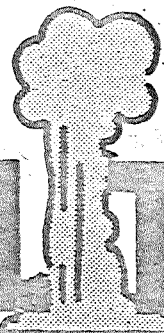


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June 14, 1979



LD FAITHFUL TIMES

ica's Newspaper Serving the Yellowstone-Grand Teton Visitor

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Yellowstone

Drilling! says NPS

Jack Ellis
TIMES Reporter

The NPS, National Park Service, has taken a strong stand against the geothermal drilling proposed for Yellowstone's west border. The proposed area is near Yellowstone's major geyser basins.

The drilling for geothermal steam wells to reproduce electricity is being proposed by the National Forest Service (As opposed to the National Park Service) who control the lands across the Park boundary.

Every on earth that such drilling has been done, near

(Continued Page 6)

Wesley Warns Visitors About Bears

...first bear
...May 22.
...was bitten
...a bear near
...he escaped
...serious in-
...companions
...attention
...to climb a

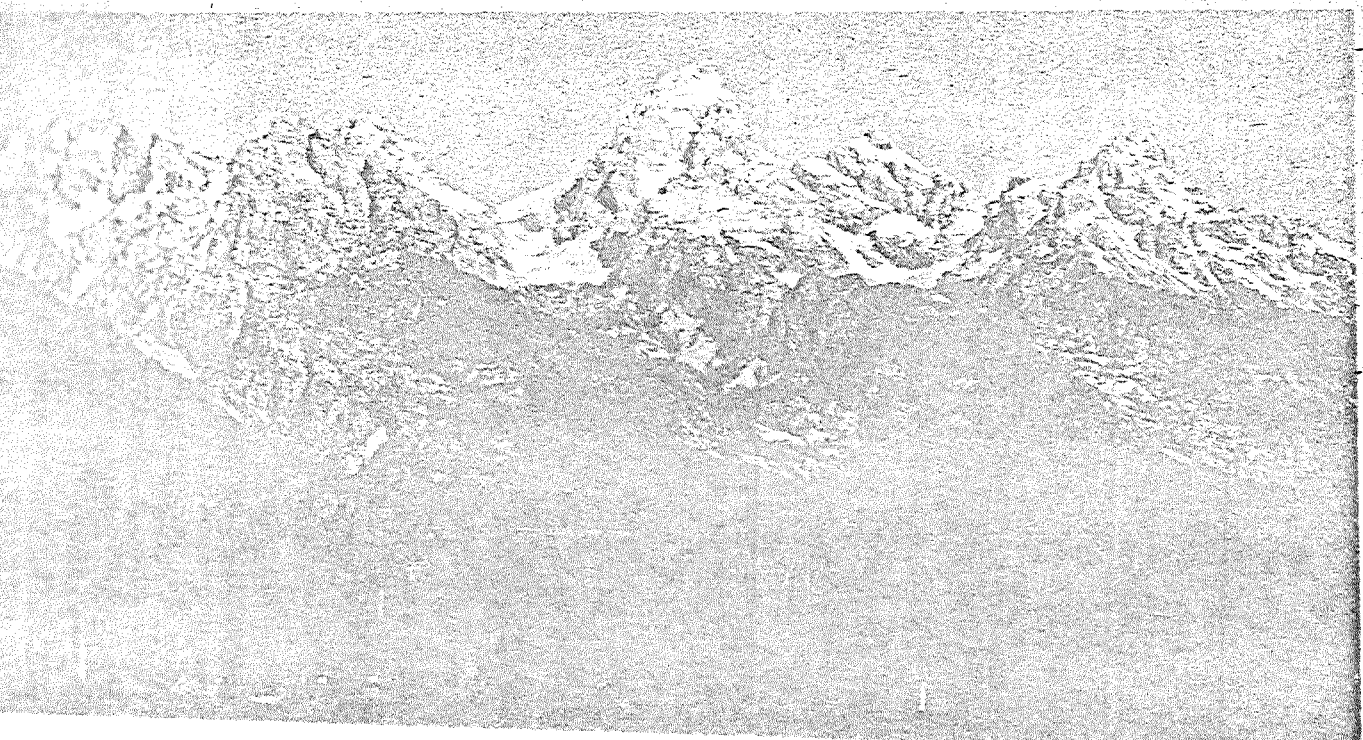


The Superintendent said: "Without the diversion of the bear's attention, this encounter may have had a much more serious conclusion. The suggestion that noise such as loud

conversation created by a group as it travels of the sound of a bell or other noise maker is valid. Anything to let the bear know you are entering his territory giving him the opportunity to avoid the conflict is helpful and in the best interest of the visitor to Yellowstone."

The injured man was Michael Neese, of Big Sky, Montana. Another member of the party was bitten on his foot as he climbed a tree to escape the bear, which was thought to be a grizzly sow with two young cubs.

National Park
John A.
warns visitors
is frequently
that bears
anywhere



Outrage Mounting Over

Yellowstone Being Ripped Off

Forest Service Ignores Drilling Threats to Geysers 100 Word Draft ES Uses Less Than 500 Words To Even Mention Yellowstone

Forest Service Fights to Save Yellowstone's Geysers

Continued from Page 1)

more people hear of the project for the first time. The issue is sure to burst into national significance because of the threat to Yellowstone posed by the drilling.

Six alternatives were offered in the Draft (Impact) Statement. Five of the six plans would allow full leasing of that portion of the IPGA classified as the Yellowstone Known Geothermal Area (KGRA). This strip of land, two miles wide, extends along and against most of the lower west boundary of the nation's oldest and largest National Park. It is considered the "hot" spot. Section 4 of the Geothermal Steam Act of 1970 provides for competitive bidding for leases in a KGRA.

The name Island Park Geothermal Area is an incorrect titling by the National Forest Service because the main area under question is the Yellowstone Geothermal Area.

The entire IPGA is something of a cut-and-paste arrangement that includes the aforementioned Yellowstone Known Geothermal Area, a good part of the Targhee National Forest, and the south end of the Gallatin National Forest, in Montana, that lies south of Highway 20 from Yellowstone's West Gate to the Idaho border. A small parcel of land controlled by the Bureau of Land Management is included. Under the Geothermal Steam Act, leases like these must be let by the Bureau of Land Management. More than forty companies and individuals have filed over two hundred applications for leases to drill. Of the forty, only two are from this area. They are Fall River Rural Electric, Ashton, Idaho, and E.J. Wilson & Sons, DuBois, Idaho.

Data Ignored!

In the last six years there have been seven micro-seismograph studies along Yellowstone's west border. These extensive studies, collecting data on geothermal potential, were conducted on National Forest Service land by Senturion Sciences of Tulsa, Oklahoma. The TIMES was told by a reliable source that the studies were ordered by two of the country's largest oil companies.

The TIMES has further learned that a number of other studies using different techniques have also been done. The facts are now being confirmed.

The Forest Service had no knowledge and had never heard of these studies until informed about them by this newspaper.

The draft ES tries to convey the impression that little is known of the potential geothermal resource along the Park's west border.

Page 20 of the ES—"The geothermal potential of the IPGA is unknown at present."

Page 25 of the ES—"Little is known about a geothermal resource in the IPGA."

The fact is that a great mass of data has been collected and the National Forest Service knows it. They simply chose to ignore the facts.

ifornia, eleven in Colorado, while the remaining few are in places like Texas, Florida, and Hawaii.

Some of the applicants besides the oil companies are speculators. A number are what are known in the industry as "bird dogs," meaning people fronting for major oil companies who do not wish to expose publicly their interest in these leases.

The Draft Environmental (Impact) Statement was released to a highly select group of interested parties on March 21, with the input period to end May 21, 1979. Due to the timing of this release, little input was forthcoming. This sixty-day period each year is the time when Parks are generally closed, and few tourists are here. It is the time when local people generally are away on vacation. The Forest Service, when asked about the selection of this period to solicit input on this most serious matter,

ever, more and more people are becoming aware of the planned geothermal development along Yellowstone's border, just a few miles from the world's largest natural geyser areas.

The people with whom this reporter has talked fall into three categories:

The first, the overwhelming majority, are those who have never heard of the Island Park Geothermal Area...and seemed shocked when told about it. The shock comes from being unaware of such an immense development and shock at the drilling itself.

The second group are those few people who see some way to personally gain by the development, either through increased business or obtaining a high-paying construction job on the major construction and power transmission lines to be installed.

The third group are the outraged. These people are those that have heard

row, or steal a copy of... They class the scheme as "rip-off" of Yellowstone... are stunned at the lack of concern shown by the Forest Service about damage that has been done to the geyser, wildlife, and the area generally.

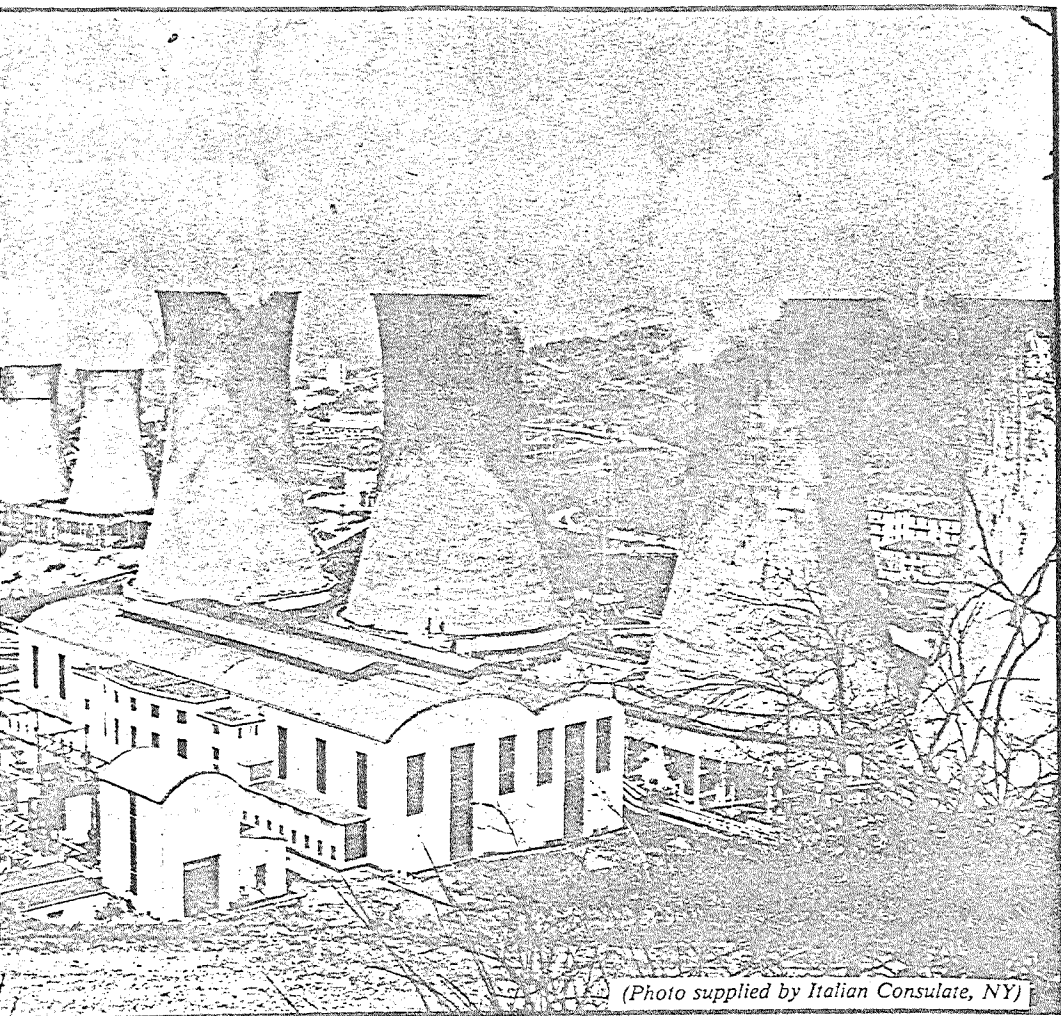
Concerns expressed are sorted out as follows:

1. The Forest Service's lack of concern for geysers... of the large, full-color map... the folio accompanying the Draft Impact Statement show any geysers in the Yellowstone geysers. A in-depth report prepared recently by the Park Service geologist... geyser expert, showing the relationship with the underground water systems of the area... most wholly ignored in the Draft Impact Statement. In the 35,000 word ES document, less than 100 words were used to mention Yellowstone Park. The recent geyser map was reduced to one short paragraph.

2. None of the maps show any of the many and beautiful trails used by elk, beaver, and deer, and all wildlife of the area along the Park border in the Yellowstone KGRA.

3. None of the maps show large recreation use, winter use, in the Yellowstone KGRA. By local Forest Service figures, the trail in the area was used by over a thousand snowmobilers last winter. It is also used for cross-country skiing. This is ignored in the maps and the map.

4. None of the maps show the roads or power transmission lines that run throughout the area along the Park's border. The maps or the full-color map portray any of the extensive industrial



(Photo supplied by Italian Consulate, NY)

is a picture of two of the seventeen geothermal steam plants at Merello, Italy referred to on page 8 of the ES. This is the type of massive industrial development the National Forest Service is trying to promote along Yellowstone Park's west border. One picture says it all.

Threats to Geysers

(continued)
of geothermal devel-

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carefully looking at the proposed plans, said the leasing schemes are drawn with a very good eye for protecting somebody's land values in Island Park.

9. There are grave legal questions involved, and the general feeling is that the Forest Service may be violating a number of laws in their plans.

10. Nothing is known about the effects this development will have on the fisheries of this area. These fisheries constitute a major factor in the local economy.

11. A noted wildlife biologist is concerned that the development would eventually drain off enough heat from Yellowstone's geyser basins so as to lower the temperatures. This, in turn, would kill off the plant life that feeds the herds of buffalo and elk that winter in those warm places. The ES makes no mention of this possibility.

12. What concerns scientists are the unknowns and what the long-range effect would be. Would it cause more major earthquakes in this area? One geologist thinks that is a definite possibility, saying, "This is a very fragile area. You can't fool with one part of it without finding that it is closely connected to all the rest." (Paraphrasing John Burroughs, Naturalist)

voiced is the lack of public involvement in this process. Few people had ever heard of this plan until the last few days. Only one meeting was held for the public, and that was in Rexburg, Idaho, 27 miles south of the IPGA. The law requires a public meeting to be held within 30 miles of the affected area.

So, the question remains. Why was no meeting held in either Island Park or the town of West Yellowstone, which, it is admitted, will be the place most affected?

The Forest Service has shown great reluctance to hold such a meeting. They are not unaware of the public outrage they will encounter as they move close to the IPGA proper and Yellowstone Park.

Now decisions must be made by the Secretary of the Interior, Cecil Andrus. Not only the National Park Service position will go to his office, but also positions from the Federal Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Land Management. The BLM is one of the parties espousing drilling.

The Secretary will distill the Department's position from these and other sources. This will then be transmitted to the Forest Service, hopefully, for their consideration and use in the Final Environmental (Impact) Statement.

If you care at all about Yellowstone Park, you should write to your Congress and protest this blatant attempt to turn over to a handful of private interests your own personal enrichment.

Do not write to the National Forest Service anywhere! Save your stamp! The National Forest Service does not account to anyone. It has a long, long history of defying the American people's wishes, including Presidents. It cares less about you, or about what you think.

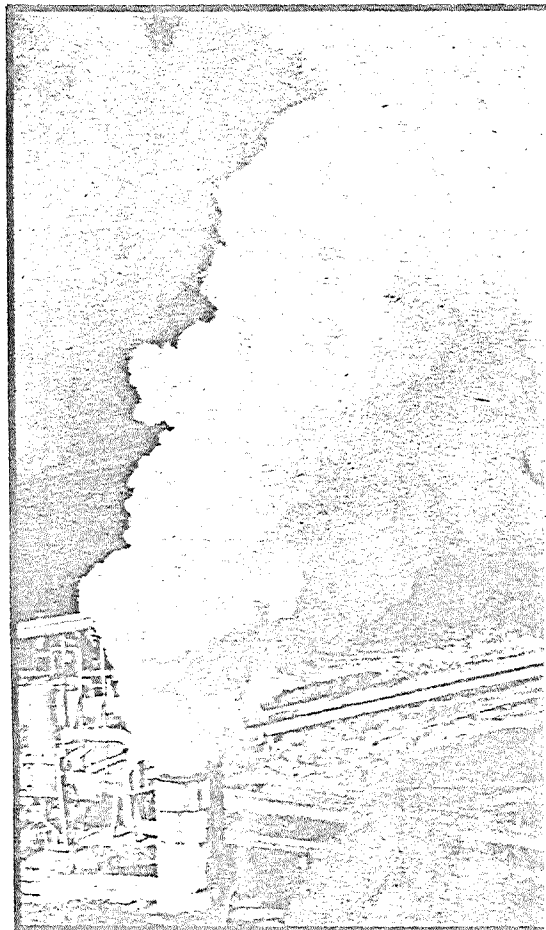
If you don't know your Congressmen, my friends, either Senator Ted Stevens or Senator Jesse Helms, in care of the Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20540.

Hopefully, the Congress will give the Forest Service a gentle pat on the head, but only flatten it slightly, to remind the American people will not stand for this. I urge you to write.

Joe Curran
Publisher

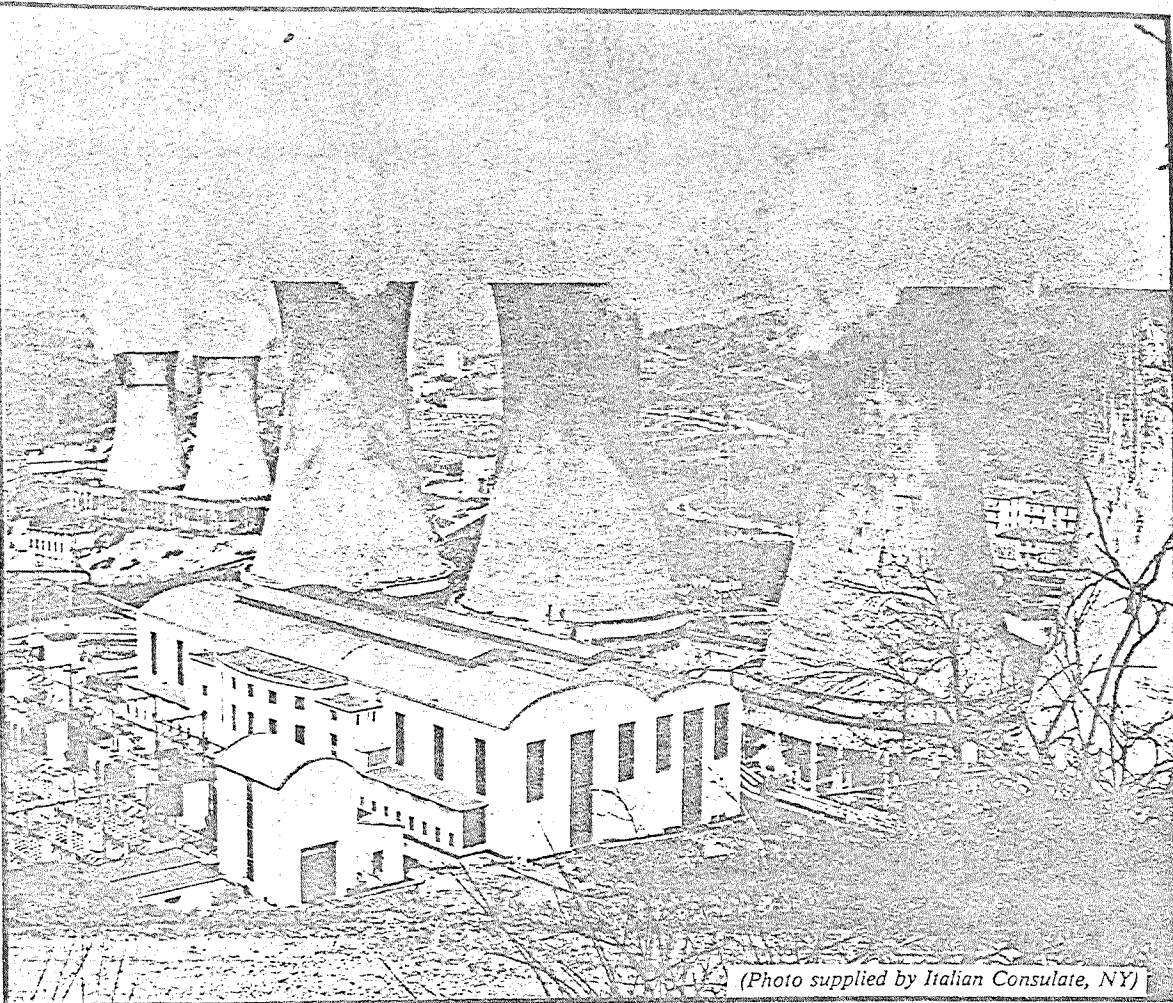
"But man, proud man, drest in authority, his essence made of geysers, ignorant of what he is most assuredly, such fantastic tricks before high heaven, to make the angels weep..."

William Shakespeare



(Photo from New Zealand)

This is a geothermal steam area in New Zealand. Where this has been built, all geysers in the vicinity are ruined. Steam flashes up and creates a frost to atmosphere. This moisture creates terrible frost conditions during freezing. Scientists reliably predict that this will happen along Yellowstone National Park West border. This type of environment threatens



(Photo supplied by Italian Consulate, NY)

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Threats to Geysers

(continued)

is a part of geothermal development.

5. None of the maps show any of the critical grizzly bear habitat of the region.

6. Almost no concern is shown for the emission of steam and other effluvia that will radically alter the air quality in the area of the Hebgen Lake Basin. Donald White, Geothermal Expert with the U.S. Geologic Survey, told the TIMES that as much as twenty-five percent of the hot water used by a geothermal steam plant escapes into the atmosphere. Allowing excessive amounts of moisture to escape into the air southwest of the town of West Yellowstone, which has below-freezing temperatures more than half of the days each year, is predicted to be disastrous for the tourist mecca. The moisture will be carried by prevailing winds straight into the town and the freezing temperatures will layer every structure with thick ice for most of the year.

7. The Draft ES puts forth a most unrealistic appraisal of the socio-economic effects of this development. It reflects a lack of understanding or knowledge of the economics of this tourist area which is used by more than two million peo-

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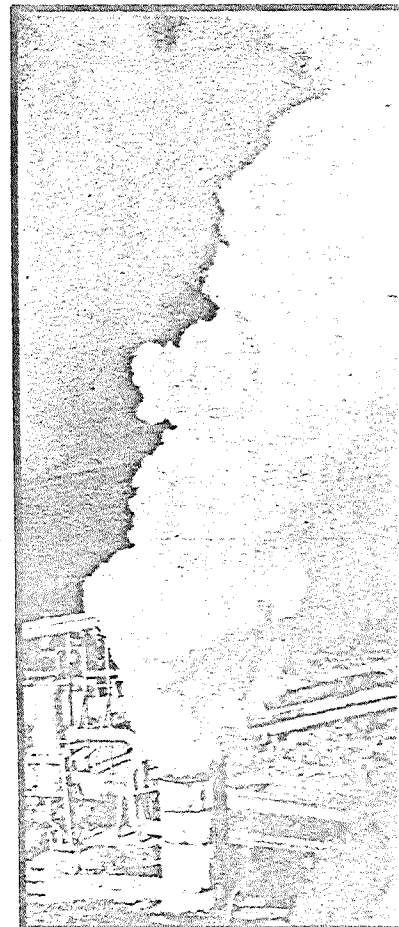
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