sup> *Ibid*, 9.

The strategy was based on the idea that if they could close the market for feathered hats, manufacturers would then halt production.

But Hemenway was not the first to start an Audubon society. Ten years before the Boston club was launched, George Bird Grinnell had founded an Audubon society (named for close family friend John Audubon) in New York. The group was short-lived due to lack of funds. But eventually American ornithologist William Dutcher founded the National Association for Audubon Societies for the Protection of Wild Birds and Animals in 1905.<sup>422</sup> The New York-based national group had support from both Grinnell and Hemenway and grew steadily in membership and influence for decades to come.

The National Association for Audubon Societies became the National Audubon Society in 1940 and in 1941, *Bird-Lore* became *Audubon*.<sup>423</sup> Initially measuring 3½ by 8 inches, *Audubon* changed formatting in 1952 to 8½ by 11 inches. Averaging 45 pages per issue, the monthly magazine was laced with advertisements for items such as binoculars and bird feeders, and featured articles written by paid authors and contributors and that were largely dedicated to birds (how to check one's binocular settings, where to find certain rare bird types, and more).

Over the course of the Echo Park dam fight, the National Audubon Society had a single Board Chair, Ludlow Griscom. Griscom was a well-known ornithologist: he developed the Audubon Christmas Count method<sup>424</sup> still in use today, and worked as an

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<sup>422</sup> David J. Miller. Rich History: Celebrating National Audubon Society's Centennial. *New York State Conservationist*. October 1, 2005.

<sup>423</sup> Audubon, "Timeline of Accomplishments," <http://www.audubon.org/timeline-accomplishments>, (accessed July 6, 2013).

<sup>424</sup> Audubon Society, "History of the Christmas Count," <http://birds.audubon.org/history-christmas-bird-count>, (accessed August 13, 2013). The Christmas Count is the largest citizen science survey in the world. During the winter months, bird enthusiasts count and

assistant curator at the American Natural History Museum of Ornithology. He discovered new plants and birds in the American tropics, and eventually was named the chair and president of the National Audubon Society.<sup>425</sup> The Society also had the same President—John H. Baker—for twenty-five years. Baker had been a fighter pilot in World War I and was a retired investment banker who “transformed Audubon into a modern organization of environmental conservation committed to the conservation not only of birds, but of water, soil, plants, wildlife (in all forms) and wildlife habitats.”<sup>426</sup> And *Audubon Magazine* had a consistent editing staff—author and bird-of-prey expert Kenneth D. Morrison, and John K. Terres, a songbird researcher.<sup>427</sup>

Beginning in 1950, *Audubon Magazine* published eleven items, ranging from small paragraphs to an eight-page story, about Dinosaur National Monument and the fight to stop the dams. Three of the twelve stories were reprinted from other publications, such as an opinion piece from *The New York Times*, and two were part of the recurring news feature, Your President Reports to You. While the number of items is slightly larger than some other publications, the extent of coverage was sparse in comparison, possibly because of Audubon’s more specific focus on birds and wildlife.

The first item to address the Echo Park Dam controversy appeared in the summer 1950 issue. The piece described the beauty and geologic importance of the monument. The author, Audubon Society President John H. Baker, expressed concern that alternative

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report the number of bird species in their local area. The tradition began in 1900 and continues today.

<sup>425</sup> Roger T. Peterson, “In Memoriam: Ludlow Griscom,” *The Auk*, October 1965, 598-605.

<sup>426</sup> John D. Stinson, “National Audubon Society Records, 1883-1991,” *The New York Public Library Humanities and Social Sciences Library Manuscripts and Archives Division*, (1994), 7.

<sup>427</sup> Stinson, “National Audubon Society Records, 1883-1991,” 7.

locations for the dams were not being concerned. Power and irrigation projects “must not be permitted if the integrity of the national park and monument system is to be preserved,” he warned.<sup>428</sup> The article concluded that citizens must recognize the threat to the National Park System and act to defend it from invasion.

Dinosaur National Monument was mentioned again in the next issue of *Audubon Magazine*, which featured an article describing the action in Congress on the proposed dams. Several conservation areas across the nation had been developed for commercial use and in excerpts from testimony, Audubon Society leaders cautioned that, “if present trends continue, the same situation as regards wilderness values will exist in the nation.”<sup>429</sup> Readers were then directed to “Bernard De Voto’s excellent article ‘Shall We Let Them Ruin Our National Parks?’ in the July 22, 1950 [sic] issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*.”<sup>430</sup> The *Post* article spanned eight pages and was a full-throated defense of the parks system, complete with images of Dinosaur National Monument, which was described as “a site the dam builders have cast hungry eyes on.”<sup>431</sup>

John H. Baker again addressed the “Dams for Dinosaur” controversy in early 1951, when he called it an “excellent illustration of unnecessary encroachment.”<sup>432</sup> He described testimony of representatives of the Sierra Club and Audubon Society, and other members of the Council of Conservationists, at a public hearing with Secretary of the

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<sup>428</sup> John H. Baker, News of Wildlife and Conservation, *Audubon*, July-August 1950, 260.

<sup>429</sup> “Dams or Wilderness Areas?” *Audubon Magazine*, September-October 1950, 287.

<sup>430</sup> “Dams or Wilderness Areas?” 287.

<sup>431</sup> Bernard De Voto. “Shall We Let Them Ruin Our National Parks?” *The Saturday Evening Post*, July 22, 1950, 17.

<sup>432</sup> Baker, News of Wildlife and Conservation, 58.

Interior Oscar Chapman. Baker also declared that “the national conservation organizations were unanimous in urging the Secretary not to approve of this project.”<sup>433</sup>

Just a few months later, *Audubon Magazine* dedicated eight pages to an article focused on defending Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>434</sup> Items included a detailed map of the monument, several photos, and a full-page picture of what was rapidly becoming a symbol of the fight: Whirlpool Canyon as viewed from Harper’s Corner.<sup>435</sup> The caption to the map stated that it was “adopted from a Nat’l Park Service map modified by Devereux Butcher, whose name could be found in *Nature Magazine*, *National Parks Magazine*, and *The Living Wilderness*.”<sup>436</sup> The modifications noted the placement of the proposed dams and depicted the reservoir areas, giving readers a clearer understanding of the changes the project would create.

In the article, Butcher reviewed the major arguments in the issue, called the campaign for the dams “propaganda,”<sup>437</sup> and accused locals of allowing “a great scenic wilderness reservation to be destroyed simply because a local community wants a business boom.”<sup>438</sup> Butcher, director of the National Parks Association, further lamented the idea that the government was “now in the business of selling [hydroelectric] power to our people”<sup>439</sup> because it was clouding the judgment of bureaucrats.

*Audubon* was silent on Dinosaur Monument for nearly three years, but the first issue of 1954 included the subject. While the controversy had been anything but dormant,

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<sup>433</sup> John H. Baker, News of Wildlife and Conservation, *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1951, 59.

<sup>434</sup> Devereux Butcher, “In Defense of Dinosaur,” *Audubon Magazine*, May-June 1951, 142-149.

<sup>435</sup> For a full description of Harper’s Corner and Whirlpool Canyon, see Chapter 4.

<sup>436</sup> Butcher, “In Defense of Dinosaur,” 142.

<sup>437</sup> *Ibid*, 142.

<sup>438</sup> *Ibid*, 145.

<sup>439</sup> *Ibid*, 147.

the sudden reappearance of Echo Park in the publication was likely a result of the December 1953 news that Interior Secretary McKay had approved Echo Park dam as part of the Colorado River Storage Project. Less than one month after the announcement, four items were published in *Audubon*. Three items were grouped together on one page: a telegram and a letter to the president, and a personal note from the editor. First, editors reproduced a telegram sent from John H. Baker to President Dwight D. Eisenhower on December 29, 1953. Baker argued that “the National Park and Monument System be protected against encroachments inconsistent with the purposes for which these parks and monuments have been established.”<sup>440</sup> Next, readers were shown a copy of a letter from Baker to Eisenhower that further detailed the Society’s objections:

To our Society, with its continent-wide membership, it seems very important, from the standpoint of public interest, that the spiritual, esthetic, health-giving and other recreational values of our National Parks and Monuments be permanently maintained.<sup>441</sup>

The last item on the page was an editor’s note that encouraged readers to contact elected officials in support of Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>442</sup>

The final item in the issue was a reprinting of a *New York Times* editorial that claimed the proposed “dam would destroy one of the West’s great scenic preserves.”<sup>443</sup> The article warned that Echo Park would be a precedent for future projects in other fixtures of the National Park System. The *Times* piece did not specify an author, but it expressed a clear opinion that the dam would be “ill-advised” and predicted that if dams were built in Dinosaur National Monument, “we might as well look ahead to another dam

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<sup>440</sup> John H. Baker, “To President Dwight D. Eisenhower: Telegram,” *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1954, 13.

<sup>441</sup> Baker, “To President Dwight D. Eisenhower: Letter,” 13.

<sup>442</sup> John H. Baker, “To President Dwight D. Eisenhower: Editor’s Note,” *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1954, 13.

<sup>443</sup> Nature in the News, *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1954, 29 and 37.

flooding out part of Glacier National Park, still another one wrecking a chunk of the Grand Canyon.”<sup>444</sup>

Baker used his column, *The President Reports to You*, in February and March 1954 to update readers on bills that would allow industrialization and reclamation projects inside parks and monuments.<sup>445</sup> And once again, Baker urged people to contact their representatives to save Dinosaur:

If, by the time you read this, you have not learned from the papers or otherwise of final action by the Congress, and you have not already communicated with your own Senators and Congressmen, we urge you to express your views to them.<sup>446</sup>

The *Audubon* coverage of the Echo Park dam fight concluded in 1955. Once again, a member organization of the Council of Conservationists was quoted, lending strength to the coalition’s efforts. A short paragraph reprinted from *The Living Wilderness* declared that in the conflict, “the real issue is the integrity of the National Park System.”<sup>447</sup> The fight was bigger than one monument; readers were being asked to defend the entire National Park program.

### *One Nation Under God*

Three common themes were identified over the seven years of Echo Park Dam coverage in *Audubon*: supremacy and purpose of the National Park System, the dangerous precedent of building a dam inside the National Park System, and bureaucracy and local needs versus national interests. While none of these ideas was unique to the Audubon Society, they stood out because of the rhetoric used to support the claims. Much

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<sup>444</sup> Nature in the News, *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1954, 37.

<sup>445</sup> “A Victory for Conservationists,” *The President Reports to You*, *Audubon Magazine*, March-April 1954, 69.

<sup>446</sup> “President Eisenhower Approves Echo Park Dam,” *The President Reports to You*, *Audubon Magazine*, May/June 1954, 118-19.

<sup>447</sup> “The Dinosaur Dam Issue,” *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1955, 38.



of the coverage discussed the spiritualization of nature, war metaphors, and wisdom and civic duty.

The argument most often used to defend Dinosaur was the supremacy of the National Park System. The “integrity of the system” was mentioned at least ten times, suggesting that the areas of the system had value and there would be honor in protecting them.<sup>448</sup> According to National Audubon Society President Baker, a dam inside a national monument was “inconsistent with the purposes for which [the Parks] were established. . . they are of benefit to the public spiritually, esthetically, physically and recreationally.”<sup>449</sup> The language combined to create a picture of purity and beauty, and a system that should be kept unimpaired and pristine. Each of these ideas suggested that nature was key to the people’s well-being. Further, it was “all the more imperative that the beautiful canyons of Dinosaur National Monument be kept in their primeval condition, in accordance with the national policy governing our national parks and nature monuments.”<sup>450</sup> There had been an established policy of leaving preserved areas in as natural a state as possible—even at the expense of modern convenience and tourism—because they were the places where people connect most deeply with nature. These lands were reserved, with foresight, to be maintained for generations to come.

According to the Audubon Society, the fixtures of the National Park System were the “crown jewels, and you have to decide whether one of them is going to be put on the auction block.”<sup>451</sup> The areas set aside as parks and monuments were irreplaceable; they gave the country its value, historically, geographically, and symbolically. Crown jewels

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<sup>448</sup> Baker, “News of Wildlife and Conservation,” 259.

<sup>449</sup> Baker, “To President Dwight D. Eisenhower: Letter,” 13.

<sup>450</sup> Butcher, “In Defense of Dinosaur,” 147.

<sup>451</sup> John H. Baker, News of Wildlife and Conservation, *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1951, 58.

are often a group's most prized possession, the thing that represents them and is infused with metaphysical power or authority. Therefore, they should be protected, because once they are auctioned off they are gone forever, costing the American people something greater than real estate: their identity.

As the editors saw it, "A principle is involved—the principle that once an area has been set aside for preservation it must be held inviolate and used for commodity purposes only in a case of extreme national need."<sup>452</sup> This language suggested that a monument was a holy place to be kept for a higher purpose than simple recreation. The idea of using a sacred space for financial gain is reminiscent of the New Testament account of Jesus casting money-changers out of the temple in Jerusalem.<sup>453</sup> Righteous indignation is expressed in the language of "inviolate" and "extreme need." Audubon writers took the topic of recreation one step further when they asked the logical question of what would happen next:

Who can say what the value of an unspoiled Dinosaur National Monument will be in an era when the face of the nation has been almost completely irrigated, drained, and dammed. Perhaps only when natural areas are scarce and hard to find will we comprehend the intrinsic worth of our national parks and monuments.<sup>454</sup>

If Dinosaur were not protected, this passage predicted a march of time that would leave the United States a barren wasteland, bereft of any area where citizens could find comfort or serenity. And it would be a loss that could never be recuperated or forgiven.

One particularly powerful piece quoted the Congressional testimony of National Audubon Society representatives. The leaders hypothesized that "New Yorkers could

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<sup>452</sup> "The Dinosaur Dam Issue," 38.

<sup>453</sup> Matthew 21:12, *King James Version*.

<sup>454</sup> "Dams or Wilderness Areas?" 287. This article also directed readers to Bernard DeVoto's "Shall We Let Them Ruin Our National Parks?" *Saturday Evening Post*. July 22, 1990.

derive a tremendous amount of tax revenue from the acreage of Central Park, if it were to be filled in with skyscrapers. Yet anyone who made such a suggestion would feel the pressure of public wrath.”<sup>455</sup> This concrete comparison to a landmark that many had seen, or at least heard of, was an attempt to try to reach the national audience and create a sense of ownership for readers who were not likely to visit Vernal or its flagship monument. Central Park was a symbol of preservation in a metropolis, Dinosaur was the symbol of preservation in the nation.

The second theme in *Audubon* content was a fear of setting a dangerous precedent for projects inside the National Park System. The editors argued that this was part of a larger government plan to gain access to prized areas. They called the Echo Park plan “one in a series of moves by either the Bureau of Reclamation or the U.S. Engineers to invade national parks and monuments.”<sup>456</sup> Opponents of the dam saw supporters as crafting strategy, similar to a chess game.

There was concern that if a reclamation project was “yielded to, in the present instance, there is literally no telling where or if it can ever again be curbed.”<sup>457</sup> Areas would be under threat of toppling one after another. The specifics of the situation were important in protecting the monument because its status in the parks system made it a vital line of defense. As was found in the *Nature* coverage, the “Dinosaur domino theory” that mirrored the rhetoric of the Eisenhower administration and the National Security Council was in use.<sup>458</sup>

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<sup>455</sup> “Dams or Wilderness Areas?” 287.

<sup>456</sup> Baker, “News of Wildlife and Conservation,” 260.

<sup>457</sup> “No Dam at Dinosaur,” 29.

<sup>458</sup> Post-WWII narratives involving the threat of communism often referenced a future threat to nations if present conflicts were not contained. Beginning with Truman in 1947, but not labeled as the Domino Theory until an Eisenhower press conference in 1954, this

The fear that a dam inside Echo Park Dam would leave other parks and monuments vulnerable was repeated often. In dramatic fashion, one item predicted that

if the Administration and Congress are so ill-advised as to proceed with construction of Echo Park Dam in Dinosaur National Monument we might as well look ahead to another dam flooding out part of Glacier National Park, still another one wrecking a chunk of the Grand Canyon, and lumber companies moving in on Olympic National Park.<sup>459</sup>

Naming specific, well-known fixtures of the National Park System—all of which were under legitimate threat of development—lent serious credence to the idea that a dam in one national monument could mean the end for several Parks. The idea that a dam was “wrecking” and “moving in on” places that belonged to the public gave the impression, once again, that the controversy was a case of protecting them from outsiders. If readers agreed with the first theme, that the system was important and should be preserved, then the threat of a domino effect in developing one park would likely be of concern.

*Audubon* used the rhetoric of war to underscore the dangers facing Dinosaur. One article claimed that “this is no time to let down the barriers of our national parks and monuments.”<sup>460</sup> The threat of “invasion” was used often<sup>461</sup> and readers were warned of “attempted raids”<sup>462</sup> and “encroachments.”<sup>463</sup> The language of the domino effect suggested that not only the parks and monuments were in danger, but they would be the spoils of war. Developers were attempting to usurp the public’s guardianship over land that belonged to the American people. Words such as invasion and raid also suggested an

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idea was similar to the arguments shown here. For more information, see Chapter 5 pages 105-106.

<sup>459</sup> “Nature in the News,” *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1954, 37.

<sup>460</sup> “Dams or Wilderness Areas?” 287.

<sup>461</sup> “No Dam at Dinosaur,” 29.

Butcher, “In Defense of Dinosaur,” 148.

<sup>462</sup> Butcher, “In Defense of Dinosaur,” 149.

<sup>463</sup> “Telegram to President Dwight D. Eisenhower,” *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1954, 13.

external threat, as though those who would use the land for commercial use were outsiders or not American.

The third theme of the *Audubon* coverage focused on the bureaucracy, and specifically the interests of local supporters versus the rest of the nation. This theme was also connected to attempts to mobilize a national reading audience in defense of the remote Dinosaur. While the narrative of the debate recognized that the needs of local communities had to be considered, the language suggested that the motives of supporters of the dam were less than noble, selfish even. Devereux Butcher admitted that “it is true that the people of Utah, particularly those of the central valley, need more water, and this they should have as soon as possible.”<sup>464</sup> But, he continued, “the communities of Utah, no more than the communities of any other part of our country, do not have the right to invade a national park or monument for local profit even though egged on to demand such a right by a federal bureau.”<sup>465</sup> The plan to dam Dinosaur was foolish and risky and the fact that a government agency was behind the campaign made it even more confusing and troublesome.

While the coverage in *Audubon* recognized local water needs, there was tension and distrust for the people of Vernal, Utah. Butcher asked, “Shall the nation allow a great scenic wilderness reservation to be destroyed simply because a local community wants a business boom?”<sup>466</sup> An economic windfall was predicted for the Eastern Utah town, both during the construction phase and after, when the reservoir would prompt tourists to the remote area. This promise had locals clamoring for the dam, and left opponents suspecting the worst of their motives. Much of the language used by Audubon

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<sup>464</sup> Butcher, “In Defense of Dinosaur,” 148.

<sup>465</sup> Butcher, “In Defense of Dinosaur,” 148.

<sup>466</sup> *Ibid*, 145.

representatives suggested that dam proponents were being thoughtless and selfish in their plan to misuse public land. Readers were told, “We should defend [the parks] from shortsighted exploitation which benefits local interests at the expense of all the people.”<sup>467</sup> The balance between the needs of the local population and the imperative to preserve Dinosaur National Monument was even more difficult when weighed against concern for the system as a whole.

The conflict between local interests and national citizens was used several times in attempts to mobilize readers in the fight. Items in *Audubon* repeatedly included language that emphasized the society’s partnership with other groups in the Council of Conservationists. Readers were told that “all major national conservation organizations are aligned against commercial encroachment of the Dinosaur Monument.”<sup>468</sup> Connecting the society to other national environmental groups increased the scope and importance of the controversy, lending credibility to the writers’ claims and magnifying the power of the messages being sent. Further, writers reported that “representatives of your Society and other national conservation groups” had testified together in front of Congress.<sup>469</sup> Not only was the dam an important national question, but *Audubon* was approaching congressional leaders to help in the fight and advocating on behalf of its members to save the monument.

Finally, a telegram to President Eisenhower reprinted in *Audubon* stated that “the National Audubon Society with continent-wide membership urges your rejection of the Echo Park Dam.”<sup>470</sup> And a letter to the president, appearing just below the telegram,

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<sup>467</sup> “Dams or Wilderness Areas?” 287.

<sup>468</sup> “Dams or Wilderness Areas?” 287.

<sup>469</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Threat,” 260.

<sup>470</sup> “Telegram to President Dwight D. Eisenhower,” 13.

established credibility of the movement by declaring that the letters represented “our Society, with its continent-wide membership.”<sup>471</sup> These references to the national reach of its members were a powerful tool to lend force and strength to the movement and to help remind government officials and readers that, though Dinosaur was remote and not likely a vacation spot, this was not simply a local issue.

By making the Echo Park fight a national issue, the writers of *Audubon Magazine* were able to connect it to a civic duty. It was argued that “the American public must come to realize that its long-term interest lies in the maintenance of the integrity of the national park and monument system, and make its views known to its representatives in Congress.”<sup>472</sup> Readers were also urged to “unite as never before to defend the nation’s outstanding nature sanctuaries.”<sup>473</sup> The calls for the American public to act and references to the long-term interests of the country focused the mobilization on a duty to posterity and patriotism to act on behalf of the system.

Occasionally, though, instructions for contacting elected officials were less poetic and more pragmatic. A 1954 special Editors’ Note included in the magazine added a sense of urgency to the campaign: “The issue over construction of Echo Park Dam in the Dinosaur National Monument is now before Congress. Persons who wish to express their views on this subject may write to their Senators and Representatives in Washington.”<sup>474</sup> This attempt to mobilize readers gave them a target for the communication and an idea of what specifically they could do to help.

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<sup>471</sup> “Letter to President Dwight D. Eisenhower,” 13.

<sup>472</sup> Baker, “News of Wildlife and Conservation,” 260.

<sup>473</sup> Butcher, “In Defense of Dinosaur,” 149.

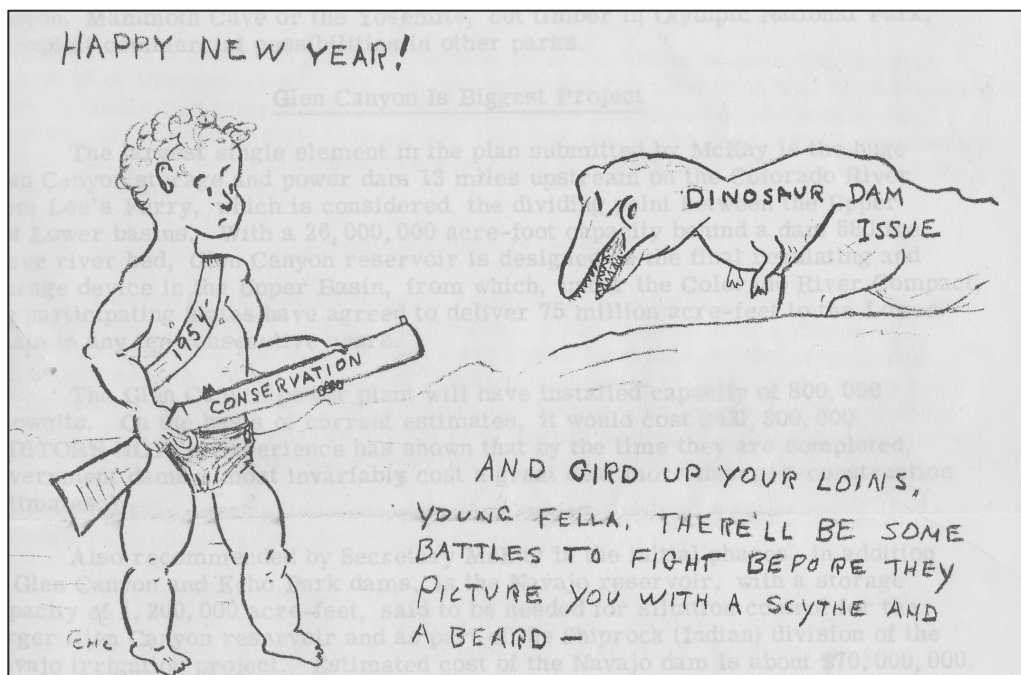
<sup>474</sup> “To President Dwight D. Eisenhower,” Editors’ Note, *Audubon Magazine*, January-February 1954, 13.

Readers of *Audubon* encountered several items regarding the Echo Park dam controversy. The writers and editors seemed to be echoing Grinnel and Hemenway—whose conservation ideals were coupled with action—when they focused on preservation of an existing natural wonder over modern innovation and appealed to readers to help take up the charge in defense of Dinosaur National Monument. The themes that developed in *Audubon* were not dependent on the organization's history, but they certainly reflected it. As a member organization of the Council of Conservationists, the Audubon Society was one of several groups drawing on its roots to defeat the dams. The other groups would use similar strategies in the campaign to save Echo Park.



## CHAPTER 7

### NATIONAL WILDLIFE FEDERATION: HOW THE SAUSAGE IS MADE



—Charles Callison, *Conservation News*

As 1953 came to a close, United States Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay announced support for the Colorado River Storage Project and the controversial Echo Park dam. McKay's declaration came as a surprise to conservationists. Many had assumed that President Eisenhower's fiscal conservatism and embargo against new projects meant the controversial dam would be off the table. In December, Charles H. Callison of the National Wildlife Federation sat down to draw an editorial cartoon that

would appear in *Conservation News*. It depicted a gun-wielding Baby New Year “1954” and a stalking *Tyrannosaurus rex* to signify the looming battle over the dam. The caption read, “Happy New Year! And gird up your loins, young fella, there’ll be some battles to fight before they picture you with a scythe and a beard.”<sup>475</sup> It was the first and only picture to appear in the newsletter in the six years of this study. Depicting conservationists in defense of nature against a predator was a warning to Federation supporters.

The National Wilderness Foundation began in 1936, when conservation activists, with help from President Franklin Roosevelt, held a conference in Washington, D.C. Nearly 1,500 people attended, “representing all groups and facets of wildlife thinking,” and the culminating event was the establishment of the National Wildlife Federation.<sup>476</sup> The group was founded with the goal of “service in the field of resource conservation, rehabilitation and management.”<sup>477</sup> From its beginnings, under the guidance of noted wilderness enthusiast Jay “Ding” Darling, the Federation was an active player in national policy. It played a role in establishing National Wildlife Week and passing the Duck Stamp Act that helps raise money to protect wetlands.<sup>478</sup> By the 1950s, the Federation’s leadership included a former secretary of the Senate Special Committee on Conservation of Wildlife Resources, one of the craftsmen behind the U.S. Wilderness Act, and a future executive vice president of the National Audubon Society.

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<sup>475</sup> Charles H. Callison, *Conservation News*, January 1, 1954, 1.

<sup>476</sup> Carl D. Shoemaker, *The Stories Behind the Organizations [sic] of the National Wildlife Federation and its early struggles for survival* (National Wildlife Federation: Washington, D.C. 1960), 1.

<sup>477</sup> Shoemaker, *The Stories Behind the Organization*, 20.

<sup>478</sup> U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, “Jay Norwood ‘Ding’ Darling,” <http://www.fws.gov/refuges/history/bio/darling.html>, (accessed January 7, 2014).

One of these leaders was Carl D. Shoemaker, a lawyer and a passionate fisherman. His activity and concern for proper wildlife management brought him to the attention of Oregon Governor James Whitycombe. In 1915, Whitycombe appointed Shoemaker director of the Oregon Fish and Game Commission.<sup>479</sup> After ten years, he left for Washington to work for the Senate. It was there that Shoemaker helped found the National Wildlife Federation. He would eventually lead the NWF as secretary and conservation director. During the Echo Park fight, Shoemaker worked as the group's Washington, D.C., correspondent.<sup>480</sup>

Richard Borden was the first executive director of the Federation. He served in the position until 1955. Borden, a well-known photographer who had worked with Major League Baseball and Walt Disney Studios, was “instrumental in the rescue of the gadwall duck, whooping crane, and bald eagle from extinction.”<sup>481</sup> In 1955, Ernest F. Swift took over as executive director “and spent five years helping [the NWF] grow, and in the process helping to shape the first U.S. Wilderness Act.”<sup>482</sup> Swift led the federation for

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<sup>479</sup> Oregon Secretary of State, “Department of Fish and Wildlife Records Guide,” <http://arcweb.sos.state.or.us/pages/records/state/fw/hist/hist1.html>, (accessed February 17, 2014).

<sup>480</sup> *Following Leopold's Footsteps: 56 Distinguished Careers Dedicated to Wildlife Conservation*, “Carl Shoemaker: 1951,” [http://joomla.wildlife.org/documents/aldo\\_leopold\\_winners.pdf](http://joomla.wildlife.org/documents/aldo_leopold_winners.pdf), (accessed January 7, 2014).

<sup>481</sup> Harvard University Obituary and Death Notice Collection, “Richard Borden '33,” [http://www.genealogybuff.com/ma/harvard/webbbs\\_config.pl/read/2](http://www.genealogybuff.com/ma/harvard/webbbs_config.pl/read/2), (accessed, January 7, 2014).

<sup>482</sup> *Following Leopold's Footsteps: 56 Distinguished Careers Dedicated to Wildlife Conservation*, “Ernest F. Swift: 1959,” [http://joomla.wildlife.org/documents/aldo\\_leopold\\_winners.pdf](http://joomla.wildlife.org/documents/aldo_leopold_winners.pdf), (accessed January 7, 2014).

five years, and spent the rest of his life working with the National Wildlife Federation representing the group in policy discussions with bureaucrats and public writings.<sup>483</sup>

The most stable and consistent presence at the NWF during the Echo Park controversy was Charles H. Callison. Described as “a major figure in the conservation movement,” Callison came to the Federation in 1951 and served as conservation director and national secretary for nine years.<sup>484</sup> During the dispute, his name appeared on the masthead of every issue of *Conservation News* save one. Years later, he would help lead the National Audubon Society, but he was the voice of the controversy for members of the National Wildlife Federation.

*Conservation News* was a biweekly newsletter that focused on updates on public policy that impacted outdoor enthusiasts. Topics ranged from the number of fishing licenses sold in the country to Congressional action on any conservation-related legislation—including lists of roll call votes and abstentions. Measuring 8½ by 11 inches, the newsletter arrived as a tri-fold mailing and was a free benefit to members of the National Wildlife Federation. From 1950 to 1956, it contained only one illustration other than the letterhead, which featured two deer and five geese.<sup>485</sup> During the seven-year period, 144 issues were published. Of those, thirty-one issues contained forty-two total items addressing the Echo Park dam controversy. The first item, however, did not appear until 1952—two years into the debate—and from 1952 to 1956, the coverage was sporadic, with multiple items published in some issues and none in others.

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<sup>483</sup> United States Geological Survey Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, “Ernest Fremont Swift – Biography” <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/resshow/perry/bios/swifternest.htm>, (accessed January 7, 2014).

<sup>484</sup> Marvine Howe. “Charles Callison, Conservationist and Audubon Leader, Dies at 79.” Obituaries. *New York Times*, February 26, 1993.

<sup>485</sup> Features in the newsletter were unsigned, unless specifically noted.

In February 1952, an article titled, “Dinosaur Monument Situation,” explained the details of the legislative process regarding the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP). It also described the actions of leaders of the groups of the Council of Conservationists, including the Sierra Club and the American Planning and Civic Association.<sup>486</sup> It was not until August 1953 that readers were reminded of the proposed dam. A *Conservation News* legislative review explained that H. R. 1038 would “prohibit the construction of any dam or reservoir within or adversely affecting any National Park or National Monument.”<sup>487</sup> Coverage picked up by January 1954 and remained steady for the next two years.

Of the twenty-four issues the Federation printed in 1954, twelve included at least one story about the Echo Park dam. The January 1 issue featured the sole illustration or image to appear in the seven years of the Dinosaur battle. The cartoon (included at the beginning of this chapter) accompanied an article that described the “controversial Echo Park reservoir, which would destroy the unique canyon scenery of the Dinosaur monument.”<sup>488</sup> The article described the monument’s “magnificent 2,000-foot-deep canyon of Lodore; the deep sculptures of Whirlpool Canyon and Split Mountain Gorge; the great gorge of the Yampa, more than 1,600 feet deep, twisting through colored rock around unnumbered bends, loops and ox-bow curves.”<sup>489</sup> Another article included a list of the members of the Irrigation Subcommittee and a table that compared governmental calculations for some of the CRSP dams to the computations of General Ulysses S. Grant,

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<sup>486</sup> “DINOSAUR MONUMENT SITUATION,” *Conservation News*, February 1, 1952, 3.

<sup>487</sup> “Some Important Bills Still in Committee,” *Conservation News*, August 15, 1953, 5.

<sup>488</sup> “THE CHIPS ARE DOWN IN DINOSAUR,” *Conservation News*, January 1, 1954, 2.

<sup>489</sup> “Scenic Grandeur in Jeopardy,” *Conservation News*, January 1, 1954, 3.

III, of the American Planning and Civic Association.<sup>490</sup> In all, nearly five pages of the newsletter were dedicated to the debate.

The February 1954 newsletter featured more than four pages on the Echo Park dam Congressional hearings. Readers were told that “conservationists were unanimous in opposing Echo Park, but [they] made it clear they were not standing in the way of the over-all Upper Colorado development.”<sup>491</sup> Next, the editors included excerpts from the testimony of Dr. Olaus J. Murie, president of The Wilderness Society. His testimony was described as “one of the better statements of the principles upon which conservationists base their defense of Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>492</sup> Murie, though a member of another conservation group, was quoted for almost three pages of the newsletter.

The front page of the April 1954 issue featured a note from Claude D. Kelley, the president of the National Wildlife Federation. Surrounded by a border of stars, and featuring a headline in all capital letters, the note asked if Echo Park dam would be built because “we allow these vital conservation issues to be lost through default of citizenship.”<sup>493</sup> An article updated readers on the House Subcommittee vote on the CRSP. The article listed each member who voted on the project and how they voted. It ended with the underlined statement: “It is time now for citizens in all the states to make their opinions known to their Congressmen.”<sup>494</sup> The passionate pleas would have been hard to miss. In the May 15, 1954, newsletter, readers were warned that the Western Association

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<sup>490</sup> *Conservation News*, January 1, 1954.

<sup>491</sup> “The Hearings on Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, February 1, 1954, 2.

<sup>492</sup> “Statement by Wilderness Society Leader” *Conservation News*, February 1, 1954, 3.

<sup>493</sup> “A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CLAUDE D. KELLEY,” *Conservation News*, April 15, 1954.

This was not the only time Kelley would include a special note on the front page of the newsletter.

<sup>494</sup> “A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT CLAUDE D. KELLEY,” 1954.

of State Game and Fish Commissioners had endorsed the dams.<sup>495</sup> It was an understated but clear warning that the fight would not be easy.

In June 1954, the coverage continued to deliver updates on legislation action, but it also included background, or process, information.<sup>496</sup> Two pages of the newsletter were dedicated to the debate over evaporation calculations and whether or not Under Secretary of the Interior Ralph A. Tudor knew that the numbers he had quoted in his congressional testimony had been erroneous. Readers saw a copy of a letter Tudor had sent to subcommittee chairman Wyoming Representative William H. Harrison, revising his data and explaining why he had presented incorrect information. But he also stated that he was not willing to recommend “substituting a high Glen Canyon Dam for the Echo Park and Split Mountain dams.”<sup>497</sup> The last item in June was an argument that compared the number of lives lost while floating the Green and Yampa Rivers to the number of people who had been killed at Hoover Dam’s Lake Mead.<sup>498</sup> This was likely a response to claims that the rivers were too dangerous for recreation. It was an attempt to answer one of the less-common arguments in favor of damming the rivers.

Attention shifted in July 1954 to the hearings in the Senate. The list of witnesses was printed and readers were told that “expressions of public opinion regarding the pros and cons of the project, if desired to reach members of the Senate, should not be

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<sup>495</sup> “Western Game Executives Endorse Echo Park Dam, Grazing Bill,” *Conservation News*, May 15, 1954, 9.

<sup>496</sup> “Committee Reports Echo Park Dam Bill by 13-to-12 Vote,” *Conservation News*, June 1, 1954.

<sup>497</sup> “Evaporation Argument has Largely Evaporated,” *Conservation News*, June 1, 1954, 5.

<sup>498</sup> “Lake Mead is a Dangerous Place,” *Conservation News*, June 1, 1954, 8.

delayed.”<sup>499</sup> Two weeks later, the second issue of the month included a glowing tribute to the “intelligent and daring leadership” of the Sierra Club’s David Brower and his “acumen to detect new errors in Bureau of Reclamation testimony and the courage to challenge their evaporation-loss figures with chalk and blackboard before an antagonistic House subcommittee.”<sup>500</sup> The introduction was followed by a copy “in digest form, of the Brower proposal as presented July 2 before the Senate irrigation subcommittee.”<sup>501</sup> Readers were then given a summary of the mathematical arguments against the Echo Park dam. The issue concluded that “the fight to conserve our big outdoors and its wildlife is a patriotic duty.”<sup>502</sup>

The Dinosaur discussion continued in August when editors addressed a completely separate reclamation project. They compared the defeat of the proposed dam along the Arkansas River to the fight to stop the Echo Park dam and hoped that the defeat of this dam was “an indication of what might happen to the Upper Colorado Storage Project bill.”<sup>503</sup> Two weeks later, an issue warned that “as this issue of CONSERVATION NEWS was being prepared” the Congress was refocusing on the Echo Park fight and “the fingers of conservationists were aching from being crossed so

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<sup>499</sup> “Senate Hearings on Upper Colorado Storage Project,” *Conservation News*, July 1, 1954, 8.

<sup>500</sup> “Resource Planning—A Task for Men of Vision,” *Conservation News*, June 15, 1954, 5. For a more detailed description of Brower’s performance in front of the House subcommittee, see Chapter 10.

<sup>501</sup> David R. Brower, “Proposal for a Revised Upper Colorado River Storage Project,” *Conservation News*, July 15, 1954, 6.

<sup>502</sup> “The Fight to Conserve . . . is a Patriotic Duty,” *Conservation News*, July 15, 1954, 8.

<sup>503</sup> “Fryingpan-Arkansas Project Defeated in House,” *Conservation News*, August 1, 1954, 8.



hard.”<sup>504</sup> The finger-crossing must have worked because in September the Upper Colorado Storage Project bill was not cleared by the House for action and “Speaker Joe Martin told a press conference the measure had been defeated by public opposition to Echo Park dam.”<sup>505</sup> In October, editors shared an editorial from *Colorado Conservation* magazine. The author proposed forming a “Committee for Wise Development of the Upper Colorado” comprised of leaders from the several conservation groups that had been fighting the dams in Dinosaur.<sup>506</sup> This would prove prescient, as the Council of Conservationists was officially established one month later.

The front page of the November 1954 newsletter was focused on the Echo Park debate. Writers argued that the dams inside the monument were a test case for future incursions into the National Park System. A strong message ended the National Wildlife Federation’s coverage for the year: “The conservation organizations that fought the proposal to a standstill in the last Congress have not let down their guard. The preponderance of nationwide sentiment against Echo Park Dam probably will have to be demonstrated again.”<sup>507</sup>

A flurry of legislation regarding the use of water and land was introduced in 1954 and 1955. One example was House Resolution 270, a call to construct the Upper Colorado River Storage Project.<sup>508</sup> President Eisenhower placed the issue in the national spotlight when he mentioned the project in the State of the Union address on January 6,

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<sup>504</sup> “Senate Expected to Vote on Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, August 15, 1954, 1.

<sup>505</sup> “Echo Park Fight Defeats Upper Colorado Project,” *Conservation News*, September 1, 1954, 3.

<sup>506</sup> “Colorado Editor Proposes a Joint Planning Committee,” *Conservation News*, October 1, 1954.

<sup>507</sup> “Echo Park Dam Fight Will Continue in Next Congress,” *Conservation News*, November 1, 1954, 2.

<sup>508</sup> “New Congress Receives Deluge of Bills,” *Conservation News*, January 15, 1954, 2.

1955. He argued that the project would “conserve and assure better use of precious water essential to the future of the West.”<sup>509</sup> Major news outlets across the country, including the *New York Times*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Denver Post*, covered the House and Senate Hearings during 1954 and 1955. And *Conservation News* covered them by including instructions on how to contact officials prior to hearings and a list of the members of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.<sup>510</sup>

By spring 1955, the hearings had adjourned and conservation groups, the National Wildlife Federation among them, were responding. Delegates at the NWF convention adopted a strongly-worded resolution . . . to take every action possible to oppose the construction of Echo Park Dam and to preserve the Dinosaur National Monument as it is now constituted, and to do everything possible to see that our National Park System is not needlessly invaded or despoiled.<sup>511</sup>

The April issue also provided readers with a summary of the Senate committee hearings and the progress of the legislation through Congress.<sup>512</sup> The article contained a roll call of how the Senate had voted on Echo Park Dam—listed alphabetically by name and with their states. The message assured readers that

defenders of the National Park System have worked hard to show that they are not against reclamation development in the Upper Colorado Basin. . . . Conservationists have fought to kill only the one dam at the one particular site—Echo Park in Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>513</sup>

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<sup>509</sup> “President Eisenhower’s Remarks on Natural Resources,” *Conservation News*, January 15, 1954, 3. “State of the Union Address Dwight D. Eisenhower,” January 6, 1955. [www.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/poldocs/uspressu/suaddressDEisenhower.pdf](http://www.hn.psu.edu/faculty/jmanis/poldocs/uspressu/suaddressDEisenhower.pdf), (accessed January 2, 2014).

<sup>510</sup> “Hearings Set on Upper Colorado Project, Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, February 15, 1955.

<sup>511</sup> “Resolution Opposes Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, April 1, 1955, 4.

<sup>512</sup> “Senate Committee Approves Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, April 1, 1955.

<sup>513</sup> “Strategy and Counter Strategy,” *Conservation News*, May 1, 1955, 3.

*Conservation News* contained descriptions of what was called “Strategy and Counter Strategy” for the campaign to save Dinosaur.<sup>514</sup>

The June 1955 issues were full of information about the legislative maneuverings and committee action. Both newsletters that month discussed the possibility of a conference committee and the danger that posed to the campaign to save Dinosaur.<sup>515</sup> Writers expressed concern that “differences in the House and Senate versions . . . would throw the measure into Conference Committee for final determination of details.”<sup>516</sup> This would leave the legislation in the hands of a combined group of legislators from both houses and would make it much harder to fight. According to the National Wildlife Federation, “the hazards of a Conference Committee are causing most of the serious head-scratching among conservationists opposing Echo Park dam.”<sup>517</sup> There was little benefit in stopping the dams in one house when procedural tricks could simply resurrect it in a conference committee. The task facing conservationists was to persuade enough elected officials keep the dams out of the project.

The July 1 newsletter presented two items from experts in opposition to the Echo Park dam plan. One such article was an examination of Illinois Congressman Melvin Price’s endorsement of a proposal to convene a scientific board to study the Colorado

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<sup>514</sup> Ibid.

<sup>515</sup> When two related pieces of legislation are passed in the House and the Senate a conference committee is called to reconcile differences between the two versions and create a working bill. The committee is comprised of members from both political parties and both houses of Congress.

<sup>516</sup> “Committee Action on Echo Park Dam Scheduled to Begin June 6,” *Conservation News*, June 1, 1955, 10.

<sup>517</sup> “Conference Committee Can Restore Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, June 15, 1955, 3.

Basin and the proposed Upper Colorado River Storage Project.<sup>518</sup> Price had been in the House of Representatives for nearly a decade. He was publicly encouraging government officials to seek out scientific information. The article went on to quote Dr. Paul B. Sears of the Association for the Advancements of Science: “Scientific knowledge and personnel are available to present the American public with factual, verifiable information.”<sup>519</sup> The next article in the July 1 newsletter was a report from Dr. Durward L. Allen of Purdue University. A research ecologist and professor, Allen argued that “proposed vast reclamation programs are visionary and foolhardy and a tax levy on naturally productive areas.”<sup>520</sup>

The mid-July issue gave a brief description of the project and a list of how each committee member had voted on the bill and its amendments.<sup>521</sup> The newsletter shared the happy news that the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs had removed the Dinosaur dams from the Colorado River Storage Project before approving the controversial plan. However, the August newsletter previewed the 84<sup>th</sup> Congress and the prediction that the project would once again be introduced.<sup>522</sup>

By the fall of 1955, conservationists had reached an agreement with supporters of Echo Park dam. The first headline, seen directly beneath the masthead in the November 15 newsletter, declared “Proponents Agree to Give Up on Echo Park Dam.”<sup>523</sup> The

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<sup>518</sup> “Price Endorses Scientific Study of Colorado Basin Plans,” *Conservation News*, July 1, 1955, 6.

<sup>519</sup> “Price Endorses Scientific Study of Colorado Basin Plans,” 6.

<sup>520</sup> Durward L. Allen, “Dams, Drainage, and Some Facts of Life,” *Conservation News*, July 1, 1955.

<sup>521</sup> “House Reports Colorado Storage Bill Minus Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, July 15, 1955.

<sup>522</sup> “Colorado Storage Project Bill Carried Over,” *Conservation News*, August 15, 1955.

<sup>523</sup> “Proponents Agree to Give Up on Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, November 15, 1955, 1.

writers noted that it “may well have been the most important decision also bearing on the problem of passing an authorization bill for a start on Upper Basin development.”<sup>524</sup> This article contained excerpts of an open letter from the Council of Conservationists, originally printed in the *Denver Post*, promising that “we will fight with every honest device at our command” if other attempts were made at building a dam inside a national monument or park.<sup>525</sup> The year ended by boldly declaring the “next goal: Make Dinosaur a Real National Park.” The thinking was that if Dinosaur was a proper national park it would be more difficult (read: unpopular) to build a dam, should the idea ever resurface.

During 1956, *Conservation News* coverage of Echo Park focused on tracking the Upper Colorado River Storage Project as it made its way through Congress and eventually to the White House for signing. And in November, writers proudly announced that the new chairman of the Natural Resources Council of America was David Brower, who had

won national recognition for his leadership and for the work of the Sierra Club in the successful fight by conservation groups to prevent the construction of Echo Park dam in Dinosaur National Monument as a part of the Upper Colorado River Storage Project.<sup>526</sup>

The coalition of conservation groups had successfully defeated the dams, and the leaders of that group were being recognized for the work.

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<sup>524</sup> “Proponents Agree to Give Up on Echo Park Dam,” 1.

<sup>525</sup> “Proponents Agree to Give Up on Echo Park Dam.”

<sup>526</sup> “Dave Brower Reelected to Head Natural Resources Council,” *Conservation News*, November 1, 1956, 7.

Forest History Society,

[http://www.foresthistory.org/ead/Natural\\_Resources\\_Council\\_of\\_America.html](http://www.foresthistory.org/ead/Natural_Resources_Council_of_America.html),

(accessed January 31, 2014). The Natural Resources Council of America was a consortium of national and regional conservation groups whose goal was to encourage wise use policies.

The battle over Echo Park was hard-fought and the Council of Conservationists had worked to convince lawmakers and the general public that Dinosaur National Monument should be saved. As part of the council, the National Wilderness Federation had helped keep its members informed and ready to engage in the debate.

*Wilderness and Wise Use*

Over the seven years of the Echo Park dam controversy, the National Wildlife Federation coverage included three themes: emphasis of the legislative process, the mobilization of readers as part of a strong coalition, and the wise use concept of resource management.

The first theme in *Conservation News* was emphasis on the legislative process. For the Upper Colorado River Storage Project, this process began, in some part, with the Presidential proclamation of 1938, which added hundreds of thousands of acres of canyons to Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>527</sup> The proclamation created an opening for a specific reclamation project in the monument, which left the whole area vulnerable. In 1954, the editor reprinted excerpts of Olaus J. Murie's statement during congressional hearings. He reminded readers of "the language and the purpose of the original action by Congress, which was aimed at preserving outstanding scenic areas in their original condition and to keep them unimpaired, so far as is humanly possible, for future generations."<sup>528</sup> Leaving the areas "unimpaired" made any intentional damage unacceptable, unless it could not be avoided. This line would suggest that building a road inside a national park area would be acceptable if its impact and design were minimal

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<sup>527</sup> "The Hearings on Echo Park Dam," *Conservation News*, February 1, 1954, 2.

<sup>528</sup> Olaus J. Murie, "Statement by Wilderness Society Leader," *Conservation News*, February 1, 1954, 3.

enough that it allowed people to visit the park. A dam, however, would not fit those criteria and would destroy the monument's "central feature, the canyons...and the living rivers running through."<sup>529</sup> Further, Murie argued that the national park idea had been "thoroughly accepted by Americans and the very fact that such a high concept has behind it the authority of the United States Government has been a source of inspiration for us."<sup>530</sup> Describing the parks as a "high concept" and "source of inspiration" elevated them to defining characteristics of the country. Causing substantial damage to a fixture of the National Park System would be detrimental to the American ethos.

The editor of *Conservation News* was highly focused on the legislative maneuverings of the various bills related to the proposed project. Readers were advised that this was "the first such legislation adversely affecting a national park or monument since establishment of the National Park Service."<sup>531</sup> These updates were not always what would be considered breaking news, but they served to keep the public aware and to create a timeline of the legislation. In fact, the first article in the newsletter to mention Echo Park stated simply that "no bills have been introduced in Congress for the construction of the Echo Park and the Split Mountain Dams within the Monument."<sup>532</sup> In anticipation of the bill that would officially begin the legislative process, the National Wildlife Federation kept the dams at the forefront for readers a status report, even if there was nothing truly new to report.

*Conservation News* also reported on action inside the House and Senate committees. Readers were advised of upcoming hearings, including dates, times and

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<sup>529</sup> Murie, "Statement by Wilderness Society Leader," 4.

<sup>530</sup> Murie, "Statement by Wilderness Society Leader," 3.

<sup>531</sup> "The Hearings on Echo Park Dam," 2.

<sup>532</sup> "Dinosaur Monument Situation," *Conservation News*, February 1, 1952, 2.

locations. This information came with an invitation for “individuals or organizations wishing to present testimony at the hearings [to] write...asking for an opportunity to be heard.”<sup>533</sup> These announcements listed the names of the committee members as well as the names and organizations of individuals testifying. On one occasion, even the allocation of time between dam proponents and opponents was discussed:

Spokesmen for conservation organizations and individual citizens protesting this threatened invasion of the national park system got their turn the last three days of the hearing. Proponents—not all of them testifying in favor of every phase of the project, it is true, but none of them opposing Echo Park dam—occupied the first seven days.<sup>534</sup>

Pointing out the disparity in the number of days dedicated to each side of the argument established the idea that dam opponents were the underdog in the issue. Even so, the hearings were an important part of the legislative process and conservationists were actively participating in that process.

In addition to the mechanisms of the committee hearings, readers were also informed of suspicious goings-on. In June 1954, an article in *Conservation News* tactfully accused Ralph A. Tudor, Under Secretary of Interior, of presenting incorrect evaporation figures to Congress. The editors were quick to point out that Tudor had subsequently sent corrected information to the committee chairman, but also noted that the Under Secretary’s testimony had been key in convincing representatives of the dam’s importance. The newsletter reprinted Tudor’s letter to the chairman, which he wrote “as an explanation but not as an excuse.” He added that “these new Bureau of Reclamation figures only came to the attention of the Commissioner of Reclamation and the

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<sup>533</sup> “Subcommittee to Start Hearings Jan. 18,” *Conservation News*, January 1, 1954, 4.

<sup>534</sup> “The Hearings on Echo Park Dam,” 2.



Secretariat of the Department within the past week.”<sup>535</sup> The editors disputed this and noted that Tudor must have known this information prior to his testimony. In fact the National Wildlife Federation was convinced that “few members of the Committee knew of the existence of Mr. Tudor’s letter of correction prior.”<sup>536</sup> According to *Conservation News*, Tudor knew about the errors, yet had not shared the corrections. This meant that most members of the committee voted based on false information. The allegation was that Tudor had deliberately misled the committee; one branch of the government had lied to another branch. This only compounded the anxiety that legislative process was the only thing that would save Dinosaur.

Unlike the other organizations of the Council of Conservationists, the National Wildlife Federation took great care to provide details of all legislative progress through the House and Senate. Descriptions of the hearings included details about the political makeup of the members: “Western congressmen, traditionally good boosters for Bureau of Reclamation projects, dominate the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs.”<sup>537</sup> This information signaled to readers that the committee was predisposed to voting for the dam and the process would be treacherous. Editors also shed light on the backdoor dealings that were afoot. Editors reported that “Upper Colorado Basin senators long had been swapping votes for support of their bill, a process known in the trade as ‘log-rolling.’”<sup>538</sup> The use of the political term “log-rolling” suggests that the National Wildlife Federation was paying close attention and had some expertise in the process. It also meant that

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<sup>535</sup> Ralph A. Tudor to Congressman William H. Harrison, 13 May 1954, in *Conservation News*, June 1, 1954, 4-5.

<sup>536</sup> “Evaporation Argument Has Largely Evaporated,” *Conservation News*, June 1, 1954, 4.

<sup>537</sup> “Evaporation Argument Has Largely Evaporated,” 4.

<sup>538</sup> “Congress and Conservation,” *Conservation News*, May 1, 1955, 1.

legislators were trying to trade votes for one pet project in exchange for a vote on the CRSP, instead of really analyzing the wisdom and necessity of the project.

The legislative wrangling included unexpected moments, however. For example, following a “surprisingly close” committee vote, the editors reported that “the sharp division in the committee was apparent not only in the vote but in the debate which at times reflected bitterness.”<sup>539</sup> These comments about the generally mundane legislative process, with language such as “sharp division” and “bitterness,” reveal an emotional appeal. It is also telling that the editor of *Conservation News* saw a serious split between those on the committee who were already committed to the project, and those who were still deciding. This appeared to be an issue ready to challenge the professional collegiality in Congress.

Beyond the demographic and strategic information, the editors were happy to name names—more so than any other Council of Conservationists group. On multiple occasions *Conservation News* supplied readers with complete lists of committee members and the states they represented. In an act that was more telling, though, the editor took attendance. He reported that

during recent meetings on the Upper Colorado Storage Project . . . from nine to a dozen of the 23 members of the House Irrigation Subcommittee were absent most of the time. Several times meetings were canceled or postponed for lack of the bare majority needed to constitute a quorum. When the key vote was taken on an amendment to delete Echo Park dam, eight members were absent, although three of those were voted by proxy. Several members of the subcommittee from Eastern states were consistently absent during the proceedings.<sup>540</sup>

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<sup>539</sup> “Committee Reports Echo Park Dam Bill by 13-to-12 Vote,” *Conservation News*, June 1, 1954, 3.

<sup>540</sup> Claude D. Kelley, “A Message from President Claude D. Kelley of the National Wildlife Federation,” *Conservation News*, April 15, 1954.

Readers were being warned that the deck was stacked against them and it would take a unified front to save the monument. The implication was that Echo Park would not be saved by testimony in committee hearings, because many of those elected officials were either enthusiastically in favor of the project or they were undecided, at best.<sup>541</sup> Rather, the project would be spared or sacrificed in the postcommittee action that would take place on the House and Senate floors. The editor argued that “the hope of Echo Park Dam opponents lies in the House of Representatives whose members are considered more responsive to general public opinion.”<sup>542</sup> The NWF leaders kept a keen eye on the proceedings and the public would have to act quickly. On multiple occasions, readers were given detailed roll call records on each vote on Echo Park-related amendments and committee. This seemingly mundane reporting would give readers important information when contacting their legislators. For example, knowing which hearings a congressman had attended and how he had voted would help a reader write a more compelling argument.

Stories about Congressional inaction were nearly as common as the stories about legislative progress. In August 1955, *Conservation News* reported that “the Upper Colorado Basin Storage Project [was] bogged down in the House Rules Committee and failed to win floor action in the Senate.”<sup>543</sup> Describing the legislation as stalled was less of a victory shout, and more of a warning cry. The legislative fight would continue and it would be a long, slow slog. The public would have to be ready for it.

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<sup>541</sup> There would be a few notable exceptions to these two categories. Two elected officials, Colorado Representative Wayne Aspinall (D) and Pennsylvania Representative John Saylor (R) were vocal opponents of the project, and Echo Park dam specifically.

<sup>542</sup> “Senate Committee Approves Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, April 1, 1955, 5.

<sup>543</sup> “Colorado Storage Project Bill Carried Over,” *Conservation News*, August 15, 1955, 5. Added [was] for clarity.

The second theme identified in the *Conservation News* coverage addressed mobilization of individual citizens and the power of the coalition that formed to fight the Echo Park dam. Often, the message focused on the responsibility of citizenship. The fact that many representatives were skipping the hearings was seen as a “lack of interest.” The editors suggested that the vote in the full House of Representatives was subject to influence by the people—“if the people let their Congressman know how they feel about it.”<sup>544</sup> Because the monument was in a remote area with few to defend it and the few who supported the dam were a vocal minority, elected officials did not actually understand the desires of the public. Readers were told that, now that the legislation was out of a committee system dominated by Western Congressmen who loved Reclamation projects, “The real showdown will come on the floor of the House of Representatives.”<sup>545</sup> The language was urgent and confrontational. Framing the debate as a showdown was reminiscent of an old West gunfight.

Readers had already been warned that Western lawmakers were eager to see the CRSP pass, and many officials had been cutting deals with colleagues to ensure the project passed quickly. The editor assumed that the opinion of the majority of the country was on the side of conservationists. Articles made reference to “vigorous and nation-wide opposition”<sup>546</sup> and “the true sentiment of the entire nation.”<sup>547</sup> One article even declared that

the American people who cherish their national parks are distributed throughout all the states, east, west, north and south. . . . Collectively we also cherish each

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<sup>544</sup> Kelley, “A Message from President Claude D. Kelley,” 1.

<sup>545</sup> “Subcommittee Votes for Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, April 15, 1954, 2. Original emphasis.

<sup>546</sup> “Proponents Agree to Give Up on Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, November 15, 1955, 1.

<sup>547</sup> Kelley, “A Message from President Claude D. Kelley,” 1.

national park in whichever state it is found. On these national issues we who live in these many states are interested beyond the boundaries of our own.<sup>548</sup>

Further, the legislative process was only going to work if individuals acted to demonstrate their will. This call to influence lawmakers was repeated often. The editor declared that “the preponderance of nationwide sentiment against Echo Park Dam probably will have to demonstrated again.”<sup>549</sup> The word “preponderance” is interesting, in that it could have been taken simply as a majority opinion, but its second meaning suggests superior importance. The dual meaning lent an air of morality to the act of defending Dinosaur.

The editor at *Conservation News* also used Beltway rhetoric—threatening electoral consequences—to inspire legislators: “Too many people use the National Parks, like them, and will fight to preserve them. In terms a politician can understand, the parks have too many votes.”<sup>550</sup> In a manner reminiscent of the American Nature Association’s coverage in *Nature Magazine*, the National Wildlife Federation was threatening the job security of elected officials who dared defy the wishes of conservation-minded voters. Issuing that threat in the newsletter could have been an indirect call for readers to contact lawmakers.

Much of the content in *Conservation News* encouraged readers to defend the monument was also focused on the power of a larger coalition of conservation organizations. The editor devoted considerable space to promoting the work of the

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<sup>548</sup> Murie, “Statement by Wilderness Society Leader,” 3.

<sup>549</sup> “Echo Park Dam Fight Will Continue in Next Congress,” *Conservation News*, November 1, 1954, 2.

<sup>550</sup> “Colorado Storage Project Bill Carried Over,” *Conservation News*, August 15, 1955, 5.

“public opposition, spearheaded by a phalanx of national conservation organizations.”<sup>551</sup>

The language cast the debate as a war and suggested it was a strategic campaign run by competent leaders and mentions of other CoC groups. Reports often highlighted the individuals leading the campaign, including Conrad Wirth of the National Park Service, Ulysses S. Grant III of the American Planning and Civic Association, David Brower of the Sierra Club, and Olaus J. Murie of The Wilderness Society. These men were notable, gaining national attention for their efforts in the debate over Echo Park. And the editor was closing watching other groups, their publications, and their public statements for items to be quoted in the newsletter.

Readers were kept apprised of the actions of many of the CoC member groups who were “writing, making speeches, testifying before the Congress.”<sup>552</sup> These were largely the same tasks the readers were encouraged to do individually. As a group, though, the CoC was also acting strategically, engaging in public action as individual organizations and in private sessions with government officials.<sup>553</sup> In addition to the above-named activities, they had “published an open letter ... in a full-page advertisement in the *Denver Post*.”<sup>554</sup> The coalition was active and the National Wildlife Federation wanted its readers to know it and follow its lead, possibly writing letters of their own.

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<sup>551</sup> “Echo Park Fight Defeats Upper Colorado Project,” *Conservation News*, September 1, 1954, 3.

<sup>552</sup> “Colorado Editor Proposes a Joint Planning Committee,” *Conservation News*, October 1, 1954, 9.

<sup>553</sup> “Next Goal: Make Dinosaur a Real National Park,” *Conservation News*, December 1955, 6.

<sup>554</sup> “Proponents Agree to Give Up on Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, November 15, 1955, 2.

Occasionally, excitement for the movement led to premature declarations of victory or defeat, often with emotional language. In 1954, the midpoint of the campaign, it was erroneously announced that “Echo Park dam is dead.” Further, the editors claimed that “it was killed by a determined coalition of conservation organizations united behind the cause with almost evangelical fervor.”<sup>555</sup> The idea of conservation as a religious movement gave it a deeper meaning, and the term “evangelical” implies a missionary zeal to share the message with others. Readers were being called to preach conservation. Further, the strength suggested by an ability to scuttle one of the largest projects the Bureau of Reclamation had ever proposed was certainly impressive. This coalition was soon being discussed in terms of its size and power on national conservation issues.

The August 1956 newsletter reviewed the major accomplishments of the 84th Congress. The Echo Park campaign was described “as a ‘negative’ though momentous victory for conservationists.”<sup>556</sup> It had included letter writing, public speeches and congressional testimony, and the production of books and movies.<sup>557</sup> This moment had brought increased public attention to environmental issues and its importance was not lost on the editor of *Conservation News*. It was discussed as important in influencing future American policies regarding land use and preservation.<sup>558</sup> Leaders of the National Wilderness Federation planned on playing a role in the conversation for years to come.

The strength of conservationists was clear to people outside the movement as well. Colorado Congressman Wayne Aspinall warned that “to postpone or defeat Echo Park dam now would only encourage the conservation organizations of the nation to keep

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<sup>555</sup> “Colorado Editor Proposes a Joint Planning Committee,” 8.

<sup>556</sup> “The 84th Congress and Conservation,” *Conservation News*, August 1, 1956, 5.

<sup>557</sup> “Colorado Editor Proposes a Joint Planning Committee,” 9.

<sup>558</sup> “Democratic and Republican Planks on Conservation,” *Conservation News*, September 15, 1956, 4.

up their fight for the next 100 years.”<sup>559</sup> Echo Park had become more than just a dam. It was a seminal fight that had to be waged, even if it was just to keep environmentalists from having success. The symbolic power of the movement was growing. Coverage in the newsletter also included lawmakers’ recognition of the influence the campaign had had:

Senator [Richard] Neuberger declared he was in favor of the proposed Upper Colorado Basin development as a whole but opposed Echo Park Dam as a precedent-making invasion of the National Park system. He cited the firm opposition of national conservation organizations to this reservoir which would flood the scenic Green and Yampa canyons of the Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>560</sup>

Before the fight over Echo Park dam, the failure to stop the Hetch Hetchy dam was the only real national campaign the conservation movement had experienced. Echo Park gave the editors of *Conservation News* a sense of strength and direction. One of the reasons the campaign had succeeded was that the Council of Conservationists, its member groups, and their supporters, had been very specific in their opposition. As Senator Neuberger recognized, the conservation movement was not arguing against dams in any location. Conservationists had cast Echo Park as the first of future projects inside other national parks. In fact, the CoC was quick to point out that its groups supported responsible use of resources. The only dam they opposed was the one inside a national monument. It is also important to note that a Senator from a Western state was taking his cues from conservation organizations and their recommendations.

The third theme discovered in the *Conservation News* coverage of the Dinosaur National Monument controversy was the “wise use” concept of resource management.

Though other groups would mention it sporadically, only *Conservation News* dedicated

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<sup>559</sup> “Subcommittee Votes for Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, April 15, 1954, 2.

<sup>560</sup> “Congress and Conservation,” *Conservation News*, May 1, 1955, 1.



this much attention to the idea. The editor used the specific term “wise use” often. The idea was not original to the National Wilderness Federation. It was the philosophy of America’s “first professional forester,” Gifford Pinchot.<sup>561</sup> Pinchot believed that conservation was about responsible development of land.<sup>562</sup> His theory would also include the rule that any development of resources must be “for the benefit of all the people, instead of the partial exploitation of them for the benefit of a few.”<sup>563</sup> This idea would drive public resource management policy for decades and would echo throughout the coverage in *Conservation News*, and would come to be known to readers as “wise use.”

A July 1954 article addressed the group’s frustration with the idea that areas set aside were still considered possible sites for Reclamation projects: “Conservationists maintain repeatedly that they favor wise use of our national resources as strongly as they oppose invasion of our national monuments.”<sup>564</sup> The language used in the wise use theme assumed that readers could understand and agree on an extremely important distinction between wild areas and “dedicated public property.”<sup>565</sup> The Federation’s argument, like Pinchot’s principle, rested on the shared belief that national parks were of higher value and should only be used as a last resort.

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<sup>561</sup> Bob Pepperman Taylor, *Our Limits Transgressed: Environmental Political Thought in America* (University Press of Kansas: Lawrence, KA, 1992), 15.

<sup>562</sup> Pinchot worked closely with President Theodore Roosevelt and is considered one of the guiding conservation thinkers of the twentieth century. In his book, *The Fight for Conservation*, he declared that conservation meant “first of all the recognition of the right of the present generation to the fullest necessary use of all the resources with which this country is so abundantly blessed.”

<sup>563</sup> Gifford Pinchot, *The Fight for Conservation* (University of Washington Press: Seattle, 1967, c1910), 80.

<sup>564</sup> “Resource Planning—A Task for Men of Vision,” *Conservation News*, July 15, 1954, 9.

<sup>565</sup> Murie, “Statement by Wilderness Society Leader,” 3.

One of the challenges in trying to explain to readers the value of the system was the fact that most Americans had never seen Dinosaur National Monument and its name suggested it was nothing more than a collection of bones. To combat this, editors described the canyons and rivers of Dinosaur as “unique and spectacular”<sup>566</sup> and the “central feature” of the monument. Olaus J. Murie warned that

by drowning beautiful canyons, by obliterating entirely the lengths of outstanding rivers within the present boundaries, this would no longer be a true national park and its usefulness as such would be gone. It would have lost its very heart, the scenic canyons and the living rivers for which it was primarily dedicated.<sup>567</sup>

The beauty and exceptional scenery of Dinosaur could not be presented visually, so the descriptions and imagery would have to be enough. Another strategy for helping readers understand the importance of the monument was to compare it to other, better known areas in the system. The editor declared that

if Echo Park Dam is authorized, it would set a moral and legal precedent for local and special interests that would like to build dams in Yellowstone, Kings Canyon, Mammoth Cave or the Yosemite, cut timber in Olympic National Park, or exploit commercial possibilities in other parks.”<sup>568</sup>

The parks listed in this warning were among the most well known of the entire system. Established in 1872, Yellowstone was the first national park and Yosemite and Kings Canyon were the fifth and sixth.<sup>569</sup> Combined, more than three million people had visited these five areas annually since 1950.<sup>570</sup> These parks were protected for wildly different reasons—from conserving a system of caves in Kentucky to preserving geysers and wildlife in Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming—and they represented areas across the

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<sup>566</sup> “The Hearings on Echo Park Dam,” *Conservation News*, February 1, 1954, 2.

<sup>567</sup> Murie, “Statement by Wilderness Society Leader,” 4.

<sup>568</sup> “The Chips Are Down in Dinosaur,” *Conservation News*, January 1, 1954, 2.

<sup>569</sup> National Park Service, “National Park System Areas Listed in Chronological Order of Date Authorized under DOI.”

<sup>570</sup> National Park Service Stats Report Viewer. <https://irma.nps.gov/Stats/Reports/Park>, (accessed January 25, 2014).

country and would have appealed to lovers of all kinds of nature. To place a threat to Dinosaur in the same category as a threat to these prominent parks was to establish its value as part of the system and to emphasize its worth to the nation.

Having declared a firm conviction that public lands were to be protected, the editor of *Conservation News* attempted to walk a very straight line. Readers were repeatedly reminded that “conservationists were unanimous in opposing Echo Park, but made it clear they were not standing in the way of the over-all [*sic*] Upper Colorado development.”<sup>571</sup> Statements in favor of growth and development served to make conservationists appear to be reasonable in their demands. Reports in the newsletter called for policies that balanced the value of development projects with that of the National Park System. According to the Sierra Club’s David Brower, who was quoted in *Conservation News*, the equation had to recognize more than just gallons of water and kilowatts of energy:

Such a program [of dams], developed as competent engineers can develop it, will, I am convinced, serve well the total public interest, including the interest of the Upper Colorado region, in the wise use of their water and other resources—and also, I must emphasize, including the preservation of the National Park System which is such a valuable resource to the region and to the entire nation.”<sup>572</sup>

Conservationists assumed that the value of the threatened lands would come out on top in any cost-benefit analysis of the projects, and consequently, “other reservoir sites outside the National Monument [must] be substituted for Echo Park.”<sup>573</sup> The wise use call was expressed by some government leaders, as well. According to a quote from Newton Drury, former director of the National Park Service, Dinosaur was “one of the great

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<sup>571</sup> “The Hearings on Echo Park Dam,” 2.

<sup>572</sup> “Resource Planning—A Task for Men of Vision,” 8.

<sup>573</sup> “The Hearings on Echo Park Dam,” 2.

places of America.”<sup>574</sup> Steep canyon walls and rapidly rushing rivers were obviously tempting for engineers, but he argued that “the economic value of recreation alone, without considering the social value, would in time exceed the economic value of water development.”<sup>575</sup> The editors of *Conservation News* were demonstrating that though Echo Park would be the easiest spot for a dam, wisdom demanded selecting the right spot for a dam. Comparing Dinosaur to other popular parks and places around the country allowed readers to more clearly understand the value of the monument.

While other CoC groups addressed the dam inside a park as a matter of principle or a way to protect the rest of the park system from future encroachment, the National Wildlife Federation was focused on the wisdom of placing a dam in this park. The goal was to wage “an earnest effort to find a way whereby the objectives of the Upper Colorado Project could be realized in a program that would serve all the public interest.”<sup>576</sup> The fact that Dinosaur National Monument had perfect geological features for a dam was of no matter; the area was just not the right place to build a dam. Failure to consider this was a violation of the public trust. The *Conservation News* coverage differed from other groups in its pragmatic approach to use of public lands.

Unlike their more firebrand colleagues, the leaders of the National Wildlife Federation avoided waging personal attacks or questioning the motives of those who supported the Echo Park dam. After all, noted one February 1954 article, “the Utah enchantment with this particular damsite is probably traceable to a determined group of promoters at Vernal, Utah, who envision local boomtown prosperity during the

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<sup>574</sup> “The Chips are Down in Dinosaur,” *Conservation News*, January 1, 1954, 4.

<sup>575</sup> “The Chips are Down in Dinosaur,” 4.

<sup>576</sup> “Resource Planning—A Task for Men of Vision,” 8.

construction period.”<sup>577</sup> The desire to build the dams was based on hope, not facts, and the local proponents were allowing their dreams to drive the campaign. Any long-term economic growth from a dam was a fantasy. Further, if financial benefit was the goal, it was predicted that Utahns would “profit more if their water and power needs can be met without sacrificing the National Monument than they will profit if we have to sacrifice it.”<sup>578</sup> Advocates of the wise use concept would have accepted the cost of the specific dam site if its benefit was significant enough, but the sacrifice of Echo Park was not going to be worth it.

Articles in *Conservation News* frequently questioned the ambitious nature of Bureau of Reclamation projects and the claims of engineers. The dams were described as “a far-flung development”<sup>579</sup> and “a project that is so inimical to conservation that it just can’t be swallowed.”<sup>580</sup> Believing the claims would fly in the face of common sense. And where other groups of the Council of Conservationists questioned whether dam supporters were being honest with the public, the rhetoric in *Conservation News* suggested that engineers were not being honest with themselves. Editors declared that “as a matter of established engineering fact, Utah could get irrigation water cheaper—by gravity flow—from another reservoir site.”<sup>581</sup> If the engineers were misunderstanding the effect of gravity on water, what else were they getting wrong?

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<sup>577</sup> “The Hearings on Echo Park Dam,” 2.

<sup>578</sup> Ulysses S. Grant III, Quoted in “Dinosaur Monument Situation,” *Conservation News*, February 1, 1952, 3.

<sup>579</sup> “Senate Hearings on Upper Colorado Storage Project,” *Conservation News*, July 1, 1954, 7.

<sup>580</sup> “Army Engineers Play Shell Game with Wildlife Lands,” *Conservation News*, April 15, 1956, 2.

<sup>581</sup> “The Hearings on Echo Park Dam,” 2.

The editor suggested that engineers were falling victim to their own pride. They believed too much in their abilities, thus demonstrating “limitations of the narrow professional mind, and of smallness of the human spirit.”<sup>582</sup> Though the tone of the language was less angry than that discovered in other publications’ coverage, the editors sounded almost sad that trained and educated men in the Bureau of Reclamation were acting so foolishly. Education and experience had created a myopic group of engineers who were failing professionally and personally. They were willing to sacrifice an area of great beauty and inspiration because it was easier than building in the best place. Someone else had to be primarily responsible for planning the use of public lands: “The editor of *Conservation News* submits that this kind of over-all [*sic*] resource planning can be done best not by engineers but by intelligent laymen with vision—the kind of men who are elected to Congress.”<sup>583</sup> The only way to guarantee that ambition and ease would not drive public policy was to leave it to officials who would be beholden to the public and, therefore, more responsive to national opinion. The informed amateur with an eye for preservation and an ear on the voice of the people would make the best plan for resource use.

The budgeting and appropriation process would require Congress to show more wisdom in resource planning. Each new Reclamation project was more expensive than the last: dams were getting bigger, and they were pricey. The editors of *Conservation News* believed that

the demands of these costly ventures have become so obviously insatiable that there is increased questioning of their propriety and ultimate worth. They are presented to us as the inspired vision of bold and progressive men. It could be

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<sup>582</sup> “Resource Planning—A Task for Men of Vision,” 5.

<sup>583</sup> “Resource Planning—A Task for Men of Vision,” 5.

prudence [*sic*] to suspect that when the cost of failure is a public charge, men of vision may become visionary and the bold foolhardy.”<sup>584</sup>

What seemed to scientists and engineers an exciting leap forward in technology would be, in the long run, an unnecessary sacrifice. The disgust expressed was evident in the rhetoric. Use of language such as “demands,” “insatiable,” and “propriety” suggests a moral failing. And “visionary” and “foolhardy” support the idea that these large projects were feeding the ego and ambition of engineers, and the American taxpayer was footing the bill. But the price tag was only part of the cost.

Wise use emphasizes that land should be used for the benefit of all, and in a manner that would extend and expand its usefulness for generations to come. Pinchot cautioned that “if we do not take action to conserve the Nation's natural resources, [then] our descendants will suffer the penalty of our neglect.”<sup>585</sup> Echoing Pinchot, the editor at *Conservation News* warned that “the resources of this continent are the base on which our population will expand and survive. The development and use of this natural wealth should involve some consideration of the biology of man himself.”<sup>586</sup> The American government had been operating under the theory of Manifest Destiny, the assumption that Americans would move across the continent and would thrive. Needless destruction of Dinosaur would be an unwise risk for the future. Technology should advance in concert with preservation. Progress was unavoidable, and it did not have to be negative, but it required a balance of considerations and goals. The editors described the conundrum as

a reclamation frontier, and its demands are imperative. But it is a technological frontier in the husbandry of land. A few millions wisely spent could mean annual progress and the steady building of solid value in all parts of the nation. It would

<sup>584</sup> Allen, “Dams, Drainage, and Some Facts of Life,” 8.

<sup>585</sup> Gifford Pinchot, *The Fight for Conservation* (University of Washington Press: Seattle, 1967, c1910), 129. Replaced “and that soon” with [then] for clarity.

<sup>586</sup> Allen, “Dams, Drainage, and Some Facts of Life,” 8.

be less spectacular than concrete monuments to engineering genius, but it would bring into being a social maturity which we now seem to lack, and it would be our best insurance for the future.”<sup>587</sup>

To embrace the challenges of the day with scientific discovery and ambition was not a fault, but replacing the natural monuments set aside for enjoyment of nature and instead worship the technology was evidence of a moral failing. The editors of *Conservation News* were challenging dam supporters to prove that American society had advanced as much as its technology.

The coverage of the Dinosaur controversy in *Conservation News* focused on the legislative process, mobilization of a coalition of supporters, and a plea for wise use of resources. The themes and language suggest a sea change: the editors and those they were quoting saw this moment as the beginning of a larger movement to more responsibly preserve and develop the nation’s natural resources.

The National Wilderness Federation and its newsletter, *Conservation News*, saw the Dinosaur campaign as the beginning of a new era in conservation and a movement that would impact future public policy: “We rejoice at this unmistakable display of strength by the friends of sound resource management. . . . We ask their help in another cause, a cause that satisfies the conservationist’s classic criterion for resource development—wise use.”<sup>588</sup> The friends of that coalition included members of the varying CoC groups, as well as the leaders.

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<sup>587</sup> Allen, “Dams, Drainage, and Some Facts of Life,” 10. Original emphasis.

<sup>588</sup> “Colorado Editor Proposes a Joint Planning Committee,” 8.



## CHAPTER 8

### THE IZAAK WALTON LEAGUE: THE GLOVES COME OFF

Seldom since the days of Teddy Roosevelt and [Gifford] Pinchot have the forces for conservation been so aroused and unified as in their battle to save Dinosaur National Monument.

—*Outdoor America*

Born in sixteenth-century England, Izaak Walton was a lover of the outdoors and a fishing enthusiast for his whole life. He grew up in the country and eventually moved to London where he married, and raised a family, and worked as an ironmonger. But he maintained a passion for fishing and in 1653, at the age of 60, Walton's book, *The Compleat Angler; or, The Contemplative Man's Recreation*, was first published.<sup>589</sup> Extolling the calm and tranquility of sport fishing, it described the various bodies of water and fish to be had throughout the English countryside.

Welcome, pure thoughts! Welcome, ye silent groves!  
These guests, these courts, my soul most dearly loves.  
Now the winged people of the sky shall sing  
My cheerful anthems to the gladsome spring:  
A prayer-book now shall be my looking-glass,  
In which I will adore sweet Virtue's face.  
Here dwell no hateful looks, no palace cares,  
No broken vows dwell here, no pale-faced fears:  
Then here I'll sit, and sigh my hot love's folly,  
And learn t' affect an holy melancholy:  
And if Contentment be a stranger, then

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<sup>589</sup> John Lowerson, "Izaak Walton: Father of a Dream," *History Today*, December 1983, 28.

I'll ne'er look for it, but in heaven again.<sup>590</sup>

*The Compleat Angler* is the third-most published book in the English language.<sup>591</sup> Behind only the Bible and the complete works of Shakespeare, it has been argued that Walton's book is one of the most important ever published. The book has been reproduced in several editions. Even after his death in 1683, Walton continued to influence multiple organizations and recreational fishing clubs around the globe for centuries.<sup>592</sup>

Founded in 1922, the Izaak Walton League of America, or "the Ikes," was based in Chicago and was dedicated to "the deteriorating conditions of America's top fishing streams."<sup>593</sup> The League would soon expand its concerns to more than fishing, seeing itself as a "defender of soil, woods, waters and wildlife."<sup>594</sup> During the 1950s and '60s, the Ikes was led by three prominent voices in conservation: William Voigt Jr., James "Joe" Penfold, and Ira Gabrielson.

William Voigt was a scholar and outdoor enthusiast. He was an environmental writer and published the book, *Born with Fists Doubled: Defending Outdoor America*, the biography of the Izaak Walton League.<sup>595</sup> He served as editorial director for the League's official magazine, *Outdoor America*, and signed several of the editorials and commentaries on the Dinosaur controversy.

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<sup>590</sup> Izaak Walton, "The *Compleat Angler; or, The Contemplative Man's Recreation* (New York: Heritage Press, 1948 edition) 230-231.

<sup>591</sup> *The Compleat Angler*, Izaak Walton League of America, <https://sites.google.com/site/izaakwaltoncottage/the-compleat-angler>, (accessed October 24, 2013).

<sup>592</sup> John Lowerson, "Izaak Walton: Father of a Dream," *History Today*, December 1983.

<sup>593</sup> Izaak Walton League, "54 Founders of the Izaak Walton League," <http://www.iwla.org/index.php?ht=d/ContentDetails/i/69546>, (accessed November 4, 2013).

<sup>594</sup> *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1950, 1.

<sup>595</sup> William Voigt Jr., *Born with Fists Doubled: Defending Outdoor America* (Iowa City, IA: Izaak Walton League of America Endowment, 1992).

Joe Penfold was a wiry man, built for activity and recreation. He was “quiet, but a ferocious gut fighter” who worked tirelessly to conserve wilderness areas and to protect the environment. He was described by the Outdoor Writers Association of America as one of the three “most important conservationists of the 20th century” right alongside Aldo Leopold and Rachel Carson.<sup>596</sup> Penfold was known best for his work in Washington, D.C., helping to create the Land and Water Conservation Fund, the Wilderness Act, and the President’s Advisory Committee on Recreation and Natural Beauty, among other groups and legislation.<sup>597</sup> But he was also the Ike’s conservation director and Western regional representative during the fight to save Dinosaur. He signed several pieces regarding Echo Park that appeared in *Outdoor America* and spoke on behalf of the League in major publications.

The Izaak Walton League claimed Dr. Ira “Gabe” Gabrielson as a member during the Dinosaur campaign. By 1950, Gabrielson had written multiple books on the topic and had served as the chief of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and president of the Wildlife Management Institute, and had “helped found the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources.”<sup>598</sup> Gabrielson was an “internationally known authority on conservation.”<sup>599</sup> During the Echo Park controversy, “Gabe” represented the Ikes in front of Congress, giving testimony in defense of the national monument.

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<sup>596</sup> Jack Lorenz, “Joe Penfold, No Ordinary Joe,” <http://owaa.org/owaa-legends/joe-penfold-no-ordinary-joe/>, (accessed November 4, 2013).

<sup>597</sup> Jack Lorenz, “Joe Penfold, No Ordinary Joe.” Penfold was named to the committee by President Eisenhower in 1958.

<sup>598</sup> Patuxent Wildlife Research Center: United States Geological Survey, “Ira Noel Gabrielson,” <http://www.pwrc.usgs.gov/resshow/perry/bios/GabrielsonIra.htm>, (accessed November 4, 2013).

<sup>599</sup> Jean R. Hailey, “Dr. Ira N. Gabrielson Dies; Well Known Conservationist,” *Washington Post*, September 9, 1977.

The League's magazine, *Outdoor America*, was published as a free benefit for members. The monthly magazine was small—3 1/2 inches by 8 inches—and was the official publication of the League. Articles focused on the activities of Ikes at the local and national level and were largely concerned with updating members about important wilderness and nature concerns.

Just under three hundred years after *The Compleat Angler* encouraged Englishmen to enjoy the outdoors through the art of fishing, the Izaak Walton League would launch a campaign to encourage Americans to experience nature and defend the national park system.

The controversy surrounding Dinosaur National Monument was fiercest from 1950 to 1956. While the debate raged, *Outdoor America* worked to inform and persuade readers to protect the monument. For five of the seven years, the magazine averaged four items annually on the controversy. In 1954 and 1955, however, the coverage more than doubled with at least one item mentioning the debate each month.

Dinosaur National Monument was one of “several wilderness crises” on the agenda for the 1950 conference of the League's legislative watch group.<sup>600</sup> During the keynote speech, readers were cautioned that primitive lands were under threat of exploitation and were urged to “hold on for dear life” to save them.<sup>601</sup> Later in the spring issue, the resolutions of the annual conference were reprinted, including one stating that the monument “be kept intact, free from construction or development programs.”<sup>602</sup> Two months later, the headline read, “CHAPMAN DECISION ENDANGERS ALL NATIONAL PARKS.” The article detailed the actions of Secretary of the Interior Oscar

<sup>600</sup> “The Strength of the Wilderness,” *Outdoor America*, April-May 1950, 5.

<sup>601</sup> “The Strength of the Wilderness,” 5.

<sup>602</sup> “Resolutions,” *Outdoor America*, April-May 1950, 20.

Chapman and his approval of the Colorado River Storage Project, including Echo Park and Split Mountain Dams.<sup>603</sup> The placement of this item was unique—it was the first time no table of contents had appeared beneath the banner on the title page—and it included a signature from William Voigt Jr., the editorial director of the magazine. The year closed out with another article focused on Dinosaur and the areas of the National Park System. In it, Voigt issued a plea for readers to “let your voice be heard in their defense, and do it now, please.”<sup>604</sup>

*Outdoor America* did not cover the issue again until the fall of 1951. Both items in the September-October issue focused on Bureau of Reclamation Commissioner Mike Straus and the speech he gave at the dedication of the Granby Pumping Station in Colorado. Straus’s speech “publicly lambasted and insulted the nation’s conservation groups.”<sup>605</sup> The article included a quote from League Western Representative Joe Penfold’s public statement which appeared in the *Denver Post*: “It is unfortunate that legitimate reclamation and river development projects must be sullied and discredited by the attitude you seemingly displayed at Granby.”<sup>606</sup>

The November-December issue of the magazine included a full-page reproduction of Richard Westwood’s response to Straus’s speech. Westwood, editor of the magazine, *Nature*, declared that “Straus is much irked because friends of the national parks,

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<sup>603</sup> *Outdoor America*, August 1950, 1.

<sup>604</sup> Voigt, Jr. “Dinosaur – On the Way Out?” *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1950, 7.

<sup>605</sup> “Reclamation Official Blasts Conservationists,” Shedding Light on Conservation Affairs, *Outdoor America*, Sept.-Oct. 1951, 10.

<sup>606</sup> “Reclamation Official Blasts Conservationists,” 10.

Joe Penfold, “1951. Walton League Official Flays Straus’s Echo Park Dam Stand,” *The Denver Post*, July 23.

individually and collectively, refused to lie down and play dead.”<sup>607</sup> Westwood’s editorial originally appeared in *Nature* in October 1951. It was reprinted in the publications of several of the Council of Conservationists groups. In 1952, the coverage returned to roughly one item per issue. An article with the headline, “Pattern for Murder!” listed the many threats created by “development” of American rivers. Charges were levied that

*the upper Colorado river was murdered!* [Conservationist Arthur H.] Carhart refers to information which we now know was contained in a Fish and Wildlife Service report kept from the public. . . . This report, made by qualified technicians, is completely ignored or overridden by Reclamation.<sup>608</sup>

The article declared that government officials were deliberately ignoring science to gain approval for dams across the country.

The next issue included a letter to the editor from Percy H. Howe of Akron, Ohio.<sup>609</sup> Howe declared that he had sent a copy of the article “Pattern for Murder!” to his Congressman. He continued, “I have put in an extra mark on the ‘Contempt of Congress’ accusation.”<sup>610</sup> An editorial note printed underneath the letter called it “an excellent suggestion” and urged “all Waltonians to go back to . . . do likewise.”<sup>611</sup>

By July 1952, the Ikes had held its national conference. Readers could read the reports from leaders of each of the League’s national committee, including the parks and wilderness committee led by James Munro of Wyoming. Munro stated that the organization had sought “to maintain and preserve the remaining wild and primitive areas

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<sup>607</sup> Richard W. Westwood. “Lets Be Fair, Mike!” *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1951, 3. Westwood’s editorial originally appeared in *Nature Magazine* in October, 1951, and can be found in Chapter 5.

<sup>608</sup> “Pattern for Murder!” *Outdoor America* Mar.-Apr. 1952, 23. Original emphasis.

<sup>609</sup> Howe was a reporter in Ohio and founding member of the Ohio Court Reporters Association. Ohio Court Reporters Association, <http://www.ocraonline.com/pdf/historyoftheohiocourtreportersassociation.pdf>, (accessed January 30, 2014).

<sup>610</sup> Percy H. Howe, Letters to the Editor. *Outdoor America* May-June 1952, 31.

<sup>611</sup> James Munro, Letters to the Editor. *Outdoor America* May-June 1952, 31.

of America's national parks and monuments and national forests."<sup>612</sup> The keynote speech of the national conference, delivered by William Voigt Jr. and published in *Outdoor America*, served as a warning of "crisis spots."<sup>613</sup> Before 1952 ended, the Ikes would take one last swipe at Straus. Writers sarcastically pointed out that "for the last year, in every speech Reclamation Commissioner Mike Straus has sung the blues."<sup>614</sup> They accused Straus of ignoring good research and sacrificing protected areas for larger, unproved projects that brought money to his agency.

Dwight Eisenhower was inaugurated president of the United States in January 1953. He announced a policy of fiscal conservatism and "no new starts on federal reclamation projects."<sup>615</sup> The League "Ikes" interpreted President Ike's policy to mean that "Dinosaur National Monument won't be under as great a threat this year as in the past."<sup>616</sup> Eisenhower's announcement was considered "a resounding victory for conservation."<sup>617</sup> The celebration was short-lived, however, as only a month later the threat to national parks and monuments was back. Readers were warned that while individual projects could be justified, "the sum total of these proposals would be eventual eradication of every natural preserve."<sup>618</sup> The concern was expressed again in 1953 in the "League Leaders Report," which referenced Dinosaur as one of several dam proposals that threatened the monument as well as the river that ran through it.<sup>619</sup> The 1953 coverage ended with the announcement that the movie, *Legends of Lodore*, a "pictorial

<sup>612</sup> "Parks and Wilderness" *Outdoor America* July-Aug. 1952, 27.

<sup>613</sup> "Voigt Tells Crisis Spots" *Outdoor America* July-Aug. 1952, 34.

<sup>614</sup> "Don't Take It Away"! *Outdoor America* Nov.-Dec. 1952, 23.

<sup>615</sup> Stephen Craig Sturgeon, *The Politics of Western Water: The Congressional Career of Wayne Aspinall* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 2002), 32.

<sup>616</sup> "What's Ahead in Conservation?" *Outdoor America*, Jan.-Feb. 1953, 3.

<sup>617</sup> "FLASH! – FLASH! Dinosaur Seems Saved!" *Outdoor America*, Jan.-Feb. 1953, 24.

<sup>618</sup> "The Long Term vs. the Short Term," *Outdoor America* Mar.-Apr. 1953, 19.

<sup>619</sup> "League Leaders Report," *Outdoor America*, July-Aug. 1953, 56.

story of running the exciting rapids of the Canyon of Lodore” would be available for League members.<sup>620</sup> This movie would give “river level views of spectacular canyon areas of the national monument the League has been campaigning so hard to preserve.”<sup>621</sup>

The political action around the proposed Echo Park dam increased dramatically in 1954, and so did the coverage in *Outdoor America*. Testimony before the House and Senate committees and President Eisenhower’s approval of the Colorado River Storage Project including the Dinosaur dams brought the issue to new prominence. The coverage inspired several high-profile stories about the monument. The January-February issue opened with an editorial that declared it was “Showdown Time on Dinosaur.”<sup>622</sup> A related article posed the question, “What Will Lawmakers Do?” It proposed a “piece of legislation [that] would specifically forbid the construction of dams and reservoirs in the national parks system.”<sup>623</sup> The March-April issue included a story about the congressional debate surrounding “one of the most dangerous threats to our national park system conservationists have had to face in decades.”<sup>624</sup> A few pages later, readers were asked, “Did you write a letter to the President or some other high government official protesting the proposed invasion of Dinosaur National Monument by construction of Echo Park dam?”<sup>625</sup> Protecting the monument was important because the areas of the parks system were “dedicated fragments of America’s original great wilderness.”<sup>626</sup>

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<sup>620</sup> “New Film in League Library,” *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1953, 17.

<sup>621</sup> “New Film in League Library,” 17.

<sup>622</sup> *Outdoor America*, Jan.-Feb. 1954, 2.

<sup>623</sup> *Outdoor America*, Jan.-Feb. 1954, 17.

<sup>624</sup> “Echo Park Dam Debated Before Congress,” *Outdoor America* Mar.-Apr. 1954, 8.

<sup>625</sup> “McKay’s Form Letters,” *Outdoor America*, Mar.-Apr. 1954, 19.

<sup>626</sup> “A Glance Over the Shoulder,” *Outdoor America*, May-June 1954, 47.



In July, the editors declared a “Year of Victory” in conservation, and listed the Dinosaur fight as one of the issues that was resolved “for the foreseeable future.”<sup>627</sup> The same issue later predicted that a razor-thin committee vote, even in a group “loaded with westerners.”<sup>628</sup> The fall of 1954 brought concern that, though Congress had eliminated the dam from the legislation, “it is probable that another rousing battle looms to protect the nation’s unique national parks system.”<sup>629</sup> By the year’s end, William Voigt Jr. was focused on the fact that “the work of the conservation organizations has become more costly and difficult.”<sup>630</sup> Voigt warned that environmental organizations lacked the resources to effectively fight the levels of bureaucracy to save Echo Park. In an article on the next page, James Penfold warned that the “Dinosaur Battle Looms Again.”<sup>631</sup> Because dam supporters “refused to consider deletion of Echo Park dam . . . . The League and all other conservation organizations were girding for a tough battle.”<sup>632</sup> And readers saw an image of iconic Steamboat Rock in the magazine as a reminder of the true cost of the dams.

Legislative and bureaucratic action on the Dinosaur controversy was virtually nonexistent in 1955—with the exception of Senate hearings in March—but the Ikes were not. In January, *Outdoor America* reprinted an item from *Nature*, in which writers described the Echo Park conversation as “A Political Question?”<sup>633</sup> The next issue included an editorial written by Representative John P. Saylor (PA) that detailed the

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<sup>627</sup> *Outdoor America*, July-August 1954, 3.

<sup>628</sup> “Dinosaur Victory Near?” *Outdoor America*, July-August 1954, 10.

<sup>629</sup> “Congress Left Loose Ends,” *Outdoor America*, Sept.-Oct.-Nov. 1954, 3.

<sup>630</sup> “What Is the Right Thing to Do?” *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1954, 6.

<sup>631</sup> *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1954, 7.

<sup>632</sup> “Dinosaur Battle Looms Again,” *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1954, 7. Verb changed from “are” for clarity.

<sup>633</sup> *Outdoor America*, Jan.-Feb. 1955, 9.

activities of a publicity group for the dam called the Aqualantes. The group's goal was to tell the public that "the project will create a great new recreation area called the Yampa-Lodore Playground. But they won't tell the public that Yampa-Lodore is merely a deceptive name for Echo Park Dam which will flood the Dinosaur National Monument."<sup>634</sup> Saylor added, "Membership will be urged on both adults and children, and anybody who coughs up a buck will get a plastic badge patterned after an old-time western marshal's star. The money received will be used to buy public relations."<sup>635</sup> Representative Saylor's editorial warned readers that money and misinformation would be flowing freely during the debate over the project.

The summer 1955 issue included a review of the League's 33rd annual convention and several messages from leaders who urged membership support of conservation campaigns. Readers were told that they had to join in the effort to save an important area.<sup>636</sup> Later in the year, the Ikes reviewed the 84th session of Congress. The evaluation praised the defeat of the Echo Park dam, but warned members to "be prepared again to do battle to preserve Dinosaur National Monument and the National Park system."<sup>637</sup> The November-December coverage gave readers a thorough review of the Upper Colorado River Project in an eight-page story that took "a realistic look at the history and background involved and [suggested] what may be a constructive solution to a complex and controversial issue."<sup>638</sup> The article explained the Colorado River Compact of 1922, which established the division of water to the various states along the river and

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<sup>634</sup> Hon. John P. Saylor, "HI-HO Aqualantes" *Outdoor America*, Mar.-Apr. 1955, 3

<sup>635</sup> Saylor, "HI-HO Aqualantes" 3

<sup>636</sup> "Membership and Related Subjects" *Outdoor America*, May-June 1955, 53.

<sup>637</sup> "What's the Conservation Score After First Session 84<sup>th</sup> Congress," *Outdoor America*, September-October 1955, 13.

<sup>638</sup> "A Realistic Look at The Upper Colorado River Project" *Outdoor America*, November-December 1955, 3. Changed from "suggests" for clarity.

closed with suggested objectives for the river, including dams outside the national park system. That issue also contained an article that detailed the League's role in the Dinosaur controversy, such as local officers taking trips to the monument "to view the effects of the proposed Echo Park Dam."<sup>639</sup> This article was a reproduction of an item that appeared in *The News-Sentinel* in Indiana—which suggested that the League's work on the Dinosaur controversy was making news across America.

The Dinosaur coverage in 1956 began with an exciting update. The League meeting with government officials had ended with the tentative understanding that the Echo Park dam would not be included in legislation for the Colorado River Storage Project. Readers were told that it seems "clear that the passage of an authorization for the Upper Colorado Project in the next session of Congress may be accomplished as a result of the agreement to exclude Echo Park from the project."<sup>640</sup> By March, the legislative update concluded that Senate and House leaders were not including the Dinosaur dams in legislation. The summer issue gave readers a chance to, once again, hear from League leaders after the national conference. The League president, L. H. Dunten, declared that member support and League campaigns had helped save Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>641</sup> The last *Outdoor America* item that addressed the controversy was on the back cover of the issue. The article recognized Representatives Wayne N. Aspinall and John P. Saylor for supporting legislation that would have made Dinosaur a national park. The theory held that upgrading the monument to national park status would make it untouchable, and thus immune to future threats.

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<sup>639</sup> "Izaak Walton League Head Keeps Watchful Eye on Natural Resources," *Outdoor America*, November-December 1955, 20.

<sup>640</sup> "A Look at Conservation Affairs," *Outdoor America*, January-February 1956, 19.

<sup>641</sup> "League Progress Reports," *Outdoor America*, July-August 1956, 3-8.

*Invasion!*

Themes discovered in *Outdoor America*'s coverage of the Dinosaur controversy generally mirrored those identified in other publications of the Council of Conservationists: first, an ethical argument that focused on the system and its value to the people; second, a call for mobilization, and more specifically the importance of the coalition of conservation-minded citizens; and third, the use of war metaphors and battle language in the coverage. However, Izaak Walton League was unique in its frequency and passion, which was largely focused on the ethical breach of a dam inside the national park system. Writers were not afraid to decry the morals of those who supported such a move.

The most common theme discovered in the coverage addressed the ethics of a plan that would "sacrifice a fabulously spectacular national monument."<sup>642</sup> Arguments centered on the importance of the system as a whole, the immorality of commercializing nature, and the wisdom of developing pristine areas without concern for future generations. The narrative around the monument was based on the idea that it was "an example of an important area belonging to all the people in the nation."<sup>643</sup> This ownership was important, and the writers were clear regarding the responsibility of citizens: "The list of state and national parks and wild and wilderness national forest areas which the League has had a hand in establishing, preserving or maintaining is a long line."<sup>644</sup> The language suggested that while citizens owned the land. Members should be proud of the League's efforts to help establish the National Park System and the areas set aside. As members, they should feel a sense of pride and ownership.

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<sup>642</sup> "Echo Park Dam Debated Before Congress," *Outdoor America*, March-April 1954, 8.

<sup>643</sup> "Dinosaur Monument Threat," *Outdoor America*, April-May 1950, 27.

<sup>644</sup> James Munro, "Parks and Wilderness," *Outdoor America*, July-August 1952, 28.

The principle of protecting the land was based on the belief that “such areas should not be sacrificed for the immediate commercial advantage of lumbermen or hotel keepers but should be preserved, sacred and inviolate, for the generations to come.”<sup>645</sup> The value of the land was found in areas “filled with magnificent scenery”<sup>646</sup> and the goal was to “prevent any activity which would detract from the public values contained therein.”<sup>647</sup> The canyons of Dinosaur were described as “irreplaceable”<sup>648</sup> and “spectacular examples of stratification and rock erosion.”<sup>649</sup> The Ikes believed that the wilderness must be recognized for its inherent beauty and worth, and the moral imperative of protecting it hinged on an ability to convince others of the same. The value of the monument was in its “use as recreational, inspirational, and scenic reserves.”<sup>650</sup> But it could not be measured in dollars and cents: it was “intangible.”<sup>651</sup>

Attempting to communicate the worth of wild places without considering financial concerns would be daunting. The League was convinced that “apparently it doesn’t make much difference what the Bureau of Reclamation does, or how contradictory its activities are as long as the money rolls in!”<sup>652</sup> The tone of the *Outdoor America* coverage of the Dinosaur controversy suggested that editors were suspicious of government officials: the Izaak Walton League did not trust the supporters of the dams. They believed that “placating the senators and representatives of the two states, and the

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<sup>645</sup> “The Strength of the Wilderness,” *Outdoor America*, April-May 1950, 5.

<sup>646</sup> Voigt, “Dinosaur—On the Way Out?” 7.

<sup>647</sup> “Resolutions,” *Outdoor America*, April-May 1950, 20.

<sup>648</sup> “Izaak Walton League Head Keeps Watchful Eye on Natural Resources,” Nov.-Dec. 1955, 20.

<sup>649</sup> Voigt, “Dinosaur—On the Way Out?” 7.

<sup>650</sup> Munro, “Parks and Wilderness,” 27.

<sup>651</sup> William Voigt Jr., “Chapman Decision Endangers All National Parks,” *Conservation News*, August 1950, 1.

<sup>652</sup> “Don’t Take It Away”! *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1952, 23.

business community of Vernal, Utah (which would benefit temporarily from the payroll spending of the construction crews), is more important than safeguarding the National Parks system.”<sup>653</sup>

The writers and editors accused dam proponents of waging a “mad rush for irrigation and hydro-electric power.”<sup>654</sup> They believed the supporters would stop at nothing to gain access to a dam site. And writers in *Outdoor America* would go a step further, suggesting “the power dams of the project would be built only as ‘cash registers’ from which the money would be taken to pay for the irrigation projects which could not pay for themselves.”<sup>655</sup> The language showed little respect for the motivations of the pro-dam groups, accusing them of irrationality. The contempt would show, often in creative name calling such as, “forces of exploitation,”<sup>656</sup> “guttled by grabbers of greenbacks.”<sup>657</sup> The alliteration and power of the words made them memorable to readers. This tone was largely unmatched in other publications.

Initially the rhetoric around the morality of the proposed dams described supporters as having been hoodwinked: “The best excuse we can put up in his [Interior Secretary Chapman’s] behalf is that he has been under terrific pressure from the forces of exploitation.”<sup>658</sup> But the benefit of the doubt vanished by the end of William Voigt’s editorial. He declared that building a dam inside a national park would reduce the country “to such a low estate that it must rob its present and future citizens.”<sup>659</sup> To use these areas

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<sup>653</sup> “Showdown Time on Dinosaur,” *Outdoor America*, Jan.-Feb. 1954, 2. Original emphasis.

<sup>654</sup> “Dinosaur National Monument,” *Outdoor America*, April-May 1950, 27.

<sup>655</sup> Saylor, “Hi-Ho Aqualantes,” 19.

<sup>656</sup> Voigt, “Chapman Decision Endangers all National Parks,” 2.

<sup>657</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

<sup>658</sup> Voigt, “Chapman Decision Endangers all National Parks,” 2.

<sup>659</sup> *Ibid*, 2.

for anything other than their purpose would be humiliating, almost offensive. Articles referred to “tub-thumping”<sup>660</sup>—a derogatory term for publicly attracting attention to distract from the issue.<sup>661</sup> Dams were described as “evil” and projects “in defiance of all that is sane and sensible”<sup>662</sup> It was declared that “the upper Colorado river was murdered!” and elected officials who supported the projects were accused of “Contempt of Congress.”<sup>663</sup> Variations of the term “exploitation” were used repeatedly in the Ike’s coverage of the issue. The editors alleged that the dams were an abusive misuse of the land and it was a moral responsibility to save the public lands. The plea went out, “May the Lord help this country if that kind of integrity on the part of the majority ever is lost!”<sup>664</sup> The motives of dam proponents, and even the morals, were suspect. They were likened to criminals, vandals, and murderers.

The accusations did not stop at selfish greed, though. The writers and editors of *Outdoor America* accused the dam enthusiasts of downright lying. The term “shamefaced” was used more than once, and the arguments and tactics of dam supporters were described as “misinformation,”<sup>665</sup> “deceptive,”<sup>666</sup> and “a gigantic scheme.”<sup>667</sup> One 1954 article claimed that there had been

a very effective muzzling of the bureaus, and of the career officials and technical specialists in them. In some cases the muzzling appears to have been done by the

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<sup>660</sup> “Reclamation Official Blasts Conservationists,” 10.

<sup>661</sup> “Tub-thumping” is a common term in conversation regarding public policy; its use can be seen as early as 1929 in *Time* magazine. “Biking and Tub-thumping,” *Time*, April 29, 1929, 27-30.

<sup>662</sup> “Pattern for Murder!” *Outdoor America*, Mar.-Apr. 1952, 22.

<sup>663</sup> “Pattern for Murder!” 22.

<sup>664</sup> “What Will Lawmakers Do?” *Outdoor America*, Jan.-Feb. 1954, 16.

<sup>665</sup> James Penfold, “Dinosaur Battle Looms Again,” *Outdoor America*, Dec. 1954, 7.

<sup>666</sup> Saylor, “Hi-Ho Aqualantes,” 3.

<sup>667</sup> *Ibid*, 19.

top officials; in others it may have been done by the bureau people themselves as a measure of self-defense.<sup>668</sup>

But the fierce rhetoric hit a crescendo when noted conservationist and author Elmer Peterson wrote that “the pertinent facts brought out . . . were ignored in the mad orgy of federal extravagance and ineptitude.”<sup>669</sup> Once again, the morality of supporters was in question. No other members of the Council of Conservationists used such blistering language—name-calling, and bald-faced accusations—as did the Izaak Walton League. And the Ikes combined that rhetoric with a call to action that mobilized their members in support of Dinosaur National Monument.

The second theme that appeared in *Outdoor America* was a call for mobilization. Specifically, editors stressed the importance of the coalition of conservation-minded organizations in the battle against dams. As one editor observed, it “is the fight of every member and friend of the Izaak Walton League and of every man woman and child, who wears the label of ‘conservationist,’ nationwide.”<sup>670</sup> The message to League members was that they had an obligation to help: “Let your voice be heard in their defense, and do it now, please.”<sup>671</sup> In 1955, Edna Murray, director of the Indiana League Chapter, wrote, “It does not matter whether it is Echo Park or Jackson Hole. Whatever the project is and whether you have to fight for it or against it, at least fight.”<sup>672</sup> But more than just a plea for action, readers were given specific directions as to how to act. First, they were told “*You* can do something about this by writing or wiring Secretary of the Interior Oscar L.

<sup>668</sup> “What Is the Right Thing to Do?” *Outdoor America*, December 1954, 6.

<sup>669</sup> “Our Water Problem Goes Back to Land Use,” *Outdoor America*, September-October 1955, 5. Peterson had written two books on nature and preservation: *Forward to the Land* (Norman: University of Oklahoma press, 1942) and *Big Dam Foolishness: The Problem of Modern Flood Control and Water Storage* (New York: Devin-Adair Co., 1954).

<sup>670</sup> “Pattern for Murder,” 9.

<sup>671</sup> Voigt, “Dinosaur—On the Way Out?” 7.

<sup>672</sup> “League Progress Reports,” *Outdoor America* May-June 1950, 53.



Chapman, Washington 25, D. C.”<sup>673</sup> Giving specific direction, and even the address for correspondence, helped readers sense the seriousness of the request; it also encouraged readers to challenge authorities directly and made it simple as well. Then there was the interaction in 1952 when Mr. Percy H. Howe of Akron, Ohio, wrote to share his story:

I have torn out and marked the article, “Pattern for Murder” (March-April issue) and sent it to my Congressman. I have put in an extra mark on the “Contempt of Congress” accusation. Perhaps if all League members would do likewise it would have considerable effect. Only one effort doesn’t count.<sup>674</sup>

No exact mention of “contempt of Congress” appeared in the original article, though there were several references to “the Bureau [acting] in defiance of Congress . . . and in defiance of all that is sane and sensible concerning a conservation program for western America.”<sup>675</sup> Carhart and Howe both argued that the Echo Park dams were a crime—either murder or dereliction of duty—and perpetrators belonged in an asylum. Howe’s deed was praised as “an excellent suggestion” and the editor “urged all Waltonians to go back to their March-April issue and do likewise.”<sup>676</sup> Publishing this kind of reader-driven action gave specific tasks and the motivation of peer pressure as well. But did readers act?

According to items in *Outdoor America*, citizen conservationists had sent countless letters to officials. In fact, it was stated that in reply to the public’s correspondence, bureaucrats were sending “hundreds of form letters to hundreds of persons who had previously protested . . . Echo Park dam.”<sup>677</sup> The form letters were not well received. In a brief note, William Voigt asked,

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<sup>673</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Threat,” 27. Original emphasis.

<sup>674</sup> Howe, “Letters to the Editor,” 31.

<sup>675</sup> “Pattern for Murder!” 8.

<sup>676</sup> Editor’s Note, “Letters to the Editor,” *Outdoor America*, May-June 1952, 31.

<sup>677</sup> “Dinosaur Victory Near?” *Outdoor America*, July-August 1954, 10.

Did you too, get one of those form letters from the office of the Honorable Douglas McKay, Secretary of Interior, blandly ignoring your protest and rehashing all the old stuff the Bureau of Reclamation has been dishing out for the last five years about the “benefits” of the construction?

Did you, too, feel that your intelligence had been insulted?<sup>678</sup>

Voigt expressed outrage, on behalf of all Ikes, that the letters and the will of the people were being ignored. He even suggested that letters sent to President Eisenhower were not reaching the chief executive. He closed by asking, “What are you going to do about it? Are you going to send that form letter right back to the President, telling him what Secretary McKay has done, and telling him how you feel about this kind of treatment?”<sup>679</sup> Members were expect to participate in the campaign, and that those efforts would be recognized. For communication from citizens to be ignored or deliberately misdirected was undemocratic and would not go unchallenged.

Editors made repeated references to the League’s efforts and the resources it was requiring. By December 1954, readers were informed that “conservation battles have been harder and more costly. In the Izaak Walton League of America, for example, it has meant that a greater share of the member’s dues dollar has had to go for national resource defense.”<sup>680</sup> The message was punctuated by a call to “do an ever increasing job of expanding our membership, educating our membership, and through them, enlightening the general public.”<sup>681</sup> The call to educate the public as part of the League’s overall strategy helped ensure that the citizens they were mobilizing would be informed and ready to engage in the Echo Park debate. The items in *Outdoor America* also placed a

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<sup>678</sup> Voigt, “McKay’s Form Letters,” 19.

<sup>679</sup> Ibid, 19.

<sup>680</sup> William Voigt Jr., “What is the Right Thing to Do?” *Outdoor America*, December 1954, 6. Dues varied by chapter, but were \$5.00 in Ohio. *Press Gazette*, January 12, 1954, 12.

<sup>681</sup> “League Progress Reports,” *Outdoor America*, July-August 1956, 4.

clear distinction between individual action and the importance of the coalition of conservation groups that existed: “You have every right to be proud of the part you had in the achievement of these victories, but we must not forget it was the cooperation of all conservation groups working together that brought results.”<sup>682</sup>

One of the most common ways the coalition of environmental groups cooperated was in the number of items that *Outdoor America* reprinted from other Council of Conservationists groups. The first item to reference the Dinosaur fight was a two-page article about the speech Ernest Griffith of the Wilderness Society gave to the League’s 1950 convention in Iowa.<sup>683</sup> Griffith was quoted, “If we stand fast,” he said, “on the belief that there is something we are fighting for which is very precious, generations to come will rise up and thank us for it.”<sup>684</sup> The campaign was an attempt to stand united, protecting for now and the future the places that were not only valuable, but were also irreplaceable as a legacy. One year later, the Ikes would once again make use of the CoC coalition when it included, in full, the American Nature Association’s rebuttal to U.S. Commissioner of Reclamation Michael W. Straus’s diatribe against conservationists.<sup>685</sup> This passionate response called Straus’s speech and his claims “a below-the-belt blow—and you know it, Mike.”<sup>686</sup> Westwood accused the Reclamation Bureau of attempting “to exploit any national park or monument.”<sup>687</sup> Sharing articles and opinion pieces among

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<sup>682</sup> “League Progress Reports,” *Outdoor America*, May-June 1955, 2.

<sup>683</sup> Griffith’s speech was also recounted in the Spring 1950 issue of the Wilderness Society’s magazine, *The Living Wilderness*, 36-37.

<sup>684</sup> “The Strength of The Wilderness,” 5.

<sup>685</sup> Richard W. Westwood, “Let’s Be Fair, Mike!” *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1951, 3. For a more in-depth review of this editorial, see Chapter 5.

<sup>686</sup> Westwood, “Let’s Be Fair, Mike!” *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1951, 3.

<sup>687</sup> *Ibid*, 3.

groups kept members apprised of the Dinosaur battle and demonstrated the strength of the campaign. Additionally, it helped to create common messages across the coalition.

In 1953, League members were given a glimpse into arguments the Sierra Club was using in the battle over Echo Park. The leaders of the Sierra Club, particularly David Brower, had come to prominence over the course of the campaign. A brief item in the spring issue included an excerpt from a Sierra Club article that warned that “unless the public demands defense of these areas ON PRINCIPLE we can lose them all—a sacrifice of long term national value to short term.”<sup>688</sup> An item reprinted from *Nature Magazine* warned that Echo Park had to transcend politics: “If the American people accept the thesis that what happens to our National Parks is ‘a political question’ then our incomparable National Park System is doomed.”<sup>689</sup> Though the battle Opening the pages of *Outdoor America* to the words and articles written by other Council of Conservationist organizations helped create a more collaborative environment, one in which readers could feel they were part of a larger movement.

The importance of that coalition went beyond the reprinted articles of its members; it extended to the efforts and expertise of the group. Readers were reminded that it would take the “efforts of the League, other conservation organizations and individuals to protect Dinosaur National Monument from invasion by the 550 foot Echo Park power dam.”<sup>690</sup> This same article mentioned the American Planning and Civic Association, the Sierra Club, and the National Parks Association—all CoC members—and the work of their leaders. Additionally, several references were made to “organized

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<sup>688</sup> “The Long Term vs. the Short Term,” *Outdoor America*, Mar.-Apr. 1953, 19. Original emphasis.

<sup>689</sup> “A Political Question,” *Outdoor America*, January-February 1955, 9.

<sup>690</sup> “Echo Park Dam Debated Before Congress,” *Outdoor America*, March-April 1954, 8. Original “Let’s Be Fair, Mike,” *Nature Magazine*, October 1951, 425.

conservation forces” in the fight to save Dinosaur.<sup>691</sup> Readers would have seen that they were part of an army of hundreds, even thousands, of members from several different groups across the country, and creating shared ownership in the campaign. And importantly, when the Izaak Walton League declared victory in the Echo Park dam controversy, it was quick to recognize CoC compatriots, creating a unified front.

The mobilization drive was largely focused on the importance of working together with other groups. *Outdoor America* declared that “Echo Park’ has become a rallying cry of conservationists, a slogan, ‘fightin’ words’ from coast to coast.”<sup>692</sup> The campaign had become more than an effort to stop a dam, it had become symbolic of the movement as a whole. Readers were told of the first technical defeat of the dam:

No individual or group can take or claim the whole credit. Members of the Congress were informed and educated on important issues by the people in numerous public spirited and unselfish groups of citizens, and the organizations that did this educating can be happy over the success of their efforts.<sup>693</sup>

The work done by the CoC and its groups had helped to rally the public and was helping to create a nuanced conversation in the conservation movement. In 1955, readers learned that the U.S. House of Representatives had not included the Echo Park dam because “an informal poll of House members showed it could not carry.”<sup>694</sup> In the same issue, an article listed every member of the Council of Conservationists and warned, “it is up to the sportsmen and other lovers of outdoor America to stay on top of this thing and keep working for Natures’ own and best method of handling the nation’s water.”<sup>695</sup> The power

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<sup>691</sup> Voigt, “Chapman Decision Endangers All National Parks,” 2.

<sup>692</sup> “A Realistic Look at The Upper Colorado River Project,” *Outdoor America*, November 1955, 3.

<sup>693</sup> “Year of Victory,” *Outdoor America*, July-August 1954, 3.

<sup>694</sup> “Whats the Conservation Score After First Session 84<sup>th</sup> Congress?” *Outdoor America*, September 1955, 13.

<sup>695</sup> “Second National Watershed Congress,” *Outdoor America*, September 1955, 32.

of the movement was found in its numbers and its message. The fight to save Dinosaur was a personal fight on behalf of posterity.

The influence of the Izaak Walton League as a member of the Council of Conservationists was also made clear to the reader. An article in January 1956 described a CoC meeting with Interior Secretary Douglas McKay and Assistant Secretary of the Interior Wesley A. D'Ewart and the Council's executive committee: J.W. Penfold and Ira Gabrielson of the Izaak Walton League, the Sierra Club's David Brower, the Audubon Society's Carl Gustafson, and Howard Zahniser of the Wilderness Society.<sup>696</sup> The meeting concluded with an announcement that Echo Park would be removed from the project. The decision was "a big step toward protection of Dinosaur National Monument and sound water development in the Upper Colorado River basin."<sup>697</sup> The CoC had defeated the dam, and the Izaak Walton League had played a major role. The Ike's past president, Louie Dunten, said, "Let me impress upon you that conservation battles are won by the weight of public opinion."<sup>698</sup> The people had acted to defend their land, and they had earned a victory in what was portrayed as a war.

The third theme that appeared in *Outdoor America* was the invasion of America, and bellicose language helped drive home the point. War metaphors, in general, were used in the coverage of the proposed dams inside Dinosaur National Monument. Words like "fight," "showdown," "battle," and "raid" were common. Writers told readers that "now that war has flared into the open, it looks like it is up to the organized conservation forces, the citizen army, to protect and defend our 'fragments of beauty' if they are to be

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<sup>696</sup> "A Look at Conservation Affairs," *Outdoor America*, January-February 1956, 19.

<sup>697</sup> "A Look at Conservation Affairs," 19.

<sup>698</sup> "League Progress Reports," *Outdoor America*, July-August 1956, 4.

preserved.”<sup>699</sup> In 1954, the magazine warned that it was “probable that another rousing battle looms to protect the nation’s unique national parks system.”<sup>700</sup> And when the debate over the Colorado River Storage Project was finally over, the Ikes declared that, “If the Echo Park dam is a dead issue, for the time being, conservationists have indeed won a great victory, for the time being, in protecting a great national park unit.”<sup>701</sup> At every turn, the metaphor of violence and war played an important role in the coverage.

Throughout the Dinosaur discussion, the idea of “invasion” was a constant refrain. No fewer than thirteen times, writers used some variation of the word “invade” or “encroach” to describe the idea of a dam inside a national monument or park. This followed popular culture of the same time. A trend in popular film of the 1950s used the “paranoia engendered by Hiroshima and the Cold War” to reflect a fear of alien invasion and atomic-age consequences.<sup>702</sup> To read the coverage of the Echo Park debate in *Outdoor America* is to sense this threat, suggesting that dam supporters were some kind of menace from the outside—a dangerous accusation in the age of McCarthyism. When Secretary Chapman is described as giving “permission to the Bureau to invade Dinosaur National Monument in Utah and Colorado . . . . it is likely this invasion is only the first of many.”<sup>703</sup> In an era dominated by messages that even one’s neighbors could not be

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<sup>699</sup> Voigt, “Chapman Decision Endangers All National Parks,” 2.

<sup>700</sup> “Congress Left Loose Ends,” *Outdoor America*, Sept-Oct. 1954, 3.

<sup>701</sup> “A Realistic Look at the Upper Colorado River Project,” *Outdoor America*, November-December 1955, 10.

<sup>702</sup> Karen A. Romanko. “Don’t Get Caught Without Them,” *Library Journal*, 115, no. 20 (1990), 42-47.

<sup>703</sup> Voigt, “Chapman Decision Endangers All National Parks,” 2.

trusted, Chapman and the dam were both perils comparable to the *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*.<sup>704</sup> The fight to save nation's most treasured places was a patriotic duty.

The coverage of the threats to Dinosaur in *Outdoor America* was substantial in comparison to the other groups of the Council of Conservationists. But it was characterized most notably by passionate and emotional language unmatched by other groups. It was also conspicuous that this group repeatedly used the term "invasion" to describe the dam builders, as though they were a menace from the outside.

The Ikes were not shy about declaring the significance of the moment, and the importance of its members being actively engaged in the fight. National Izaak Walton League President Louis H. Dunten echoed these notions when he said

The history in the Echo Park fight demonstrates that we have tremendous strength and we can win conservation battles when we are upon sure and sound ground. In a letter to your president one congressman admitted that they could not win a battle to destroy valuable resources against our opposition.<sup>705</sup>

The League saw the fight as morally right, historical in nature, and a bellwether moment, not just for Ikes, but for all conservationists.

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<sup>704</sup> *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, directed by Don Siegel, Walter Wanger Pictures, Inc. 1956.

<sup>705</sup> "League Progress Reports," *Outdoor America*, July-August 1956, 4. Verb tense and quotation format edited for clarity of reading.



## CHAPTER 9

### NATIONAL PARKS ASSOCIATION: SEEING IS BELIEVING

The National Parks Association and other organizations have not opposed the Upper Colorado River program . . . . They have objected vigorously to only one aspect of the plans—the inclusion of Echo Park and Split Mountain dams proposed to be constructed inside Dinosaur National Monument.

—Fred M. Packard—*National Parks*

In the summer of 1950, Devereux Butcher packed up with his wife, Mary, and their twelve-year-old son, Russell, for a visit to Dinosaur National Monument on the border between Colorado and Utah. Butcher, a dedicated leader of the National Parks Association, was known for using his vacation time and personal resources to visit the parks. During the Dinosaur trip, “they camped on the beach in Echo Park, looked down from Harper’s Corner, and toured the monument with the superintendent.”<sup>706</sup> On the trip down the Yampa River, they encountered a landscape “so snarled and twisted . . . that the river’s main channel is hardly distinguishable.”<sup>707</sup> After the clan returned with rolls of film and a notebook filled with descriptions of the area, Devereux Butcher “focused his field and editorial efforts for the association on the Dinosaur problem.”<sup>708</sup> He shared his experience with several groups from the Council of Conservationists, and many of his photos were published in American Nature Association’s *Nature*, the Audubon Society’s

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<sup>706</sup> John C. Miles, *Guardians of the Park: A History of the National Parks and Conservation Association* (Washington, D.C.: Taylor & Francis, 1995), 173.

<sup>707</sup> Devereux Butcher, “This Is Dinosaur,” *National Parks*, October-December 1950, 123.

<sup>708</sup> Miles, *Guardians of the Park*, 173.

*Audubon*, and the Wilderness Society's *The Living Wilderness*. Butcher's story was the feature story in the October-December 1950 issue of *National Parks*, the official magazine of the National Parks Association.

The National Parks Association (NPA) was founded in Washington, D.C., in 1919 by a group of progressive intellectuals, two years after the National Park Service was established. The NPA was “an organization devoted to the study and development of a system of U.S. national parks and monuments.”<sup>709</sup> According to Stephen Mather, one of the founders, the national parks and monuments “belong to everyone—now and always.”<sup>710</sup> For decades, the NPA worked tirelessly to help preserve “the museum function made possible only by the parks’ complete conservation.”<sup>711</sup> During the 1950s, several prominent conservationists led the NPA, including Fred M. Packard, Sigurd Olson, and Devereux Butcher. Packard—a biologist and former Navy lieutenant and National Park Service employee—had been recruited by the NPA in 1946 to help run the growing organization. He served as executive secretary and represented the NPA in congressional testimony served as executive secretary.<sup>712</sup> Sigurd Olson had worked with the Izaak Walton League of America, the Wilderness Society, and the National Park Service. An ecologist known for his belief in the spirituality of nature, Olson was NPA president from 1951 to 1959.<sup>713</sup> Devereux Butcher helped complete the NPA leadership team during the Dinosaur controversy. He brought a talent for photography and an uncompromising devotion to his service as both executive director and executive

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<sup>709</sup> Miles, *Guardians of the Park*, 3.

<sup>710</sup> “An American Idea,” *National Parks*, May-June 1991, 5.

<sup>711</sup> “An American Idea,” 5.

<sup>712</sup> Miles, *Guardians of the Park*, 3.

<sup>713</sup> *Ibid.*

secretary.<sup>714</sup> In 1942, under Butcher's leadership, the NPA discontinued its simple newsletter and transitioned to the quarterly magazine *National Parks*.<sup>715</sup>

*National Parks* was "issued quarterly for members of the Association and for others who are interested in the preservation of our national parks and monuments as well as in maintaining national park standards, and in helping to preserve wilderness."<sup>716</sup> The magazine was 8½ by 11 inches and presented "articles of importance and of general interest relating to the national parks and monuments."<sup>717</sup> In the 1940s and '50s the magazine could be found in many schools and libraries. It featured were long narrative pieces, often with multiple photographs that gave readers intimate views of the nation's parks and monuments.<sup>718</sup>

*National Parks* coverage of the Dinosaur controversy was substantial, with more than eighty items dedicated to the issue over the course of seven years. The coverage included editorials written by NPA staff and editors, minutes from board meetings, and official statements on environmental issues. The magazine reprinted letters of support from conservation leaders and direct correspondence with government officials. Major feature stories often spanned five to ten pages and included multiple photographs of the monument. In addition, a regular section called The Parks and Congress gave legislative updates (with some editorializing). The style and format of the content varied, but from 1950 to 1956 the attention was consistent and constant.

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<sup>714</sup> "Devereux Butcher; Environmentalist, Author and Editor," *Los Angeles Times*, May 30, 1991.

<sup>715</sup> Miles, *Guardians of the Park*.

The newsletter was titled *National Parks Bulletin*.

<sup>716</sup> *National Parks*, January-March 1952, cover.

<sup>717</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>718</sup> Miles, *Guardians of the Park*.

The spring 1950 issue included three items dedicated to the Dinosaur question. One brief paragraph informed readers that the Secretary of the Interior, Oscar Chapman, was scheduled to hold a public hearing on the Dinosaur question. They were told that an update would be provided in the next issue.<sup>719</sup> The Parks and Congress update included information about the Dinosaur legislation and a warning that “there are reasons for believing that the project as a whole is ill-advised.”<sup>720</sup> Of the three items related to the proposed Dinosaur dams, the most prominent was a three-page opinion piece by Devereux Butcher. The article contained four of Butcher’s own photographs of the monument and predicted that the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) would leave the Colorado River “within a few decades, inundated by reservoirs.”<sup>721</sup>

The fall issue described the various summer activities of the National Parks Association. It also presented notes from the president, Sigurd Olson, and the field secretary, Fred M. Packard, about their congressional testimony. A report on the annual board meeting reprinted a resolution that called for the projects to be “abandoned in favor of alternative sites.”<sup>722</sup> A letter written by Packard, to President Eisenhower’s Water Resources Policy Commission, declared that proposed water management projects, including Echo Park and Split Mountain dams, had disregarded “the damage that may result to soil, forests, wildlife, national parks and monuments and other resources that in many cases may have higher value to the nation than the benefits.”<sup>723</sup> The letter laid out the association’s belief that water management projects should only be considered viable

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<sup>719</sup> “Dinosaur Hearing,” *National Parks*, April-June 1950, 60.

<sup>720</sup> The Parks and Congress, *National Parks*, April-June 1950, 79.

<sup>721</sup> Devereux Butcher, “Stop the Dinosaur Power Grab,” *National Parks*, April-June 1950, 62.

<sup>722</sup> “Annual Board Meeting – 1950,” *National Parks*, July-September 1950, 115.

<sup>723</sup> “Water Resources Policy,” *National Parks*, July-September 1950, 96.

if they were outside preservation areas, especially national parks and monuments. The issue also included an editorial warning of “the destructive effect of the dams and reservoirs upon the monument’s primeval landscape.”<sup>724</sup> Writers called for further review of the sites and the preservation of “our great natural reservations.”<sup>725</sup>

Four relevant articles were published in the winter 1950 issue of *National Parks*. One article, titled, “At the Nature Preservation Battlefronts,” summarized the activities of seven conservation organizations. Four of those were fellow members of the Council of Conservationists—National Audubon Society, the Wilderness Society, the American Nature Association, and the Izaak Walton League.<sup>726</sup> There was also a note in The Parks and Congress regarding the controversy and the NPA’s opposition to the dams.<sup>727</sup> The feature story of this issue was an eighteen-page article, with texts and photographs by Devereux Butcher, titled “This is Dinosaur.”<sup>728</sup> The pictures and narrative gave readers a better understanding of the “glorious sense of solitude” they would find in the monument.<sup>729</sup> A detailed map of the monument even showed the rivers of Dinosaur and dark areas that showed “reservoirs filling the spectacular canyons.”<sup>730</sup>

The spring 1951 issue of *National Parks* included a letter of support—inspired by Butcher’s feature—from conservationist L. S. McCandless. He declared that “in my own small way, I have been fighting the dams ever since they were first mentioned.”<sup>731</sup> The

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<sup>724</sup> “Editorial: Dinosaur Monument and Mount San Jacinto,” *National Parks*, July-September 1950, 110.

<sup>725</sup> “Editorial: Dinosaur Monument,” 111.

<sup>726</sup> “At the Nature Preservation Battlefronts,” *National Parks*, October-December 1950, 151-153.

<sup>727</sup> “The Parks and Congress,” *National Parks*, October-December 1950.

<sup>728</sup> Butcher, “This Is Dinosaur,” 123-136, 154-155.

<sup>729</sup> *Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>730</sup> *Ibid.*, 123.

<sup>731</sup> L.S. McCandless, “Opposes Dinosaur Dams,” *National Park*, January-March 1951, 9.

magazine also featured an opinion piece regarding the controversial resignation of Newton Drury as director of the National Parks Service. Drury had led the NPS for nearly a decade, but the Dinosaur debate had created strife inside the Department of Interior. When Drury was asked to take a demotion as a result of the tension, he opted to resign instead. Waldo Gifford Leland, who had helped guide the NPS during the Franklin Delano Roosevelt administration, wrote that “the termination of Mr. Drury’s ten years of service is not a pleasant story, and nature conservationists throughout the country have every reason to be perplexed and indignant and anxious.”<sup>732</sup> Leland lamented “the decision of Secretary Chapman to recommend the construction of the dams, over the opposition of Mr. Drury,” and concluded that Echo Park was the reason for Drury’s dismissal.<sup>733</sup>

Two other items published in 1951 addressed the Dinosaur question. In late summer, The Parks and Congress column included commentary on the President’s Water Resources Policy Commission official report. The editor declared that “a weaker defense of the national park system could hardly have been phrased.”<sup>734</sup> The final issue of 1951 offered readers an abridged version of General Ulysses S. Grant III’s analysis and recommendation related to the Colorado River Storage Project.<sup>735</sup> Grant argued that the Echo Park dam proposal had not been adequately researched and he recommended that alternative sites outside the national park areas be investigated. It was an abbreviated

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McCandles was a veterinarian and active in several conservation groups. Colorado Agricultural Research Foundation, “Prospectus of Purposes, Aims, and Organizations,” (year unknown). *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 1919.

<sup>732</sup> Waldo Gifford Leland, “Newton Bishop Drury,” *National Parks*, April-June 1951, 42.

<sup>733</sup> Leland, “Newton Bishop Drury,” 64.

<sup>734</sup> The Parks and Congress, *National Parks*, July-September 1951, 111.

<sup>735</sup> “Alternative Sites for Dinosaur Dams,” *National Parks*, October-December 1951, 131. The original arguments and recommendations are presented in *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1951. Analysis of the original can be found in Chapter 5.

version of an original article from *Planning and Civic Comment*, the official publication of the American Planning and Civic Association.

Several major advancements on the controversy took place throughout 1952. For example, legislation was introduced in the U.S. House, the Senate authorized the CRSP, and the Sierra Club sponsored a river trip through Dinosaur. Coverage in *National Parks* began with a cover story titled, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument.”<sup>736</sup> Arthur Carhart, a noted scholar in the area of water and resource management, argued that the monument was invaluable. Dinosaur was being sold out by reclamation officials. The article featured Devereux Butcher’s photographs of the monument, including a view from the base of Steamboat Rock and a two-page, panoramic photo of the monument’s canyons. Butcher also shot the cover photo of the issue: a view of Steamboat Rock from the Harper’s Corner overlook.<sup>737</sup> The editor’s note at the beginning of the article directed readers to other articles on the controversy that had been published in *National Parks* and fellow CoC groups, the Wilderness Society’s *The Living Wilderness*. Carhart pointed out that “members of the National Park Service, well qualified to judge park values, have declared this area is of high rank in the park system.”<sup>738</sup>

The spring 1952 issue of *National Parks* published reprints of correspondence regarding Dinosaur. These letters detailed the arguments for and against Echo Park and explained Interior Secretary Chapman’s rationale for supporting the project. The Parks and Congress section of the issue was dedicated to the “Status of the Dinosaur Dams”

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<sup>736</sup> Arthur H. Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” *National Parks*, January-March 1952, 19-30.

<sup>737</sup> The overlook provided a view of the 800-foot tall rock formation from an elevation of 2,500 feet. Some version of the image appeared in almost every publication of the groups in the Council of Conservationists.

<sup>738</sup> Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” 23.

and detailed the progress of the bills and the probability of passage in the legislative houses of Congress.<sup>739</sup>

The late summer installment of *National Parks* included a report on the 1952 annual board meeting. The resolutions adopted at the meeting called for alternative sites to the Echo Park.<sup>740</sup> Also in the issue was a guest editorial from noted editorial cartoonist and conservationist J. N. Darling.<sup>741</sup> He declared that, when it came to conservation battles, “the best we are able to achieve is a costly stalemate against the hordes of knuckleheads who are bent on drive us, and the principles we stand for, into the sea.”<sup>742</sup> Darling’s opinion was highly valuable in conservation circles—he had helped found the National Wilderness Federation and was instrumental in establishing the Federal Duck Stamp Act—and it would be the last word on the Dinosaur controversy in the magazine in 1952.

During 1953, *National Parks* gave readers an unusual glimpse into Dinosaur’s namesake and one of its most important features. The article, “Patsy of Dinosaur Monument,” described in detail the *Apatasaurus louisei* skeleton discovered just outside Vernal, Utah, in 1909.<sup>743</sup> Patsy was the first of many fossils that had been found in the quarry inside what would come to be Dinosaur National Monument. The article did not mention the proposed dams specifically, but printing a detailed account of the “greatest

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<sup>739</sup> The Parks and Congress, *National Parks*, April-June 1952, 93.

<sup>740</sup> “Annual Board Meeting – 1952,” *National Parks*, July-September 1952, 135-139.

<sup>741</sup> U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, J.N. “Ding” Darling, <http://www.fws.gov/dingdarling/about/dingdarling.html>, (accessed November 23, 2013). Though he had no formal education in the natural sciences, Darling was named Director of the U.S. Biological Survey and helped establish the Federal Duck Stamp Program.

<sup>742</sup> J.N. Darling, “The Nature Protection Plight,” *National Parks*, July-September 1952, 99.

<sup>743</sup> Arthur Sterry Coggeshall, “Patsy of Dinosaur Monument,” *National Parks*, April-June 1953, 58-61, 95.



dinosaur quarry in the world” in the magazine during the controversy helped establish the scientific value of the relatively unknown monument.<sup>744</sup> The spring issue also listed the various pieces of pending legislation related to the monument, including a proposal “to establish the Green River Canyons National Park, in Colorado and Utah, from a portion of the Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>745</sup>

The proposed Green River Canyons National Park was highlighted in the late summer issue. This was a plan to establish a national park that would include the entirety of Dinosaur National Monument and much of its surrounding areas. It was believed that “there are few national monuments in our land that have the splendor of Dinosaur” and designating it as a national park would protect it against present and future threats.<sup>746</sup> The plan was addressed further in The Parks and Congress section, and was connected to proposed legislation that prohibited water projects inside any national park or monument.<sup>747</sup> The coverage in 1953 ended with a summary of the Eisenhower administration’s environmental policy. In an article, Secretary of Interior Douglas McKay admitted that

time marches on; the nation grows’ conditions change; we must be constantly on the alert, analyze our situation, and look to the future. There, I cannot say, nor would you want me to say, that there will never be any change in any of the areas of the national park system.<sup>748</sup>

And once again, the legislative action related to Dinosaur was reported in the Parks and Congress section.

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<sup>744</sup> Coggeshall, “Patsy of Dinosaur Monument,” 60.

<sup>745</sup> The Parks and Congress, *National Parks*, April-June 1953, 89-90.

<sup>746</sup> James C. Gifford, “Exploring the Proposed Green River Canyons National Park,” *National Parks*, July-September 1953, 117.

<sup>747</sup> The Parks and Congress, *National Parks*, October-December, 185-186.

<sup>748</sup> Douglas McKay, “The Present Administration’s Policy,” *National Parks*, October-December 1953, 149.

Developments on the CRSP and Echo Park dams occurred at breakneck speed in 1954. President Eisenhower announced public support for the Colorado River Storage Plan, there were hearings in the House and Senate, and dam proponents began a publicity blitz. It was a busy year in *National Parks* as well, with twenty items dedicated to the proposed Echo Park dam. In January, an article featured a full-page photo of Echo Park captioned “All but the top of the 800-foot high Steamboat Rock in Echo Park will be submerged if Echo Park dam is built.”<sup>749</sup> Executive Secretary Fred M. Packard warned that “It is not the inundation alone that would cause this damage, but the inevitable havoc caused by such things as construction machinery and power facilities.”<sup>750</sup> The winter issue included a copy of a letter sent from Packard to President Eisenhower referencing the “vigorous national protest against retention of this dam in the project.”<sup>751</sup> Readers were also alerted that several informational items, including the film *This Is Dinosaur* and “reprints of articles on Dinosaur National Monument,” were available for private use.<sup>752</sup> Finally, the issue included an article that encouraged readers to participate in the Sierra Club summer river trips to Dinosaur National Monument “to demonstrate to local communities the recreational values of the monument.”<sup>753</sup> The trips would play an important part in the campaign to protect Dinosaur.

The spring issue was notable for its extensive coverage of the Echo Park controversy. The magazine led off with President Sigurd Olson’s impassioned defense of

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<sup>749</sup> Fred M. Packard, “Dinosaur Dams Again,” *National Parks*, January-March 1954, 2.

<sup>750</sup> Packard, “Dinosaur Dams Again,” 3.

<sup>751</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>752</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Film Available,” *National Parks*, January-March 1954, 22. There was a rental charge for the film, but article reprints could be requested free of charge.

<sup>753</sup> C. Edward Graves, “News from Our Western Office,” *National Parks*, January-March 1954, 27.

the national parks: “Americans cherish and enjoy these last remnants of our continent’s primeval grandeur. As proof, over a quarter of our population, 46,000,000 people, saw them in 1953.”<sup>754</sup> He called, too, for more cooperation between government agencies to protect the parks. Next, readers were directed to an issue of *National Geographic Magazine*, which included an article by Jack Breed that described a boat trip down the Yampa and Green rivers.<sup>755</sup> Breed’s article featured numerous photographs, including a before-and-after image of Echo Park as it was in 1954 and as it would be, submerged under a reservoir, if the dams were built. The NPA distributed copies of that *National Geographic* issue to the lawmakers on the House committee with jurisdiction over the dam projects. Next in the spring issue came excerpts from a speech Ira Gabrielson gave at the North American Wildlife Conference. Gabrielson, who was President of the Wildlife Management Institute and had represented the Izaak Walton League in congressional hearings earlier in 1954, delivered a stinging rebuke of the Eisenhower administration’s conservation policy, or lack thereof, claiming that “little interest had been shown by the two departments (Interior and Agriculture) responsible for our conservation estate in protecting the gains made in the past.”<sup>756</sup> The issue also included a report from C.

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<sup>754</sup> Sigurd F. Olson, “The Challenge of Our National Parks,” *National Parks*, April-June 1954, 51.

<sup>755</sup> “Dinosaur and the National Geographic,” *National Parks*, April-June 1954, 61. In this sprawling twenty-five-page article, Breed described “75 miles of white water twisting and tumbling through some of the West’s most spectacular gorges, the bright-hued cliffs and caverns of Dinosaur National Monument.” Jack Breed, “Shooting Rapids in Dinosaur Country,” *National Geographic Magazine*, March 1954, 363.

<sup>756</sup> “Gabrielson Sounds Alarm at Wildlife Conference,” *National Parks*, April-June 1954, 62. Original insterion.

Edward Graves, the NPA western field representative, and an update on legislative progress and the hearing on the dams.<sup>757</sup>

The highlight of the spring 1954 issue, however, was a nine-page feature story by Stephen J. Bradley that described his river trip through Dinosaur.<sup>758</sup> It was an adaptation of Bradley's congressional testimony, which had included a stirring account of his adventures on the river. Several photographs accompanied the article, including the (by now) familiar view of Echo Park from Harper's Corner, except this version of the image had a twist: it had been painstakingly manipulated to show the canyons inundated with water. The iconic Steamboat Rock was largely obscured by gray water.<sup>759</sup> Readers now had a clearer idea of what was really at stake in the debate.

The National Parks Association held its annual meeting in May 1954. Resolutions declared "a number of the crisis spots in the national park and monument system, including Echo Park dam proposed to be built in Dinosaur National Monument."<sup>760</sup> Fred Packard published another of his opinion pieces, this time asking, "Is This Good Government?"<sup>761</sup> The NPA's executive secretary warned that if the CRSP were approved, "we shall not be able to repair the damage the great misplaced dams have done—and we shall still be paying for them."<sup>762</sup> In one of the most entertaining items to appear in *National Parks*, a brief note shared a story of someone calling the *Denver Post* to ask for

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<sup>757</sup> C. Edward Graves, "News from Our Western Office," *National Parks*, April-June 1954, 77. The Parks and Congress, *National Parks*, April-June 1954, 93.

<sup>758</sup> Stephen J. Bradley, "We Explored Dinosaur," *National Parks*, April-June 1954, 69-76, 85.

<sup>759</sup> Devereux Butcher, Dinosaur National Monument, ca. 1954.

<sup>760</sup> "Annual Board Meeting – 1954," *National Parks*, July-September 1954, 126.

<sup>761</sup> *National Parks*, July-September 1954, 101.

<sup>762</sup> Fred M. Packard, "Is This Good Government?" *National Parks*, July-September 1954, 130.

directions to “Dinah Shore’s Monument.”<sup>763</sup> Referencing the popular television and radio star who sang “See the U.S.A. in Your Chevrolet” was a moment of levity in the midst of the serious controversy.<sup>764</sup>

The year ended with the National Parks Association recognizing Pennsylvania Representative John P. Saylor’s “stalwart defense of Dinosaur National Monument from the proposed Echo Park dam, and of his vigorous effort to ensure adequate appropriations for the National Park Service.”<sup>765</sup> The National Parks Association Award was meant to honor true friends of conservation and readers were invited to attend the October 14 luncheon in Johnstown. The magazine closed out 1954 with a detailed review of the legislative action of the year, and specifically “the second round in the Echo Park dam controversy.”<sup>766</sup> Readers were reminded that the issue would have to be carefully monitored in 1955.

As it turned out, little official action on the Colorado River Storage Project occurred during 1955. However, *National Parks* featured considerable coverage of the proposed dams and the national park system. The spring issue included a guest editorial about the value of the national parks and describing the exhaustive effort “to keep these areas of scenic grandeur intact for our everlasting benefit and enjoyment.”<sup>767</sup> The piece focused on the value of the parks and the importance of protecting this “remarkable

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<sup>763</sup> “Where Is Dinah’s Monument?” *National Parks*, July-September 1954, 140.

<sup>764</sup> Stephen Holden, “Dinah Shore, Homey Singer and Star of TV, Dies at 76,” *New York Times*, February 25, 1994.

<sup>765</sup> “Representative John P. Saylor Honored,” *National Parks*, October-December 1954, 169.

<sup>766</sup> “Representative John P. Saylor Honored,” 169.

<sup>767</sup> Robert E. LaFontaine, “Guard This Heritage,” *National Parks*, January-March 1955, 3.

heritage.”<sup>768</sup> Western Representative C. Edward Graves expressed a “desire to see intermountain states’ water problems solved without impairing the scenery of our national park system.”<sup>769</sup> Another article described a recent hearing before the Colorado Water Conservancy Board as the “Third Battle of Dinosaur.”<sup>770</sup> Readers were assured that “conservationists represent the public interest in the preservation of these areas.”<sup>771</sup> And finally, readers were told that “proponents of Echo Park dam have stated that the most effective weapons the national park defenders have used to block the dam’s authorization were the motion pictures of Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>772</sup> They were encouraged to rent one of the films—*This Is Dinosaur* or *River Wilderness Trail*—and show it to their friends.

The spring installment of 1954 featured coverage of the Senate hearings regarding Dinosaur. A brief story informed readers that the hearings had concluded and promised them that the next issue would include an update on the vote. The Dinosaur fight was mentioned in a story about Rainbow Bridge in southeastern Utah and the threat to its existence by Glen Canyon dam—Echo Park was important but it should not mean other areas would be ignored.<sup>773</sup>

The summer magazine opened with the exclamation, “Echo Park Dam? Not By a Damsite!”<sup>774</sup> It was a passionate editorial about the five-year fight to protect Dinosaur

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<sup>768</sup> LaFontaine, “Guard This Heritage,” 4.

<sup>769</sup> “C. Edward Graves, “News from Our Western Office,” *National Parks*, January-March 1955, 7.

<sup>770</sup> “Third Battle of Dinosaur,” *National Parks*, January-March 1955, 21.

<sup>771</sup> “Third Battle of Dinosaur,” 21-22.

<sup>772</sup> “Dinosaur Monument Films,” *National Parks*, January-March 1955, 22.

<sup>773</sup> William R. Halliday, “Rainbow Bridge in Danger,” *National Parks*, April-June 1955, 70, 89, 95.

<sup>774</sup> Fred M. Packard, “Echo Park Dam? Not By a Damsite!” *National Parks*, July-September 1955, 99.

National Monument which had “aroused the voice of the American people as has no other issue since the National Park Service was founded, in 1916.”<sup>775</sup> The editorial encouraged readers to contact government officials, more than once if necessary, in defense of the monument. The issue also included two items regarding recent legislative action on the dams.<sup>776</sup> First, an editorial by Fred M. Packard noted that “since the editorial was written, there have been some new developments in committee.”<sup>777</sup> Second, an editor’s note described the Senate and House action in greater detail.<sup>778</sup> And, finally, the book review section gave a glowing review to Wallace Stegner’s, *This Is Dinosaur: Echo Park Country and Its Magic Rivers*. The book was designed to “show, not by argument, but by words and pictures, what the American people will lose if they and their Congress fail to prevent invasion of the area by two huge dams.”<sup>779</sup>

By the end of 1955, the conversation had shifted to preserving Glen Canyon and Rainbow Bridge. The previous calls for alternatives to the two Dinosaur dams ended with a bargain. Conservationists agreed not to fight the proposed Glen Canyon dam after engineers guaranteed that Glen Canyon’s Rainbow National Monument would not be damaged by the reservoir the dam would create. In October 1955, the Council of Conservationists promised not to fight the Glen Canyon project.<sup>780</sup> The October-

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<sup>775</sup> Packard, “Echo Park Dam? Not By a Damsite!” 99.

<sup>776</sup> One interesting note in the issue was a request by W. R. Halliday to have his authorship removed from the Rainbow Bridge article in the previous issue. No specific reason was given, but the writers expressed gratitude for “his help in bringing a serious national monument threat to the attention of our members.” “Disclaims authorship,” *National Parks*, July-September 1955, 132.

<sup>777</sup> Packard, “Echo Park Dam? Not By a Damsite!” 122.

<sup>778</sup> “Latest Developments on Dinosaur,” *National Parks*, July-September 1955, 143.

<sup>779</sup> “The Editor’s Bookshelf,” *National Parks*, July-September 1955, 137.

<sup>780</sup> National Park Service, Rainbow Bridge Administrative History, “Chapter 6: Issues and Conflicts II: Rainbow Bridge National Monument and the Colorado River Storage Project, 1848-1974,”

December issue of *National Parks* contained two articles about Glen Canyon, both mentioning the bargain environmentalists had struck, and its beauty and value to the national park system. This issue shared with readers the good news that Echo Park dam had been removed from the bill authorizing the Colorado River Storage Project. But they were assured that the National Parks Association would keep a watchful eye on the legislation to ensure that Dinosaur remained guarded.<sup>781</sup>

The coverage in 1956 began with an announcement that the CRSP bill had passed and Echo Park was safe. Issues published during the rest of the year were dedicated to the larger questions regarding national park policy and the goals of the National Parks Association and other conservationists. Articles ranged from honoring Sierra Club Executive Director David Brower for his work, to the NPA laying out its six objectives, including promoting national parks to the public. The most important article, however, was the six-page item on the characteristics of a national monument and a national park.<sup>782</sup> In short, national parks were described as “spacious land and water areas essentially in their primeval condition and in quality and beauty so outstandingly superior to average examples.”<sup>783</sup>

As a member of the Council of Conservationists, the National Parks Association played an active role informing its members of the threat to Dinosaur National Monument from the proposed Echo Park and Split Mountain dams. Through its

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[http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online\\_books/rabr/adhi/adhi6a.htm](http://www.nps.gov/history/history/online_books/rabr/adhi/adhi6a.htm), (accessed November 27, 2013).

<sup>781</sup> “Echo Park Dam Shelved by Congress,” *National Parks*, October-December 1955, 151.

<sup>782</sup> Devereux Butcher, “What Is the Difference Between National Parks and National Monuments?” *National Parks*, July-September 1956, 98-104.

<sup>783</sup> Butcher, “What Is the Difference Between National Parks and National Monuments?” 99.



publication, *National Parks*, the Association gave readers detail and depth regarding the controversy.

### *A Parks Principle*

Three major themes were discovered during close readings of *National Parks* and its coverage of Echo Park and Dinosaur National Monument: the importance and inherent value of the national park system, the importance of a public defense against invasion of Dinosaur National Monument, and the strength of the coalition of environmental groups and their members. Similar to other Council of Conservationists groups, the arguments about the importance of the national park system were infused with language that concentrated on the beauty and inspiration found in nature, and often mentioned the hallowed history and founding principles of the system. As with the American Nature Association and the Izaak Walton League, the idea of invasion was prominent; yet, in *National Parks*, this theme included the need for an informed general public as the first line of defense. Once again, the themes would be comparable to those in other publications, yet the patterns were unique.

The first theme identified was the inherent value of the national park system. Given the history and mission of the National Parks Association (and the name), this was a natural topic. It was a “commitment made to all of the American people which guaranteed to them the protection of our outstanding scenic assets: the Organic Act of 1916, conceived three quarters of a century ago, and honored by every administration since.”<sup>784</sup> These areas were a “preservation of the finest national park system in the world.” The national park idea was uniquely American and its areas had to be protected

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<sup>784</sup> Graves, “News from Our Western Office,” 85.

as originally intended. For the leaders of the NPA, the monuments were to be preserved in their primeval state and

any proposal that would violate that protection and subject a national park or monument to economic exploitation and alteration of natural conditions, other than the provision of services necessary for the accommodation and safety of the people visiting the area, is in conflict with the intent of Congress that led to its reservation, and contrary to law.<sup>785</sup>

The value of the parks was in the identity they created for Americans; it was anathema to harm that for financial gain. In addition to the founding principles of the National Park System, the language of violation and exploitation gave an impression of nature and preserved areas as pure and others who sought to use that land for a less-than-noble purpose. There were also repeated references to the legislative intent of Congress when establishing the system: “It is a violation of the expressed intent of Congress that major engineering works should be authorized within the national park system.”<sup>786</sup>

For park supporters, the fear was that the dams would create, one at a time, weaknesses in the program. Beyond that, there were dangers yet unseen. The rhetoric continued with use of terms “unspoiled” and “unimpaired.” Readers were told that “in 1916, when the National Park Service was established, the idea that the parks and monuments were to be kept unimpaired was stated in unmistakable terms.”<sup>787</sup> To be unimpaired was to be left perfect and functional—if parks and monuments were altered they would cease to operate as intended. The concept of national parks and the legislation that set them aside created an absolute imperative that they were to be maintained in original condition.

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<sup>785</sup> “Water Resources Policy,” *National Parks*, July-September 1950, 97.

<sup>786</sup> Fred M. Packard, “In Defense of Dinosaur,” *National Parks*, January-March 1954, 5.

<sup>787</sup> Douglas McKay, “The Present Administration’s Policy,” *National Parks*, October-December 1953, 148-149.

References to posterity frequently appeared alongside the idea of leaving the monument unimpaired. Writers reminded readers that Americans had been “blessed with a remarkable heritage—the system of national parks and monuments. Men of vision have worked hard to establish it, and it is our duty to see that it remains unimpaired for future generations of Americans.”<sup>788</sup> These parks were the result of wisdom and forethought and protecting them was a promise “for the enjoyment of future generations.”<sup>789</sup> According to conservationist Stephen T. Mather,

the great primary principle that the national parks must be forever maintained in absolutely unimpaired form for present generations and posterity has been established by Congress, and until Congress, having the ultimate decision, by legislative mandate annuls or changes this principle, it must be faithfully, unequivocally and unalterably adhered to.<sup>790</sup>

Mather’s language makes clear the Association’s belief that the legislative mandate was supreme and to be followed without alteration as a responsibility to the future. He was also suggesting that changes to the areas should not even be a conversation. It was non-negotiable.

Another term commonly used expressed the “value” of the monuments and the system overall. With development projects, the land is often described as lying dormant waiting for a project to utilize the land’s full potential. Conservationists also believed that the problem with measuring the value of a national monument is that many people, especially those involved in development projects, failed to consider the intangible values: they “considered them of secondary or minor importance.”<sup>791</sup> The writers warned of “a danger of underestimating the value of this area as a national park unit, and, thus

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<sup>788</sup> LaFontaine, “Guard this Heritage,” 4.

<sup>789</sup> Olson, “The Challenge of Our National Parks,” 85.

<sup>790</sup> Stephen T. Mather, *National Parks*, July-September 1951, inside cover.

<sup>791</sup> “The Parks and Congress: 82nd Congress to July 1, 1951,” *National Parks*, July-September 1951, 111.

glossing over the sacrifice.”<sup>792</sup> Conservationists believed that “beauty is one of our natural resources just as surely as water or power.”<sup>793</sup>

For supporters of the national park system, the importance of the areas was in “the use of all our people the outstanding scenic, recreational, scientific and related values.”<sup>794</sup> Those uses were rarely quantifiable, but not without consideration. The monument contained “latent uses which augment demands for the preservation of the dominant canyon features, and add up to Dinosaur being a potential park of foremost rank.”<sup>795</sup> With a little support from the National Park Service and Congressional appropriation, Dinosaur would “provide a never-ending source of business to the neighboring communities.”<sup>796</sup> Writers were not unrealistic, and did not begrudge the people of Utah and Colorado their desire for new commercial ventures. They disagreed with the specific ventures, though. The idea of building dams inside the national parks to create recreational opportunities was described as “amusement-park thinking.”<sup>797</sup> According to articles in *National Parks*, the dams would be “speculative, destructive and likely to do ultimate harm rather than good to the community itself.”<sup>798</sup> To turn areas of beauty and solitude into something akin to Coney Island was not only a mistake, but it would be a crime against nature itself.

One of the common complaints about the proposed dams was that they were threatening not just any monument, but one that “members of the National Park Service, well qualified to judge park values[,] had declared this area of high rank in the park

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<sup>792</sup> Bradley, “We Explored Dinosaur,” 73.

<sup>793</sup> William L. Thompson, “Glen Canyon, the Sublime,” *National Parks*, October-December 1955, 150.

<sup>794</sup> Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” 29.

<sup>795</sup> Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” 26.

<sup>796</sup> Butcher, “This Is Dinosaur,” 136.

<sup>797</sup> Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” 21.

<sup>798</sup> Ulysses S. Grant III, “Alternative Sites for Dinosaur Dams,” *National Parks*, July-September 1951, 133.

system.”<sup>799</sup> The area’s incomparable beauty was described as “without doubt, at the very apex”<sup>800</sup> of the national park system. The value of Dinosaur was not measured solely against other areas, it was measured in comparison to other areas of the National Park System. And it was considered royalty—practically immeasurable. Arthur Carhart, another conservationist, believed the canyons of the monument were “perhaps the only ones comparable in majesty and color.”<sup>801</sup> Much of the rhetoric regarding the areas of the national parks evoked images of royalty and honor. The conclusion was that

to deliver this top-ranking potential future national park to the intrusion of dams, reservoirs, and power facilities would, in my estimate, degrade the area to the most lowly kind of recreation spot. If this major park unit is dumped into the reservoirs, it will have to be eliminated from the national park system.<sup>802</sup>

To make the area artificial would make it common, reducing it to a lowly state.

Areas were key to the “physical, mental and spiritual health of the people of the United States.”<sup>803</sup> The language used to describe the value of Dinosaur National Monument and the other areas of the National Park System was often spiritual, and almost religious. Writers described the ability of nature to stir visitors: “Each park will be like an oasis, refreshing those who seek inspiration from it.”<sup>804</sup> The use of religious rhetoric helped instill a sense of holy importance to the areas and the campaign to keep them safe. The language was more powerful than that, even, often calling the parks and monuments “inviolable nature sanctuaries to preserve permanently.”<sup>805</sup> Minimal changes to the areas were only acceptable if they added to “the right of all men to enjoy

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<sup>799</sup> Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” 23. Changed “have” to “had” for clarity.

<sup>800</sup> *Ibid*, 26.

<sup>801</sup> Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” 25-26.

<sup>802</sup> *Ibid*, 29.

<sup>803</sup> “Water Resources Policy,” *National Parks*, July-September 1950, 98.

<sup>804</sup> Lafontaine, “Guard this Heritage,” 4.

<sup>805</sup> “The National Parks and You,” *National Parks*, October-December 1956, 198.

sanctuaries of undisturbed primitive grandeur.”<sup>806</sup> Writers described the parks and monuments as a place of safety and escape from the modern world. These were places of worship. If dams were built, Dinosaur’s canyons would be a “sunken cathedral.”<sup>807</sup>

Nature was not only a place to experience religious enlightenment, though. It was also somewhere to see nature’s finest works of art. Sigurd Olson compared the parks to galleries that held:

paintings on a continental scale, museums that cannot be approached by anything conceived by man, majestic symphonies that no one can ever record. These are our greatest masterpieces of all. They are capable of stifling grander emotions, and contributing more to national character and happiness than anything we have been able to save of the past.<sup>808</sup>

The cost of destroying the areas would be immeasurable—it would be felt in the souls of the American people. But the “glorious sense of solitude ... the peace and beauty and quiet of the place may some day soon be shattered by exploding dynamite and the roar of machines.”<sup>809</sup> The impact of construction was “marring of landscapes.”<sup>810</sup> Further, the harm done to the monument was called “disruption, damage and degradation.”<sup>811</sup> To degrade the area would be to lower it or disgrace it, much like a sin does to a soul. For conservationists, it was humiliating to the land itself—a literal crime against nature. And it was argued that Americans “can never afford to sacrifice our spiritual heritage to the drive for power.”<sup>812</sup>

The second theme of the coverage in *National Parks* was focused on the importance of public defense against the invasion of Dinosaur National Monument. The

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<sup>806</sup> E. M. Richardson, *National Parks*, October-December 1954, 156.

<sup>807</sup> Bradley, “We Explored Dinosaur,” 76.

<sup>808</sup> Olson, “The Challenge of Our National Parks,” 52.

<sup>809</sup> Butcher, “This Is Dinosaur,” 127.

<sup>810</sup> “The National Parks and You,” *National Parks*, October-December 1956, 198.

<sup>811</sup> Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” 25.

<sup>812</sup> Richardson, 156.

word “integrity” was used no less than eight times over the course of the debate, including a warning that the dams were an “attack on the integrity of the national park system, and if successful would establish precedents fraught with grave danger to its continued existence.”<sup>813</sup> As with some other groups in the Council of Conservationists, the National Parks Association used the language of war. The dams were an “invasion of the national park and monument system.”<sup>814</sup> Writers frequently used the word invasion and similar terms. One article included the declaration that “if there is to be any encroachment upon the parks, it must be proven unmistakable that it will produce for the nation values that outweigh greatly those which are to be changed or destroyed.”<sup>815</sup> And readers were warned that outside forces were gathering “for the invasion of such areas as Dinosaur National Monument and Glacier and Olympic national parks.”<sup>816</sup> Those outside forces were not as “outside” as some may have initially suspected.

Unlike the coverage in *Audubon* wherein the outside forces were rather amorphous, the writers of *National Parks* repeatedly referenced the specific government agencies attempting to overrun the national parks system. Conservationists were “faced with the strange contradiction of a government pledged to the protection of these areas, actually urging the invasion of Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>817</sup> It was a dereliction of duty.

Soon these suspicions were given a name and a face: Newton Drury. The relationship between the various branches of the Department of the Interior had been rocky. The Bureau of Reclamation was pushing hard for the Dinosaur dams, and those

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<sup>813</sup> “Water Resources Policy,” 97.

<sup>814</sup> Packard, “Dinosaur Dams Again,” 4.

<sup>815</sup> McKay, “The Present Administration’s Policy,” 149.

<sup>816</sup> Olson, “The Challenge of Our National Parks,” 51.

<sup>817</sup> *Ibid*, 52.

dams would have been inside a national monument under the purview of the National Park Service. The resulting friction between the agency directors had been kept relatively quiet but not completely. In 1951, the very public demotion-then-resignation of National Park Service Director Newton Drury was hashed out in the nation's major newspapers.<sup>818</sup> The threat to the monuments and parks was coming from a once-trusted ally and writers lamented "a top-level park property, with superb inherent possibilities, invaded by a bureau of the department charged with its protection."<sup>819</sup>

Bureaucrats are usually described in stereotypical terms such as pencil pusher, but the language in *National Parks* was passionate. Writers called proponents of the Dinosaur plan "fanatical,"<sup>820</sup> and the project "sinister,"<sup>821</sup> "frightening, scandalous and reprehensible."<sup>822</sup> The language painted a picture of government leaders violating their sworn oaths, intentionally damaging a national treasure, and doing so through scheming and subterfuge. The only option was to enlist the public to defend the parks. Those seeking to build the dams were seen as *others*, and those who were defending or protecting it were the real Americans.

That the Bureau of Reclamation's Dinosaur plan was being taken seriously at all was blamed on an uninformed public. Beyond that, "ignorance is a narcotic which the general public and some of our law-makers use to prevent the nauseating sickness felt by those who appreciate natural beauty, when faced by the apparition of such

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<sup>818</sup> Coverage included "Mr. Drury's Departure," *New York Times*, Feb. 14, 1951.

"Newton Drury's Resignation," *Washington Post*, Feb. 17, 1950.

<sup>819</sup> Carhart, "The Menaced Dinosaur Monument," 30.

<sup>820</sup> Grant, "Alternative Sites for Dinosaur Dams," 132.

<sup>821</sup> Carhart, "The Menaced Dinosaur Monument," 21.

<sup>822</sup> *Ibid*, 30.



destruction.”<sup>823</sup> The arguments of dam proponents were deceptive and dangerous and the public was addicted to the “high” of cheap services. It was time for a campaign to educate the citizenry and mobilize them in support of Dinosaur. Writers claimed that “if the public were aware of the constant efforts of exploitive interests to invade and destroy our wonderful national parks and monuments, there would be few if any such selfish efforts made, and the reservations would be forever secure.”<sup>824</sup> The American people were missing two important concepts that would drive them to defend the monument: ownership and education. According to the writers, “when they become steeped in a sense of guardianship toward them, then and only then will the parks be safe from vandalism, intrusions and the threat of commercial interests.”<sup>825</sup> It would take the American public recognizing their role as “citizen owners of the reservation”<sup>826</sup> taking responsibility for their property.

Ownership would require study, though. Unfortunately, “the general public simply is not informed about these things.”<sup>827</sup> It would take an extensive effort to inform this group who had so little understanding. “The seriousness of the situation resulted in a unification of these forces never before attained, and in the development of a public education campaign reaching out to all levels of the population.”<sup>828</sup> The debate could not be left only to conservationists.

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<sup>823</sup> Thompson, “Glen Canyon, the Sublime,” 150.

<sup>824</sup> Butcher, “This Is Dinosaur,” 135.

<sup>825</sup> Sigurd F. Olson, “The Association’s Second Objective,” *National Parks*, April-June 1956, 97.

<sup>826</sup> Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” 25.

<sup>827</sup> Butcher, “This Is Dinosaur,” 135.

<sup>828</sup> “The Parks and Congress. 83rd Congress to August 20, 1954,” *National Parks*, October-December 1954, 181.

The campaign to educate the public was a frequent topic of conversation in *National Parks*. Discussion included reviews of books and films related to the Dinosaur issue and other ways to reach the people:

We know that public opinion evolves slowly. However, we have media today for moving much more swiftly and effectively than in the past, the press, radio, television, color motion pictures, and skills in using all of these for educational purposes.<sup>829</sup>

Readers were given details of several other tactics, including an exhibit of large images of Dinosaur and information that would travel to libraries across the country and copies of films of the monument available for public use.<sup>830</sup> The National Parks Association was also warning readers that it would be a long campaign.

The rhetoric used to mobilize the general public was infused with war metaphors and warnings of invasion. The call was issued for “all citizens to join [together] to make sure that areas set aside for preservation in the national park system are not needlessly invaded or despoiled.”<sup>831</sup> The writers in *National Parks* spoke of “an informed, militant public”<sup>832</sup> as necessary for the protection of the park system. The language called for an aggressive and active public, one that would make personal sacrifices for the greater good. Once established, “such defenses in public opinion cannot be broken down.”<sup>833</sup> A citizenry apprised of the value of the parks and awakened to the threat against them would be as a fortress around the areas. Defense of the system would be the responsibility of “a greater percentage of the American public.” The “long-term interest lies in the

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<sup>829</sup> Olson, “The Challenge of Our National Parks,” 51.

<sup>830</sup> “Highlights of Our 1955 Annual Meeting,” *National Parks*, July-September 1955, 126.

<sup>831</sup> “Third Battle of Dinosaur,” *National Parks*, January-March 1955, 22.

<sup>832</sup> Sigurd F. Olson, “The Association’s Third Objective,” *National Parks*, July-September 1956, 144.

<sup>833</sup> Waldo Gifford Leland, “Newton Bishop Drury,” *National Parks*, April-June 1951, 66. “As” removed for clarity.

maintenance of the integrity of the national park and monument system.”<sup>834</sup> The areas of the national park service had to remain whole and pure. And it would only happen when “the people speak so clearly and forcefully that there will be no question as to their wishes.”<sup>835</sup>

The third theme of the *National Parks* coverage focused on the strength of the coalition of environmental groups and the members they reached. While the members of the general public were the first line of defense for Dinosaur, the groups of the Council of Conservationists were the generals and their members were the trained soldiers:

The battles for the great cause of conservation in good old U. S. A. are not being won and, further, that they will continue to be lost until the thousand and one independent and competing conservation organizations get together for unified national objectives, and throw their massed strength against wasteful and ignorant exploitation.<sup>836</sup>

Much of the language in this theme drew on military terms aimed at mobilizing the members of the National Parks Association to enter the Dinosaur debate. In this, “one of the most serious and pressing problems ever to be faced by your Association and its allies,”<sup>837</sup> the public played a vital role. Writers warned that “we will continue to go down to defeat, and the natural resources of our continent will continue going down the rat-hole with us, until we are willing to join together in one mighty surge for the great cause.”<sup>838</sup> It was oft-repeated that Your Association was acting as one part of the

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<sup>834</sup> “At the Nature Preservation Battlefronts,” *National Parks*, October-December 1950, 151. Reprinted from John H. Baker, “News of Wildlife and Conservation,” *Audubon*, July-August 1950, 260.

<sup>835</sup> Olson, “The Challenge of Our National Parks,” 52.

<sup>836</sup> Darling, “The Nature Protection Plight,” 100.

<sup>837</sup> “Dinosaur Hearing,” *National Park*, April-June 1950, 60.

<sup>838</sup> Darling, “The Nature Protection Plight,” 100.

coalition of “the national conservation and nature protection organizations.”<sup>839</sup> They were working in concert to protect Dinosaur.

Magazine articles described the work the coalition was doing. Activities included representing leading conservation organizations or speaking as private citizens,<sup>840</sup> testifying against the proposed dams during congressional subcommittee hearings, and recommending legislative amendments. Readers were well informed of the coalition’s activities.<sup>841</sup> Compared to other Council of Conservationists groups, though, the National Parks Association went into greater detail. Stories included descriptions of an orchestrated campaign by groups such as “the Izaak Walton League, The Wilderness Society, the American Nature Association, and the National Parks Association, [that] addressed letters of protest to the President.”<sup>842</sup> Additionally, items funded through cooperation and aimed at persuading elected officials were distributed to elected officials: “Indications are that opponents of Echo Park dam, in the House, are strong enough to defeat it. A master stroke was the distribution of Alfred A. Knopf Company’s book *This Is Dinosaur* to every member of Congress.”<sup>843</sup> The groups produced an advertisement featuring “a scene in the monument’s Echo Park area as it looks today, and as it would look if the dam were built. This advertisement has been reprinted in quantity and distributed to all members of Congress.”<sup>844</sup> All of these passages, and more, helped keep

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<sup>839</sup> Packard, “Dinosaur Dams Again,” 3.

<sup>840</sup> “The Parks and Congress: 83<sup>rd</sup> Congress to April 1, 1954. The Hearings on Echo Park Dam,” *National Parks*, April-June 1954, 93.

<sup>841</sup> “The Parks and Congress: The 81st Congress to October 1, 1950,” *National Parks*, October-December 1950, 156.

<sup>842</sup> Leland, “Newton Bishop Drury,” 43. “That” added to quote for clarity.

<sup>843</sup> “Highlights of Our 1955 Annual Meeting,” *National Parks*, July-September 1955, 126.

<sup>844</sup> Graves, “News from Our Western Office,” 77.

readers apprised of the activities of the coalition in defense of Dinosaur. The strength of the alliance was a rallying point for members.

The groups were not only corresponding with government leaders, they were also meeting in person. Readers learned that “leaders of twenty-eight national organizations met in new York . . . at the invitation of the National Parks Association to prevent authorization of Echo Park dam.”<sup>845</sup> However, the campaign was not waged solely by organization leaders strategizing to lobby Congressmen. There was fierce activity as part of the coalition, and much of it included calls to members to join the fray for “only the most active expression of public opinion, addressed to the President and to Congress, can now preserve one of the most valuable natural treasures of the nation.”<sup>846</sup>

There were multiple calls for members to act in defense of the national parks and monuments. Editors wrote that “when threats occur, the Association appeals to its members and allied organizations to express their wishes to those in authority.”<sup>847</sup> And it was not just members groups of the Council of Conservationists on whom the NPA was calling. It was argued that “if national organizations such as the Kiwanis, the Moose, Rotary and the Elks would learn the issues and discover what is at stake, and would inform their members, the national parks would gain widely increased support.”<sup>848</sup> As broad and powerful as the coalition was, the leaders called for action from its members to stop the dams.

The writers of *National Parks* used more than the strength of the coalition to motivate their members to action. They also used past environmental injustices, hoping

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<sup>845</sup> “Third Battle of Dinosaur,” *National Parks*, January-March 1955, 21.

<sup>846</sup> Packard, “Dinosaur Dams Again,” 3.

<sup>847</sup> “The National Parks Association,” *National Parks*, January-March 1952, back cover.

<sup>848</sup> Lafontaine, “Guard this Heritage,” 4.

that “nature conservationists will realize that now, and in the immediate future, they must be more than ever on the alert. They have not forgotten Hetch-Hetchy.”<sup>849</sup> It was believed that “every member of Congress should be alerted to the truth, be given the facts, and be urged to authorize a reappraisal of the entire Upper Colorado project.”<sup>850</sup> Readers were given specific instructions as to how to contact their representatives, because “when threats occur, the Association appeals to its members and allied organizations to express their wishes to those in authority.”<sup>851</sup> Editors also gave details how to contact lawmakers. Readers were told that “members who wish to express their views on any of this legislation should address the chairman of the appropriate committee, and send carbons to the author of the bill and to the director of the bureau concerned.”<sup>852</sup>

Further, readers of *National Parks* were kept informed of the progress of the campaign. The fact that Dinosaur had not been dammed was taken as evidence of their success:

Conservationists have been aware of these dangers, and it is their activity in alerting congressmen who are interested in these resources that have made it possible to hold the line. Only as you who believe in maintaining and managing these public lands continue to take active interest, can these lands be held for public use for generations yet to come.<sup>853</sup>

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<sup>849</sup> Leland, “Newton Bishop Drury,” 66.

<sup>850</sup> Packard, “Is This Good Government?” 101.

<sup>851</sup> “Why the National Park Association,” *National Parks*, April-June 1952,

<sup>852</sup> “The Parks and Congress: The 83rd Congress to April 1, 1953,” *National Parks*, April-June 1953, 89.

<sup>853</sup> “Gabrielson Sounds Alarm at Wildlife Conference,” *National Parks*, April-June 1954, 62.

The status quo had been maintained, and it was largely a result of the member's dedicated action. "Because of the success of the battle to preserve Dinosaur National Monument, our forces are riding a crest of potency."<sup>854</sup>

The National Parks Association had formed to promote and defend the country's newly established National Parks System. The Association grew in popularity and influence, recruiting its leaders from the ranks of the federal bureaucracy and adapting its strategies to new forms of media. By the time the Colorado River Storage Project was introduced and the Echo Park dam controversy was in full swing, *National Parks* had been on the shelves of schools and libraries across the country. Over the course of the fight to defend Dinosaur, the magazine gave readers an intimate portrait of the monument and its value as part of the park system. The breathtaking photographs and rich, detailed stories in the magazine appeared in several publications outside the NPA and made it a valuable part of the Council of Conservationists.

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<sup>854</sup> "Highlights of Our 1956 Annual Meeting," *National Parks*, July-September 1956, 128.

## CHAPTER 10

### AMERICAN PLANNING AND CIVIC ASSOCIATION:

#### BRING IN AN EXPERT

When it is considered that the areas administered by the National Park Service constitute less than one percent of the entire United States, it would seem that the agencies of the Federal Government might avoid these hampering controversies by proposing irrigation, power and flood control works in the ninety-nine percent of the United States which is not protected by law from these activities.

*—Planning and Civic Comment*

January 1954 was unseasonably cold in Washington, D.C., but that did not stop a parade of dignitaries and activists from traveling to the nation's capital to testify at a congressional hearing. The House Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation had called for testimony regarding the proposed Colorado River Storage Project and its controversial Echo Park Dam, nestled at the heart of Dinosaur National Monument. The list of people scheduled to testify before the twenty-two subcommittee members included senators, Native American tribal chairs, municipal representatives, and environmental leaders. The member groups of the Council of Conservationists were well-represented at the hearings: David Brower of the Sierra Club, Fred Packard of the National Parks Association, Howard Zahniser of the Wilderness Society, and General Ulysses S. Grant



III, of the American Planning and Civic Association, appeared in defense of Dinosaur and the National Park System as a whole.<sup>855</sup>

On a sunny but frigid Tuesday morning, General Grant, a decorated veteran of World War I and a former leader of the Army Corps of Engineers, spoke on behalf of the members of the APCA, which had a

background of more than half a century's connection with the citizens' efforts to make our country a more attractive and agreeable place in which to work and live, and to save for future generations those natural areas and formations from which we have drawn improved health and inspiration, and with a sincere desire to provide for the sound economic development of the Upper Colorado Basin.<sup>856</sup>

Grant's testimony was not necessarily inspirational. In what could best be described as academic language, he called the monument "a scenic area legally set aside after careful study for the edification, instruction and inspiration of our people."<sup>857</sup> The bulk of his message was based on mathematics, and as such, he called on his engineering experience in his attempt "merely to show that by the Bureau of Reclamation's own data the Echo Park and Split Mountain projects are not necessary."<sup>858</sup> Grant was a civil engineer. He was representing civil engineers. And he was before Congress, challenging the testimony and claims of government civil engineers. Math was the appropriate strategy for his purpose.

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<sup>855</sup> "Colorado River Storage Project: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, House of Representatives, Eighty-third Congress, second session, on H.R. 4449, H.R. 4443, and H.R. 4463."

<sup>856</sup> General U.S. Grant 3rd, "Colorado River Storage Project: Hearings before the Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, House of Representatives, Eighty-third Congress, second session, on H.R. 4449, H.R. 4443, and H.R. 4463" 708-709.

<sup>857</sup> "Statement of U.S. Grant 3rd, President American Planning and Civic Association," Planning and Civic Comment, March 1954, 5.

<sup>858</sup> "Statement of U.S. Grant 3rd, 12-13. Quote adjusted to specify "Bureau of Reclamation" for clarity.

The American Planning and Civic Association has a tangled history of groups joining together, disbanding and merging again with other like-minded organizations. The APCA was first known as the Park and Outdoor Art Association in 1897, then the American League for Civic Improvement, the National League for Civic Improvement, and the National Conference on City Planning.<sup>859</sup> The common interest area of all these groups was a desire to adequately protect and plan for public spaces and preserve them for future generations. In 1934, following a merger of the American Civic Association and the National Conference on City Planning, the American Planning and Civic Association formed with stated concerns of “National, State, Regional and City Planning, Land and Water Uses, Conservation of Natural Resources, National, State and Local Parks, Highways and Roadsides.”<sup>860</sup> The APCA led the charge to create the National Parks Service and saw planning as the most important public policy issue of the twentieth century.<sup>861</sup>

Grant led the APCA from 1947 to 1949, when he left to become president of George Washington University. But he stayed active in the group, and once again led the APCA in 1954.<sup>862</sup> He brought extensive experience in public and military service as a member of the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and the Office of Public Buildings and Public Parks of the National Capital.<sup>863</sup> Grant was one of the more visible players in the fight over Echo Park. He drew attention to the issue and the Council of

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<sup>859</sup> Cornell Library Rare and Manuscript Collections <http://rmc.library.cornell.edu/ead/htmldocs/RMM02777.html>, (accessed August 13, 2012).

<sup>860</sup> “The Noble Lineage of *Planning and Civic Comment*,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1954, 2.

<sup>861</sup> “The Noble Lineage of *Planning and Civic Comment*,” 3.

<sup>862</sup> Syracuse Library, “Papers of Ulysses S. Grant, III,” [http://library.syr.edu/digital/guides/g/grant\\_us3.htm](http://library.syr.edu/digital/guides/g/grant_us3.htm), (accessed August 13, 2012).

<sup>863</sup> Syracuse Library, “Papers of Ulysses S. Grant III.”

Conservationists through congressional testimony and reprinting articles from leaders of the CoC groups.

Whenever the APCA wanted to inform members about important issues, it used the publication *Planning and Civic Comment*, the “official organ of American Planning and Civic Association and National Conference on State Parks.”<sup>864</sup> Editorials were unsigned and the staff included Managing Editor Dora Padgett, and a board comprised of one national park historian, one lawyer, and a civic planner.<sup>865</sup> Harlean James was a park enthusiast who served as executive secretary for the APCA and on the editorial board, in addition to being active in several conservation organizations. She wrote a book—*Romance of the National Parks*—that extolled the virtues of “the domain we have received from the hands of Nature, and in using it for our collective enjoyment manage it wisely and damage it as little as possible.”<sup>866</sup> Flavel Shurtleff was a Boston-based lawyer and recognized authority on the legalities of city and park planning.<sup>867</sup> The final board member, Conrad L. Wirth, was noted for his work for the National Capital Park and Planning Commission and (eventually) his long tenure at the National Park Service.<sup>868</sup> These three individuals helped to guide and direct the publication of *Planning and Civic Comment*.

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<sup>864</sup> *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1954, cover.

<sup>865</sup> Information about Padgett was not available.

<sup>866</sup> Harlean James, *Romance of the National Parks* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1939), 238.

<sup>867</sup> Flavel Shurtleff, *Carrying Out the City Plan: The Practical Application of American Law in the Execution of City Plans* (New York: Survey Associates, Inc., 1914). Flavel Shurtleff, *Digest of Laws Relating to State Parks* (Washington, D.C.: National Conference on State Parks, 1955).

<sup>868</sup> Obituary of Conrad L. Wirth, *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1993. For more information about Wirth, see Chapter 9.

The quarterly journal was started to “create a better physical environment which will conserve and develop the health, happiness and culture of the American people.”<sup>869</sup> Each issue included articles on the use of natural resources, public lands and spaces, and preservation of historic sites. The issues measured 6 x 9 inches and averaged 64 pages and while illustrations were mentioned in the description of the journal, other than tables only three photographs appeared in the sample, two of which were of Echo Park. Articles in *Public Comment* were extremely technical in nature and often involved complicated mathematical and legal arguments.

During the fight over Echo Park, twenty-eight issues of *Public Comment* were published, as well as two additional, unscheduled installments that focused solely on the dams of the Colorado River Storage Project. Roughly sixty articles discussed the issue—a large collection compared to other Council of Conservationists organizations.<sup>870</sup> In the first four years of the battle over Dinosaur National Monument, the *Planning and Civic Comment* coverage was steady, averaging five articles a year (or at least one per issue). But in 1954—the year of the most legislative action on the CRSP—more than twenty items were published. That same year, two special issues reprinted congressional testimony for members to review. By 1955 the coverage slowed to a dozen items.

The first Dinosaur item in *Planning and Civic Comment* was published in 1950 and described the proposed project and the scenic and historical value of the monument. The next issue included a description of Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman’s hearings on Echo Park and his decision to endorse the dam. A third item allowed writers

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<sup>869</sup> *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1954, p. 2.

<sup>870</sup> Only one of the articles listed an author to identify a source.

to “register disagreement” about Chapman’s recommendation for the dams.<sup>871</sup> At the end of the year, the magazine included a six-page editorial by Grant declaring: “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT.”<sup>872</sup> Grant accused the dam proponents of introducing “The Trojan Horse, model 1950,” and claimed that the dams were merely an attempt “to secretly pass over the wall established by law to protect the natural wonders and play places of the American people.”<sup>873</sup> In addition to the descriptive language, the editorial included charts comparing evaporation rates for the proposed dams and possible alternative locations.

The steady succession of coverage in 1950 continued in 1951 with five articles on the controversy. A resolution passed at the APCA annual business meeting stated that “the Board continues to hammer home its belief that land once dedicated to parks in cities and counties should be protected from uses unrelated to recognized park services.”<sup>874</sup> The battle over Dinosaur often centered on the tension between local desire to use the land and national interest in preserving the land. The resolution also declared “any construction of Echo Park and Split Mountain Dams as injurious to the Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>875</sup> As with many other nonprofit organizations, it was standard practice for the APCA to adopt resolutions that would serve as guiding principles for the year. Topics included planning, housing, parks, design strategies for the nation’s capital, and conservation. The resolutions of 1951 ended with a call that “all Federal agencies

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<sup>871</sup> “Secretary Chapman Approves Dinosaur Dams,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1950, 60.

<sup>872</sup> “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1950, 1-6.

<sup>873</sup> “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR”, 1.

<sup>874</sup> “Resolutions Adopted at the Annual Business Meeting of the Board of Directors of the APCA Held in Washington, Jan. 20, 1951,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1951, 13.

<sup>875</sup> “Resolutions Adopted,” 14.

administering publicly owned or privately controlled natural resources be brought together in a Federal Department of Natural Resources with a Secretary in the Cabinet.”<sup>876</sup>

In September, *Planning and Civic Comment* featured a report by Grant regarding the proposed Echo Park and Split Mountain dams. Over nine pages, Grant presented a twenty-four-point argument against the projects that included legal arguments and mathematical evidence regarding evaporation rates and storage capacity. The ninth point, for example, focused on the “claim that the substitution of other dam sites for Echo Park and Split Mountain will involve an increase of 350,000 acre feet annually in the loss by evaporation.”<sup>877</sup> Grant acknowledged that this would be an unacceptable amount of water lost, but then presented mathematical evidence that “the 350,000 acre feet so harped on apparently exceeds a justified estimate by about 171,000 acre feet—an error of nearly 50%.”<sup>878</sup> By point twenty-four, Grant concluded that

there are certainly so many obviously doubtful features in the report and it is based on such inadequate field investigation that a review of the project, as now proposed by the Bureau of Reclamation, should be made by some other competent Federal office.<sup>879</sup>

Following the arguments against the dam, Grant offered three recommendations that included early authorization of several dams in the CRSP, protecting national parks and monuments from any reclamation project, and a recalculation of evaporation rates so as

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<sup>876</sup> *Ibid*, 14.

<sup>877</sup> “Supplementary Report by General Grant on the Dinosaur Controversy,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1951, 3-4.

<sup>878</sup> “Supplementary Report by General Grant,” 4.

<sup>879</sup> *Ibid*, 9.

not to deny “*the citizens of the Upper Colorado River Basin of any drop of water, which they need or can put to use in bettering their communities.*”<sup>880</sup>

The last item of 1951 was an editorial titled, “Congratulations Mr. Secretary!” It celebrated Secretary of the Interior Oscar Chapman, who had declared, at an Audubon Society dinner, his sincere “hope that we might work out a solution whereby the Split Mountain and Echo Park Dams need not be built in the Monument.”<sup>881</sup> The editorial mentioned the work of the APCA and other Council of Conservation member groups in the debate over the CRSP, and suggested that Congressional testimony and arguments laid out in *Planning and Civic Comment* were having an impact on at least slowing down the project. It closed optimistically:

We believe that the policy announced by Secretary Chapman before the National Audubon Society and by Assistant Secretary [Dale] Doty before the Sierra Club will bring a balanced water-use program for the Upper Colorado to realization, with benefit to all concerned.<sup>882</sup>

The optimistic tone did not carry into 1952, though.

An editorial and two articles published in June specifically addressed the fight. In one item, readers were directed to the May 1952 *Sierra Club Bulletin* in which “the Dinosaur Story is told” by General Grant and J. W. Penfold (the Western Representative of the Izaak Walton League).<sup>883</sup> This brief article represented the cooperative relationship between the member organizations of the Council of Conservationists: *Planning and Civic Comment*, the publication of the APCA, praised articles written by representatives

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<sup>880</sup> Ibid, 10. Original emphasis.

<sup>881</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT Congratulations Mr. Secretary!” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December 1951, 2.

Titles of recurring features in publications were not always consistently punctuated or capitalized. For ease of reading, the titles have been edited slightly in this project.

<sup>882</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT Congratulations Mr. Secretary!” 3.

<sup>883</sup> “Sierra Club on Dinosaur,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1952, 4.

of the APCA and the Izaak Walton League that appeared in the official magazine of the Sierra Club. The cooperative and cyclical nature of the campaign—with groups quoting from other organizations and using leaders from all groups as experts—fit the definition of a coalition as a “coordinated effort ... advancing a shared advocacy agenda.”<sup>884</sup>

The June 1952 issue also contained an informational article and an editorial regarding the Dinosaur question. Writers warned that legislation authorizing the Colorado River Storage Project had been introduced, and “we have the issue squarely before us.”<sup>885</sup> The message was that this bill was not necessary and readers were told to prepare for the upcoming debate. Then, an editorial discussed “the purposes for which national parks and monuments were created.”<sup>886</sup> In essence, the Echo Park dam was antithetical to the idea of the Act of 1916 that established the National Park System. The 1952 message was one of preparation—girding for a fight.

Coverage of Dinosaur National Monument in 1953 largely consisted of reports on comments at a dinner for Washington elites,<sup>887</sup> resolutions passed at various conferences,<sup>888</sup> and several of the legislative watch reports that updated readers on the status of bills in the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate. These items each included brief mentions of the Dinosaur fight, and reiterated the importance of the issue one sentence at a time.

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<sup>884</sup> David Nelson and Susan Webb Yackee, “Lobbying Coalitions and Government Policy Change: An Analysis of Federal Agency Rulemaking,” *The Journal of Politics*, 74 (April 2012): 339.

<sup>885</sup> “Dinosaur Again,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1952, 5.

<sup>886</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT A Priceless Heritage,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1952, 5.

<sup>887</sup> “Secretary of the Interior Honored at Dinner,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1953, 31-36.

<sup>888</sup> “The New Orleans APCA Conference,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1953, 25-30. “Resolutions of Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December 1953, 20-21.



One article dedicated solely to the controversy referenced the Sierra Club river rafting trips.<sup>889</sup> The Sierra Club had planned and supported three trips to Dinosaur in an effort to demonstrate first, that the monument was accessible, and second, that it was worth saving. Writers considered that the people “who made the trip form a distinguished group of conservation leaders.”<sup>890</sup> The story spanned half a page and, in addition to the list of names, contained a declaration. It stated “the American Planning and Civic Association, as it has in the past, continues to agree with the Sierra Club, and will definitely oppose any compromise which will sacrifice either Echo Park or Split Mountain dam sites within the Monument.”<sup>891</sup> Once again, the strength of the coalition of the Council of Conservationists was demonstrated by this use of space and attention.

The battle over Dinosaur hit a crescendo in 1954. Over the course of twelve months, the House Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation held hearings that featured reports from more than fifty people while the Senate heard testimony from nearly seventy people on the question. At the other end of Pennsylvania Avenue, President Eisenhower announced his support for the Colorado River Storage Project and Echo Park Dam, lending a sense of legitimacy to the project. By June, the publicity machines on both sides had articles in major publications including the *Christian Science Monitor* and *The Denver Post*.<sup>892</sup> The Upper Colorado River Grass Roots Committee had its local booster group, the Aqualantes, conducting a full-court campaign for money and support, and lobbying elected officials. With so much steady movement on the legislative

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<sup>889</sup> See Chapter 3 for a more complete description of these trips.

<sup>890</sup> “Dinosaur National Monument Rediscovered,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, September, 1953.

<sup>891</sup> “Dinosaur National Monument Rediscovered.”

<sup>892</sup> “Dinosaur: Battle for the Future,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Mar. 17, 1954. “Is the Storage Project Dead?” *Denver Post*, May 23, 1954.

and public information fronts, 1954 was also a year that the American Planning and Civic Association dedicated a sizeable amount of its publication to the fight.

The first issue of *Planning and Civic Comment* in 1954 had four separate items about Echo Park: two editorial statements against the dams, a list of APCA resolutions declaring support for public lands and national parks and monuments, and a legislative watch report.<sup>893</sup> However, readers would receive an additional publication that quarter. This special, twenty-five-page installment was dedicated entirely to the “House Hearings on Dinosaur” and included a full-page photo of a portion of the monument that was originally published in *National Parks Magazine*.<sup>894</sup> The caption read: “All but the top of the 800-foot high Steamboat Rock in Echo Park will be submerged if Echo Park Dam is built.”<sup>895</sup>

The special issue included a brief introduction to the controversy and a synopsis of testimony by Ralph A. Tudor, Under Secretary of the Interior, in front of the House Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation. Then readers were given a complete transcript of Grant’s testimony to the committee. His statement opened with a declaration:

I have the honor to appear before you to protest against the inclusion in the Upper Colorado Storage Project of the Echo Park dam or any other dam inside of the Dinosaur National Monument, or in any other monument of National Park in the region.<sup>896</sup>

It also included three tables to help readers visualize the mathematical complexities of the dams. The rest of the issue contained summaries of the statements by Horace M. Albright

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<sup>893</sup> *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1954 (I).

<sup>894</sup> This installment was referred to as “Part II” and appeared to be sent with the original March issue labeled as “Part I.”

<sup>895</sup> *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1954 (II), 1.

<sup>896</sup> “Statement of U.S. Grant 3rd,” 5.

of the National Park Service, J. W. Penfold of the Izaak Walton League of America, David Brower of the Sierra Club, Fred M. Packard of the National Parks Association, and Dr. Olaus J. Murie of the Wilderness Society. This installment presented the words of these prominent leaders from the groups of the Council of Conservationists directly to the readers of *Planning and Civic Comment*, demonstrating the strength and breadth of the coalition fighting to stop the dams planned for Dinosaur National Monument.

After the excitement of the hearings in the House, the focus in the June 1954 issue shifted to the annual conference of the APCA. Multiple speakers, scientists, and government officials attended the event in Denver, Colorado. The summary of the meetings noted that, “In most years there are sharp conflicts. We are engaged in several now—defense of the Dinosaur National Monument (and consequently the entire National Park System) from unrelated commercial encroachments.”<sup>897</sup> The battle was also addressed in the editorial section, updating readers that, though the subcommittee had approved the CRSP, environmental groups were still actively fighting the project as passed. Readers were assured: “It is more than ever important now that the Colorado River Basin bill be amended in the House to omit Echo Park and Split Mountain dams within the Dinosaur National Monument, if the measure is to be adopted.”<sup>898</sup>

Three months later, in September 1954, *Planning and Civic Comment* quoted a powerful new voice in the debate. The Commentaries section reprinted a segment of Eleanor Roosevelt’s July 13 column “My Day.”<sup>899</sup> Roosevelt wrote, “The whole national park system and state park system, our nationally-owned and state-owned forests, and all

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<sup>897</sup> “Members Meeting,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1954, 9.

<sup>898</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: NATIONAL PARKS,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1954, 12-13.

<sup>899</sup> “My Day” was a syndicated, daily column Roosevelt wrote daily for more than twenty years.

of our natural resources, mean the future of our country.”<sup>900</sup> In her original column, she encouraged readers to obtain copies of two *Sierra Club* articles:

“A Great National Park or Two Wasteful Dams?” and “Don’t Dam the National Park System” from the *Sierra Club*, 1050 Mills Tower, San Francisco 4, California. On these facts you may decide to write your Congressman as I have done.<sup>901</sup>

Roosevelt had been one of the most active and involved first ladies in the nation’s history and since her husband’s death, she had “remained a highly influential political figure.”<sup>902</sup> She shared her opinion on everything from foreign policy to integration to family relationships, and she was speaking out in defense of Dinosaur. Next, readers would hear from David Brower, leader of the *Sierra Club*, in the second supplemental issue of *Public and Civic Comment*.

In July 1954, the Senate Subcommittee on Irrigation heard from more than seventy people. However, instead of summarizing several of the testimonies, the September supplemental issue featured a full transcript of Brower’s statement. His testimony in front of the House committee in January had been crucial because he “challenged the estimates of evaporation rates, and in so doing, he discredited the justification for Echo Park Dam.”<sup>903</sup> In his statement, he observed,

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<sup>900</sup> “Commentaries,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1954, 34.

<sup>901</sup> Eleanor Roosevelt, *My Day*, July 12, 1954. George Washington University, “The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project” [http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/displaydoc.cfm?\\_y=1954&\\_f=md002904](http://www.gwu.edu/~erpapers/myday/displaydoc.cfm?_y=1954&_f=md002904), (accessed November 13, 2013). Names of pamphlets used in lieu of “these pamphlets” for clarity.

<sup>902</sup> Hazel Rowley. *Franklin and Eleanor: An Extraordinary Marriage* (Farrar, Straus and Giroux: New York, 2010), 294.

<sup>903</sup> Mark W. T. Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness: Echo Park and the American Conservation Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000) 191.

our concern for the preservation of the National Park System led us into an earnest effort to find a way whereby the objectives of the Upper Colorado Project could be realized in a program that would serve all the public interest.<sup>904</sup>

The APCA published Brower's Senate testimony in this special issue and Grant's would be printed in the next issue. It speaks to the strategy of the groups in the Council of Conservationists to help inform and inspire readers by forming a coalition to advocate. The CoC groups were carefully watching the activities and publications of the other groups, commenting on strategies, and supporting the efforts of all.

By December 1954, the editorial page focused on the potential economic and business importance of Dinosaur. The writers argued that building a dam inside a national park or monument was a bad business decision because it would cost local tourism money that would not likely be replaced. They also pointed out that

those public spirited citizens who have rallied over the years to protect the national parks and monuments from commercial invasions have counted many business, industrial and professional leaders, and they have arrived at logical conclusions, based on knowledge of our national development.<sup>905</sup>

This was not a question of conservation versus local business—conservation would *be* the local business. The final issue of 1954 included a reminder that “the American Planning and Civic Association, and its predecessor, the American Civic Association, has consistently through the years opposed these commercial invasions.”<sup>906</sup> It was a warning that this fight was neither new nor over, and that there could be no break in the efforts.

The Echo Park controversy was mentioned in every issue of *Planning and Civic Comment* published in 1955. In March, the controversial Hetch Hetchy dam helped to

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<sup>904</sup> “Preserving Dinosaur National Monument Unimpaired,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1954 (II), 16.

<sup>905</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: What is a Sound Business Decision on Dinosaur?” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December 1954, 6.

<sup>906</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: What is a Sound Business Decision on Dinosaur?” 8.

underscore the need to protect the monument. Hetch Hetchy had haunted conservationists for thirty years, ever since the Yosemite National Park valley was wiped out when a dam captured the Tuolumne River for the burgeoning San Francisco population.<sup>907</sup> The Board of Trustees included Dinosaur, once again, in its annual resolutions:

The Board opposes the building of any dams, reservoirs and other similar works within or affecting our national parks and monuments . . . In line with this policy the Board has consistently opposed any reservoirs or works in the Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>908</sup>

Again, the idea of consistency reminded readers that protected areas were always under threat and the campaigns to defend them had been and would be ongoing. Dinosaur would be named a key issue facing conservationists and protecting the monument would be one of the central goals of 1955.

Another item worth noting in the March issue was a Sierra Club report on a federal appellate decision that “appeared to strengthen conservationists’ efforts to protect nationally outstanding recreational areas threatened by economic development, such as Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>909</sup> As they had before, the editors of *Planning and Civic Comment* chose a piece from the Sierra Club to update the readers and keep them informed.

The longest article in the magazine was a five-page transcript of General Grant’s Senate testimony. Grant’s experience as a civil engineer helped him craft a convincing argument based on evaporation calculations and proposed alternative sites. The Colorado

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<sup>907</sup> National Parks Conservation Association, “Yosemite National Park,” <http://www.npca.org/parks/yosemite-national-park.html?adwords=1&category=park&gclid=CNjk7v7S87kCFak1QgodgDgAeA>, (accessed September 30, 2013). For more information on Hetch Hetchy, see Chapter 1.

<sup>908</sup> “Meeting of the Board of Trustees, APCA,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1955, 13.

<sup>909</sup> “Commentaries,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1955, 49.

River Storage Project was designed to provide drinking and irrigation water to the arid Western states. Dam proponents were adamant that the dams in Dinosaur would store the most water with the least amount of loss to evaporation. Grant had crunched the same numbers as the Bureau of Reclamation and he had come to the conclusion that Echo Park would actually lose more water than was being admitted. He declared that, “we are not opposed to the bill ‘in toto’ but merely to the inclusion of the Echo Park Dam in the authorization. We would indeed like to see a balanced and economically justified program.”<sup>910</sup> Transcripts allowed readers to hear directly from Grant, a valuable source, and to see his arguments and calculations firsthand. Readers had the chance to analyze Grant’s calculations and conclusions. The members of the APCA were largely professionals in the fields of civil engineering and public planning and Grant’s testimony would have resonated with them. For other members of the CoC, the logical, mathematic arguments would be a welcome quantitative element in what had been a largely legal and emotional debate.

The June 1955 issue of *Planning and Civic Comment* dedicated three pages to printing a letter Grant had sent to Utah Senator Arthur V. Watkins regarding the Upper Colorado River Project. Grant wrote: “You are conscientiously acting for what you believe the best interests of your constituents and of the Nation; just as I am conscientiously advocating the contrary.”<sup>911</sup> The June coverage included an editorial warning that the proposal to build dams in Dinosaur “constitutes a danger to the

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<sup>910</sup> “Statement of U.S. Grant 3rd Relative to S.500 Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, 1 March 1955,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1955, 16.

<sup>911</sup> “General Grant’s Reply to Senator Watkins,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1955, 38.

Monument itself and a precedent to break down the protection for national parks and monuments set up by Congress.”<sup>912</sup>

The rest of 1955 was fairly quiet on the legislative front, but not quite so in *Planning and Civic Comment*. The last two editorials of the year were focused on the danger to Dinosaur, with the December editorial declaring that

at long last the leaders in Congress who have sponsored the legislation have agreed to omit the Dinosaur Dam from the bill. . . . This is a signal victory for the conservation forces—one that could never have been won if the conservation leaders had not held patiently and tenaciously to their righteous cause.<sup>913</sup>

With victory declared in December 1955, the 1956 coverage was limited to brief updates on legislative progress of the Colorado River Storage Project in the journal’s Watch Service Report.

### *The Numbers Game*

For six years, the American Planning and Civic Association was one of the nine members of the Council of Conservationists fighting the battle to save Dinosaur National Monument. The APCA’s substantial and detailed coverage repeated three major themes: the importance of the National Park System, presentations of alternative sites, and mobilization of the public. Each of these themes featured rhetoric unique to its argument. The supremacy of the system had appeared in the thematic analysis of the American Nature Association’s coverage in *Nature*, but the APCA discussed it in terms of the bureaucracy and the place of the NPS in the government, and often included statements on government budgets and red tape. When items in *Planning and Civic Comment*

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<sup>912</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: The Future of National Parks,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1955, 44.

<sup>913</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: Integrity of the National Parks,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December 1955, 9.



presented arguments for alternative sites, they were grounded in mathematics and figures and tables were used to illustrate the information. And finally, when attempts were made to mobilize the public, the language focused on Americans' birthright and their responsibility to posterity.

The most common theme used by the APCA against the Echo Park dam focused on the importance of the national park system. The case against Echo Park rested on the idea that the parks system must be kept whole and inviolate. Many of the articles and editorials in *Planning and Civic Comment* centered on the belief that "the greatest threat to our National Parks and Monuments comes from power, flood control, and reclamation projects which are conceived as beneficial investments for the American people."<sup>914</sup> According to one resolution, "Needless destruction of the Monument would squander potential reserves in the National Park System at a time when overcrowding indicates the necessity for increasing the area of our own Parks rather than reducing them."<sup>915</sup> Areas of the park system had value and the public was taking advantage of them. The APCA wanted those areas protected and enhanced, not altered and destroyed. To "squander" the area, destroying it for no reason, would violate the purpose of the park system and was a waste of something precious.

But not everyone was convinced that this was the best way to drive tourism to the area: "The [APCA] Board questions, however, whether benefits obtained by destruction of National Park values can outweigh permanent inspirational and educational as well as

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<sup>914</sup> "Dinosaur National Monument," *Planning and Civic Comment*, 1950 16(1), 11

<sup>915</sup> "Resolution of Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs," *Planning and Civic Comment*, December, 1953, 20.

recreational values so destroyed.”<sup>916</sup> The park areas were set aside because they provided more than just a place to camp: they were sources for deeper learning and even devotion. Creating a reservoir on top of the monument would not provide a new place for amusement; it would obliterate the rivers and bury the monument. This new form of recreation would cost Americans their souls.

The idea of a system of parks and areas preserved for use by the American people was not based on economic value. Rather, it was important to remember that “scenery is not the only qualification for a national park or monument. The system is rich because it contains historical, archeological, scientific and other qualified national areas as well as scenic parks.”<sup>917</sup> Again and again, the APCA noted that national parks, Dinosaur National Monument included,

cannot be measured alone in dollars and cents. The area was created a national monument for its scenic as well as its archeological features and it should be protected from damaging encroachments . . . leaving the vast river resources of our country outside of national parks and monuments to be developed for the greatest possible economic service to the people.<sup>918</sup>

It was a constant refrain, that monetary gain was not the only way to measure the worth of the monument. The purposes for which national parks and monuments are set aside are not always clear to the public. Occasionally, the concept of the greater public good was to be weighed against the economic benefit that might come to a few Americans. The APCA coverage echoed the law that established the National Park System described these areas as important to “the common benefit of all the people of the United States.”<sup>919</sup>

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<sup>916</sup> “Resolutions Adopted at the Annual Business Meeting of the Board of Directors of the APCA Held in Washington, Jan. 20, 1951,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March, 1951, 14.

<sup>917</sup> “”EDITORIAL COMMENT: The future of National Parks,” 43.

<sup>918</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: Congratulations Mr. Secretary!” 3

<sup>919</sup> *Organic Act of 1916*, 39 Stat F35, 16 U.S.C. §1, August 25, 1916.

Similarly, the APCA focused on the idea that as a fixture of the National Park System, the land was not for the Bureau of Reclamation or even the Department of the Interior to use. For

Uncle Sam is a Landlord on nearly 25,000,000 acres in the National Park System and he has tenants—transients to be sure—but nevertheless tenants to whom he must give facilities for seeing the parks, who must be sheltered and fed, and above all, who must be able to enjoy in their natural state these parks and monuments which represent the finest scenic, scientific, historic and archeological areas we have in this country.<sup>920</sup>

The idea of the government as a landlord suggests responsibility and maintenance, and the combination of the personification through the iconic “Uncle Sam” means even more: that caretaking was a patriotic duty. The Department of Interior had a responsibility to protect that land and it was not enough to build a fence around these areas. The people must be welcome and even encouraged to visit and see what really makes the country great.

The question of the purpose for the land, and consequently, the responsibility of the government agencies to protect it, was also commonly raised. The APCA recognized the changing role government agencies were playing in land management, stating that,

the Department of the Interior has developed from the early days when settlement of the vast unoccupied public domain was a paramount purpose, and we appreciate its evolution into a Department now principally dedicated to the conservation and wise use of the natural resources entrusted to its care.<sup>921</sup>

But writers openly worried that the bureaucracy was not upholding its responsibilities. In particular, they doubted the sincerity of political appointees who they claimed “never comprehended the concept of national parks and monuments for which the Department of

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<sup>920</sup> “UNCLE SAM IS A LANDLORD IN THE NATIONAL PARKS,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1954, 5.

<sup>921</sup> “Secretary of the Interior Honored at Dinner,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March, 1953, 35.

the Interior is responsible.”<sup>922</sup> This suggested a disregard that grew out of a lack of understanding—people who opposed the dams were more knowledgeable and had more clarity regarding the importance and purpose of the land—and it was up to the groups of the Council of Conservationists to educate their members in a way that would resonate.

The legal justification for halting the Echo Park Dam was in the 1916 law establishing the National Park System, and for Grant and the APCA,

it would be strange indeed for Congress to authorize a Government agency like the Bureau of Reclamation to violate such an established policy and to do what private enterprise is not allowed to do, namely to do irreparable damage to a scenic area legally set aside after careful study for the edification, instruction and inspiration of our people so as to protect it against just such exploitation as is now proposed.<sup>923</sup>

The repeated calls for more “careful study” of the issue prior to breaking with “established policy” implied that the dams were unwise and a violation. Further, use of the terms “violate” and “exploitation” gave the impression that the dams were not only unwise, but also slightly disrespectful. The idea of the monument as a place of “edification” and “inspiration” spoke, once again, to the value of the land to all people.

The national parks and monuments were set aside as part of the unique character of the United States. Writers predicted that “if the National Park System continues to be protected, we can look forward to years of cultural communion with Nature at its climax in our national parks which are the envy of European nations.”<sup>924</sup> National parks were a place to join together, experiencing the things that made people uniquely American. And for the readers of *Planning and Civic Comment*, who would largely have served in World

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<sup>922</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT What is a Sound Business Decision on Dinosaur?” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December, 1954, 6.

<sup>923</sup> “STATEMENT OF U.S. GRANT 3RD, PRESIDENT AMERICAN PLANNING AND CIVIC ASSOCIATION,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1954 II, 5.

<sup>924</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: The Dinosaur Controversy,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1955, 6.

War II, a comparison to Europe and its land still scarred by years of frontline battles would have been powerful.<sup>925</sup> Particularly when postwar highways connected people from across the country and allowed them to visit national parks, thus escaping newly-created suburbs, there was a belief that nature was a kind of religion itself. A place for “communion” is a source of great relief and fulfillment.

The APCA reminded readers of the importance of the system and the “manifest duty of the National Park Service under the law to protect Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>926</sup> Articles in *Planning and Civic Comment* often claimed that the Bureau of Reclamation and local supporters were not just trying to build a dam, they were actively attempting to subvert the law:

Mr. Tudor [Under Secretary of Interior] studiously avoids any reference to the Act of Congress of 1916 and amendments which direct the Secretary of the Interior to preserve so far as possible the national parks and monuments *in their natural state for the use and enjoyment of future generations*. Unless Congress makes an exception to the rule which it has itself laid down, it would be illegal to build a dam and reservoir in Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>927</sup>

Many claims centered on the specific pieces of legislation and amendments that had established the parks program, requiring Congress to amend or pass new legislation before they can deviate from the existing law. The APCA set clear and complicated guidelines for building Echo Park. The bureaucratic red tape would have been enough to stop the projects. The language suggests, though, that leaders of the APCA seemed

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<sup>925</sup> 16 million Americans served in WWII, and of those, roughly 50% attended college as a result of the G.I. Bill. In the 1950s the professional class, including engineers and civic planners, would have been overwhelmingly populated with veterans.

<sup>926</sup> “HOUSE HEARINGS ON DINOSAUR DAMS,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, 1954, 20(1, II), 3.

<sup>927</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: What is a Sound Business Decision on Dinosaur?” 7. Original emphasis.

convinced that the bureaucrats were dedicating serious effort to making an end run around the legislature by sneaking into Dinosaur.

*Planning and Civic Comment* often lamented that budget restrictions for the National Park Service had made it extremely difficult for the public to visit (due to inaccessible roads, dilapidated facilities, and lack of ranger support) and therefore virtually impossible for the service to defend itself against encroachments. According to the APCA, “the National Park Service falls in the category of being a ‘poor relation.’ We have not had funds or personnel to carry out in an adequate manner what we believe to be a desirable working relationship.”<sup>928</sup> The theory followed that if appropriations had been made sufficient, the public would have visited Dinosaur, and having seen it, would have been lined up to defend it: “As soon as the National Park Service, which for years has been on a starvation diet, can obtain funds to provide access roads and facilities for the care of visitors, a large influx of visitors may be expected.”<sup>929</sup> The accusation was that the government was not maintaining, even minimally, its parks. These areas were being neglected to help justify their destruction. This was particularly true for Dinosaur, which lacked an access road or facilities. Not even locals had visited the monument. Opponents of the dam challenged that “adequate appropriations for the maintenance and administration of our much neglected national parks, is the solemn proposal to appropriate \$21,000,000 to develop recreational facilities in the National Monument after the scenery for which it was preserved has been mutilated.”<sup>930</sup> The juxtaposition between the terms “solemn” and “mutilated” and “neglected,” implies a harsh relationship

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<sup>928</sup> Arthur E. Demaray, “Relation of the National Park Service to State Parks.” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December, 1951, 51.

<sup>929</sup> “Supplementary Report by General Grant on the Dinosaur Controversy,” 5.

<sup>930</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: Conservation Problems in the National Parks,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1954, 4.

between the land and those who wanted to dam it. The language is representative of the common accusation that Congress was leaving the National Parks System defenseless, and not by accident.

The APCA would argue repeatedly that Echo Park was only the first “of many ‘invasions’ of the national park system now proposed by the dam builders.”<sup>931</sup> This threat to one fixture of the system was a threat to the system as a whole. Opponents believed that the Bureau of Reclamation had a “desire to set a precedent for encroachment on such a prohibited area.... Once this exception is authorized, the bars will be down and excepting legislation in other cases on equally specious pretexts will be more easily obtainable.”<sup>932</sup> The term “encroachment” suggests that opponents saw dammers as outsiders. The language helped to establish a precedent of preservation, even in the face of possible loss of financial revenue and saw the Echo Park dam as a threat not just to Dinosaur National Monument, but a first step on the path to the end of the National Park System.

As part of the overall concern for the system as a whole, the idea of “encroachment” was discussed often and implied a surreptitious scheme to sneak inside the borders of the national park system. It was declared that “conservation organizations have worked together in a united effort to protect the National Park System from this unrelated use and to make sure that no precedent for other encroachments would be set.”<sup>933</sup> The worry was that the dedicated purpose of the NPS would be forgotten in the rush to industrialize. And, “while we approve of multiple-purpose projects when the joint

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<sup>931</sup> Conrad L. Wirth, “Book Review,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, January 1951, 55.

<sup>932</sup> U.S. Grant III, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1950, 1-2.

<sup>933</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: Integrity of the National Parks,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December 1955, 9.

uses are compatible with each other, we advocate the protection of national parks and monuments, together with certain other national reserves, from commercial encroachments.”<sup>934</sup> This language suggested that the threat was not only from outsiders, but that it was happening gradually and in a calculated manner.

The second major theme in *Planning and Civic Comment* was a call for alternative dams in the project—dams that would be outside the National Park System. It is important to note that the APCA was careful in its opposition to the Echo Park and Split Mountain dams only, not the CRSP in total. The group recognized the need of Western states to capture and store water for irrigation and to support the burgeoning populations. Of the nearly twenty reservoirs proposed, the only dams the APCA was fighting were those that violated the boundaries of a national monument. It was difficult for any group to argue that the desert states of Utah, New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada, and California would survive without a storage system for water; it was also obvious that the state of Colorado had a legal right to some of the water that passed through its borders. The APCA was clear in its support for “legislation for reclamation of the waters of the Upper Colorado Basin, but opposes any reservoirs or works in the Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>935</sup> The logical solution to this problem was to place the necessary dams in other locations.

The writers often stressed that water storage projects were a necessary part of modern industrialized society, but the APCA “oppose[d] the building of dams, reservoirs and other similar works within or effecting [*sic*] our national parks, monuments,

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<sup>934</sup> “Reorganization of the Planning Commission,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1952, 21.

<sup>935</sup> “Resolutions adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Planning and Civic Association,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, January 1954, 16.



wilderness and wildlife areas.”<sup>936</sup> In fact, the APCA was one of the first groups to mention the proposed reservoir in Glen Canyon as a reasonable alternative (in 1950) and it continued to point to alternative locations for the dams that would provide as much, if not more, of the resources for which local supporters clamored: “It is difficult to conceive of any such need which could not be met equally well by power from the Cross Mountain or Flaming Gorge dams.”<sup>937</sup> Common sense and logic permeated the arguments, giving readers the idea that this was a decision that had to be made with their heads and not their hearts. And that would be difficult when dam supporters used emotional appeals.

One of the common arguments put forth by proponents of the dams was that they were placed for the benefit of the local communities, but the APCA argued that those needs should not be satisfied with resources of national importance. Editors and writers for *Planning and Civic Comment* continually pointed to the importance of discerning between local concerns and national priorities in this fight, claiming “there are feasible alternatives which will fully meet the needs and desires of the Eastern Utah and Western Colorado people without sacrificing the Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>938</sup> The benefits of the dams were described as “a few acre-feet of water and a few kilowatt hours which, it must be emphasized, can be provided elsewhere.”<sup>939</sup> The APCA was forced to admit that, yes, the dams would likely provide a local benefit. However, the writers were quick to point out that those benefits had to be measured against the total cost. And beyond this logical appeal was the very real issue of the legal red tape Western states were living under.

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<sup>936</sup> “The New Orleans APCA Conference,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1953, 30.

<sup>937</sup> *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1951, 6

<sup>938</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: Congratulations Mr. Secretary!”, 3.

<sup>939</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR MONUMENT,” 3.

Many local groups arguing in favor of the CRSP—and the Echo Park and Split Mountain dams in particular—used the Interstate Compact of 1922 to justify their necessity and haste. The Compact established the way the water of the Colorado River would be divided among the states of the Southwest. Drawing a distinction between the upper and lower Colorado River Basin, the Compact demanded that 7.5 million acre-feet of water reach the states of Arizona, New Mexico, and California.<sup>940</sup> But the APCA observed that “Echo Park and Split Mt. dams are not necessary for successful and economic development of the Upper Colorado Basin, or for compliance with the Interstate Compact.”<sup>941</sup> The APCA proposed postponing the Echo Park dams until the second phase of the Upper Colorado project, and argued that “further study will show there are substitutes which will make the construction of the Echo Park and Split Mountain dams unnecessary.”<sup>942</sup> In short, dams were not the problem; these specific dams were the problem. A call for further study and more research spoke to the concern that the process was moving too fast and mistakes would be the likely result. The caution they called for was a way to avoid the irrevocable error that would be the Dinosaur dams.

The focus on the presence of Echo Park and Split Mountain dams inside a national monument led the APCA to argue that alternative sites should be explored at all cost. “While, of course, many of these will prove impracticable on further examination and local survey, it is evident there are plenty of substitutes from which to choose. Evidently many red herrings have got into the upper Colorado.”<sup>943</sup> The risk that the project would be delayed was not sufficient reason to ignore the logical alternatives. But

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<sup>940</sup> Harvey, *A Symbol of Wilderness*, 27.

<sup>941</sup> “Sierra Club on Dinosaur,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1952, 4.

<sup>942</sup> “Supplementary Report by General Grant on the Dinosaur Controversy,” 1.

<sup>943</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” 3.

the government's stubborn resolve in favor of the Dinosaur dams was frustrating to conservationists and they argued against the sites and the logic used to support them: "the Bureau of Reclamation's fanatical insistence upon this view in the face of the information about possible alternatives in its own reports its evident unwillingness to investigate possible alternatives without prejudice."<sup>944</sup> Much of the rhetoric suggested a myopic obsession with the Echo Park dams and the APCA began to wonder why.

Further, while the APCA argued that the two specific dams in Dinosaur National Monument were not necessary, the group was clearly on the side of development. As planners and engineers, the group was focused even beyond the irrigation and power needs that were in the forefront, writing, "The Board recognizes that properly designed reservoirs and well directed soil conservation programs on the headwaters of rivers will constitute a first effective step toward flood prevention."<sup>945</sup> The APCA used these passages to both recognize the legitimate water needs of the states along the Colorado River and also demonstrate its support for alternative water storage projects. However, terms used in *Planning and Civic Comment* gave the impression that supporters had been duped. With "specious," "half-baked," and "misleading," the language suggested that the trickery was not accidental.

There was even a conspiracy theory that claimed the government was not as concerned with the evaporation rates as it was with getting a dam placed inside the National Park System, and the evidence was in the Bureau's refusal to consider alternatives. In making the argument for alternatives, the most common claim was that

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<sup>944</sup> "UNCLE SAM IS THE LANDLORD IN THE NATIONAL PARKS," 6.

<sup>945</sup> "Resolutions adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Planning and Civic Association January 29, 1954," *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1954, 15-16.

the Bureau of Reclamation had used faulty math in its calculations for Echo Park Dam.

And the engineers appeared to take umbrage with the miscalculations:

The proponents of this project without such exact knowledge propose to railroad through this tremendously costly project and destroy a most unique National Monument, and they have the effrontery to quote a guessed at and manifestly exaggerated 350,000 acre feet loss by evaporation as an argument against even considering substitute dam sites to save the National Monument!<sup>946</sup>

The tone indicated a level of disregard for the proponents and their math, suggesting that they questioned either their motives or their intelligence. By calling the calculations “manifestly exaggerated,” writers gave a truly sinister nature to dam supporters who were acting “in violation of sound public policy which they find irksome”<sup>947</sup> and at one point, the plan to build the Echo Park dam was called flat-out “evil.”<sup>948</sup>

Supporters of the dam were accused of lacking wisdom,<sup>949</sup> of using “specious and erroneous arguments.”<sup>950</sup> As General Grant wrote in an editorial published in September 1951, “Like the cynics of half a century ago they know the price of everything but the value of nothing.”<sup>951</sup> While testifying on behalf of the APCA, Grant even stated, “How the Bureau of Reclamation has been able to convince so many intelligent and experienced men that this program is sound and economically feasible is a great mystery to me.”<sup>952</sup>

The Bureau’s unwillingness to examine its own calculations was a source of great frustration to the APCA and much of the coverage in *Planning and Civic Comment* focused on the fuzzy math. Arguments often included incredibly detailed arguments:

“This indicates that even the 249,000 acre feet loss is too great by some 70,000 or more

<sup>946</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” 4-5.

<sup>947</sup> “Supplementary Report by General Grant on the Dinosaur Controversy,” 7.

<sup>948</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” 6.

<sup>949</sup> “Supplementary Report by General Grant on the Dinosaur Controversy,” 9.

<sup>950</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>951</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” 1.

<sup>952</sup> “General Grant’s Reply to Senator Watkins,” 38.

acre feet, and the 350,000 acre feet so harped on apparently exceeds a justified estimate by about 171,000 acre feet—an error of nearly 50%.”<sup>953</sup> *Planning and Civic Comment* often dedicated page space to tables and charts demonstrating the government’s mathematical errors. The rhetoric around these errors indicate that the misleading figures and miscalculations were an affront to these engineers—either because they did not like the inaccuracy or they did not like being ignored when they challenged the inaccuracy.

As far as the APCA was concerned, the Bureau’s strategy seemed to “rest on repetition, as no facts in support have been adduced except the seemingly erroneous and misleading argument of an alleged intolerable evaporation loss, if the Echo Park dam be eliminated.”<sup>954</sup> Once again, the implication was that errors were not really errors, they were purposefully ambiguous numbers being repeated in attempt to convince the public of the dam scheme and its importance to the West and the nation.

The arguments in favor of the Dinosaur dams rested on the idea that the government could ill afford *not to* build them, and so the CRSP had to be approved immediately and without adjustment. However, when testifying in front of Congress, Grant

put the despoilers of the national parks in their place and the dammers of Echo Park, in Dinosaur National Monument, didn’t get to first base. Utah and Colorado need all the Colorado River water they can store in reservoirs but General Grant, who has been an army engineer for 50 years, makes it clear that Echo Park and Split Mountain are not needed for an efficient power and reclamation project.<sup>955</sup>

The APCA and its writers argued passionately that the value of the national parks was something that could not be monetized: “so-called economic benefits will be achieved at

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<sup>953</sup> “Supplementary Report by General Grant on the Dinosaur Controversy,” 4.

<sup>954</sup> “Statement of U.S. Grant 3rd, President American Planning and Civic Association,” 6.

<sup>955</sup> “Statement of U.S. Grant 3rd, President American Planning and Civic Association,” 6.

a very great cost the welfare and enjoyment of the American people.”<sup>956</sup> Instead, it was a cost-benefit equation that had been calculated all wrong, without concern for the intangible values that nature represented. And the APCA would turn to the American people to help save the monument.

The third theme of the coverage in *Planning and Civic Comment* was the mobilization of readers to act to stop Echo Park Dam. When attempting to move the readers, language often focused on an ethical responsibility to protect nature. For the APCA, the fight to stop Echo Park was described as a “moral obligation to preserve the Monument undamaged.”<sup>957</sup> While it may seem contradictory for the rhetoric to be both logical and emotional, these two themes fit perfectly within the APCA’s mission to ensure proper planning would protect public lands for the benefit of future generations. The lands protected by the National Park System, as mentioned earlier, were of importance for several reasons—not just beauty—and as modern citizens, readers owed it to others, including the future, to keep them safe. The magnitude of the challenge was expressed in the question, “Shall we, in this vaunted civilized age, condone the destruction or damage involved in proposals for incompatible man-made projects in the midst of these great areas of cosmic importance?”<sup>958</sup> The ideas of a “moral obligation” and a “vaunted civilized age” suggest a higher understanding of morality in the modern age. The natural areas were evidence of the higher order Americans were living in. Throughout the coverage, there was an attempt to rouse the reader to action, often

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<sup>956</sup> “Dinosaur National Monument,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1950, 11.

<sup>957</sup> “Sierra Club on Dinosaur,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1952, 4.

<sup>958</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: A Priceless Heritage,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, June 1952, 5.

accompanied by language suggesting a spiritual or religious responsibility to the monument (and nature as a whole):

Objection is made, however, to the unnecessary destruction at incalculable expense to the already heavily burdened nation of one of our great natural, scenic wonders, which has been legally reserved for the benefit of the American people.<sup>959</sup>

Often, nature was described as inspirational and Americans deserved this land. But more than that, Americans *needed* this land. Readers were supposed to protect it.

One interesting approach that appeared in the APCA journal was the use of repeated references to the modern age and need to escape it. For example:

Our industrial civilization is creating an ever greater need for the average man, woman and child, to re-establish contact with nature, to be inspired by and appreciate the wonders of nature, and to be diverted from the whirling wheels of machinery and of chance.<sup>960</sup>

There was concern that the public lands provided a “public benefit”<sup>961</sup> beyond any monetary value, and that the dams would “destroy forever by flooding a unique and inspiring area of natural scenery especially selected for preservation, the very special recreational values now afforded the public for navigation on and camping along the banks of torrential streams and in tremendously impressive surroundings.”<sup>962</sup> The ability of nature to help give respite and relaxation was one thing, but the language of *Planning and Civic Comment* suggested nature was essential for maintaining humanity. It was almost holy, and defending it was a “righteous cause”<sup>963</sup> and the call was issued: “May

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<sup>959</sup> “Supplementary Report by General Grant on the Dinosaur Controversy,” 10.

<sup>960</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” 2. Camping had become popular in the 1930s and increased in interest following WWII. [www.campinginfo.org/historyofcamping.php](http://www.campinginfo.org/historyofcamping.php), (accessed January 13, 2014).

<sup>961</sup> “Resolutions of Federation of Western Outdoor Clubs,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December 1953, 20.

<sup>962</sup> Statement of U.S. Grant 3rd Relative to S.500,” 16.

<sup>963</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: Integrity of the National Parks,” 9.

enough good men act now to prevent this evil.”<sup>964</sup> The implication of this message was that it was an egregious sin—a violation of that moral authority—to dam Dinosaur. The APCA writers would use patriotism to discuss the duty of its readers to act in defense of the monument.

The attempt to mobilize readers based on the inherent value of the monument took an interesting turn. Instead of using the language of war—which had been the preferred metaphor of other Council of Conservation groups and might have been second nature for a group led by someone with an impressive military lineage such as General Grant—the writers of *Planning and Civic Comment* focused on the responsibility to “protect this property of the people for this and future generations.”<sup>965</sup> The language was patriotic and emotional, and appealed to a sense of obligation to both those who had come before them and those who would come after. Patriotic arguments would have been even more effective in the 1950s; the engineers and civic planners who made up the membership of the APCA would have been, overwhelmingly, military veterans who served during the Second World War. A patriotic appeal would have resonated well.

Readers were warned that projects were risking “existing and irreplaceable values that are the heritage of the American people.”<sup>966</sup> The lands were a gift and responsibility, representative of the American spirit as a whole. This idea of the “priceless American heritage” would appear repeatedly throughout the years of coverage, and would serve as a backdrop for arguments of an obligation to the future as well: “It would be a crime to destroy this unique value which we have inherited, and cut off our heirs with a

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<sup>964</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” 6.

<sup>965</sup> “Secretary of the Interior Honored at Dinner,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1953, 34.

<sup>966</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” 1.



shilling.”<sup>967</sup> And there was concern that the dams were a “sale of our birthright for a mess of potage.”<sup>968</sup> By calling on responsibilities to our forebears and our children’s children, the APCA was able to establish deep connections to the land and declared that, “*If the American people wish to preserve this God-made wonder for the inspiration and enjoyment of themselves and future generations they must act now.*”<sup>969</sup> A focus on children and a commitment to protecting land for them to use in the future would be an important persuasive element, particularly in the post-World War II baby boom. The members of the APCA were the parents of a sharp increase in birthrates—one of the largest groups of babies to come into the world—and a sense of responsibility to leave a better world for those children probably helped this argument resonate with readers.

According to the coverage in *Planning and Civic Comment*, Americans were actively engaged in protecting Dinosaur and the river that ran through it. “The conflict of ideas and demands on water indicate that the American people must be militant if they are to retain waters that serve recreation,” it was declared.<sup>970</sup> The readers were encouraged to become informed and then be engaged actively in the campaign to save the monument. Writers recommended that “the people of the United States who own and use the national parks and monuments may let their agent and landlord, Uncle Sam, know what they expect of him.”<sup>971</sup> The idea of the government as landlord extends to the people as tenants, and the relationship between the two is one of mutual benefit. The

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<sup>967</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” 3. The term “shilling” is an odd choice as it references a form of British and Colonial currency, but on closer reading, and recognizing the misspelling, it would appear as though the writers are using the verb “to shill” or take advantage of.

<sup>968</sup> “Supplementary Report by General Grant on the Dinosaur Controversy,” 21.

<sup>969</sup> Grant, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” 2. Original emphasis.

<sup>970</sup> Worth, “Book Review,” 55.

<sup>971</sup> “UNCLE SAME IS LANDLORD,” 5.

people had a right to contact government officials and declare their expectation of responsible stewardship.

The coverage also informed readers that they were not the only citizens engaged in this fight: “those public spirited citizens who have rallied over the years to protect the national parks and monuments from commercial invasions have counted many business, industrial and professional leaders, and they have arrived at logical conclusions.”<sup>972</sup> Once again, acting in defense of Dinosaur was a patriotic endeavor, but it was also supported by experts and was going to be part of a team effort. Those who acted to save the monument were the only thinking, true patriots.

Readers were given a blueprint for how they could contact their representatives. For example, “U.S. Grant 3d ... wrote to the President of the United States to petition him most respectfully and urgently not to give his approval of the Echo Park project.”<sup>973</sup> The article continued, “These and many other letters to the President indicate the decided public opinion in favor of maintaining adequate protection to our National Park System.”<sup>974</sup>

The activity of environmental supporters was apparently effective. *Planning and Civic Comment* reported to readers that “promoters of the bill did not bring it to the floor before adjournment, evidently because unofficial polls indicated defeat of the measure due to aroused public opinion.”<sup>975</sup> If the self-congratulatory reports were not convincing, readers were also given a quote from Sherman Adams, Assistant to President Eisenhower: “We have recognized the sincerity of the opposition of some of the

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<sup>972</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: What is a Sound Business Decision,” 6.

<sup>973</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: National Parks in Jeopardy,” 4.

<sup>974</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: Conservation Problems in the National Parks,” 4.

<sup>975</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: Danger to Dinosaur in Second Session of Congress,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1955, 8.

constituent organization of this body, as well as public criticism.”<sup>976</sup> The campaign to defeat the proposed Echo Park Dam was successful, in large part due to the activity of the APCA and other groups of the Council of Conservationists.

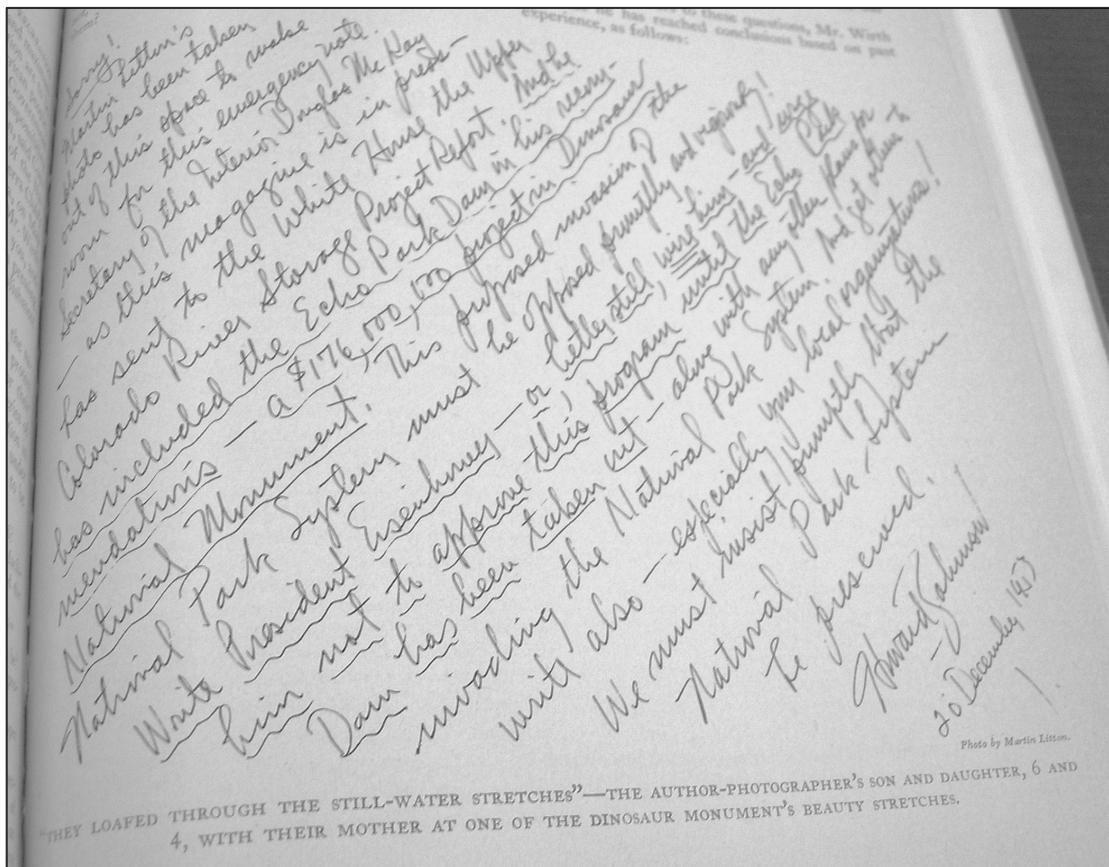
The discussion of the Dinosaur National Monument controversy in *Planning and Civic Comment* was substantial. The coverage focused on the importance of the National Park System and its value to the American people, the logic of considering alternative sites, and the calculations that justified the Echo Park project. And finally, attempts to mobilize readers were strengthened by connections to the generations of Americans who had preserved pristine areas as well as the record-breaking number of Baby Boomers that would follow. The American Planning and Civic Association’s mission to use land efficiently and wisely had an influence on the items that appeared in the quarterly magazine. From brief paragraphs to complete reproductions of congressional testimony, readers were kept fully informed and encouraged to enter the debate that was raging. The members of the APCA would not be the only people hearing this call to act; the Wilderness Society was mobilizing their readers as well.

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<sup>976</sup> “Watch Service Report,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December 1955, 38.

## CHAPTER 11

### THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY: THE TIME IS NOW!



#### *The Living Wilderness*

The Autumn 1953 issue of *The Living Wilderness* was ready for the press. That was the first number of what would be a running series in the quarterly magazine dedicated to highlighting the more than 160 national parks and monuments across the country. The issue also included excerpts and photos from Martin Litton's *Los Angeles*

*Times* article about his family trip through Dinosaur.<sup>977</sup> Litton described in great detail the adventure he shared with his four-year-old daughter and seven-year-old son, “merrily riding rubber boats through the ruggedest canyons the Green river has to offer—in the heartland of Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>978</sup> As readers leafed through the magazine, they encountered a surprise, though. Four pages into Litton’s article, a desperate plea appeared in place of a photograph. A handwritten note began: “Sorry! Martin Litton’s photo has been taken out of this space to make room for this emergency note.”<sup>979</sup> The note from Howard Zahniser, the president of the Wilderness Society, reported that Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay had recommended that Echo Park Dam be included in the Colorado River Storage Project. Zahniser pleaded with readers to take action in defense of Dinosaur. The caption beneath the note read, “‘They loafed through the still-water stretches’—the author-photographer’s son and daughter, 6 and 4, with their mother at one of the Dinosaur Monument’s beauty stretches.”<sup>980</sup> Zahniser’s handwritten note had been added to the magazine layout in such a hurry that there was not even time to remove the caption. The campaign to save Dinosaur National Monument was moving swiftly and conservation groups, including the Wilderness Society, were acting to save it.

The Wilderness Society was founded when a group of four nature enthusiasts decided to establish an organization dedicated “to save the vanishing wilderness and

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<sup>977</sup> Martin Litton, “Children Run Dinosaur Rapids,” *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1953, 26-30. Litton was a prominent writer for the *Los Angeles Times* and a vocal opponent of the Echo Park Dam proposal.

<sup>978</sup> Martin Litton, “Children in Boats Run Utah Rapids,” *Los Angeles Times*. August 30, 1953.

<sup>979</sup> Howard Zahniser, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1953, 29.

<sup>980</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1953, 29.

inspire Americans to care for our wildlands.”<sup>981</sup> By the end of 1934, the group of founding members had grown to eight: Harold Anderson, Harvey Broome, Bernard Frank, Aldo Leopold, Benton Mackaye, Bob Marshall, Ernest Oberholtzer, and Robert Sterling Yard.<sup>982</sup> These were some of the most prominent conservationists of the day. Among them were an accountant, a bureaucrat, a lawyer, a university professor, two forestry experts, a landscaper, and a journalist.<sup>983</sup> It would seem they had all that they needed to organize a club—including a wealthy benefactor to help keep the group afloat through the lean times.<sup>984</sup>

Based in Washington, D. C., the group worked to keep wild areas “sound-proof as well as sight-proof from our increasingly mechanized life.”<sup>985</sup> Olaus Murie, who had been a close friend of Bob Marshall, worked with the Society starting in 1937. Murie was a biologist with experience in field research and an obsession for “high-latitude wilderness.”<sup>986</sup> He served as executive director of the Wilderness Society from 1950 to 1957. Working alongside Murie as executive secretary of the Wilderness Society and editor of *The Living Wilderness* was publicity man Howard Zahniser. A former public information officer for the US Biological Survey, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Department of Agriculture, Zahniser was

an unlikely sort to lead the Wilderness Society. An unassuming man who did not seek the public spotlight, he lacked the rugged outdoor bearing of wilderness

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<sup>981</sup> The Wilderness Society, “History,” <http://wilderness.org/article/wilderness-timeline>, (accessed March 21, 2014).

<sup>982</sup> “The Wilderness Society 75 years: 1935-2010,” *Wilderness*, 2009/2010, 26-27.

<sup>983</sup> The Wilderness Society, “Founders,” <http://wilderness.org/bios/founders>, (accessed March 21, 2014).

<sup>984</sup> Bob Marshall, one of the first of the eight to suggest the Wilderness Society, was also independently wealthy, and he gave part of his holdings to the society when he died.

<sup>985</sup> “The Wilderness Society 75 years: 1935-2010,” *Wilderness*, 2009/2010, 26-27.

<sup>986</sup> Bill Vogt, “O.J. Murie,” *National Wildlife*, October/November 1992, 26.

luminaries like Robert Marshall and Sigurd Olson, and the scientific credentials of Olaus Murie and Aldo Leopold.<sup>987</sup>

Zahniser used his journalistic experience to help communicate the power and beauty of nature to readers. He also played a key role in building a cooperative relationship with other groups, including several of the groups that would comprise the Council of Conservationists.<sup>988</sup> Zahniser helped draft a national policy on wilderness preservation and he would be memorialized as the father of the Wilderness Act of 1964.<sup>989</sup>

Under the guidance of Murie and Zahniser, *The Living Wilderness* introduced a format designed to connect readers to nature through the use of more narrative articles and photography. It was a quarterly magazine intended to “mobilize support for wilderness preservation and tell our members, other organizations, and the public about proposals that threaten . . . preservation.”<sup>990</sup> With an 8½ by 11-inch format and a back page dedicated to the bylaws of the Wilderness Society and the purpose of the publication, this magazine was free to paid members. The content was more focused on general outdoor adventure with articles on various types of outdoor activities, visiting nature parks, spring in the eastern mountains, and learning to appreciate the desert landscape. From 1950 to 1956, the coverage of the proposed Echo Park dams inside Dinosaur National Monument was detailed. Items ranged in size but often appeared in the recurring column News Items of Special Interest.<sup>991</sup> Five issues referenced Echo Park or

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<sup>987</sup> Mark Harvey, “Architect of the Wilderness Act,” *Wilderness*, December 2004/2005, 30.

<sup>988</sup> Harvey, “Architect of the Wilderness Act,” 30.

<sup>989</sup> “Howard Zahniser, 58, Is Dead; A Leader in U.S. Conservation,” *New York Times*, May 6, 1964.

<sup>990</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Winter-Spring 1956, 59.

<sup>991</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, 47, 50, and 55

Dinosaur on the cover<sup>992</sup> and of these, three of those issues featured full cover photographs of the monument.<sup>993</sup> Clearly the fight over Echo Park Dam was an important issue for The Wilderness Society to have devoted so much valuable print space to its every twist and turn. The attention paid to the Echo Park dam proposal in *The Living Wilderness* continued after the issue was resolved and was held up as an example of how effective conservation groups could be when they participated in a strategic communication effort.

The first item in *The Living Wilderness* to discuss Dinosaur National Monument appeared in the Spring 1949-50 issue. It was one paragraph informing readers that a public hearing with the Secretary of the Interior was scheduled for April 3, 1950. Readers were encouraged to “make their interests known.”<sup>994</sup> The Spring 1950 magazine featured four items discussing Dinosaur. A six-page editorial detailed the plans for the dams inside the national monument. It included a photograph of Steamboat Rock and a map of the monument showing the areas that reservoirs would flood. It also gave a narrative timeline of the controversy. The article presented information on the establishment of the monument, the 1928 compact, and editorials and speeches on the current debate.<sup>995</sup> Several items in the magazine explained changes that were taking place at other conservation groups, such as a leadership change at the National Parks Association,<sup>996</sup> and a the adoption of a resolution by the Izaak Walton League.<sup>997</sup>

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<sup>992</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, 46, 47, 50, 55, 57

<sup>993</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, 47, 50, and 55

<sup>994</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1949-50, 25.

<sup>995</sup> “Defending Dinosaur National Monument,” *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 21-26.

<sup>996</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 33-34.

<sup>997</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 35-37.



The Summer 1950 issue reviewed Interior Secretary Oscar Chapman's decision to support the Echo Park dam as part of the Colorado River Storage Project and the response in the *New York Times*.<sup>998</sup> The Autumn magazine was filled with many items dedicated to Dinosaur. Margaret Murie, wife of Olaus Murie, shared an account of her visit to the monument, spanned five pages, and featured black-and-white photographs of the canyons and rock formations found there. She wondered, of the view she encountered, "Will that be under water, too?"<sup>999</sup> Readers glimpsed excerpts from the journals of Mildred E. Baker, who had run the Green and Colorado Rivers in 1940.<sup>1000</sup> The next eight pages of the magazine featured a reprint of General Ulysses S. Grant III's statement at the Chapman hearing.<sup>1001</sup> This was an almost exact reproduction of the article that appeared in the September 1950 issue of *Planning and Civic Comment*, but the Wilderness Society included photos and a map for context.<sup>1002</sup> As with Grant's writing in other publications and his testimony at hearings, the article leaned heavily on calculations of evaporation rates and kilowatt-hours and it provided three tables for comparison between the proposed fixtures and possible alternate locations. Finally, the News Items of Special Interest column had multiple items related to Dinosaur.<sup>1003</sup> Readers were informed of articles of interest in *National Parks Magazine*, the *Saturday Evening Post*, and *The Christian Science Monitor*.<sup>1004</sup> The magazine also reprinted a

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<sup>998</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*,

<sup>999</sup> Margaret E. Murie, "A Matter of Choice," *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 14.

<sup>1000</sup> Mildred E. Baker, "Lifelong Inspiration," *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 16.

<sup>1001</sup> Ulysses S. Grant III, "The Dinosaur Dam Sites Are Not Needed," *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 17-24.

<sup>1002</sup> Ulysses S. Grant III, "Let's Not Liquidate Dinosaur National Monument," *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1950, 1-6.

<sup>1003</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 38-41.

<sup>1004</sup> Devereux Butcher, "This Is Dinosaur," *National Parks*, October-December 1950, 123-155.

statement from the National Park Service to President Eisenhower's Water Resources Policy Commission.<sup>1005</sup>

The coverage in *The Living Wilderness* in 1951 largely appeared in the News and Special Interest column. The Spring issue referenced a speech by the National Parks Association's Fred Packard at the annual meeting of the National Wilderness Federation.<sup>1006</sup> The column detailed the unceremonious departure of National Park Service Director Newton Drury. The article described the back-and-forth conservation among leaders, government officials, and newspapers over Drury's resignation.<sup>1007</sup>

An article in the Summer 1951 magazine announced that the labor union, the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), had joined the effort to protect Dinosaur and "advocate an alternative reservoir program—substituting Cross Mountain, Gray Canyon, and Desolation dams for the Echo Park and Split Mountain dams."<sup>1008</sup> The article also described a pamphlet that nearly twenty organizations had cooperatively produced and distributed.<sup>1009</sup> The Winter issue opened with a note from Olaus J. Murie stating, "We

The title "This Is Dinosaur" was used for several projects, including articles, a book, and a film. It was not consistently capitalized in reporting about projects. For ease of reading, the capitalization has been standardized in this project.

Bernard DeVoto, "Shall We Let Them Ruin Our National Parks?" *Saturday Evening Post*, 17-19, 42-48.

Edward C. Graves, "Park Defenders: Group Seeks to Prevent Flooding of Canyons," *The Christian Science Monitor*. August 3, 1950.

<sup>1005</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 40-41.

<sup>1006</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1951, 38-39.

<sup>1007</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1951, 41-45.

<sup>1008</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1951, 24.

The Congress of Industrial Organizations would be familiar to modern readers as the precursor to the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations—the AFL-CIO—one of America's most powerful unions. AFL-CIO, "About the AFL-CIO," <http://www.aflcio.org/About>, (accessed March 31, 2014).

<sup>1009</sup> "News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1951, 26-27.

"Will You DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM?" Sierra Club, February 1951.

face the dangers round about us. Some would destroy the basic character of the beautiful canyons of Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>1010</sup> Next, Arthur Carhart’s article from *National Parks* was quoted: “If park qualities of the rank of those now existing in Dinosaur can be thus prostituted, no park can be considered immune from similar attack.”<sup>1011</sup> Other articles in the magazine detailed editorial debates and personal correspondence between conservation leaders and bureaucrats.<sup>1012</sup>

The coverage in 1952 was limited to four articles. Two of the stories were in the News Items of Special Interest: one detailing the discrepancy in evaporation rate calculations<sup>1013</sup> and another calling for a thorough review of the alternative sites.<sup>1014</sup> The Autumn issue included an eight-page feature story written by Philip Hyde and his photographs.<sup>1015</sup> Hyde described Dinosaur National Monument as a place where

a geologic story is unfolded that captures the imagination and stimulates the mind. On every side can be seen evidences of primal forces in operation. . . . The whole story is there to read; the domes and canyon walls of sedimentary rock carved by erosion; the river, transporter of materials; and the beds of layer upon layer of sediment ancient erosion cycles.<sup>1016</sup>

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This pamphlet was distributed with the February 1952 issue of the *Sierra Club Bulletin*. For more details of the pamphlet, see Chapter 3.

<sup>1010</sup> Olaus J. Murie, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1951-52, 1.

<sup>1011</sup> Arthur H. Carhart, “The Menaced Dinosaur Monument,” *National Parks*, January-March 1952, 19-30. Quoted in “Dinosaur National Monument,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1951-52, 29.

<sup>1012</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1951-52, 31-32.

<sup>1013</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1952, 32.

<sup>1014</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1951-52, 23-24.

<sup>1015</sup> Philip Hyde, “Nature’s Climax at Dinosaur,” *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1952, 7-14.

<sup>1016</sup> Hyde, “Nature’s Climax at Dinosaur,” 7.

And in winter, J. W. Penfold of the Izaak Walton League addressed the readers. He declared that “wilderness preservation, in the last analysis, is land management. It is not separate from land management. It is an integral part of the overall land pattern.”<sup>1017</sup>

As one solution for the Dinosaur debate, the editors of *The Living Wilderness* began advocating for the Green River Canyons National Park in 1953.<sup>1018</sup> Establishing this park would “give the fullest protection to the magnificent canyons of the Green and Yampa Rivers.”<sup>1019</sup> The Autumn issue prominently featured Martin Litton’s *Los Angeles Times* article that described his family’s trip down the rivers.<sup>1020</sup> The magazine also included articles that addressed the importance of planning for and funding the national parks.<sup>1021</sup> The issue delivered a surprise as well: Howard Zahniser’s handwritten note pleading for readers to write letters in defense of Dinosaur.<sup>1022</sup> A photo of Hardings Hole in Yampa Canyon graced the cover in Winter 1953-54.<sup>1023</sup> The editor’s note inside the front cover explained that

never has there been a time since the organization of The Wilderness Society when there have been so many threats with which to contend all at once—so many problems pressing for immediate study and recommendation. Yet never has there been a time when public consideration of the wilderness idea and its development in public policy has been so frequent and extensive.<sup>1024</sup>

The congressional hearings for the Colorado River Storage Project occupied much of the Winter magazine. Highlights and excerpts were published from the remarks of the

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<sup>1017</sup> J. W. Penfold, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1952-53, 1.

<sup>1018</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1953, 30-31.

<sup>1019</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1953, 30.

<sup>1020</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1953, 26-28.

Litton, “Children in Boats Run Utah Rapids,” August 30, 1953.

<sup>1021</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1953, 28-29.

<sup>1022</sup> Howard Zahniser, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1953, 29.

<sup>1023</sup> Philip Hyde, “Hardings Hole, Yampa Canyon, Dinosaur National Monument,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1953-54, cover.

<sup>1024</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1953-54, 24.

American Planning and Civic Association's Ulysses S. Grant III, the Izaak Walton League's J. W. Penfold, David Brower of the Sierra Club, the National Parks Association's executive secretary Fred Packard, and Olaus Murie's statement on behalf of the Wilderness Society delivered by Howard Zahniser.<sup>1025</sup> Three pages of the article were dedicated to photographs of the monument and one page showed before-and-after photos from Hetch Hetchy. A small note was inserted in the top left corner of the last page of the article. It pleaded with readers to contact elected officials: "URGE THE DEFEAT OF THE ECHO PARK DAM PROPOSAL."<sup>1026</sup>

The controversy hit full steam in 1954. President Eisenhower's public support for the Echo Park dams and the congressional hearings had placed the Colorado River Storage Project in the national spotlight. Coverage in *The Living Wilderness* began with the mournful declaration that "conservationists opposing the Echo Park Dam were more on the defensive than ever."<sup>1027</sup> The Autumn issue showcased a cover photo of Steamboat Rock and called the controversy "a great debate over our national policy of park preservation."<sup>1028</sup> An editorial declared that

we are principals in this debate, and we must keep ever alert both in argument and refutation, insisting that the threatened invasion of the Dinosaur National Monument be turned back and the sanctity of our National Park System reaffirmed and thus strengthened.<sup>1029</sup>

Fred Packard with the National Parks Association reviewed two films about Dinosaur, *Wilderness River Trail* and *This Is Dinosaur*. He suggested that "they deserve wide

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<sup>1025</sup> "Dinosaur Hearings," *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1953-54, 31-39.

<sup>1026</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1953, 38. Original emphasis.

<sup>1027</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1954, ii.

<sup>1028</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1954, cover.

<sup>1029</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1954, ii.

circulation, and are performing valuable service to the welfare of the national parks.”<sup>1030</sup>

Just a few pages later, readers saw photographs of two teletypes, one from the Associated Press and one from the United Press.<sup>1031</sup> The images were part of an article that declared “conservationists’ efforts to prevent invasion of the National Park System were rewarded” when Congress ended its 83rd session without approving the CRSP or its dams.<sup>1032</sup>

The Winter issue that closed out 1954 began with an editorial warning that “those concerned with wilderness preservation as a national policy should be taking a good look at our national parks and the policies governing their protection and use.”<sup>1033</sup> The Sierra Club’s David Brower reviewed the book, *This Is Dinosaur: Echo Park Country and Its Magic Rivers*. Brower, who had helped publish the book, called it “the culmination of heroic effort to make this superb unit of the National Park System better known to the people and their Congress.”<sup>1034</sup> In yet another review, J. W. Penfold discussed a brochure produced by the Upper Colorado River Commission, *Tomorrow’s Playground for Millions of Americans*.<sup>1035</sup> The book review included an image of Steamboat Rock next to a scale version of the Washington Monument to show the size and magnitude of the area. Penfold wrote that

as a whole this brochure can be summarized as an effort to convince the people that they must finance a huge dam at this spot so as to get access roads to the

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<sup>1030</sup> Fred M. Packard, “Two Dinosaur Films,” *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1954, 16.

<sup>1031</sup> “Congress and Conservation,” *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1954, 26-28.

<sup>1032</sup> “Congress and Conservation,” *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1954, 26.

<sup>1033</sup> “Our National Parks,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1954-55, II.

<sup>1034</sup> “*This Is Dinosaur*,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1954-55, 25.

<sup>1035</sup> J. W. Penfold, “Slick Paper with Slick Words,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1954-55, 27-30.

Upper Colorado River Commission. 1954. *Tomorrow’s Playground for Millions of Americans*. Grand Junction, CO: The Commission.

scenic areas which the reservoir will flood and destroy, to create dubious values which can be more easily and cheaply developed elsewhere.<sup>1036</sup>

Readers were informed, in the News Items of Interest section, that the Wilderness Society had signed on as part of the Council of Conservationists. This coalition was “directing the campaign to alert Congress to the immediate and long-range dangers inherent in the proposed construction of Echo Park dam as part of the Colorado River Storage Project.”<sup>1037</sup> It was an optimistic tone on which to end 1955.

The Winter-Spring 1955-56 issue was dedicated to declaring the “Echo Park Controversy Resolved.”<sup>1038</sup> An editorial predicted that the protection of Dinosaur National Monument would create a “continuing spirit of good will [that] can prove to be the most important part of the Echo Park victory.”<sup>1039</sup> The News Items of Interest section was twenty pages long and composed entirely of stories about Echo Park. First was a timeline of the Council of Conservationists’ efforts to stop Dinosaur dams as part of the CRSP. The section also honored several elected officials who had played a part in the success. Coverage included photos of Representative John P. Saylor (PA), Senator Clinton P. Anderson (NM), Representative William A. Dawson (UT), Wayne N. Aspinall (CO), Representative Lee Metcalf (MT), Senator Richard L Neuberger (OR), Senator Paul H. Douglas (IL), and Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (MN), and captions that described the roles each had played in the campaign.

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<sup>1036</sup> Penfold, “Slick Paper with Slick Words,” 30.

<sup>1037</sup> “The Echo Park Issue,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1954-55, 31.

<sup>1038</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Winter-Spring 1955-56, cover.

<sup>1039</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Winter-Spring 1955-56, ii.

Another article asked the question “How Strong Are Conservatives?”<sup>1040</sup> After calculating the margin of victory in the CRSP vote, it was concluded that the power of conservationists “amounts to 170 or 180 votes.”<sup>1041</sup> In a House of Representatives with 435 voting members, conservationists could have influenced more than half of the votes. The next article in the issue focused on the congressional hearings.<sup>1042</sup> It detailed the testimony of various conservation leaders in front of House and Senate committees in 1955. Finally, writers explained the “Significance of Echo Park Victory.”<sup>1043</sup> The article reprinted the letter sent from the Council of Conservationists to Representative Saylor. The letter argued that “to tolerate the possibility of building the Echo Park dam would certainly jeopardize this public policy of national park preservation.”<sup>1044</sup>

Throughout 1956, articles in *The Living Wilderness* referenced the Echo Park victory as proof of the strength of the conservation movement and predicted future triumphs. The Dinosaur fight was “a demonstration of public support that in large measure paved the way for successful initiation of ‘Mission 66,’ the ten-year program of rehabilitation and improvement of the national parks and monuments.”<sup>1045</sup> Editors also kept readers updated on the push to establish Dinosaur National Park.<sup>1046</sup> The coverage in 1956 ended with an issue dedicated to the proposed Wilderness Bill. Encouraged by the success of the Dinosaur campaign, conservationists began promoting the legislation that

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<sup>1040</sup> “How Strong Are Conservatives?” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter-Spring 1955-56, 36.

<sup>1041</sup> “How Strong Are Conservatives?” 36.

<sup>1042</sup> “1955 Echo Park Hearings,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter-Spring 1955-56, 37-

<sup>1043</sup> Significance of Echo Park Victory,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter-Spring 1955-56, 41-43.

<sup>1044</sup> Significance of Echo Park Victory,” 43.

<sup>1045</sup> Charles Callison, “Conservation in the 84th Congress,” *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1956, 23-24.

<sup>1046</sup> “Dinosaur National Park Proposed,” *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1956, 33.



would help preserve areas already set aside and establish the bureaucratic structure to better protect those areas.<sup>1047</sup>

### *A Movement Is Made*

The Echo Park dam controversy raged for seven years and was a major topic in the pages of *The Living Wilderness*. The coverage featured three main themes focused on the value of the National Park System, a call to place the dams in alternative locations, and attempts to mobilize the public. As with other Council of Conservationists groups, the national parks were discussed in terms of their beauty and described with spiritual language. Suggestions for substitute sites were often accompanied with arguments based on wisdom and logic. Finally, rallying readers usually included references to the coalition of groups that was fighting to save Dinosaur National Monument. Much of the content was comprised of quotes and excerpts from the magazines of member groups of the Council of Conservationists and newspaper editorials, more so than in other publications.

The Wilderness Society was, in large part, concerned with the value of the National Park System. The system was based on the idea that

Congress has repeatedly made plain its intention that the national parks, national monuments, and other areas constituting the National Park System are to be held free of any use which would modify or destroy the natural conditions, scenic beauty, historic or pre-historic objects, or wildlife, for the enjoyment of which these areas were given their special status.<sup>1048</sup>

Writers argued that protecting the monument depended on protecting “the park principle itself.”<sup>1049</sup> The policy had “established a well-considered policy of the Government to protect the interests and heritage of all the people in our country—and the enjoyment of

<sup>1047</sup> “A Special Issue Devoted to the Wilderness Bill,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter-Spring 1956-57.

<sup>1048</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 40.

<sup>1049</sup> J. W. Penfold, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1952-53, 1.

the citizens of other nations who come here to see and appreciate the wonders.”<sup>1050</sup> The National Park System was “less than three quarters of one percent of the area of the United States and contained only sites universally acknowledged to be supreme in beauty, grandeur, and spectacle.”<sup>1051</sup> The country was only three decades into the experiment and yet we had not yet “begun to measure the need for national parks and monuments on a national scale.”<sup>1052</sup> These places were set aside as a result of measured and systematic policy and their true value was, as of yet, unknown. They were larger than description or even imagination, and it was to be treasured and protected.

Conservationists saw the dams as “a threat to the whole concept of the national park system.”<sup>1053</sup> Editors claimed that “the greatest threat to the integrity of the national parks and monuments today comes from water control proposals.”<sup>1054</sup> They insisted that “our engineering friends keep their hands off the national parks and monuments.”<sup>1055</sup> The language gave a sense of ownership, and therefore, a duty to protect these places. The problem was that if dams were built “the fundamental precept of retaining for the use of all our people the outstanding scenic, recreational, scientific, and related values in national parks is blasted.”<sup>1056</sup> The use of terms of violence suggested that preservationists were demanding literal protection of the areas.

Beyond the value of the system, the problem was that Dinosaur National Monument was being undervalued. General Grant warned that “construction of these two

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<sup>1050</sup> U. S. Grant III, “The Dinosaur Dam Sites Are Not Needed,” *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 18.

<sup>1051</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 38. Edited to add “and contained” for clarity.

<sup>1052</sup> “Defending Dinosaur National Monument,” *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 25.

<sup>1053</sup> “Dinosaur Hearings,” *The Living Wilderness* Winter 1953-54, 38.

<sup>1054</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 41.

<sup>1055</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1951, 39.

<sup>1056</sup> “Dinosaur National Monument,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1951-52, 31.

dams will destroy the character of a unique national monument having special scenic, geological, archeological, and recreational values.”<sup>1057</sup> It was a drive to protect something vulnerable. For readers who had never seen or even heard of Dinosaur, *The Living Wilderness* quoted a *New York Times* editorial that waxed poetic:

The very names breathe some of the romance and the beauty of the western mountain country: Whirlpool Canyon, Upper Disaster Falls, the Canyon of Lodore, and so on . . . one of the most fascinating (and least known) of all the country's treasure-houses of scenic wilderness.<sup>1058</sup>

The beauty of the monument was mentioned multiple times. It was described as a “natural beauty,”<sup>1059</sup> a “unique beauty,”<sup>1060</sup> and a “pristine beauty.”<sup>1061</sup> Margaret Murie described the “world of the Green and the Yampa. The fog kept rolling back, and the colors, rose and rust and saffron, topped by the green slopes of pine and juniper, were warmed by sunlight.”<sup>1062</sup> Dinosaur was relatively unknown and was threatened with “irreparable damage.”<sup>1063</sup> The poetic language gave a sense of a place to be felt. Its measure never truly known, the loss would be costly to the community and the soul.

Much of the language around the Dinosaur National Monument focused on protecting a sacred space. According to editors, “if Dinosaur National Monument is desecrated certain values will be lost forever, values that are far more important than values of power.”<sup>1064</sup> To desecrate the land would make it less pure. The idea was that

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<sup>1057</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dam Sites Are Not Needed,” 17.

<sup>1058</sup> “Defending Dinosaur National Monument,” *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 24.

<sup>1059</sup> Murie, “A Matter of Choice,” 14.

<sup>1060</sup> “Defending Dinosaur National Monument,” 24.

<sup>1061</sup> Packard, “Two Dinosaur Films,” 16.

<sup>1062</sup> Murie, “A Matter of Choice,” 12.

<sup>1063</sup> Dinosaur Hearings, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1953-54, 31.

<sup>1064</sup> “Significance of Echo Park Victory,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter-Spring 1953-54, 41.

preserved areas had to be kept “inviolable from commercialization.”<sup>1065</sup> Conservationists wanted “a reaffirmation of the sanctity of all the areas which the Nation has dedicated for preservation.”<sup>1066</sup> These places were holy, not unlike a church or memorial.

It was the responsibility of government officials to protect and guard the areas. In an open letter to the Newton Drury, the Director of the National Park Service, conservationists declared him

the chief custodian of our country's greatest treasures, unique and irreplaceable, the superlative works of nature upon our land and the monuments of the history of our people. You have guarded these treasures with devotion and with courage as a sacred trust on behalf of countless generations to come, and you have known how to draw from them inspiration and enjoyment for the generations of the present.<sup>1067</sup>

The language suggested the areas were of the highest order and the greatest gifts. Much of the coverage included demands that the areas be protected, so they must “remain unspoiled.”<sup>1068</sup> And it was the responsibility of conservationists to help keep it that way. In a drive for modernization, the American people were developing wild areas across the country and it would be to the “detriment of our opportunities to enjoy our fair share of mental and spiritual satisfactions.”<sup>1069</sup> The inspiration people would find in Dinosaur was referenced repeatedly. It held “scenic and inspirational values.”<sup>1070</sup> National parks gave the people “free inspiration.”<sup>1071</sup> And if a dam was built, the “unique educational

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<sup>1065</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 35.

<sup>1066</sup> “Significance of Echo Park Victory,” 41.

<sup>1067</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1951, 44.

<sup>1068</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1951, 27.

<sup>1069</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 41.

<sup>1070</sup> “Defending Dinosaur National Monument,” 24.

<sup>1071</sup> Margaret E. Murie, “A Matter of Choice,” 14.

and inspirational values would be destroyed--and quite unnecessarily.”<sup>1072</sup> The idea of inspiration and faith was part of our human experience. General Grant worried that

our industrial civilization is creating an ever greater need for the average man, woman, and child, to re-establish contact with nature, to be inspired by and appreciate the wonders of nature, and to be diverted from the whirling wheels of machinery and of chance.<sup>1073</sup>

From an engineer, readers were warned of the toll of modern life. Grant warned that the loud, chaotic nation we were becoming would soon find itself in desperate need of a quiet escape.

The religious references were not always so indirect. Ernest Griffith claimed there was “God in the wilderness.”<sup>1074</sup> He observed that “God has written two Bibles, one of the record of the struggle of a people for finding God and the other the record of His handiwork in the forest and stream.”<sup>1075</sup> Griffith connected the struggle in the Old and New Testaments to follow God to the modern struggle to find evidence of God: both were a search for meaning and salvation. The areas preserved in the National Park System were sacred and it would be sacrilegious to place a dam inside one.

The second theme was a call to place the dams in alternative locations. The Colorado River Storage Project was necessary for Western states, but “conservationists were somewhat hopeful that Secretary Chapman would yet come to the defense of the park system in view of the alternatives so convincingly presented.”<sup>1076</sup> In fact, the National Parks Association’s Fred Packard stated that “of 134 proposals for dams on the

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<sup>1072</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dam Sites Are Not Needed,” 24.

<sup>1073</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dam Sites Are Not Needed,” 18.

<sup>1074</sup> Ernest S. Griffith, “Our Wilderness Needs,” *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 37.

<sup>1075</sup> Griffith, “Our Wilderness Needs,” 37.

<sup>1076</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1951, 26.

Colorado River, we have opposed three and one phase of a fourth.”<sup>1077</sup> It was important to recognize the need for water. Western expansion left more people dependent on reclamation projects. The CRSP was necessary, but Echo Park dam was not. Multiple items expressed the idea that conservationists did not oppose the project, but “alternative dam sites outside of Dinosaur are both available and feasible.”<sup>1078</sup> The suggestion of replacement sites was based on two basic ideas. First and foremost, “the alternative program would safeguard the monument.”<sup>1079</sup> Second, “the total alternative program here proposed would result ultimately—not only in preservation of the monument—but in an economy in expenditures and a greater return in power productions and water storage.”<sup>1080</sup>

For editors of *The Living Wilderness*, the Dinosaur dams were ridiculous and unnecessary. They asked, “What if it can be had in some other way than by damming up the beautiful canyons of the Green and the Yampa in this particular ‘convenient’ spot?”<sup>1081</sup> Convenience was not a sufficient enough reason. Conservationists argued that “dam sites exist in other places in the upper Colorado system”<sup>1082</sup> and water “can be impounded equally well at other sites.”<sup>1083</sup> The clarion call was to “stop Echo Park or stop the whole thing.”<sup>1084</sup> Council of Conservationists groups were making suggestions and they were willing to compromise. It was an attempt to be appear reasonable and fair.

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<sup>1077</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1951, 39.

<sup>1078</sup> “Dinosaur Hearings,” 31.

<sup>1079</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1951, 25. “Which” removed from quote for clarity.

<sup>1080</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dams Sites Are Not Needed,” 23.

<sup>1081</sup> Murie, “A Matter of Choice,” 14.

<sup>1082</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dams Sites Are Not Needed,” 18.

<sup>1083</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1951, 27.

<sup>1084</sup> “Dinosaur Hearings,” 31.

The second argument for alternatives was that the Echo Park site was simply not a logical choice for the dams. Mathematically, “estimates as do exist regarding costs very definitely favor these proposed substitutes rather than the objectionable Echo Park and split Mountain projects.”<sup>1085</sup> The debate surrounding the impoundment and evaporation rates took place in front of Congress and in the pages of *The Living Wilderness* and in the pages of other Council of Conservationists groups. Ulysses S. Grant III’s calculations and arguments were offered. The mathematics supported alternate sites and conservationists claimed that the Echo Park project was based on “guesses,” rendering the plan “quite meaningless.”<sup>1086</sup> The implication was that the proponents had not thought the project through.

If the calculations were wrong, then what was behind the push? Conservationists claimed that dam proponents were being either devious, or duped. Grant pointed out that “there is always a temptation to grab a park for any other purpose and public opinion has been stirred up under a misunderstanding.”<sup>1087</sup> They also mentioned the “ersatz park recreation that can be provided.”<sup>1088</sup> Recreation already existed in the monument—hiking, camping, river-riding, and more—yet proponents were touting the benefits of a reservoir that would bury most of that. But even more powerful was the accusation that the dams were based on an “erroneous and misleading argument of an alleged intolerable evaporation loss.”<sup>1089</sup> The campaign was described as a “scheme”<sup>1090</sup> and “wanton

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<sup>1085</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dams Sites Are Not Needed,” 23.

<sup>1086</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1951, 25.

<sup>1087</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dams Sites Are Not Needed,” 24.

<sup>1088</sup> “Dinosaur Hearings,” 37.

<sup>1089</sup> “Dinosaur Hearings,” 31.

<sup>1090</sup> “Defending Dinosaur National Monument,” 24.

destruction of irreplaceable values.”<sup>1091</sup> And the propaganda was filled with “with slick words chosen to deceive and confuse.”<sup>1092</sup> The language accused proponents of intentional falsehoods. This was a plan of smoke-and-mirrors, designed to trick lawmakers and citizens.

The project was described with several creative analogies. Damming the rivers in Dinosaur was a plan to “kill the goose that lays the golden eggs.”<sup>1093</sup> Readers were told that math errors were “red herrings [that] have got into the upper Colorado.”<sup>1094</sup> And the dams were an attempt to sneak in a

Trojan horse, [that would] secretly pass through the wall established by law to protect the natural wonders and play places of the American people, and by an intensive campaign of propaganda “sell” the local inhabitants and their leaders the project.<sup>1095</sup>

The plan was unnecessary, foolish, and perhaps even sinister. It was carefully strategized trickery. And in the decade immediately following World War II, the accusation of propaganda was not without a strong negative connotation. The only solution was to mobilize the public to stop the project.

The third theme to emerge in the Echo Park coverage in *The Living Wilderness* was an attempt to rally the readers to defend the monument. The magazine had grown in readership and editors were aiming to “present the full text of significant discussions of wilderness . . . to provide a source of information in detail for those leaders of conservation and thought who have the special interest thus served.”<sup>1096</sup> Ernest Griffith believed there was “a very wide backlog of support as yet unorganized in the sense of not

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<sup>1091</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dams Sites Are Not Needed,” 24.

<sup>1092</sup> Penfold, “Slick Paper with Slick Words,” 30.

<sup>1093</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 26.

<sup>1094</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dams Sites Are Not Needed,” 20.

<sup>1095</sup> *Ibid*, 17.

<sup>1096</sup> “This Winter,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1953-54, ii.



having found its way into the existing organizations.”<sup>1097</sup> The missing piece was an effort to educate the public. Editors “predicted that the opposition of conservationists will not only continue but will increase as the nation becomes more fully aware of the choice between preserving these great canyons and using them for reservoirs.”<sup>1098</sup> The writers and editors called for “a demonstration by conservation and other public-interest groups of a national determination to protect the threatened monument.”<sup>1099</sup> The call was to “the citizen owners of the reservation,”<sup>1100</sup> creating a sense of ownership, to “make sure our National Park System shall not be needlessly invaded or despoiled.”<sup>1101</sup> Passionate pleas were made: “*If the American people wish to preserve this Godmade wonder for the inspiration and enjoyment of themselves and future generations, they must act now.*”<sup>1102</sup> There was a sense of ownership, and even obligation, to protect these areas for posterity. As citizens, this was a patriotic duty.

The Wilderness Society was specific about what actions the public should take. Readers were repeatedly urged to write to elected officials.<sup>1103</sup> Even after they had written once, readers were told, on the cover, to “*WRITE AGAIN TO [YOUR] SENATORS AND TO THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AND URGE THE DEFEAT OF*

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<sup>1097</sup> Griffith, “Our Wilderness Needs,” 36.

<sup>1098</sup> “Defending Dinosaur National Monument,” 21.

<sup>1099</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1952-53, 23-24.

<sup>1100</sup> “Dinosaur National Monument,” 29.

<sup>1101</sup> News Items of Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1954-55, 31.

<sup>1102</sup> Grant, “The Dinosaur Dam Sites Are Not Needed,” 18. Original emphasis.

<sup>1103</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1951, 24.

News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1953, 30.

“Dinosaur Hearings,” 38.

THE ECHO PARK DAM PROPOSAL"<sup>1104</sup> This note, in all capital letters and italics, helped communicate the importance of public action to help protect Dinosaur.

More than writing, though, readers were informed of multiple ways to get educated and get involved in the debate. Reprints of articles from other publications including the *Saturday Evening Post* and *National Parks* were made available free of charge to readers who requested them.<sup>1105</sup> The campaign was extensive and multifaceted. Readers were encouraged to help “distribute widely”<sup>1106</sup> the pamphlet *Will You DAM the Scenic Wild Canyons of Our National Park System?* And the book *This Is Dinosaur* was described as an “effort to make this superb unit of the National Park System better known to the people and their Congress.”<sup>1107</sup> Much of this effort to educate the public required cooperation among multiple conservation organizations, and the details of that effort were described in *The Living Wilderness*:

It is for organizations such as yours and mine, the Izaak Walton League and The Wilderness Society, to stand four-square for the fact that some areas at least in this country belong to the nation, and not only as it is today, but as it will be one hundred or two hundred years from now; that these areas shall not be sacrificed for the immediate commercial advantage of the lumbermen and hotel keepers but shall be preserved sacred and inviolate for the generations to come.<sup>1108</sup>

The names of the several groups involved with the Council of Conservationists and their leaders were common in *The Living Wilderness*: “the opposition—which includes such

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<sup>1104</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1953-54, front cover. Original emphasis. “THEIR” changed to “YOUR” for clarity.

<sup>1105</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1950, 38. “Dinosaur National Monument,” 31.

<sup>1106</sup> News Items of Special Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Summer 1951, 26.

<sup>1107</sup> “*This Is Dinosaur*,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1954-55, 25.

<sup>1108</sup> Griffith, “Our Wilderness Needs,” 36.

organizations as the American Planning and Civic Association, The National Parks Association, the Izaak Walton League, The Wilderness Society, and the Sierra Club.”<sup>1109</sup> The CoC was also mentioned often.<sup>1110</sup> This coalition was described as bringing “together the different parts of the faith that is in us.”<sup>1111</sup> The language created a sense of strength and camaraderie. Readers were no longer just writing letters, they were involved in a kind of missionary work. They were being asked to invest the time to learn enough about the issue that they could proselyte to others.

The conservationists gained experience from the campaign to save Dinosaur and were eager to share with supporters their plans for the future. They had successfully used major media outlets and some unorthodox mediums, such as films and targeted books, to influence the opinions of elected representatives. But perhaps the most promising outcome of the campaign was the sense of cooperation between conservation groups themselves.

Readers of *The Living Wilderness* were told that the Dinosaur campaign had helped create a more cohesive community among conservation groups. Where there had once been strife and conflict, now there was cooperation.<sup>1112</sup> The movement had engaged in a coordinated operation under the auspices of a confederation of groups united in purpose, pooling resources and talent. *The Living Wilderness* praised that, “The Council’s executive committee also included four conservation leaders, serving in this capacity as

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<sup>1109</sup> Martin Litton, “Children Run Dinosaur Rapids,” *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1953, 26.

<sup>1110</sup> “Defending Dinosaur National Monument,” *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 21.

“Congress and Conservation,” *The Living Wilderness*, Autumn 1954, 26.

News Items of Interest, *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1954-55, 31.

“Echo Park Controversy Resolved,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1955-56, 26.

<sup>1111</sup> Griffith, “Our Wilderness Needs,” 37.

<sup>1112</sup> News Items of Interest. *The Living Wilderness*, 1956, 26

individuals, rather than as representatives of organizations, but bringing to the Council the benefits of their acquaintance with the issues involved.”<sup>1113</sup> It was predicted that this new environment of cooperation would lead to successful campaigns in the future:

The great reservoir of strength of the conservation movement lies in the general public. If a single important lesson is to be drawn from the events of the 84<sup>th</sup> Congress, a lesson that can be applied in the future, this is it. The American people realize their dependence on natural resources.<sup>1114</sup>

The conservation movement had found a winning combination for future campaigns. The Echo Park strategy had created legitimacy and public support and it was going to be used again. According to Charles Callison of the National Wildlife Federation and the National Resources Council of America noted in *The Living Wilderness* that “The rule, then, if you want to win a conservative victory, is *take the issue to the public*.”<sup>1115</sup>

The themes that emerged in the Dinosaur coverage in *The Living Wilderness* mirrored those found in the other CoC organization. However, this magazine stood out for featuring so many items from other Council of Conservationists groups. The number of leaders and articles quoted in this magazine far outpaced any of the other publications. As part of the coordinated campaign, another important message sent by the Wilderness Society was a focus on the important lessons being learned. Howard Zahniser and Olaus Murie both seemed to believe that this was only the first of many conservation fights that would have to be waged, and they planned on learning all they could to ensure success in the future.

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<sup>1113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>1114</sup> Callison, Conservation in the 84th Congress, 30.

<sup>1115</sup> Callison, Conservation in the 84th Congress, 30.

## CHAPTER 12

### CONCLUSION: THE LESSONS WE LEARNED

In September 1996, President Bill Clinton used the executive authority of the Antiquities Act of 1906 to establish Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in southern Utah. Similar to Dinosaur National Monument, the Staircase features a beautiful expanse of vistas and overlooks, is difficult to get to, and rarely visited. The move created a backlash. Pollsters blamed the monument for the defeat of Utah's only Democrat holding federal office, Representative Bill Orton, and left many Utahns bitter for years.<sup>1116</sup> On March 26, 2014, the United States House of Representatives voted on H. R. 1459, the "Ensuring Public Involvement in the Creation of National Monuments Act." The bill, sponsored by Utah Republican Representative Rob Bishop, was designed to limit a president's ability to create national monuments without congressional review. The chief executive's proposal would have to "go through a stringent environmental review before a new monument is created."<sup>1117</sup> The bill had been winding through the

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<sup>1116</sup> Jeffrey O. Durrant, *Struggle Over Utah's San Rafael Swell: Wilderness, National Conservation Areas, and National Monuments* (University of Arizona Press: Tucson, 2007).

<sup>1117</sup> Thomas Burr, "Bishop bill would restrict national monument creation," *Salt Lake Tribune*, March 25, 2014.

legislative process for months. The floor vote was almost exclusively down party lines: 228 Republicans and 2 Democrats voting “Yea” and 187 Democrats voting “Nay.”<sup>1118</sup>

In the weeks leading up to the House vote, more than one hundred conservation organizations joined together to urge elected officials to “oppose H. R. 1459, which would undermine Presidential authority under the Antiquities Act to act swiftly to protect iconic historical, cultural, and natural sites that are the fabric of who we are as Americans.”<sup>1119</sup> Among the groups signing the letter were the National Audubon Society, the National Parks Conservation Association (formerly the National Parks Association), the Sierra Club, and The Wilderness Society. The groups took to Facebook and Twitter to rally their supporters. They provided news updates, opinion pieces about the bill, and links to online petitions and webpages that—with a name and a ZIP code—would send an email to a congressional representative.<sup>1120</sup> Supporters were told that the situation was “Urgent! [to] Protect Our National Park Legacy”<sup>1121</sup> and encouraged to “TAKE ACTION NOW!”<sup>1122</sup> And according to a tweet from the Wilderness Society, “Under #HR1459 the

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<sup>1118</sup> Office of the Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, “Final Vote Results for Roll Call 142,” <http://clerk.house.gov/evs/2014/roll142.xml>, (accessed April 10, 2014).

<sup>1119</sup> Coalition Letter, March 24, 2014, letter sent to members of the House of Representatives and signed by more than one hundred organizations across the country.

<sup>1120</sup> National Parks Conservation Association on Facebook, “National Parks Conservation Association,” March 21, 2014. Linked to National Parks Conservation Association, “Urgent! Protect Our National Park Legacy,” <https://secure.npca.org/site/Advocacy?page=UserActionInactive&id=1229>, (accessed March 20, 2014).

Sierra Club on Twitter “@sierraclub,” March 26, 2014.

<sup>1121</sup> National Parks Conservation Association, “Urgent! Protect Our National Park Legacy.” Today that URL leads to a page that reads: “The action you attempting is no longer active. . . . NPCA will be working to ensure this bill does NOT get a vote in the Senate and may need your help with that effort in the future.” And then, “In the meantime, click here to see how your rep voted and send them a message. The action was over, but the campaign continued.

<sup>1122</sup> @sierraclub, “Sierra Club on Twitter,” March 26, 2014. Original emphasis.

#GrandCanyon wouldn't have been protected by T. Roosevelt. Tell Congress to vote NO <http://bit.ly/1psQIXh>.”<sup>1123</sup> The messages to supporters would sound oddly similar to those used sixty years earlier in the battle to stop the proposed Echo Park and Split Mountain dams, and save Dinosaur National Monument.

A coalition of conservation groups, the likes of which had never been formed before, engaged in a unified strategy to stop the Echo Park dam project. The coalition was noteworthy because “seldom since the days of Teddy Roosevelt and [Gifford] Pinchot have the forces for conservation been so aroused and unified as in their battle to save Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>1124</sup> Though the Colorado River Storage Project was the brainchild of the 1940s, the controversy made news during a period of postwar industrialization and patriotism.

During the Second World War, the United States experienced an “amazing rise in industrial production—26 percent in just five years.”<sup>1125</sup> By 1960, the vast majority of American homes had telephones, electricity, and plumbing, and citizens were driving on the country’s new Interstate Highway System.<sup>1126</sup> Over the course of three decades, the nation had helped create a modern world full of machines built for speed and convenience. The mechanized country was also experiencing an “extraordinary burst of civic activity. . . . Virtually every major association [in this study] sharply expanded its ‘market share’ between the mid-1940s and the mid-1960s.”<sup>1127</sup> From church attendance to civic engagement, the country was joining together. The United States has always had

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<sup>1123</sup> @Wilderness, “Wilderness Society on Twitter,” March 26, 2014.

<sup>1124</sup> “A Realistic Look at The Upper Colorado River Project” *Outdoor America*, November-December 1955, 3.

<sup>1125</sup> Arthur Herman, “How America Got Rich,” *Commentary*, September 2012, 22.

<sup>1126</sup> Herman, “How America Got Rich,” 21.

<sup>1127</sup> Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 2000), 268.

a much higher rate of religious belief and activity than its industrialized counterparts; in the 1950s the rate of American religious attendance hit its zenith.<sup>1128</sup> Further, organizations dedicated to socialization and philanthropy, such as the Elks and the Junior League, were attracting new members and enjoying high activity rates (even Ralph Kramden of the hit '50s TV show “The Honeymooners” was a member of the Loyal Order of Raccoon Lodge). A sense of community and commitment was growing in the nation.<sup>1129</sup>

The massive, joint effort of World War II played an important role in creating this sense of civic duty. The “shared adversity and shared enemy” of the war gave the people something to rally around—sixteen million Americans had participated in the military effort—and the media were filled with patriotic themes.<sup>1130</sup> Nearly one-quarter of Americans had been involved in some way in the war effort of the 1940s and the battle terminology would likely have been familiar.

Two of the most iconic ideas of 1950s popular cultural were the threat of alien invasion story and communism.<sup>1131</sup> Alien invasion movies were popular in the '50s and warned audiences of outside forces coming to take over.<sup>1132</sup> When Americans were not watching alien invasion movies, they were often being confronted with communism with the McCarthy hearings, blacklists, and Edward R. Murrow’s broadcasts in response to the

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<sup>1128</sup> Putnam, *Bowling Alone*.

<sup>1129</sup> Putnam, *Bowling Alone*, 268.

<sup>1130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1131</sup> “The Gee! Decade,” *New York*, July 15, 1996, 13.

<sup>1132</sup> Karen A. Romanko, “Don’t Get Caught Without Them,” *Library Journal*, 115, no. 20 (1990) 42-47.



Red Scare sweeping the nation.<sup>1133</sup> From 1951 to 1957, one of the most popular television shows was hosted by one of the top-ten public figures in America: Fulton J. Sheen. His show, *Life is Worth Living*, “effectively conflated ideological struggles and moral questions” and helped with the “religious and cultural upheaval [that] swept America in the 1950s.”<sup>1134</sup> Sheen was known for being staunchly anticommunism and “his long-standing elevation of communism above all other threats (e.g., secularism, liberalism, and modernism) defined his popular appeal in the postwar generation.”<sup>1135</sup>

Movies and television were not the only place communism was a topic, though. By 1953, the United States State Department and the Eisenhower administration had given the threat a name: the domino theory. Following a trip by Vice President Nixon to Indochina, the U.S. government grew concerned that if Korea fell to communists, then Indochina and Malaya would be next. Without aggressive U.S. intervention, the communist dominos would continue to fall until the threat was at the American border.

These cultural influences can be seen in the recurring themes of the Dinosaur coverage. Analysis of the coverage in the official publications of the CoC member groups revealed four major themes: value of the National Park System, the precedent of placing dams inside the system, a call for the dams to be placed in alternative locations outside park and monument borders, and the importance of mobilizing conservationists. With the

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<sup>1133</sup> Nancy E. Bernhard, “Clearer than Truth: Public Affairs Television and the State Department’s Domestic Information Campaigns, 1947-1952,” *Diplomatic History*, 21, no. 4 (Fall 1997), 545-567.

<sup>1134</sup> Irvin D. S. Winsboro and Michael Epple, “Religion, Culture, and the Cold War: Bishop Fulton J. Sheen and America’s Anti-Communist Crusade of the 1950s,” *The Historian*, September 2009, 210.

<sup>1135</sup> Irvin D. S. Winsboro and Michael Epple, “Religion, Culture, and the Cold War: Bishop Fulton J. Sheen and America’s Anti-Communist Crusade of the 1950s,” *The Historian*, September 2009, 210.

exception of the National Wilderness Federation, at least two of these themes appeared in each publication.

According to George Lakoff, when crafting a message, the social, cultural, and political contexts matter. They are relevant to the effectiveness of a message and can help influence the frame we use when discussing a topic.<sup>1136</sup> For organizations and social movements, a frame is the meaning of or interpretation of events, making it significant to members or supporters.<sup>1137</sup> This meaning is created by using shared patterns of understandings and themes. Dennis Chong and James Druckman have argued that frames have the ability to help influence audiences to the point of changing their behaviors.<sup>1138</sup> The repeated use of these themes helped create two larger frames of spirituality and patriotism. The common argument was that the value of Dinosaur National Monument and the National Park System lay in their inspiration and God-made beauty. Lakoff has called this the frame of the “nurturant parent” in which “the natural world is what gives us life, what makes all of life possible, and what sustains us.”<sup>1139</sup>

In the forty years since its creation, the National Park System had become part of the American ethos and its areas were a sense of pride for the country. Many Americans saw the parks and monuments as iconic and much of the CoC member coverage focused on the purpose and meaning of the monuments and parks. Eight of the nine CoC organizations focused on the supremacy of the system. It was described by outdoor

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<sup>1136</sup> George Lakoff, “Simple Framing: An Introduction to Framing and Its Uses in Politics,” *Rockridge Institute* 14 (2006).

<sup>1137</sup> David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, “Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization,” *International Social Movement Research* 1 (1988): 197-217.

<sup>1138</sup> Dennis Chong and James N. Druckman, “Framing Theory,” *Annual Review of Political Science* 10 (June 2007): 104.

<sup>1139</sup> George Lakoff, *How Liberals and Conservatives Think*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: The University of Chicago press, 2002), 215.

enthusiast Stephen Bradley as a “precious part of our American heritage.”<sup>1140</sup> He found it incredible “that anyone could propose the construction of Echo Park Dam as long as he knew and appreciated the unique beauty which the dam would forever seal from view.”<sup>1141</sup> One of the common arguments was that the National Park System was something uniquely American that had to be passed on to future generations.

The language fused the spiritual with the patriotic—these areas were places to find peace and solitude, communion with others and with God. The purpose of the parks was to provide “public inspiration and enjoyment”<sup>1142</sup> and they were a place “of cultural communion with Nature at its climax in our national parks which are the envy of European nations.”<sup>1143</sup> The spiritualization of nature was common: “There is God in the wilderness.”<sup>1144</sup> They were also one of the things that set the United States apart from other countries around the world. Americans had been wise and righteous enough to set aside these lands, the argument ran, and should not allow them to be chewed, torn asunder, and destroyed forever.

Fred M. Packard of the National Parks Association demonstrated the importance of the system when he wrote in *National Parks*:

The National Parks Association and other organizations have not opposed the Upper Colorado River program . . . . They have objected vigorously to only one aspect of the plans—the inclusion of Echo Park and Split Mountain dams proposed to be constructed inside Dinosaur National Monument.<sup>1145</sup>

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<sup>1140</sup> Richard H. Pough, “Would You Dam Dinosaur National Monument?” *Natural History*, March 1954, 144.

<sup>1141</sup> Stephen J. Bradley, “Folbots Through Dinosaur,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, December 1952, 6.

<sup>1142</sup> Devereux Butcher, “Stop the Dinosaur Power Grab,” *National Parks*, April-June 1950, 62.

<sup>1143</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: The Dinosaur Controversy,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, March 1955, 6.

<sup>1144</sup> Ernest S. Griffith, “Our Wilderness Needs,” *The Living Wilderness*, Spring 1950, 37.

<sup>1145</sup> Fred M. Packard, “Dinosaur Dams Again,” *National Parks*, January-March 1954, 2.

One of the most common points against the Echo Park dams was that they were inside the National Park System, so conservation organizations offered a solution. Several of the leaders of CoC groups used their congressional testimony and publications to share suggestions for other places to build.

In fact, of the nine CoC publications, six made a call for alternative locations. In *Audubon* and *Nature*, the call came with a warning that if the United States allowed one dam to be built inside a national monument, no monument or park would be safe again. The Dinosaur dams were proposed early in the Colorado River Storage Project and the CoC groups discussed the projects as an invasion. Much of the language used would focus on the external force that had to be prevented from entering these American spaces. The National Park System was of paramount importance, and protecting it was a civic duty.

The champions of the alternative locations were the American Planning and Civic Association's General Ulysses S. Grant III and the Sierra Club's David Brower. Grant had run the numbers and Brower had drawn on the blackboard. Together, they had crafted a logical argument that "there are feasible alternatives which will fully meet the needs and desires of the Eastern Utah and Western Colorado people without sacrificing the Dinosaur National Monument."<sup>146</sup> Grant's work in the APCA's *Planning and Civic Comment*, and Brower's congressional testimony and passionate chalkboard display, were reprinted or discussed in every publication of the CoC groups. And Grant's proposed alternatives—Flaming Gorge and Glen Canyon dams—did, indeed, come to fruition. David Brower, representing the Council of Conservationists, agreed with elected

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<sup>146</sup> "EDITORIAL COMMENT: Congratulations Mr. Secretary!" *Planning and Civic Comment*, December 1951, 3.

officials not to fight the Glen Canyon dam in exchange for legal protection for all areas of the National Park System. This would bury the beauty and majesty of Glen Canyon under the second largest reservoir in North America.<sup>1147</sup> It was a decision that haunted Brower to his last day.<sup>1148</sup>

Conservationists warned that dams inside Dinosaur National Monument would “establish a precedent for the invasion of any, and all of our national parks and monument by the dam builders.”<sup>1149</sup> Tied to the idea of invasion was the belief that the “loss of this [Dinosaur] issue will expose other National Park areas to invasion by special interests.”<sup>1150</sup> CoC groups described the Dinosaur dams with the variations on terms “invasion” or “encroachment” nearly 150 times.<sup>1151</sup>

Reminiscent of the rhetoric of anticommunists, the language often included warnings of a domino effect, familiar rhetoric in the age of the political threat of communism and the popular culture obsession with alien invasion. The language suggested that citizens had a duty to protect the National Park System. Groups described conservationists as “public spirited citizens who have rallied over the years to protect the national parks and monuments from commercial invasions.”<sup>1152</sup> Leaders described the “efforts of the League, other conservation organizations and individuals to protect

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<sup>1147</sup> United States Society on Dams, “Dam, Hydropower and Reservoir Statistics,” [http://www.usdams.org/uscold\\_s.html](http://www.usdams.org/uscold_s.html), (accessed April 12, 2014).

Within less than a decade, Glen Canyon would be knocked down to fifth place on the list of dams by size in the United States.

<sup>1148</sup> David Brower and Eliot Porter, *The Place No One Knew: Glen Canyon on the Colorado* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 1988), 8.

<sup>1149</sup> William Voigt, “Dinosaur—On the Way Out?” *Outdoor America*, Nov.-Dec. 1950, 7.

<sup>1150</sup> Richard H. Pough, “As Dinosaur Goes,” *Natural History*, February 1955, 62.

Original emphasis.

<sup>1151</sup> The actual count was 139 uses of the words “invasion,” “invade,” “encroach,” and “encroachment.”

<sup>1152</sup> “EDITORIAL COMMENT: What is a Sound Business Decision on Dinosaur?” *Planning and Civic Comment*, December 1954, 6.

Dinosaur National Monument from invasion by the 550 foot Echo Park power dam.”<sup>1153</sup>

Echo Park would be only the first domino to fall and it had to be stopped.

The calls for mobilization were militaristic and evocative of the nation’s recent war effort. These themes combined to create a patriotic frame. David Perlman wrote in the *Sierra Club Bulletin* that “Brower and the Sierra Club's directors foresaw in 1954 that the fight against Echo Park would need new political armaments. They alerted other conservation groups and the arms were forged.”<sup>1154</sup> In the language of the CoC, Dinosaur was a battle, Echo Park was a “Trojan Horse, model 1950,”<sup>1155</sup> and the opposition “spearheaded a phalanx of national conservation organizations.”<sup>1156</sup> The military language was prominent in all CoC group publications, with the ironic exception of the organization led by a general, which focused on math.

Readers were encouraged and admonished, multiple times, to act. Covers of the *Sierra Club Bulletin*, *The Living Wilderness*, and *National Parks Magazine* had images of the monument. The debate was described as “the fight of every member and friend of the Izaak Walton League and of every man woman and child, who wears the label of ‘conservationist,’ nationwide.”<sup>1157</sup> One cover included a note that readers should “*WRITE AGAIN TO THEIR SENATORS AND TO THEIR REPRESENTATIVES AND URGE THE DEFEAT OF THE ECHO PARK DAM PROPOSAL.*”<sup>1158</sup> Last-minute items, asking readers to take specific action to stop the dams, were added to issues of *Nature*,

<sup>1153</sup> “Echo Park Dam Debated Before Congress,” *Outdoor America* Mar.-Apr. 1954, 8.

<sup>1154</sup> David Perlman, “Our Winning Fight for Dinosaur,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, January 1956, 5.

<sup>1155</sup> Ulysses S. Grant III, “LET’S NOT LIQUIDATE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT,” *Planning and Civic Comment*, September 1950, 1.

<sup>1156</sup> “Echo Park Fight Defeats Upper Colorado Project,” *Conservation News*, September 1, 1954, 3.

<sup>1157</sup> “Pattern for Murder,” *Outdoor America*, Mar.-Apr. 1952, 9.

<sup>1158</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, Winter 1953-54, front cover.

the *Sierra Club Bulletin*, and *The Living Wilderness*. For example, the editors of *Nature* added a note at press time that warned readers: “If you wish to stop the dangerous precedent represented by the building of Echo Park Dam, let your Congressman and Senators know how you feel about this plan.”<sup>1159</sup> Accounts from conservation groups and elected officials reported that over 80,000 letters had been sent to Congress. Pennsylvania Representative John P. Saylor claimed that the Speaker of the House had received more letters on the Dinosaur controversy than any other topic.<sup>1160</sup> According to David Brower of the Sierra Club:

People, more than we’ll ever know, were writing the letters and showing the pictures and riding the river and telling the other people who wrote still more letters and talked to still more people all of whom, in the nameless but undeniable aggregate, chalked up the National Park System’s biggest victory.<sup>1161</sup>

The conservationists had won an important battle.

During the winter that closed out 1956 and ushered in 1957, the Wilderness Society dedicated an entire issue of *The Living Wilderness* to the “freedom of the wilderness.”<sup>1162</sup> The issue was filled with articles written by elected officials and conservation leaders and included the language of the bill. One article argued that the Echo Park victory had “demonstrated that the American people favor the protection of these areas.”<sup>1163</sup> Saylor, and conservationists across the country, believed that a movement had been created and the time was at hand to act to preserve other areas.

On September 3, 1964, the Wilderness Act became the law of the land. This law

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<sup>1159</sup> “Harsh Words from Gabe,” *Nature Magazine*, May 1954, 257.

<sup>1160</sup> Representative John P. Saylor, “Saving America’s Wilderness,” *The Living Wilderness*, Winter-Spring 1956-57, 3.

<sup>1161</sup> David Brower, “Scenic Resources,” *Sierra Club Bulletin*, June 1956, 7.

<sup>1162</sup> *The Living Wilderness*, “Winter-Spring 1956-57, 1.

<sup>1163</sup> Saylor, “Saving America’s Wilderness,” 3.

was intended to protect areas from industrial development. Contrary to popular thinking, wilderness areas are more than impressive canyons and breathtaking vistas. They

range from the mountains and dunes of the California deserts to the peaks of the Rocky Mountains to the rounded knobs and valleys of the Appalachians. The smallest wilderness is six acres; the largest is more than 9 million acres.<sup>1164</sup>

This law was not established without a struggle. Mark Harvey declared that “the campaign to pass a wilderness bill began in January 1956, inspired by conservationists’ great triumph over the proposed Echo Park dam within Dinosaur National Monument.”<sup>1165</sup> After the Dinosaur campaign, the conservationists had grown from a loose collection of groups in the 1950s to a movement. The groups had learned to mobilize and work together. They had worked cooperatively, using diverse forms of media including film, books, pamphlets, and photographic displays. The leaders of groups had testified in front of Congress and, in at least the case of the Sierra Club, adjusted their organizational structure so they could more effectively lobby elected officials. They used similar language to discuss the controversy, with eight of the nine CoC member groups using the two themes of “Value of the National Park System” and “Mobilization.”<sup>1166</sup> This campaign created a new movement, which included direct communication with members and readers in attempt to influence public policy.

The importance of the fight to save Dinosaur National Monument is in gaining a better understanding of the history of the modern conservation movement, as well as the groups and individuals who helped create it. And the tactics used in this campaign can

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<sup>1164</sup> James Morton Turner, *Promise of Wilderness: American Environmental Politics Since 1964* (Vancouver, British Columbia: University of Washington Press, 2012), 3.

<sup>1165</sup> Mark T. Harvey, “Architect of the Wilderness Act,” *Wilderness*, December 2004-2005, 31.

<sup>1166</sup> Only the National Wildlife Federation did not directly use the theme of the National Park System. Instead, the NWF introduced two unique themes focusing on the legislative process and the concept of wise use.



serve as a helpful guide for future efforts to mobilize the public in conservation efforts. The first contribution is in following Louis Gottschalk's advice to abandon the major narratives of history.<sup>1167</sup> Just as with Davidson and Lytle's reimagining of President Andrew Jackson, historians need to gain a clearer picture of the characters involved in the Echo Park debate.<sup>1168</sup> We must stop focusing on David Brower alone simply because he was the most vocal and public opponent. Visitors to Dinosaur National Monument will encounter displays dedicated to Brower and the Sierra Club—including a plaque at the overlook for Echo Park on the drive to Harper's Corner—and mentioning no other conservationists. Brower was, indeed, instrumental in the founding of the Council of Conservationists, but he was in no way the only expert on the issue. What of Grant and Zahniser? Where are the plaques to these men and the groups they led?

The current telling of the Dinosaur campaign reduces the movement to one organization and the efforts of its leader. This is a dangerous trend that leaves conservation vulnerable to being defined by its most visible characters—often the most radical. And it limits our understanding of the breadth of the coalition. It has reduced conservationism to a bunch of California extremists when it was actually an effort of a wide and diverse range of groups and citizens.

The campaign to save Dinosaur National Monument also provides a useful case study for understanding recent theories in strategic communication and persuasion.

Robert Cialdini identified six key elements in marketing ideas to people and persuading

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<sup>1167</sup> Gottschalk, *Understanding History*.

<sup>1168</sup> Davidson and Lytle, "Jackson's Frontier."

them to act—consistency, reciprocity, social validation, authority, scarcity, and liking—and the messages from the Council of Conservationists fit each one.<sup>1169</sup>

Consistency is the idea that behavior only follows some sort of earlier commitment. In the case of the CoC, the readers of the newsletters and magazines were members of organizations dedicated to nature and public spaces: they were already part of the campaign. Messages aimed at persuading them to act would have to be tied to that earlier commitment. The second element is to establish reciprocity, or the idea that the audience *owes* a repayment to someone or something. This can be done by identifying a benefit or service that has already been received. In the case of Dinosaur, clearly communicating the value that people had already derived from the National Park System gave readers a sense of obligation to protect one of its fixtures. Additionally, reciprocity “applies to concessions that people make to one another.”<sup>1170</sup> This can be seen in the messaging conservationists used to clarify that while some may be fighting the entire Colorado River Storage Project, the CoC was opposed to only the two dams inside a national monument. By demonstrating a good faith effort to compromise or make a concession, the groups were able to persuade the audience that they were acting reasonably and supporting them was prudent.

This leads to Cialdini’s third element: social validation. An audience is more likely to respond to a message and act if the people feel that they are part of a community. Beyond a sense of belonging, the bandwagon effect gives people a sense of protection: they can act with less individual risk. The constant reminders in the CoC publications of the growing numbers of supporters, and even the fact that a coalition was

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<sup>1169</sup> Robert B. Cialdini, “The SCIENCE of Persuasion,” *Scientific American Special Edition*, Jan 2004, 70-77.

<sup>1170</sup> Cialdini, 73.

formed, gave readers the impetus to act. Another benefit of the coalition was that it helped connect experts in the area of conservation. Cialdini's fourth element is establishing authority on the issue; an audience will respond to arguments made by credible individuals. Several prominent experts cooperated in the campaign to stop the Echo Park dams. Readers of *The Living Wilderness* heard not only from Howard Zahniser, but also read articles written by Ulysses S. Grant III, Richard Westwood, and David Brower. The combined messages of these men, and so many others who were the great minds of the day in conservation, made the CoC trustworthy.

The fifth element of persuasion is scarcity. Communication from groups should demonstrate the threat that something is in short supply. In the case of Dinosaur, this message was expressed in the disappearing wild spaces of the twentieth century and the threat to protected spaces of the National Park System. Cialdini's final element is liking, or creating a "feeling or connection between people."<sup>1171</sup> The attempt to personalize the message from the CoC was found in the many stories of individual experiences in Dinosaur National Monument. The articles and congressional testimony from the Bradley family—three generations who floated the Green and Yampa Rivers—are prime examples. Another attempt at establishing a connection to the issue was the Sierra Club's push to have people visit the monument.

The previous pilot study conducted on this issue found use of collective action frame theory (CAFT). Specifically, the success of a campaign depends on the ability to "drum up support for their view and aims and activate individuals who already agree with

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<sup>1171</sup> Cialdini, 74

those views and aims.”<sup>1172</sup> According to Robert Benford and David Snow, groups aiming to enact policy change must first diagnose the problem they are addressing. This requires groups to identify a cause and place blame. The second and third steps are to identify solutions and then communicate to supporters a rationale for action. Cialdini’s elements would be effective in each of these steps.

Social change campaigns today, whether it is keeping the Antiquities Act intact or helping designate the Greater Canyonlands National Park, should involve the six elements. Groups must find a way to create a previous commitment. In the digital age, this can happen with online petitions before asking for donations, and asking for donations before asking for personal action. Communication should also center on the importance of the wild places and nature, its connection to Americans and the nation. Validation can be more visible via social media with Facebook follows, likes on posts, and favorites or retweets on Twitter. Beyond these cosmetic appearances, the use of inclusive language such as “join us”—just as in the 1950s—is essential to creating a feeling of unity.

To establish authority on an issue, conservation groups must engage experts and opinion leaders in the fight. Groups must find the Browers and Zahnisers and Grants today: names that come with cachet and expertise. Some groups have resorted to using celebrities or politicians, but true authority rests with the expertise. Environmental groups need more people like Tim DeChristopher, Ted Nordhaus, and Michael Shellenberger.<sup>1173</sup>

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<sup>1172</sup> David A. Snow and Robert D. Benford, “Ideology, Frame Resonance, and Participant Mobilization,” *International Social Movement Research*, 1, 199.

<sup>1173</sup> Tim DeChristopher served two years in federal prison for falsely bidding in an auction of federal land for oil drilling. He is the founder of [www.bidder70.com](http://www.bidder70.com) and is a prominent voice in environmental activism. Ted Nordhaus and Michael Shellenberger are

The idea of scarcity must be clearly communicated, using data and concrete examples, so the audience can understand the threat and level of loss that will occur without action and social change. Finally, social media can help groups personalize the message by allowing individuals to include a note when they share an article or status.

As shown with the response to Representative Rob Bishop's proposed changes to the Antiquities Act, the lessons of the Dinosaur campaign can be seen in current campaigns of the conservation movement. In a letter protesting Bishop's proposal, more than one hundred groups joined together to sign a letter, including the National Audubon Society, the National Parks Conservation Association, the Sierra Club, and The Wilderness Society, five groups from the Council of Conservationists. A coalition was established, at least for the battle to protect the Antiquities Act. The calls to action were just as urgent as they were in 1954, only in 2014, the platforms are different; organizations can immediately contact supporters via Facebook and Twitter. The mobilization included detailed steps for contacting elected officials, and social media features to "Share" or "Retweet" important posts. The language of posts and letters followed similar patterns to those of the 1950s as well. Much of it focused on the value of the parks and the "iconic natural, cultural and historic places" they held.<sup>1174</sup> It used battle terms such as "front lines."<sup>1175</sup> The themes and frames of the 1950s are being used in campaigns today. But are they still relevant? The National Park Service will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 2014, yet Jonathan Jarvis, director of the NPS, recently expressed

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environmentalists who have become leading voices in the need to redesign the message of conservation and ecological campaigns.

<sup>1174</sup> Coalition Letter, March 24, 2014.

<sup>1175</sup> "High Noon for Keystone XL," *Insider: The Sierra Club's Official Newsletter*, March 11, 2014.

concern that the system was experiencing “waning relevancy to the American people.”<sup>1176</sup>

Popular culture has evolved and there are new icons of the day. In the days of “astroturfing,” when “political actions masquerade as grassroots efforts” through the use of online campaigns, it presents interesting opportunities for scholars to study the use of social media and current themes, including those relating to current popular cultural references.<sup>1177</sup> Future research in this area should include analysis of themes in campaigns, with particular focus on the use of social media versus traditional media. Have newsletters and magazines changed with digital delivery and hyperlinks? In a day when anyone can sign an online petition or click to send a form email, has the power of the grassroots been minimized? And how has the conservation movement evolved to welcome global voices? From a strategic communication perspective, it would also be valuable to study the national media coverage of Echo Park dam and Dinosaur National Monument for themes matching the themes used by CoC groups. Did the *New York Times* coverage reflect the themes that appeared in CoC publications? For a greater understanding of the Echo Park campaign, an analysis of all materials distributed by the Council of Conservationists would be useful. Furthermore, if frames had been truly effective, research would find patriotism and spiritualization of nature reflected in the newspaper, magazine, and television accounts of the Dinosaur controversy.

In 1965, David Brower returned to testify before a congressional subcommittee. Construction on Glen Canyon Dam was slated to begin within months and the Sierra Club leader had changed his mind on the deal he had struck to stop the Echo Park dam.

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<sup>1176</sup> Brett Prettyman, “Director: Americans Disconnected from National Parks,” *Salt Lake Tribune*, April 9, 2014.

<sup>1177</sup> Caroline W. Lee, “The Roots of Astroturfing,” *Contexts*, September 2010, 73.

He sat before representatives and said, “Ten years ago I was testifying in favor of a higher Glen Canyon Dam and I wish I had been struck dead at the time.”<sup>1178</sup> Brower and many conservationists of the time believed that they had mistakenly sacrificed a brighter jewel to save Dinosaur. This may be true. But to see Dinosaur National Monument in person is to be in awe. To stand on the lookout at the tip of the Harper’s Corner hairpin is to feel small in the vast expanse of the wild. And to see the size of Steamboat Rock and the rivers that helped carve it, and still rush past it, is to see the grandeur and power of nature. The importance of the monument should not be underestimated, and neither should the campaign that saved it. That campaign helped establish a movement that continues to drive policy more than fifty years later.

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<sup>1178</sup> David R. Brower, *Lower Colorado River Basin Project: Hearing Before the Subcommittee on Irrigation and Reclamation of Me House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs*, 89th Congress, 813.

## APPENDIX

### MAPS



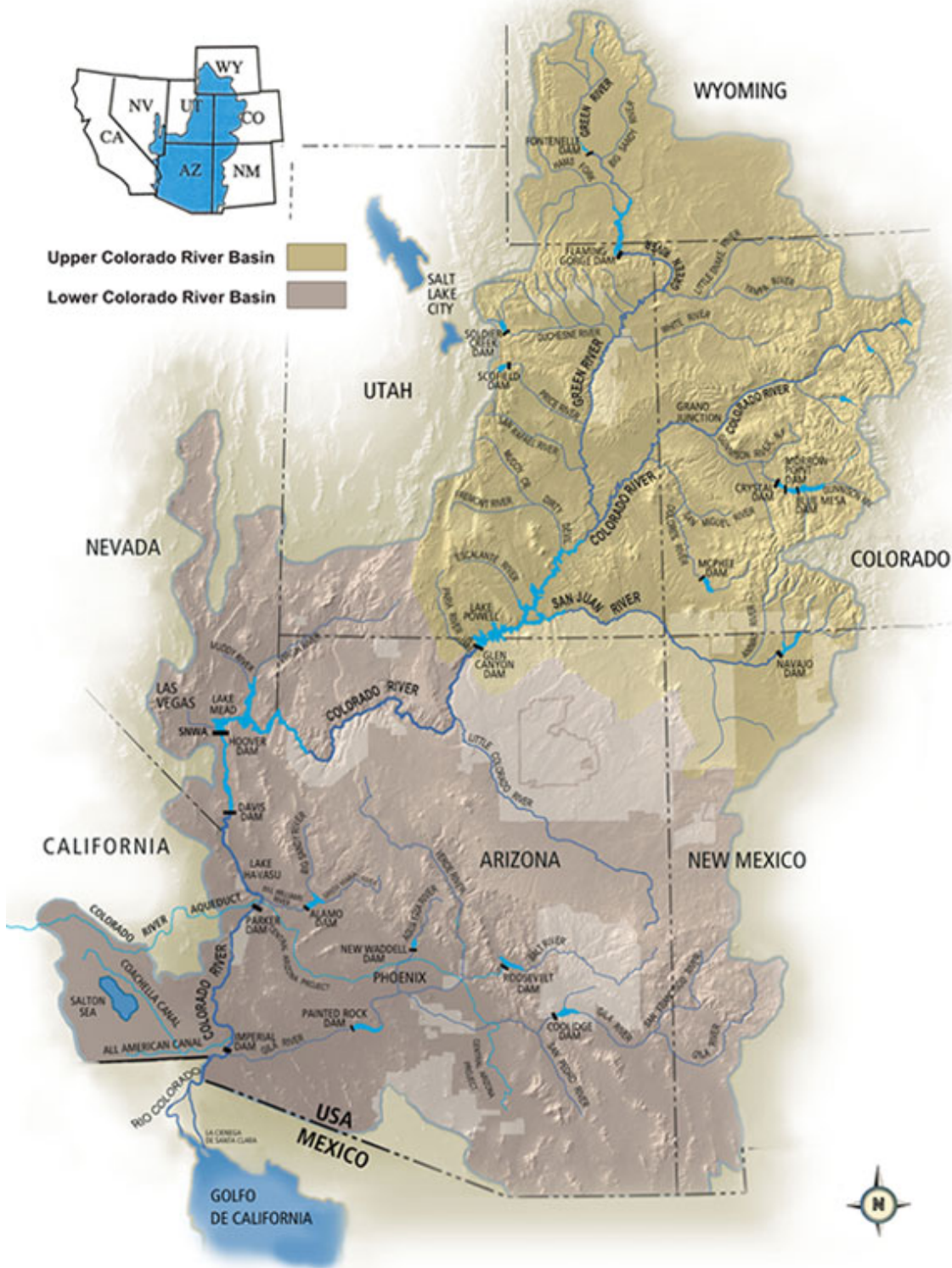


Figure 1. Colorado River Basin

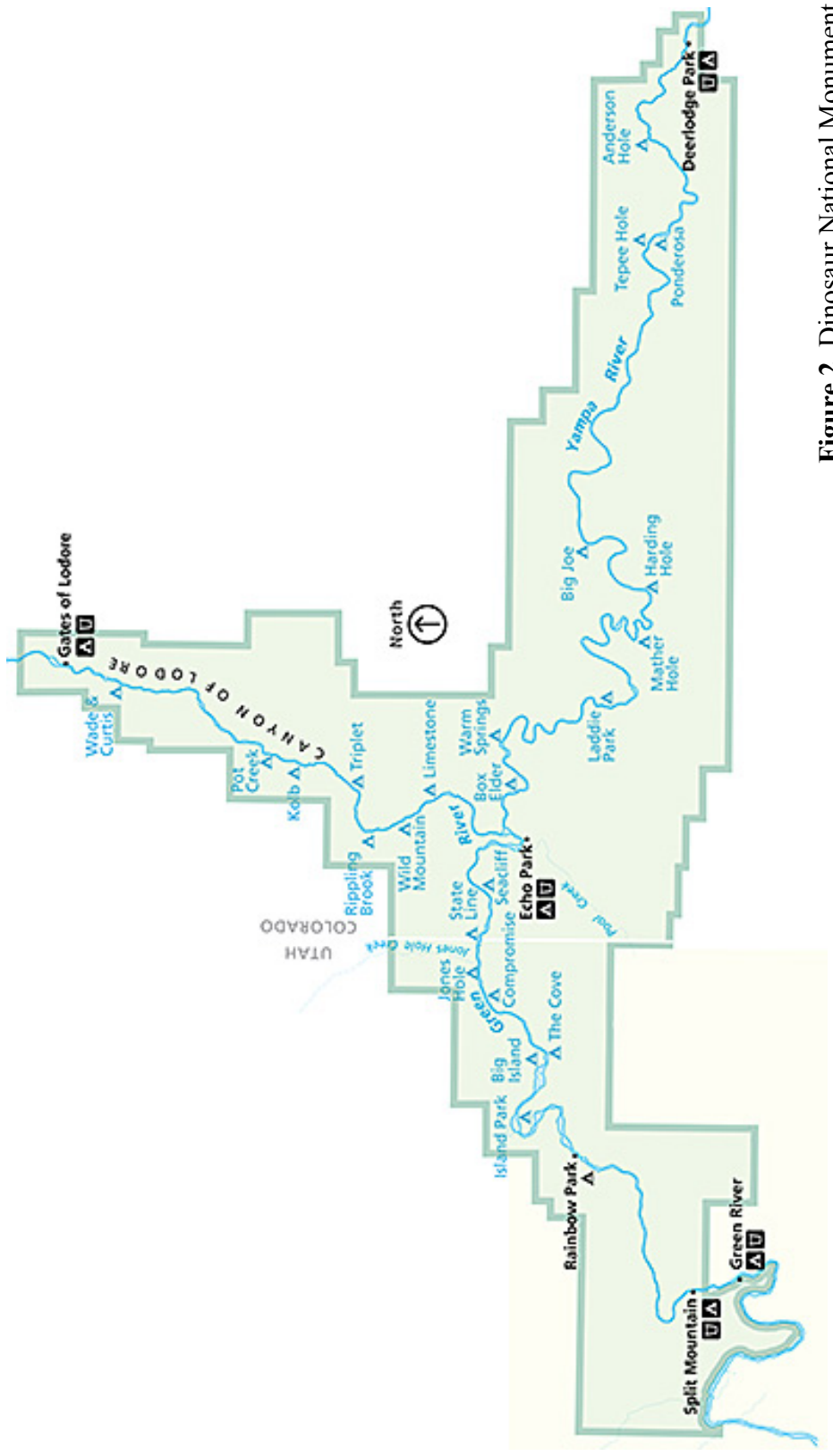


Figure 2. Dinosaur National Monument