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COMP BOOK

Taylor Ranch Journal,
Nov. 7, 1992 - Dec. 17, 1993

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Care takers

Nov 7-15 - Pat + Jim Peck
 Nov 15- Dec. 1 - Phil Talbot
 Dec 1 - Dec 23 - Pat + Jim Peck
 Dec 23 - Jan 2 - Phil Talbot + Sarah
 Jan 2 - Jan 7 - Phil "
 Jan 7 - March 16 - Pat + Jim Peck
 March 16 - April 14 - Mark Portier
 April 14 - May 1 - Pat + Jim Peck
 MAY 1 - SEPT. 24 - JEFF YEO
 SEPT. 24 - NOV. 17 - PAUL CLARKE
 NOV. 17 - Dec 5 - JANET HOHMANIN
 Dec. 5 - ? - Paul + Joan Clarke

Visitors

Jan 12-19 - Archie George
 Feb 10-16 - Marv Henberg
 Torstein Storaas
 April 20 - Mike Schlegal
 Scott Reinecker
 Jim Pope
 Janet DeVleig
 April 26-29 Benji Hill

Saturday, Nov. 7, 1992

Jim Peck + Al (Pat) have been here since October. Will be leaving between Nov. 15 + Dec. 1, also about 2 weeks at Christmas and 2-3 weeks in March + will move out about May 1st - at least that's the plan now. Stay tuned for what really happens!

Saw a cedar waxwing today. also there's been goldfinches, robins, the ever present magpies and our 'pet grouse' (is the plural of grouse 'grice'?)

One lone ewe was on the bench west of Cliff Creek, then she crossed over near the bridge and went up the other side.

Sunday Nov 8

This morning the red squirrel ~~was~~ busy harvesting apples. He tucks up the trunk, out, upside down on a limb, yanks an apple with his strong teeth, and balances precariously as he darts down, the apple being at least 1/3 of his body weight! He must be storing his prizes, because he is soon back to repeat the performance after disappearing for a minute in the direction of the orchard.

No snow except a tiny bit on top of the ridge.

We walked 2-3 miles up river to where the deadfall trees are blocking the

trail, Jim carrying a 2 man crosscut saw and a one man saw, since I have warned him I don't intend to spend the day on one end of a "military whip". He got a lot of the trail cleared.

Walking back I saw a chickadee, a dark's nutcracker, hairy woodpecker and there are geese along the river.

I also walked out past the sawfall area to the steep trail before you get to Zolauer Bar, and there were about 16 sheep just above the trail.

Monday Nov. 9

Snow started last night and this a.m. we had 2 inches. We heard a lot of geese down in the airstrip after the snow started.

This morning there were 13 sheep with 1 ram up high and 2 large rams on the 2nd bench.

Tuesday, Nov. 10

The sheep were on 1st bench & I climbed up to try to photograph them but they were gone. It's sunny & cold with just a stiff of snow on the ground. I saw the ram 2 ewes & a lamb on high cliff to right but they were too far away. Also saw a nice buck & doe on 3rd bench.

The big camp from in Cliff Creek came out today.

Jim + I took vegetation samples on the two lowest plots today 1A + 1B.

Wed, Nov. 11

Jim found the carcass of a young buck about $\frac{1}{4}$ way down the airstrip. It was lying in the brush at the base of the cliff and there was drag marks above it which indicates it probably was dragged down. There were cougar as well as coyote tracks around it & the rear end and one side of ribs was gone. He speculates that it was killed on Monday night when we heard the geese making such a racket.

There are 26 sheep on the first bench, including 3 rams (one that has $\frac{3}{4}$ curl) and 7 lambs.

The Thanksgiving cactus has been blooming for last 2 weeks. It had one bloom, but it was a triple! Very pretty. I have it on kitchen counter so it gets more light. It's about to drop off today.

About 10:00 two lovely coyotes, reddish brown, with tails flying, marched through the pasture and headed down the strip, on their way, no doubt, to a tasty venison lunch!

The mail plane came today. ^{Letter from} ~~Get~~ ^{much} ~~appreciated!!~~
We did the water temp in Pioneer & Rush Creeks, Broke thermometer at Pioneer so need to replace it.

Thursday Nov 12

The sheep were on the first bench this morning. Patches of snow on the ground but today was warmer than yesterday.

Friday, Nov. 13

The sheep were on the bench all day today. A hunter came by to use the phone and said he counted about 50.

We walked to the creeks & river to get samples to take out for analysis, then walked east to the lick along the river to check for elk tracks but saw no new ones. It was mild & partly sunny, with just a few remnants of snow.

Saturday Nov. 14

We are due to fly out this p.m. but Cascade is fogged in. We have fog hanging over the top of the ridge.

The sheep were here up above the trail on the west side of Cliff Creek & I went to see if I could get a photo, and followed them quite a way up & around the side of the mountain until I lost them. The old ram was with them too.

Sunday Nov. 15

Cascade was fogged in all day yesterday & we're still not out today (at ~~1:30~~^{1:30}) but I think we'll make it this p.m. It's the same here as yesterday, not bad (flyable) but fog on top of ridge.

No sheep today.

Sun Nov 15
cont.

1630 Jim & Pat took off with Lady, Rod piloting. Didn't think they'd make it out today. Arnold being backed up the way they were I was behind on account of the heavy fog hovering over Cascade. Went down to check out Cougar Kill, Jim pointed out to me then up to Arnold's cabin to see what the situation looks like. Ate, read and off to bed. @ 55 Sheep crossing Big Cr. as I flew in.

Mon Nov 16.

It's nice to be back in here at Taylor Ranch. Although the bed is too soft and my back hurts! Went hunting most of today E of here along Ridge. Saw 1 guy w/ horse and 1 mule heading W towards Cabin Cr. and a party of 4 heading E w/ one 'g. body bag strapped to a mule. Saw 1 pretty good size doe bedded w/ 1 yr of this year @ 40 yds about 1 mile E, didn't want to break up a family. Looking for a buck like the one the cougar killed. Went through blebs to check things out, Onion Soup w/ homemade bread.

Tues Nov 17

Snow on Peaks, overcast looks like more snow is going to fall. Saw a big buck up on ridge behind Taylor Cabin, 4 pt. I shot up in air and it hit the dirt, made the buck jump and he took off down to the bottom I followed after a bit & made sure I didn't hit him so went to Rye Cr then along it and back up again. I thought I might see him again but at his trail got up on the talus slope. Heard Rams crashing heads or what sounded like Rams crashing

heads but did not see them. I'm a bit out of shape & find my bones are tired. Saw what appeared to be a Gosawk flying up Big Cr. looked like the same bird that Peck and I saw from Taylor Cabin

Weds ^{Nov} ~~17~~ 18

Went out this AM after 1" or so snow had fallen. It turned out to be extremely slippery and bagged it about noon after many falls. Dismantled kitchen cabinets in Arlow Cabin. It turns out that the cabinets were put in as one piece with the back wall of cabinet covering old log wall from original cabin piece by piece dismantled job. Going to talk to Jeff tomorrow & see if he still wants a window, and if there is to be a woodstove in kitchen etc. Snow melting rapidly w/ & muddy.

Thurs ^{Nov} ~~18~~ 19

Talked to Jeff and will cut log since I've already cut quite a mess. Everything full of dust, mouse tracks, & nest materials. Had K chain for a wash. Cut logs came out OK very touchy to a kickback, no nubs through wear. I did check first but thought for sure I'd hit at least one. I had old worn chain on back of Stahl before I cut. Had a bit trouble starting but ran OK once it got warmed up. I pack string going E today. Hunters must be moving.

Fri Nov 20

Snowing this AM and had too much coffee so I went E to Big Cr. for a walk. Seemed like a good excuse to go. Came back @ 2:00 and worked in Arlow Cabin. Couldn't find Mantle for lanterns, pretty dark in cabin w/out them. Bl. beans for dinner.

Sat. Nov 21

Worked in Arlow Cabin All day. Well, almost I did laundry in AM waiting for radio to become un-busy. Pretty neat little laundry machine although not as neat as having someone else doing it. Spaghetti w/ beans & bread for dinner.

Nov²¹ cont. Koosha doing well, eating more regularly enjoying the out of doors!

22 Nov. Happy Birthday to me! No work today Big breakfast and went for a walk towards Cabin Cr. Read ate some more.

23 Nov. Worked on Arrow Cabin all day. searched for decent pieces of wood to use for trim @ opening, Most of it pretty wet I brought it into Cabin to dry it out. - met Jerry Peterson he was taking his Stock out. to busy to stop for coffee.

24 Nov. Went for a walk towards Cabin Cr. in AM Jerry Peterson told me of a fresh Cougar Kill in one of the basins 3-4 miles up. Saw a mink in water on way up. found the kill a ewe, 8m one. On the way back I feared and crushing of skulls as Rams butted heads I managed to get a few pictures as they went by one of the openings 3 Rams all ~~at~~ least had curls going at least to the eye. One of them had a curl that wound up past the eye as it faced downhill to me. Down the trail I met them as they came down to basin by Bee Cr. They were so close I could barely use my binocs @ 50'. Still smashing each other. of course I used up all my film 10 minutes before I saw them. We watched each other for @ 20 mins. then they headed up slope. Incredibly best walk I've been on since I've been here back at room worked in Arrow Cabin till dark.

25 Nov. Cold today Everywhere is freezing up. No one on River morning I worked in Arrow Cabin as much as I could had to keep coming in to get warm. @ 15° or so outside work is slower than normal. Heard Rams butting heads most of the day. They are close to trail below 1st bench.

26 Nov. Thanksgiving Day Saw 33 sheep below 1st bench feeding on slope. went and got some pictures, left Koosha inside. Could hear her bark the whole time. Spilled dog! Couldn't get generator going so I took apart decking and corner cap and

Cleaned up a bit in Arlow cabin. kinda frustrating how long it takes to get anything done, Always something off, well. Starting to feel like winter, hands and feet constantly cold. Can't move around enough to keep warm. -50 in Yellow Pine got to around 10° here and only goes up to 30° max. Took generator into back room of Taylor Cabin

27 Nov.

Warmer today finally turned heat on in Arlow cabin put trim around opening, I think the wood will still shrink some but it felt pretty dry 2 days in Taylor cabin drying got temps of streams the thermometer on Rush Cr. was buried underneath lower layer of ice had to come back for ax to chop through, broke hole in Pioneer Cr. to get ready for Cabin's water to freeze up.

28 Nov.

Cleaned Taylor Cabin did laundry ate, ate & ate until I was in cabin. Snowing light to heavy out of, watched sheep play near Big Cr. running up & down on some pretty steep slopes. Put see @ in Arlow cabin trying to figure out what will work as countertop for sink area. the existing one didn't look good or sanitary.

29 Nov

Went for a short hike up Pioneer Cr. in AM. Came across some pretty fresh cougar tracks. Turned around at 3rd Cr. crossing and very soon found puppoo some fresh cougar tracks over the tracks I had just made. I crossed cr. and went upslope. Had things to do, so I didn't follow, but kept an eye open for any movement. Worked on sink area of Arlow Cabin

30 Nov

light snow here but Caspale received a bunch so no flights today. Stayed by radio and wafled floors in liv, kitchen back room bath and bed looked OK, Dedna bothered to do any work in Arlow cabin

December 1, 1992

Jim & I were due in here yesterday but spent one night in Cascade. Got here about 10:30 am. It looks great! Can I have Phil stay at my house too??

Jim went for a walk up to Cougar Cr. and saw 2 other in deep hole below old pasture & across the creek.

Dec 2

Three elk on 1st bench. One deer by house. One sheep on 2nd bench. We did water temps today. Snowed lightly all day, about 7 inches snow on ground.

Dec 3, Thursday

We tramped down the airstrip today, expecting the mail plane -- he never showed! It was a beautiful cold sunny day.

Dec 4, Friday

Found out we'll get mail on Sun. There are 8 elk on 2nd bench this morning & saw 2 coyotes in pasture. Temp got down to 2° last night. We're leaving water run night & day now & so far it hasn't frozen! We're shutting off living room now to keep it warm. Saw a bald eagle fly downriver about noon today.

I went for a walk down to salt

lick & saw the 2 coyotes across the river and 2 collared ewes and one lamb above the trail near the gate. I hiked up & got a picture, then went on up the draw, thinking I'd come out on 1st bench, but came out on top of 2nd & back home.

Later in evening we saw 2 rams, one with full curl & broomed, bedded down on the trail at the bend ~~to~~ below 1st bench. We got a good look through the spotting scope. Also the elk are still there.

Dec. 5, Saturday

I awoke this morning to the lonely sound of the song dog's yodel. The two coyotes came across the pasture and the smaller one stopped about in the middle, looked up at the cabin, and let forth with a ^{raucous} ~~raucous~~ bark/howl as if to say "We know you're there, but we don't care." It lasted for about two minutes, then she trotted off defiantly.

Jim walked up past Sabaner Basin to investigate a ewe that was killed there. (Phil told him about it & he heard it from Jerry Jepperson) The cougar's tracks were all over and had scraped up the snow over the carcass. As Jim was looking it over, he felt some movement in a tree overhead, a small bobcat was peering down,

as quiet as only a cat can be. Fady never even knew it was there!

The 9 elk were on the same meadow above the 3rd bench most of the day.

Dec. 6 Sunday Last night it was -2°

Ray Arnold flew in with mail about 2:30.

Jim checked all cabins and added anti freeze to some toilets. He broke ice away from the water intake, there was about 4 inches of ice on it since he'd broken it last time.

We've started making a fire in the cookstove morning and evening and it helps a lot. It can also do some cooking although the oven doesn't seem to get hot enough to bake cornbread.

Dec. 7 Monday

5 elk, 1 deer and 1 sheep feeding together on 3rd bench. There are 22 head of elk on the slope with 2 calves as far as Jim can tell.

Jim broke ice in the spring & the hole in the creek. He also turned off water to outside spigot in Taylor cabin and hopefully drained it. We still have water and temp is going up this evening it's about 22° at 5:00.

Dec. 8, Tuesday

Awoke this morning and lo and behold! Twenty four elk are eating in the pasture, seven are in the corral! There are two bulls and three calves.

I clamor down the path before I even have coffee (that's dedication!) and get some pictures. They let me get fairly close, while watching me and letting forth their high pitched yelp! yelp! yelp! Then stream across the river behind the bunkhouse and back up the cliff creek trail, stopping to ^{periodically} gaze back at this strange red bundle tottering after them.

This was quite a day for wildlife photography! After lunch the sheep herd was below the 1st bench and I took off with my camera. I used up 24 pictures & got some pretty good shots of the rams exhibiting flehmen (lip curl). There's one full curl old guy in the bunch.

I came back to get more film and decided to see if the otters were in the river. Sure enough! Right near the tack shed they were cavorting in the water and out. Then Lady came up and I yelled at Jim to get her. I figured shed scared them, so I walked up river a few feet. Soon I noticed 2 black noses coming up the river following me! I got about 12 pictures in all kinds of poses.

Wed. Dec. 9

We've got the most snow ^{since} we've been here, about 6" all together 4" fell last night.

We walked up Pioneer + Rush to do water temps. Then tramped down airstrip with snowshoes.

The elk + sheep were all over 2nd + 3rd benches all day today. Jim counted 42 head of elk.

They were mostly at their favorite place, behind + to left of 3rd bench. He walked up to get pictures and rams would butt heads + elk nearby didn't even look up!

About dusk, 5:00, the elk start filing down the hill, mostly using the trails, five of them cross Cliff Cr. + feed along trail to west, but about 25 come down 1st bench trail to the bend, then go east, downriver.

Thursday Dec. 10

This a.m. when we got up there were 10 elk right below the cabin by the air strip shed. Three calves. I stumbled out with camera ready, then Jim let Lady out so they spooked *! *! *! *! *! *!

They went up above the strip toward the sage bench.

There were no elk or sheep on benches today, the barometer was going down + abt 7:00 the rain started + it rained hard all evening.

Jim talked to Tony Wright tonight on the radio. He's at Running Creek on The Selway.

Friday Dec. 11th

Snow is really crusty after the rain. There's still about 10" on ground and its 17° out this a.m. and blue sky!!

No sign of critters, except for our bunny rabbit nibbling on the sunflower seeds I put out. He sits on the crosspiece on bottom of the table in the yard, ears cocked + nose twitching, but scampers away when I open the door to get a picture.

Last night Jim put the dog out around 10:00 and something jumped down from the apple tree and went up the fir. We went out to look but couldn't find it. Today we found the tracks of a raccoon.

It was a beautiful, sunny cold day today and we walked down to Cougar Creek. Saw one hairy woodpecker and two deer. No sign of elk or sheep today!!

Saturday, Dec. 12

Last night, just as dusk fell over the benches, Jim spotted a young buck as he crept warily along the side of the second bench + around to the salt lick. He had beautiful antlers and seemed so delicate and tense in the twilight. Today we walked up to check on winter + it wasn't iced over, then walked down the airstrip. On our way back to the house we saw an old cow elk outlined against the sky on the cliff above, watching us as we retreated.

Sunday, Dec. 13

Yesterday I put sunflower seeds & apple pieces not only on the table in the yard, but on a board near the hedge directly in front of the window. Sure enough, the bunny was there about 9:00 and I stealthily opened the window and got a good picture of him.

An hour later, death, in the form of a large goshawk, swooped right down in the yard in front of the window, made a turn & went back toward the creek. He was looking for my bunny, obviously, and a pang of guilt clutched my heart. Have I lured the tiny rabbit to his untimely end by feeding him?

(Jim rolls his eyes knowingly, but leaves me to my own amusements!)

So far I haven't been able to corrupt the stellar's jay. He nibbles a little from the table every few days, but cares nothing for victuals that my birds at home would be doing somersaults for.

The mailplane came today! Christmas cards! Pecans from my sis in Arkansas! a newspaper!

After Ray & ? left Jim & I walked up behind cabin along the trail to the sage bench. As we were directly above the airstrip we saw 2 coyotes trotting on the ice along the river, going toward Cliff Creek.

We continued along the trail and as we got to the other side of the hill, we were finally in the sun! We approached the flat where the study area is & suddenly heard a high pitched yelp! "That's elk" I told Jim, & there they were peeking through the trees.

By the time we got to the flat they were a distance off, about 4 head. Then we saw 13 more over on the Rush Point trail. All in all we saw about 25 elk in the area.

We sat in the snow and watched them awhile before heading back the way we'd come. The sagebrush smells wonderful up there, even in the snow!

Monday, Dec. 14

A quiet day. I washed clothes. Drying big flannel sheets is a pain! I hang them outside, then a wet shower all night, then on rack by stove ----

We walked up Pioneer Creek to spring. Elk have really been browsing up there. Jim saw a cow on Allen Point! early this a.m.

Sheep were on 15th bench.

Tues. Dec. 15

all sheep are on 1st bench - 11 head, 1 ram. It's warmed up to about 30° and the roof is dripping.

I walked out in p.m., intending to go up the airstrip, but as I got down there, I saw two elk at end of the strip so changed my mind and Lady and I went up Pioneer Creek. A light snow was falling and the only sound was the gurgle of the water under the ice. We have about 6" snow on the ground at the ranch, but about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile upstream from the spring the snow increases to a foot at least. It was a beautiful snowy day all day.

Wed. Dec. 16

It was 5° last night and windows had frost on the inside. The sun lights up the third bench as about 20 sheep cavort around on the top, including at least 3 rams. Jim biked up to get a closer look.

Jim saw the cow again this a.m. on Allen Point. As he was walking up to look the sheep over he saw a goshawk nose dive down and grab something near the river and carry it a short way before tearing into it. On his way back he went over

To investigate and it was a chukar.

He found the sheep were just grazing the grass above the snow, pretty much a pure diet of blue bunch wheat grass. No evidence of pawing.

The elk are all on north slopes right now, I saw three on my walk up sage bench trail. They paw down for fescue.

We got stream temps all at 1° above ~~centigrade~~ centigrade.
Thursday, Dec. 17

We took a walk today up to the blowdown flat. It was kind of overcast as we left and there were heavy gray clouds upriver. It's about 59°

The river is completely frozen over in spots, but there are a lot of open areas as well. Tracks of elk, deer, coyote, otter, mink and bob cat are found in the snow over the river.

There are large chunks of ice, like slices of blue glass cake with white frosting on top, sticking up. The clear ice is about 6" thick, and is a result of the river freezing, then breaking up and freezing again. The water gurgles and rolls stones under its icy coating.

The trail is easy and lovely. As we near the blowdown, the snow starts, just a fine mist, tiny flakes drifting

down & around us as the cloud moves down the river canyon.

We stop to have a "little something", (in this case, Hershey's chocolate drink in the boxes) and as we make a place on a log, we see about 10 elk across the river and up high on a north slope. They stop eating and just stare, dumbfounded.

On the way back we see 3 deer very high up on our side of the river in a south facing grassy saddle on the top of the ridge.

As we neared Rush Creek we ~~saw~~ ^{see} an eagle above the mountain across the river.

Friday, Dec. 16

24

This morning the sheep were all on first bench about 10:30, so Jim went over to photograph.

(about 10) As we were eating lunch we watched the herd leave the bench and about 3-4 ewes led the way to the flat ~~to~~ above the creek. They stood for several minutes here, gazing down into the trees, while the rams and rest of the herd stayed up above on the side of the bench above the trail. The leaders finally picked their way down to the creek & soon everyone from up above ran, fell, down the slope & into the trees.

Soon they were all coming up on the west side of the creek on the

trail and then went over the bank, which is steep exposed rock + dirt to the left of the bridge. They stay here over an hour nosing around, maybe eating dirt? or there may be some salt here? It's also sunny and warm here, so maybe they are sun bathing?

about an hour or two after the herd leaves, another band comes through at the same spot and goes to the same places, but they only stay about 30 min. Talk about a bunch of sheep!!!

Saturday Dec. 19

We fly out tomorrow, weather permitting. Jim saw the elk on Allen Point again. The sheep spent all day yesterday + all night between the 1st gate and Reek Creek just above the trail, then in late afternoon they headed up Cliff Creek on the same side.

We got the water samples from the 34 creeks to take out and packed down the airstrip with snowshoes. It was about 20° today.

As we were heading into the house we heard + saw the flock of chukars making a big racket just near the gate on the trail, about the same place where the goshawk got one the other day.

About 7:00 the coyotes started a mournful chorus very close to the cabin yi yi yip yip yip!!! oooooo — — — There were 2 or more, it's impossible to tell when their voices interweave with each other, but it seemed they were on the flat next to Cliff Creek howling their little hearts out! They carried on for over 30 minutes.

at 7:30 Jim called Tony Wright at Running Creek (about 100 mi n. of here) and Tony said yesterday he was challenged by a bobcat!

He was walking on a flat near the Selway River when he ~~saw~~^{saw} the young cat, about 15 lbs, really only a kitten, near the trail. Instead of running, the cat started spitting and coming at him! He backed off, but the thing kept coming, hissing & fighting mad, very unusual behavior for bobcats, who are usually shy & elusive.

He was carrying his skis, thank goodness, because the cat was intent on attack, and finally got so close that Tony could use his ski ~~to~~ to lash out at him. He hit the ground with the ski & hit at the feline. The cat retreated a little way & watched him. He walked gingerly on, looking backward the whole time until he could no longer see the beast!

Sunday, Dec 20

We were supposed to go home today. It's OK in here, but snowing in McCall, so no flying yet. (It's 2:30)
No sheep today.

Monday Dec 21

Yip, unfortunately we're still here and poor Phil & Sarah are waiting at Cascade. It's 11:30 now and still snowing there. It's OK here but that doesn't mean much. bah! humbug!

Tuesday Dec 22

Bah! Humbug!!

Wednesday Dec 23

Ships are clear (semi) in Cascade. We're going out today sure!!

Thurs Dec 24.

Got in finally yesterday after huddling in Jim + Pat's trailer for 4 nights waiting for the blizzard to pass. Snowed fairly constantly in Cascade.

1st thing we did was locate ourselves a Christmas tree - found a scrawny one, in the midst of a little group of ~10 yr old trees up Pioneer Creek.

Seen to be having trouble with inverter. Tried to charge the laptop IBM so I could do some work; inverter lets out a high pitched constant tone. Battery hovers in the questionable zone btwn "good" + "bad".

(12 volt)

a $\frac{3}{4}$ curl ram just below the second bench avidly sniffing a ewe. Showed signs of mounting, followed her around for ~20 minutes - then we got tired of watching.

Phil spent day working in Arlo Cabin. Finished up the counter tops. I'm still editing my master's professional paper ... by hand.

Went for long walk east along Big Creek - Lots of tracks about. Phil saw fresh cougar tracks heading S across Big Creek - said it looked like a small one. Still no elk to be seen.

27 Dec 1992 Sunday

About 10am **Ris Am dogs began barking** - there were 4 elk down by the tack shed. Female + young were licking at salt block - 2 other ♀'s tried to lick also - mother pushed them away.

All looked healthy, thick coats. Hung around until at least 11am, when we headed out on a walk up Pioneer Creek. About a mile + $\frac{1}{4}$ up creek, high on ridge to the east, saw 7 elk, all females. Walked until trail appeared to end at open flat area about 2 miles up. We were looking for the intersection of the creek that shows on the map to be coming into Pioneer Creek from the SE about 2 miles up. Didn't find it Lots snow up there; 13-15" I'd guess. Warm day, 30° F or so, everything dripping. Hope about 4. 4:30 Elk tried to cross from above Lanham down to tack shop - saw 3 females. Dogs barked + scared them back into woods. Phil Baked bread + we made a huge pot

of Turkey Vegetable soup from Xmas leftovers.

Back to our Scrabble Game!

28 Dec. 1992 A beautiful warm sunny day. Spoke to Yeo this morning - hoped to get some information about possible ways to charge the computer battery. It was as we had feared - no sun, no charge. The sun really only seems to hit the solar panels directly for about 2 hours - from 12 to noon. I did actually run the computer for 20 minutes today - from 140-200, before the inverter let go with its high pitched "low voltage" tone. We took the 2 12-volts from the cellar + hooked them up at Lanham about 11AM, hoping there would be more solar energy there. I tried the computer about 4, and it seemed to have plenty of power. I worked until dark, but was afraid if I left the computer to charge overnight I'd run the ^{12-volt} batteries down (as the charge was visibly dropping as I worked.)

Phil began work in the old lab, taking down the wall to enlarge the bathroom. He finished up in the Arlo Cabin with varnishing the new wood work.

Tramped down $\frac{1}{2}$ of the airstrip with snow shoes - and Phil tramped down a path for the sled. That proved unsuccessful. Sticky snow or not enough incline - sled wouldn't go fast enough to raise a breeze.

No sign of sheep or elk today. Maybe tomorrow.

30 Dec. Looks like I forgot to write yesterday - must have been an uneventful day. I know we did quite a bit of walking on the airstrip with snowshoes -

It's almost ready for a smooth landing! Oh - by the way we got almost 4 inches of snow on the night of the 28th - we wish we had our skis. Today was cool + partly o-cast; 30°F or so. The ^{solar} set-up down at Lanham seems to be working fine; I can do about 6 hours a day + still be ok with the change. I suppose it simply gets more sun down there.

Phil has been struggling with the wall in the old lab; apparently needs a little new plumbing.

No sign of sheep or elk, but we haven't spent a lot of time looking.

31 Dec 92 Cold today - 15°F, or so. Mixed o-c. and sun. Suddenly realized our time here is coming to a close - we fly out on Saturday, Jim and Pat return.

I'm struggling to get the last of my work done (defend for my masters mid-January). Change still fine down at the Lanham cabin - haven't tried it up here lately.

Phil has the wall down in the old lab, and a new one up. The bathroom is much roomier now. We did some more snowshoe-ing on the airstrip; should be fine now for use. It's new year's eve - we're having a quiet one: scrabble and popcorn. We're getting pretty good at scrabble.

No sign of sheep today - scanned the hills this morning.

1 Jan 93 Jim called 1st thing this AM with bad news of his wife Pat. Bad that she had a seizure of some kind. Gopal, in that they were out and could get to a doctor for help to find what is exactly wrong & hopefully provide medicine

to rectify the situation. Sarah worked in Lanham cabin till 1:00pm and I added 1 more goat to counter top in Arlow cabin and cleaned up a bit. We went for a walk downstream towards Petroglyphs. Deep Snow made for some strenuous walking had a short lunch and back at 5:30. Saw 3 Elk (Cows) on Airstrip $\frac{1}{2}$ way down. We also saw 1 mallard and 11 ^{on water} Geese from Taylor Bridge. We also saw 2 groups of deer 5 in 1 group 4 in the other and 5 ewes near goat Cr. Lots of ouzels along Big Cr. Snow off & on all day.

2 Jan 93 Supposed to fly out today - I was, anyway. Phil's staying for a week or so, until Jim and Pat's return. Weather was bright + sunny here - but snowing in Cascade. Just as well, we had some more work to do on the airstrip. Snowed on + off all day yesterday + we were too beat when we got back from our trip to do any tramping. Phil's got it packed pretty hard now - side-stepped almost the whole thing. I was out there early this AM - spooked the elk off it.

I worked at Lanham on the computer all day. Good thing I'm going soon; I'm getting thru some wood. It's that awful poplar - burns fast; and the Lanhams hard to heat.

7 sheep on the 1st bench around 2PM; traversing + browsing. One of the sheep we saw yesterday had a collar on - Phil thought it might be blue but we didn't really get a good look.

Well, I'll probly go tomorrow. Our best wishes are with Jim + Pat, hoping she makes a swift recovery + it's not a serious thing.

3 Jan 93 ⁰⁸³⁰ 11 Sheep along rocks & shrubs East of 1st bench
2 Rams and 1 ewe and 1. They appear to be munching some rotten mahogany
1500 10 Sheep grazing on 1st bench 1 ewe w/ blue collar
Sheep on 1st bench till after 2:30 didn't see them leave

but they were there when Sarah took off. Sarah had to leave to go
needed photos etc. last minute things done for her defense on Jan 22
with the weather being the way it is we could still be here
Even though she didn't make any noise its awfully quiet here
without her. I miss her already.

4 Jan 93 Worked in Lab cabin all day cutting hole
through wall for window, after carefully taking off panels
frims, chinking inside and out, and removing any debris that my
destroy chainsaw and me. Had to find 2x6 pieces. Long &
decent enough for rough opening, my last cut was just bare
light enough to see. Kind of drafty in there with the window
open. 11 Elk laying around near airstrip (wide spot on stony
beach right along Big Cr.) The dogs obviously didn't think they
should be on their airstrip.

5 Jan 93 Finished window (roughed in) in Lab. Started putting
wall panels back up. won't have enough unless there
is more $\frac{1}{4}$ " or $\frac{3}{8}$ " plywood down by bankham. Saw 5 sheep on
1st bench @ 10 - 1:30 pm. Elk, about 7 of them
on S side of airstrip browsing. Koushka seems to be much
better, she saw them but came when I called her back.
Jim & Pat coming down on Thurs and I'll probably start
cleaning up my mess in Lab

Thursday, Jan 7, '93

We flew in about 4:30. Its good to see
the place again.

Friday, Jan 8

The snow is knee high and its really
pretty with a few flakes drifting down.

1993

It's very quiet here today, with no animals or even birds anywhere to be seen. Jim walked up down around the bend to the salt lick to see if he can see signs of the sheep.

This will be our long stretch" here until March 15 if all goes well and I'm looking forward to days and days of pursuing our activities at our easy pace.

Saturday Jan 9, 1993

Little cat feet came quietly down to the creek by the cabin last night. We saw his tracks as he came down to the open water & then walked back up Pioneer Creek. A small ~~bobcat~~^{raccoon} Jim thinks.

We lost our water last night! We got up this a.m. to nothing! Jim filled up the buckets & then we walked up to look at the spring. It was open, so it must be the pipes into the house. We can still use the toilet by filling the tank by hand, at least that's the plan.

About 4:00, we finally got a good view of our elusive raccoon! He was at the bottom of the table as I glanced out the window. He was just a puff of fur, about the size of a small dog. His fur was brownish red along his sides, with darker brown down his back. His tail was dark brown with about 6 lighter brown rings around it. He had a small face, with

a tiny sharp nose, and small, upright tan ears. The black of his mask continued along the top of his nose to the tip and his small black eyes were busy.

His little black hands reached furtively out for pieces of apple and he chewed the frozen pieces studiously. Suddenly he noticed something, and stood on his hind legs, holding his paws over his stomach like an old man after dinner.

Sunday, Jan 10

We went for a walk upriver just to the gate across from Rush Creek. Saw a lot of tracks. As we came back we saw the 2 otter in the river near cookhouse and then heard the chukars in their usual place on the slope by cliff creek.

As we came up to the cabin, we saw tiny fresh tracks in the trail, and when we got to the yard we could see the mashed bandit had struck again; all the apples I'd placed on the rung under the table were gone.

Jim said "He's probably right here in the trees hiding from us." I looked and sure enough, he was in the big fir directly behind the small cedars, curled up on the lowest branch, peering down at me. I got some pictures.

Jim saw 2 sheep, a ram and a ewe on the first bench this afternoon.

Monday, Jan 11, 1993

a quiet day. We saw the raccoon coming right across the airstrip at noon. When we opened the door he ran to the large tree by the shed & stayed there for about 2 hours. at about 3:00 he was eating apples in the yard.

We saw just a couple of sheep on the first bench.

Tuesday, Jan 12, 1993

archie George came in today. Weather & airstrip were good for flying, so he didn't have to wait. We visited all afternoon & evening. Jim has a bad cold.

Wed. Jan 13

We're enjoying visiting with Archie. Jim still feels rotten so we didn't do much.

Saw 2 elk across the river & a couple of sheep.

I walked a ways up Rush Creek and saw fresh cougar tracks going across the iced over creek. Archie went up to 2nd bench.

Thursday, Jan 14

The three of us did the stream temps in the a.m. We saw an elk crossing river on the ice & going up Kede Creek. There were 6 sheep about $\frac{1}{2}$ way up the slope on other side of the river. The sun is on that side but airstrip is in shade.

We saw the cougar tracks about 100 feet into airstrip trail on top of my tracks made yesterday at 5:00. Also saw same tracks going up our trail up Pioneer Creek.

Friday, Jan 15

We took a hike up to Sobauer Basin and it was a gorgeous, sunny day. We saw about 10 elk high up across the river at different places.

Before we got to blow down flats, as we went around the cliff, we saw 4 big bull elk outlined against the sky on the ridge top, then noticed 2 more to the right, as well as about 5 deer. As we came into the trees, there were a cows moving up about 100 yds to our right. They'd been eating the Oregon grape and grasses there under the trees.

Tracks are everywhere, above the trail, on the trail and below, as well as many on the river ice. For awhile we could follow a

cougar's track along the trail.

I have to start back a little before the gyps, and when I get back to Blow Down Flats I notice magpies flying & chattering. I watch where they are landing a short distance through the heavy downfall and go over to investigate. A cow elk has been killed, and a lot of the meat, hide and bones are still there.

Saturday Jan 16

Jim and Archie went back to the Blow Down today to clear out more of the trail. We've lost our sun and it's overcast.

It's very quiet around here, if it wasn't for the 3 grouse, 2 magpies and 1 rabbit in the yard, I'd be lonely!

Sunday, Jan 17

Archie walked up to the Salmon River (nc) today. He left about 7:30.

Jim & I walked up on the trail above the cabin. There's 15" of snow on the sage flats study plot. We saw 6 elk right there. Also 8 deer on the steep face above Rush Creek.

Monday, Jan 18.

A cloudy day. We got a heavy snow in the afternoon. No animals around.

Tuesday Jan 19

We saw an elk cow with a calf on the bench west of cliff creek early this a.m. The sheep are above the 3rd bench pawing in fescue. Three or four elk on the slopes. at the end of the strip Jim saw where the goshawk had killed a grouse.

Archie leaves today about noon and we get mail! Jim got stream samples and is sending them out.

Wed. Jan 20

Rain today! and we have clothes on the line naturally.

There were 6 sheep that crossed cliff creek and went briefly over to the cut bank to west of the bridge, then ran back and on down the trail to the east and up on plot 1A.

There were two coyotes right across the river and they were howling at Lady, who was on this side. ^{eating the deer bones} Finally she decided they were right, and turned tail and went back over to Jim.

Thursday Jan 21, 1993

A grey day here today. Temp. is about 30°. Carol was 20 min late on the radio this a.m. Ray was 12 hours last night driving the mail because of snow slides. It's the worst they've seen for years on S. Fork of Salmon. The snow slides off our roof with a slow crenching sound, then ker-thump! A pile lands down below. To yellow pin

Friday Jan 22, 1993

We got 5½ inches of snow last night which makes a total of 10½ inches, one of the highs so far as we can tell. It's really pretty outside with mist swirling up in the bowl to the right of the 3rd bench and a little sun highlighting the cliff creek bowl, but the clouds are moving in for more snow.

Jim saw a lone cow elk below first bench early today.

30 minutes later I can't see the 3rd bench at all, the snow cloud covering everything above the 2nd bench and it's snowing heavily.

We are not using the solar lights at all now because the

power is so low, and we use the propane mainly for cooking and in the evening to read by, from about 7:00 - 9:30. The kerosene lamps are our main source of ready light. They are so cheerful and bright, they really help to dispel the gloom of long winter days.

Saturday, Jan 23

There's a late filagree along the roof top this morning. The sky is baby blue and the sea is sparkling on the lambing cliffs. It inches it's way down and by 9:30 it has lighted up the rim of the inside bowl under the cliffs. It was 4° last night. By 11:30 the pasture is ablaze in sunlight & the sun is touching the corner of the cabin. How quickly it moves & how quickly we are in the dark shadows again!

Sunday Jan 24, 1993

We have one lone stellar's jay at the feeder, along with 3 magpies. Jim heard some coyotes howling from across the river. It's warmed up to about 17° and it's very quiet around here.

Monday, Jan 25, 1993

It's 40° today and the sun warms our winter weary backs as we head across the pasture to take a walk down to the salt lick. Just before the gate we see three deer high above us, peering down curiously.

A raven calls as it wings its way high above us and beneath our feet is another one of nature's wonders, snow fleas! They look like black pepper scattered over the sparkly snow, and once in awhile one jumps.

There's been no sheep on the benches for about 3 days.

Tuesday, Jan 26, 1993

A hairy woodpecker was in the aspens by the creek this morning.

Another 40° day. At noon a fog covers the top half of the ridge, but 45 min. later it's all blue sky except for a fluffy cloud over the top of the cliffs.

We walk up river on the trail. When we get to about even with half way down the strip, Jim says "look" and there are a bunch of elk ahead of us in the trail, their light rear patches shining in the sun. They head down to the river to cross and six of them go tippy toeing across the ice, walking stiff legged like newborn calves, one after the other. The seventh one stops. She

refuses to go across, and the nine elk behind her bunch up, confused. Finally they all go on downstream and cross at a better place. While they're standing around by the bank, one of the six that crossed comes galloping back, I guess to see what happened, but the others pay no attention & go up the hillside.

While we are watching the elk, we notice about 6 sheep above us in the rocks.

We travel on a couple hundred yards and then see a 5 point bull lying down behind some rocks just above the trail. There was one cow & 2 calves nearby.

Jim decided that was it, & we should come back, rather than disturb everything. Lady doesn't bark, and we put her on a leash when we first see something.

Jim went back to photograph the animals & lady & I went downstream to the salt lick & back.

Wed, Jan 27

We took stream temps today. Another mild, sunny day. As we came to spot along Rush where thermometer is, Jim sees heads of 2 cows silhouetted against the sky on Rush Ridge, just their heads between sage plants.

This a.m. we saw 3 large ravens going upriver.

Our one lone jay had a problem. The dog was lying about 10' from the feeder. The jay squawks? squawks? and hops around. He's really spooky. The dog, of course,

pay no attention. The jay hopped around, agitated and anxious to have some seeds and squawked some more. He finally landed gingerly on the farthest corner of the table, cocked his head, then flew right back to the tree. The tension was just too much! He finally flies away until I bring our beest inside, at which time the bird immediately appears and quietly eats his fill.

Thursday, Jan 28

One lone cow elk on knob west of Cliff Cr. early today

About noon 9 ewes, 4 lambs, 1 yearling ram are on outbank left of bridge. Magpie is picking ticks off of one ewe. Suddenly they all run across Cliff Creek & up the trail

My lone jay is completely hooked now, he eats the millet as well as sunflower seeds and apple parings - ditto for the raccoon!

Friday Jan 29

alt 33° today and another sunny day
Heard the familiar chickadee dee dee and saw a black capped as well as some mountain chickadees. also a pair of hairy woodpeckers in big tree by corral (their favorite spot)

four sheep crossed Cliff Cr. onto the outbank around noon.

We walked up past the salt lick, and saw 10 sheep in the rocks above the trail

Saturday, Jan 30

7 sheep to right of Cliff Creek this afternoon
one ram.

Jim walked to Ram Basin and on the way Lady saw a coyote and took out after him. The coyote stopped about 100 ft away and barked at the dog. Jim only had to call once & Lady came back to his side, probably glad she didn't have to be too brave!! The coyote yelled for a few minutes, getting in the last word.

Just at dusk the 4 grouse fly in low, like B-1 bombers with a heavy load, & land awkwardly in the pear tree.

The raccoon ate at the table in the middle of the day today, he had old corn squash & apple parings, then waddled around the house to check out the compost pile.

A clear sunny day.

Sunday, Jan 31 7° last night

at 8:00 a.m. 4 elk on w. knob by Cliff Cr. one was a scrawny bull. Then on top of first bench was a larger bull.

Yesterday Arnolds called to ask if they can bring mail on Mon. instead of Wed., We said no problem.

We walked up to Ram Basin. Its another bright sunny day. Saw a flock of common redpoll finches and heard the creaky cry of clarkes nutcracker.

The trail, packed down by our boots and the hooves of many elk and deer is anywhere from 3-24 inches lower than the snow

alongside it.

Monday, Feb. 1

It was 4° this a.m. & the lone jay sat huddled up forlornly in the apple tree, his feathers all fluffed up & once in awhile he emits his inquisitive hoo hoo sound & flies down to peck ~~at~~ a seed or two.

Ray came in with mail! newspapers! groceries! about 11:30. He stayed & visited quite awhile & had tea & cookies.

2 bull elk on the beach.

Tuesday Feb. 2

Washday today. We start heating water as soon as we're up & Jim hauls 24-30 gallons of water, and I'm done by 11:00

Some practical suggestions on using the manual washer indoors:

Hook hose to drain as tight as possible. Make sure drain is shut & put a small tub under connection because it leaks.

Fill washer with clothes and hot water & soap. Move lever on side back & forth to make agitator work. (It's best to do this to loud rhythmical music, Tchaikovsky's overture of 1812 works well for me) The faster you move, the more dirt goes!

Then run clothes through the wringer. Catch them in metal pan, since sometimes you dump water. Socks & pillowcases go in closed end first.

When you're ready to drain water out, take hose out the door & as far away

from steps & house as possible. Then open the drain, but not all the way & water drains out very well. Then you're ready to close it up & rinse clothes!

Make sure back porch is well watered, & water is mopped up well and it works well.

We walked ~~up~~ ^{down} the trail and saw 13 sheep up on the bench. When we were almost to gate, we saw a 3/4 curl ram all bedded down under a huge ponderosa pine high on the ridge. I tried to climb up to get a picture, but he left before I got up there! (What a climb!)

About 9:00 ~~Elk~~ ^{Elk} are on trail w. of Cliff Creek. 3 cows, 2 calves and a spike bull. They stand around, then go up the bench about half way & wind around going into Cliff Creek drainage.

Wed Feb. 3

5° last night & sunny today. We took the stream temps, and as we walked down airstrip there were about 20 elk going upriver on the trail opposite us. One rafter and one spike bull. When they saw us they speeded up and crossed the river at mouth of Rush Creek. There is a lot of open water on the river, but still iced over there.

Five or six sheep around outbank when we came back by.

Thursday Feb. 4

at noon, the raccoon treads, whisper lightly, around front of cabin to the table. We also see 2 elk high up in the cliffs to east (under the "nose") browsing on mountain mahogany.

We take a walk to Cougar Creek. Feather ice crystals cover everything and the snow is so dry, the crystals rustle as we walk. We ~~see~~ ^{see} about 7 mule deer up on the south slopes just below the rocks, browsing in the sun as we trudge ~~to~~ below in the shadows!

6 elk are grazing on left side of 3rd bench this evening at 5:30

Friday Feb. 5

Jim takes a walk up to 3rd bench to inspect the grasses + Fedy + I go up to the trail going upriver. We just get to top above the creek + there's one sheep ^{above} standing like a statue, with blue sky behind him. Soon we see 10 more, all grazing on the barbed off S. side. at the gate, there are about 10 more below the trail. We turn around

and go back and watch all 20 scattered across the slope from the cabin for 2-3 hours.

Jim saw one lone sheep at the salt lick.

Saturday Feb. 6 -

Early this morning there were 6 elk bedded down way up in the rocky ridge to the east, a little to the left of the giant's face.

Yesterday Jeff called to tell us that we will have visitors from 10th to 17th; Marr Henberg, UofC Philosophy dept, & Torstein Storaa visiting prof. from Norway.

This p.m. ^{4:30} the sheep were on the cutbank. 25 sheep - ~~2 does & 1 ram~~, ³ radiocollared ewes, 1 ^{full curl} mature ram, ² ^{1/4} curl ram, 5 lambs, 14 ewes
9 deer on w. knob of cliff creek -

Sunday Feb. 7

4 fawns, 5 does

3 elk were inside the corral when we got up this a.m. When they heard us moving around they moved slowly out & up the slope into the Cliff Cr. Gorge. About 5 min later, two coyotes came trotting to the flat beside the creek from the downriver trail. They sniffed the elk trail, hesitated, then continued at a good trot upriver.

Jeff called this a.m. to discuss research projects.

We leave about 10:00 to go upriver to Zebauer Basin. It's about 20°, with blue sky and puffs of clouds, the trail is mostly in the shade. There's clear ice on parts of the trail.

On the flats, the evidence of many elk are everywhere. They've trampled, gnawed and torn shrubs. They're eating Oregon Grape & Red Osier. There are marks on the alder of elk scraping with their teeth.

There's a pile of chukar feathers by the trail, evidence of the busy goshawk.

We visit the site where the cow elk was killed around Jan 15. It's pretty well picked clean, with only the backbones, legs and skull left. There's a regular trail leading to it from the main trail.

There's a pileated woodpecker directly above, working on a dead cottonwood.

in
snowbank

We keep walking, hoping to find a sunny spot for lunch. We get to the cliffs right before Zobauer Basin and find a spot to → nestle on the side of the hill. This is a good vantage point to see slopes both across the river and west of the basin.

We soon spot a group of elk; 3 cows, 2 calves, 1 ramhorn and 2 spike bulls, moving about halfway down & across the slope.

On the way back, an elk runs across the trail in front of me, and when we get to the gate across from the cabin, the sheep are in the cutbank. They run up to first bench, and when we get back to the cabin, there are 4 elk grazing on second bench.

A lovely time was had by all!!
at 6 p.m. there are 8 deer on knob west of cliff creek.

Monday, Feb. 9

The 4 elk are still on top of 2nd bench when we arise this a.m.

This evening there are 15 sheep on knob W. of Cliff Creek. They stand, bunched up & staring down into the trees for several minutes before running down. Soon they emerge on E. side and trail up to 1st bench.

A few minutes later 2 cow elk cross the bridge and head for the corral. The other 4 that were with them went under the bridge & across the river. Eventually another 2 come into the corral.

Tuesday, Feb. 9

10 elk are bedded down in a small depression just below the top of the 3rd bench.

Three coyotes appear coming from the east about midway up the second bench. They sit, then two run chasing each other across 2nd bench and the first one disappears into Cliff Cr. The "aggressor" moves back up to where the 3rd one is still sitting. The 3rd one stands & howls, then sits. Then suddenly another one appears! This new threesome mills around and finally disappears back in the direction they all came from.

We see a flock of redpolls in the yard.

2 elk come to feed in corral about dark.

Wed Feb. 10 - about 2:30 Marv Henberg and Torstein Storaas arrive. We have tea & cookies with Ray for a couple of hours. They get settled in the Zanham Cabin.

Just at dusk 4 deer steal into corral to feed, and behind them is an elk calf. He wanders on past the Hayshed, into the pasture and slowly onto the bridge, stopping & looking every few feet, and disappeared to the right.

Thursday Feb. 11

There's a squirrel in the apple tree this morning, and 2 elk cows moving up the trail on 2nd bench, a coyote howls up Cliff Creek.

It's a very quiet day here. We are enjoying Marv & Torstein's company. The 3 of them went on a walk downriver after ¹⁵ deer - 14 bighorn (to Cougar Cr)

It's in the ~~the~~ ⁴¹ ~~30's~~ & snow is very slushy. The river is mostly clear ^{of ice} under the bridge, but still a lot at mouth of Rush.

Fri Feb. 12

9:00 a.m. 7 deer dashing over the top of the 3rd bench and down the side into Cliff Cr. also 3 elk grazing on east side of same bench.

We all walk out to do stream temps and take the sage flat trail above the cabin to get to Rush. We see 8 deer as we approach the sage flat and Torstein is ecstatic, it seems they don't have deer in Norway! He takes numerous pictures and then watches with binoculars. The deer are very accomodating, and pose for about 15 minutes, Zady gets restless at the delay, & nips at our heels!

Saturday 2-13

Jim, Mavis + Torstein walked up to Cabin Creek today + I stayed here with Zady. It's been a very quiet day! No animals at all until about 3:00 when 6 elk moved onto the 2nd bench, south face that is clear of snow.

I phoned in my first long grocery list today. We've done very well on stuff brought in.

The guys got home about 6:00 and had a great time! Saw elk, sheep, and a fresh (still warm) calf elk killed by a cougar about 1 mi this side of cabin creek on the cliffs. It appeared to have been killed in the trail. Near the carcass was a lot of fresh cat tracks 3 1/2" wide, and a few feet away they found a dead bobcat (not related to the kill Jim says, it's been dead awhile)

Sunday 2-14

We all walked up to 2nd bench + Mavis went out to top along right hand ridge. There were 4 elk just above trail near lower pasture.

We all had a "Valentine's Day" dinner with ♡ cookies.

Near Brown's Basin

Monday 2-15

Weather is colder 18° with a wind. The guys went to Middle Fork today. They came upon another hill only didn't find the body! Just a lot of cougar tracks and blood in the trail and bloody beds where something was wounded. This was in the narrow gorge past the pictographs.

Tuesday 2-16 4° today

There's a storm predicted for W-F so Torstein & Marv are leaving today. We've really enjoyed their visit & wish they could stay longer. As they are ready to get in the plane, we notice the sheep are on the knob W of Cliff Cr. watching them leave, they've been absent almost all this week!

Wed, 2-17 5° below zero last night, the coldest so far this winter!! The dog's water is frozen on top.

The lone jay is asking for his handout, now that I've corrupted him, I have a responsibility to support his habit! The bunny is here also, after a long absence. Jim gives his not-so-clear weather and trail report for the lower Big Creek Expressway: "Traffic is moving briskly for hoofs, claws & paws, but those in viburnums & knobbs stumble & slide a lot."

There were 2 grouse in the willow below the cabin last evening, eating buds and also a flock of red polls in the birch beside the back steep, eating buds!

No sheep or elk! Very deserted on the benches!

Thurs. 2-18 - We got stream temps today. The snow is very crusty now & when you walk, you sometimes break thru & sometimes don't. It's 25° this afternoon, a heat wave!

There's a golden eagle above the cliffs across from the mouth of Rush & we see all the sheep on the cutbank around noon. It's good to see the critters back!

Friday - 2-19-93

We awake this a.m. to a fog moving into the ridge and by 10:00 the snow is coming down heavily.

We take a walk upriver about 1:00 and see the band of 15 sheep up in the rocks above the trail before we get to the gate.

We walk up past Ram Basin, then turn around. It's 34° & the snow tries to rain, but only a mist.

We scare up one grouse & when we get back to the sheep we see a nice $3/4$ curl ram even closer to us than the ewes! We get a lot of good photos.

Saturday 2-20

It rained hard last night, & the snow is hard packed and glassy along the paths.

I get very close to an otter, which popped his head out of an ice hole at the mouth of Rush. Could have gotten a good photo if not for X!X! dog! Saw one elk on cliffs east of Rush trail, and Jim saw a golden eagle between here & Horse Mtn.

Sunday 2-21-93 11° this a.m. (3 1/2 mi)

Today we walked down to Big Creek Gorge. It was cold and the trail was very icy in spots, but with the trail the guys made last week, it wasn't too bad.

We saw about 25 mule deer, about evenly divided on both sides of the river, 3 elk and 1 otter.

Jim wanted to see what was left of the "battle site" but there wasn't much, I could see the tree, though, that was clawed up, & that was something! The Gorge is always worth the walk, too, it's really spectacular!

Monday 2-22-93 - Bob Cat tracks by Canyon Cabin

There are 3 elk camped on top of 3rd bench. I walked down airstrip and saw 3 mule deer on steep talus across river from top of strip.

Sunny day, temp is abt. 33°

This evening there are 11 elk grazing on top of 3rd bench, & below them are about 20 mule deer.

We watch a golden eagle flying between us & Knob W. of Cliff Cr. He flies along the ground & lands briefly on a rock about half way down the slope.

No sheep.

Tuesday, 2-23-93 11° this a.m.

Six elk still on top of 3rd bench, about 10:00. The 20 or so mule deer come back to same place as yesterday

7 ravens flying upriver in a.m.

On radio this morning hunters in Selway River were talking about a cougar hunt. They chased the 170 lb male for 6 hrs & decided to kill him "for the soap" ????

After lunch Jim takes a walk on the trail upriver. He gets about half way, across from the airstrip and Judy takes off. He turns a corner and there's a deer kill in the trail. Judy is chasing the cougar up a big doug fir a few ft above the trail.

He gets a good look at it, then they come back home to get me, but he's gone by the time we get back.

After dinner we climb up the trail behind the cabin & around the ridge until we can see where the kill was. But the carcass is gone! There are red marks where he's dragged it & buried it a few ft ~~bet~~ below the trail. A bald eagle flies in and sits in a cottonwood, but doesn't go down.

We sit in the bank with binoculars on the spot, but see nothing. Soon there are 2 coyotes in the airstrip directly across, watching.

They go across the river but then leave.

Jim says the cat has got to be there or the critters would have stayed but we watch till dark & see nothing! No sheep today

Wed 2-24-93

We get up at 7:00 this a.m. & go back up to our lookout point on the trail behind the cabin. The carcass has been dragged again, probably by coyotes since it's not covered. It's to the left & more visible.

We see nothing but magpies & ravens.

On the way back there are 3 elk on 2nd bench. In p.m. 3 deer - 1st bench 4 sheep right of 1st bench.

one with a cape

Thurs. 2-25-93

3 elk on 2nd bench early a.m. also walk to sound of coyotes yodel an airstrip.

This p.m. we went up to measure grass on plot 1A - it's bare & muddy - on rocky slope above lower pastures are 8 sheep & above them about 7-8 deer grazing, as soon as we leave the plot the sheep are in it.

We checked on the hill & it's mostly gone except for bones & hair.

We did stream temps today.

10 elk & 4 deer on open slope w. of ⁷ 3rd bench in evening

2 coyotes, both with capes, traveling across main pasture & to airstrip about 6:00 p.m.

Fri. 2-26 - The Zone Jay has a mate!

a.m. 10 sheep, 4 deer & 4 elk

near plot 1A above trail, 6 sheep on west knob

We walked up to 3rd bench to measure of grasses. 2 yearling rams (3/4 wild) ran past us twice.

at 6:30 p.m. 10 deer on w. knob. Two coyotes walked from airstrip across main pasture to woods, about 6 sheep earlier on w. knob.

Sat. 2-27 Early a.m.

Five deer bedded down where w. knob connects with Horse Mts, the sun hits the gravel there early.

also 8 sheep on 1A plot.

5:30 p.m. (deer) still on top of knob.

elt's still light at 7:00 p.m. now. Wow!

Sun 2-28 early a.m. 4 deer on knob. 3 elk on west slope behind knob.

20 sheep feeding on plot 1A about 10:30

8 " on outbank about 1:00 - 2 lambs, ~~and~~ 2 ewes had collars, & one of them also had a yellow tag

7:00 p.m. 8 deer on 1A about 5:00 p.m.
20 sheep on rock fell above lower pastures
2 elk on 2nd bench

eating old horse tail plants & dirt

Monday, March 1 - 1993

20 sheep camped on 1st bench all day,

Two, ouyels dipping together at the river, and
Gene Jay has a mate it seems!

Two elk on 2nd bench early today.

Tuesday, March 2 - Warm today! 47° highest since Oct.!!

25 sheep camped on W. knob & 1st bench
all day.

3 sheep high on Horse mtn. after lunch.

It's very light at 7:30 a.m. now, the winter
darkness is over! The river is slowly breaking up, it
runs more & more, but still iced over at mouth
of Rush (but then).

I heard my first song sparrow yesterday, his
little 4 note song is a welcome sign.

According to "experts" on the main Salmon,
that river will "go out" in a week or less,
I'm not sure how Big Creek compares.

Wed, March 3

Mail day! elk 3:00 & not here yet.

25 sheep on 1st bench. 1 Elk on
second bench early today. Out here about
4:30 visited for quite awhile. Ray had
a woman who is the mail route driver
for Warren & S. Fork. She was great,
very interested in the sheep, etc.

Thurs. March 4 - Low of only 18° last night!

Just after daylight Jim saw one caped
coyote go across main pasture to strip. 30
min. later the 2nd one, also caped, followed.
It ran out, without a coat, (since it
seems like spring) and went to the fence
corner below compost pile to watch

where they were going. I heard them howling before I saw them. There were three by then, skirmishing around on the ice at mouth of Rush, howling & carrying on for some minutes before I crossed Big Creek & then went up Rush.

I walked down to Ram Basin about 9:30 to see if I could see anything but didn't (except, of course the gorgeous cliffs & mysterious mouth of Rush!).

When I came back I heard, then saw, the first redwing blackbird. He had a different sound from ones at home, & seems to be another lower!

We did stream temps today ^{5 elk across} Rush on slope
Nine sheep on 3rd bench in late p.m.

3-5-93 - Temp today is 45°!

Snow is wet & soft. We went up above 1st bench today to do plot 1B. Very quiet out. Saw 4 elk on 3rd bench in early a.m.

3-6-93 - 54° at cabin above 60° across river, I was sweating in my Gore-Tex pants & heavy sweater coming back. We walked to Tobacco Basin. Saw about 8 sheep before blowdown flat.

The river is flowing freely here & Rush Creek is clear at the mouth. There's one spot where ice is still across the river and that's a little below mouth of Rush.

The serviceberry has small buds & we saw 3 butterflies!

3 elk on left of 3rd bench in evening, also deer on 3rd bench as well as ¹⁵ sheep

across from ram basin is still ice over, but puddles on top.

3-7-93 High yesterday 53° to 25°

Jim hiked up to top of ridge today. I stayed here & cleaned bedroom - washed curtains (which may have been a mistake!) Side panels fell apart are in bottom drawer
He saw sheep, elk & deer en way from ridge to Cougar Creek and back.

3-8-93 Sheep (about 10) on 1st bench most of day, 10 deer on slope above Cliff Cr (east) at 3:30.

3-9-93 - Snow is melting fast now. It's a warm springy day. We walked up to sage bench above cabin, saw no animals but the arroyo & bitterbrush have tiny buds showing green!

The river is gathering strength but there's still a thin bridge of ice below Rush mouth.

We saw juncos (new) and red breasted nuthatches today, and about 10 sheep in lick in a.m.

In evening there are about 40 sheep on & around 3rd bench, 10 deer on 2nd & 3rd benches & 2 does & 2 fawns in the corral. We watched a skunk walk across the yard, his beautiful brush held high, just before dinner.

3-10-93 - We did stream temps today. Pioneer Creek always warmer continually.

About 30 sheep on & around benches in afternoon. A huge flock of song sparrows came swooping up Pioneer Creek in p.m.

Still a very thin bridge^{ice} about 10-15' wide this side of Rush mouth.

About 30 deer grazing in swale left of 3rd bench about 4:30 - At 6:00 31 sheep & 16 deer all feeding together on left side of 3rd bench.

3-11-93 Jim did a count (census) of 40 sheep late this p.m. They were in swale behind 2nd bench.

I went to the compost with Zady at my heels as usual, I was almost there when I noticed our aromatic friend nosing around in the peatlings. I grabbed Zady's collar & all was fine until she spied the skunk, waddling up to the outhouse, then I had a heck of a time holding her back long enough to let him get away! Saved one more time! I hope we make it until Monday!!

Two prairie in yard just at dusk. We haven't seen them for a long time!

3-12-95 - and now we have --- ta daaa Grosbeaks!

A flock this a.m.

We climb up Horse Mtn today. From up on 1st knob we can see about 30 sheep & 20 or so deer over on the benches, and in the other direction, above Rush Creek, there are 10 elk bedded down about half way up the ridge.

We never got to the lookout, even though we climbed up to about 7200' because we were even with Rush lookout. We ate lunch under a huge old doug fir tree, & while there, an eagle flew below us!

When we reach the "spine", a narrow line of rock, we can see all the way to the mouth of Cliff Cr., as well as all the Bighorn Crags, in one direction & up Pioneer to its head and a lot of the Rush Cr. drainage as well.

There's a sheep directly below where we sit, and on the way down we have to scare about 6 deer so they'll move over for us.

It's a horrible climb up & even worse going down!!

Today
high 43°
low 26°

3-13-93 - Early a.m. 10 deer grazing on top of 2nd bench and 10 more near top of 3rd. About 20 sheep to right of 3rd bench high above 3B plot. One lone elk in timber left of 3rd bench

The deer are still on benches in late evening. Ten sheep climbed cliffs above W. knob by Cliff Creek near dark.

3-14-93 - 10 sheep were on the cliffs this morning & deer on W. knob in evening.

3-15-93 - We got word yesterday that Mark Porter, our replacement, had a breakdown so won't be in for a day or so. We are waiting to see if we can get out anyway. Hate to do it but have plane tickets ---

No luck: Cascade had fog & rain. Then late this afternoon the rain started here and it's been pouring. That means the airstrip will be covered with water tomorrow, and it's not expected to freeze tonight. It looks like a long frustrating wait. Poor Mark had plenty of time after all!

3-16-93 hi 50° low 32°

Guess what? This morning snow! Down to the 2nd bench there was a skiff, and fog clouds around lambing cliffs, but Jim says strip is not bad (we may make it today)

Eight elk above 3B plot and 3 deer above 3rd bench.

3-16-93 - Even though my car broke down, we made it out. Jim & Pat made it out. I'm pretty excited. It was a cloudy trip in - I'm glad Ray knew where he was going! At about 5:00 there are 2 bands of sheep in sight. 1 is on the Rocky face* E of Rush Cr - there are *the lambing cliffs

7 in that band, then there 17 sheep in a band
on the ridge just above the 3rd bench. ~~11 elk~~ ~~1 elk~~
on the 3rd bench. and ~~1 elk~~ on the
West bench.
~~1 elk~~ 5 mule deer below 2nd bench.

3-17-93

SE Patty's Day! Green is the color, even if there
isn't much around here. A lazy day - checking the
Rush Creek thermometer was the longest venture
I took. Maddy (my ^{big puppy} ~~dog~~) tried to lick the smell of the
muck on the tube and the thermometer. I wouldn't
let her have it but when I put it back in the
water she could see it and tried (for 3-4 minutes),
much to my amusement to get at it through the
hole in the ice. The antics of a 7 month old pup
will probably save me from going nuts these 30 days!
Any way 11 elk ventured up the ~~west~~ west side of Cliff
creek and reappeared mid-afternoon (I believe it was
the same ~~herd~~ - ?-) on the second bench #ing 19.

One band of sheep ⁽¹¹⁾ above the ^{Pasture (~~band~~)} ~~band~~ across big creek - they
moved through saddle between 1st & Second bench. 5 muleys
^{below} ~~on~~ 2nd bench. ~~stop~~. At one point ^{the} elk & deer were only 30-50 yds
apart - the deer in a bunch the elk in rough single file.
I skunk below cabin at the hay shed - quite a bit of white
on me/his tail. I piled woodpecker feeding, drumming
w/ occasional calling above ~~cab~~ Taylor cabin.

3-18-93

Took weather at 0800. Ate breakfast, washed dishes
& cleaned kitchen, and went to try & catch some whitefish.
No luck - till noon when I ^{realized} ~~remembered~~ I never called in
the weather! OOPS! 2 duties a day and I forgot one.
I'd like to say it's not typical - oh well. Two coyotes
1 lg. & 1 small crossed pasture, ~~below~~ airstrip below Taylor

11 head of Elk on 2nd bench along w/ 9 muleys.
1 band of 7 sheep just east of Kush Creek Big Creek
confluence on N. Side Big Creek. Possibly 1 band
of Sheep in pasture below bridge across Big Cr. from
here - but it was dusky and I was way up on Ridge.

The stars are out tonight for the first time but not
too bright because of high thin clouds.

Crossed big creek on the ice, above Kush Creek.

3-19-93

Snow on the ridge top this morning. White
powder all the way down to the 3rd bench. 11 elk
on the west slope of the third bench. AARGH!
A simple job this one, no? Well this a.m. I found
that the maximum temperature yesterday was 99°
according to the thermometer in the weather station.
Humm... I thought. Closer examination of the
instrument revealed that the mercury had separated.
So I carefully remove the glass tube in its metal
sheath and think - now don't break this, be careful,
this is your sole livelihood here!

Shaking it down did not fix it. I had heard
of ~~the~~ boiled thermometers (the stream type) to
to ~~fix~~ reunite divorced mercury columns. So
I boil water. I turn off the heat AND then
gingerly ~~return~~ ^{place} the thermometer into the water
carefully observing the mercury level. ZOOM! It
shoots straight to the top - I pull out the
thermometer and examine it. The mercury has not
rejoined! So I carefully lower it back into the
water - SNAP! AARGH!!! * @!! - @ *!!!

But this is a two part tragedy: 1) I
broke the thermometer and had to make a
very humiliating call over the radio to see what to

(She will be in one)
do. 2) The pot I used to boil the ~~the~~ water in - and break the ~~thermometer~~^{on} in - was the coffee pot! So if when you read these next entries it seems I am as "mad as a hatter" you'll understand. 3. Hopefully several good rinses will take care of the problem. OR, maybe I'll just do the coffee in some other pot.

Hiked up the ridge S.W. of the cabin today; went straight up from here. GOT ALMOST THE DOUBLE KNOBS WHEN I SPOOKED TWO BULL ELK - BOTH BRANCH ANTLERED BUT NOT "MONSTERS." THEIR STRIDES THROUGH THE 1 1/2' DEEP SNOW WERE HUGE PROBABLY 8-9' TO EACH GROUP AND INTERGROUP ABOUT 3-4' - AND THEY WERE ONLY LOPING. BLUE GROUSE ON THE RIDGE - HEARD AT LEAST TWO ♂'S WHOOT-WHOOTING AWAY - ONE OTHER (Ad. ♂) WALKED WITHIN 15 YDS. OF US BEFORE MADDY NOTICED AND PUT IT TO FLIGHT (I HADN'T SEEN IT YET I WAS "RECLINED" IN THE SUN). PULLED A TICK OFF MADDY TODAY - YECH! 1 GOLDEN EAGLE ^{FLYING ABOVE} ~~ON~~ 2ND BENCH ^{THIS} AM. SUNNY FOR MOST OF THE DAY. ☺!

3-20-93

Bluebirds & Clarks Nutcrackers on the sage bench today. Ruffed grouse in the bottom. I think every magpie in the neighborhood showed up when I gave a few ardent crow calls off of the bluff above Rush Cr. confluence w/ Big Creek. We got several heavy! RAINS this morning early and then one about 10:00 AM that turned to snow & once again wintered the ridges.

It has been ages since I started a fire in the rain so I took this opportunity. 10 matches and a 1/2 hr. later I had inhaled more smoke than ^{any} fire I've been on (well, almost) and had a nice little warming fire going. The sky cleared and the sun came out. I was soaked but warm! It's kinda fun to do a mile away from the woodstove & lunch and dry clothes. OH - another "new bird" for me. ^{NEAR} Redwing blackbird in the



25 head of Elk on the East bench, including 15 pc. bull - I found a spotting ^(telescope) scope in the Conyere Cabin. 2 sheep ~~see~~ (1 ewe & a lamb?) seem right at home among them. 6 muley's also nearby and they seem to have great attention focused on the draw below between E. bench and ~~see~~ bench. 3 muley's at 1st bench also. Haven't seen many sheep out feeding lately.

I'm not sure exactly what's what so you'll have to pardon the scribbles, but the lettered spots on "my map" are what I call what.

6 more sheep have wandered out of the timber and are feeding above the East bench - all appear to be ♀ or young (no big horns), but even with the spotting scope they are hard to see. Even though there is no snow (it's sunny) a few of them are spending a bit of time pawing at the ground, maybe trying to get salt?

Enough for now. Well just 2 more things. Small avalanche appears to have come down pioneer cr. drainage for west, ~ 8 foot strain of snow - 4 foot deep across trail. Lastly a flight of swans or some other geese - sounding ^{call} similar in duration and pattern Canada geese but much more musical tone. The end.

3-21-73 Sunday.

5 elk on 3rd bench this A.M. - All cows. ~~and calves~~
 No sheep or deer in sight. I walked downstream on the Big Cr. trail about 10:30 am. there are 11 cows and calves in the far pasture. They miraculously move silently up the scree slope as maddy and walk on the riverside of the pasture. I have tried now on several occasions to catch some white fish to smoke. Now I'm not the

worlds best fisherman. or anything but elbe thrown
dark flies, light flies, green flies and iridescent flies;
nymphs to the bottom, dry flies across the top over & through
riffle, pool, glide, pocket and hole from Bush creek to cougar creek
and in desperation el spun little spinners through each on my
back home. I'm beginning to wonder if there are really
any fish in this creek!? el guess it's a bit early yet
cold water (it hurts the feet to wade in - I took a special
path today in honor of SPRING & sunshine). Maybe - hopefully
el net catch a few to smoke but very heavy runs out - come
on warm weather.


el gave up on fishing after a couple hours and
hiked down to cougar creek and then up and up in search
of petroglyphs ~~or~~ or whatever. Hopefully el find them but
el leave - I didn't today. I did however find a yearling (?)
calf elk, and 1 sheep, and 1 fawn^{all dead}. The sheep was very (early
this winter or older?) old and straw hitler and yoni. The calf
was about $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ mile up Cougar creek on the east side and
the deer about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile further up ^{and east}. The benches above the river
there are fabulous ^{exhilarating} ~~mystical~~. el'll visit there again. The
calf was not too old (~1 wk. tops). she had been found by
a flock of 12 or so Ravens, 6 or so magpies and 3 golden
Eagles! That's how el found her. Maddy was instrumental in
finding the rest. The calf was not covered with debris
and was out in the open though the hair on her neck looked
as if shid been dragged a good ways. * There was nothing left
of hind quarters and her top ribs were bare but viscera
still intact. 5 elk ^(30' sunk now by color) across GOAT creek from me and 20-30 h
on soldiers bar ^{boomies from soldiers bar.} ~~on a trip~~ (No binocs today!). Coyote tracks
on ours on the way ~~home~~ home. Feels good to ramble with-
constraint. Curiosity is one of the Piner guides. Dips-
~~sig~~ singing away on Big Creek maybe they're the early
bird in the neighborhood when el comes to feeding.

* No 3/30 of
broken neck
or legs ...

3-22-93, Monday.

GAVE THE KITCHEN A SPRING SCRUBBING ^{THE} FLOORS A SPRING SWEEPING. MESSED AROUND WITH FINISHING THE SMOKE JOB ON MY BUCKSKIN. COTTONWOOD WILL WORK 4 SMUDGE FIRE BUT A FEW KINKS TO WORK OUT YET. 21 SHEEP TOTAL HUNG OUT ALL DAY ON 1ST BENCH $\frac{1}{2}$ ITS LOWER SLOPES. I SNUK UP CLIFF CR. DRAW TO GET A CLOSER LOOK AT ~~OR~~ Ad. ♀ w/ RADIO COLLAR AND YELLOW TAG IN HER RIGHT EAR. * ~~OK~~, MY KINGDOM FOR A TELEPHOTO LENSE! 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ CURL RAM, 3 YOUNG RAMS ($< \frac{1}{2}$ curl), 6 EWES AND 4 LAMBS w/IN 50 YD.S! I HAVE TO BE WITHIN LONGBOW RANGE TO GET A GOOD PICTURE w/ THIS CAMERA! MAYBE NEXT TIME.

~~LESEE~~ LESEE, 1 PR. MALLARDS by mouth of RUSH CR. 6 teal type ducks overhead same area. Doug Fir DOWN UP RUSH CR. WILL MAKE GOOD FENCE POST ~~(~~LESEE~~ RAILS)~~ AND/OR FIREWOOD 4 NEXT YR. FOUND ANOTHER OLD DEER CARCASS by RUSH CR. - BY where there ARE ~~DEAD~~ HORSE SKELETONS. LOWER JAW IS THERE BUT I DIDN'T BRING IT BACK. HARE? GUT CONTENTS UNDER A HAWTHORNE THicket - COULD BE COUGAR OR MAYBE NOT. 12 muleys on West slope of RUSH CR. 10-15 Elk ON THE "TIMBER RIM" (SEE ^{MY} MAP). TOMMOROWS A WEEK THAT I'VE BEEN HERE; GOES BY QUICK. 3 MORE WKS SEEMS LIKE FOREVER THOUGH :!

* No number visible ON THE TAG which is square The collar is similar TO A DOG COLLAR BUT HAS A Bulge (RADIO? transmitter - # 151.35?) of Non shiny aluminum or duct tape at the bottom  buckle. This ewe was obviously leader of this band of sheep. She was either at the lead pulling others w/ her as she went or was ~~out front leading the way.~~ behind keeping other sheep moving

Tues

3-25-93

up early - Sunrise was orange and beautiful.
2-3 elk visible up on 3rd bench. No Sheep or
~~deer~~ to be seen. Starlings in the alder outside
the window. Back from taking the weather. 23 sheep
are now visible: ¹⁶ in the bowl behind and E of the slopes of the
second bench. 4 on their way down to the 1st bench from
2nd (going 4 salt?), and 7 just below the Ridge top
straight above First Bench (Bedded down). Actually a
late-breaking update from our telescope technician "Eagle
Eye Porter" reveals 8 sheep in the latter mentioned band! "Thanks
Eagle!" Toes under the feeder!

Well, The rest of the day was long. Maddy & I hiked
up ~~Push~~ ^{Pia} Creek Ridge, destination: the lookout. But when
we got to the last saddle b-4 you enter the timber we hit
2' + deep snow ~~and~~ - I was in my tennis shoes and had
only brought an orange for lunch ~~so~~ ^{so} I "winced out".

The quotations ^{marks} come from ^{the knowledge of} our homeward journey.
We dropped straight off the ridge into Push Cr. and came
along the river that way. The scramble down wasn't ~~so~~
bad till the last 400-500 yds. Eek it was steep - talus & cliffs.
Once in Push Creek (which was gorgeous up there!) bottom
it got "bad". That brush is some serious stuff!!! and
talus slopes... and steep... and man that brush was thick!
I + would have been wiser to go to the lookout and
~~then~~ hike ~~the trail~~ back as planned - although the snow
at the lookout looked much more substantial than
where we stopped. Should have strapped on a pair
of Snowshoes b-4 I left.

The winds were ^{heavy} enough to make you lean hard
to keep upright. To the North of the Ridge all was cloudy
and dark, to the south it was patchy clouds - I think
the winds were the result of being at the edge of
the ~~front~~ front. We did find an old ^{heavy} S-point Shed antler,

Saw 4 bulls & Two cows on the way up the ridge (1 sm. ♂ point and two sm. Raghorns). About 18 deer total and tons of tracks - One pretty clear cougar print and one pile of deer hair. Toads everywhere, 1 patch of buttercups!! - the 1st flowers I've seen yet. ~~4/4~~

In the bottom of Rush Creek (from just above Lewis Creek mouth) down we found 3 chukAR remains, 1 grouse skeleton, 1 pile of feathers of a cedar waxwing - maybe an accipiter or two? We also found the skull antlers and skeleton of a lg. 5x6 bull. Almost packed the mossy "~~trapping~~ out monster out but I'm glad now I didn't. Last beaver activity seen was ^{just} above where trail crosses Rush creek to head up the hill, ~ 6 dams below quite active those guys. We ended crossing the creek about 10-12 times, about half the time there was a log otherwise we waded (krrr...) Fell through the ice once but all in all ^{the creek is ice} was much easier going than the Hawthornes!

Wed

3-24-93

I forgot to write about the skunk yesterday. Poor Guy! He had no idea about PVC pipe! A couple of days ago I walked out of the house and smelled skunk - ah! Pepe le pue is about today, but I couldn't see him/her. Then yesterday as I walked down the airstrip towards Rush Creek I smelled him again. I hadn't gone far - just beyond the shed and the fuel barrels. Hmmm... Pepe is in ^{Pioneer} ~~the~~ creek's brush! Camera ready and Maddy leashed I approached the little swale - nothing. Then a big wif! I looked down at my feet and to my dismay not more than 2 ft. from my feet was pepe's tail protruding up from a hole in the ground. You can imagine the swift backpedaling! I cut and watched ^{from a safe 15'} camera poised

for the emergence of my black and white friend. But the tail was peculiarly still. Still, el too ~~to~~ waited ~~too~~. One doesn't mess with skunk tails - even still ones. One minute, two, three Hmmm. el can see that Pepe has found not just any hole but a permanent fence pole hole - with a rimnet ~~length~~^{2'} length of 5-6" F.V.C. pipe. OH-OH Pepe! I find a long stick. With Maddy at stay el carefully prod and flip Pepe's tail back & forth. No reaction. el drop the stick and move close and delicately take hold of the tail - el give a tug but Pepe doesn't budge. AT This point Pepe's protruding tail is too much, el'm pretty sure Pepe is dead, but ... So el leave Pepe in a cylindrical headstand position and go for a hike.

~~On my return~~

On my return, ^{el find that} Pepe tail remains in the same place, only ruffled occasionally by the wind. With a good tug Pepe comes ~~out~~^{out}, rather like pulling out the stopper of a syringe. It was a tight fit. Took guy/gal. el don't see anything in the bottom of the hole to make me ~~think~~ want to dive into it headfirst but then el am not a skunk. By the whiteness of the tail el'm pretty sure that this is the same skunk el tried to get a picture of last week. el wish el would have found him ~~before~~^{before} he expired. Ah-well, so it goes in nature's neighborhood. Today el'll take ~~Pepe~~^{"Pepe"} to the woods below the lower 40 where el ~~last~~ last saw him lifting that tail in warning!

~~37~~ 37 Elk on West Shoulder of 3rd bench at the same elevation as the top of the second bench. They are making their way onto the trail leading to ~~the~~ timber rim. 2 sheep on the south slope below the east bench ~30 yds from the edge of ~~area~~^{tallus growth.} ~~the rest of the strip~~

A large bunch of Sheep on backside of the East shoulder of the 2nd bench this A.M. when I checked the weather. 11:50 AM - 24 sweep on the W slope of 1st bench.

This is probably the same band as I've been seeing for the last 2 days as the radiocolared ewe is in the lead. However there is now 1 lg. Ram that has joined the group. His horns are much thicker than the 3/4 curl, they are also darker and wider. They curl ends just below his eye in profile. He is ^{also} much larger bodied than the other sheep.

Maddy found hind legs of ~~the~~ a deer on airstrip about 1/2 way down - no carcass found until this afternoon I found hair pile 1/3 of the down airstrip in bushes on the S. side. 34 elk all over 3rd ~~bench~~ ^{bench} - south end. Sheep on ^{the} lower ~~face~~ west face of 1st bench for most of afternoon then ~~into~~ ^{onto} the 1st bench itself and haven't seen them since.

3-25-93 THURSDAY

7:00 AM: 23 ELK ON THIRD Bench, 2 Sheep on east bench, 3 Sheep on 1st bench. No deer to be seen. MADDY & I HIKED DOWNRIVER TODAY IN search of soldier bar and petroglyphs. Earlier I had thought that soldier bar was on the river and was not the bench w/ the airstrip. I found out today that soldier bar is the airstrip. I didn't hike up to it as the river is high and cold and it's pretty cloudy. We did hike down as far as Duncie Creek (I believe) and hiked up it a ways. Then back to Goat Creek and up the trail to the 1st Basin, then we bushwacked over the ridge and into Cougar Creek and back home. It was a fun day. In Big Creek Gorge (the 1st part of it any way - we got to watch two otters in the rapids. Their Dolphin like arching dives made it seem as if they ~~had~~ were really ocean critters ^{and} a bit out of place in the Big Creek rapids. Gorgeous & Graceful. One had caught a whitefish and ate it (head first) on a rock about 20' from us - and

for some reason I'd left my camera up the trail. In that same stretch of Canyon I found "petroglyphs". I'm not ~~entirely~~ ^{entirely} sure that they are real, they may be modern additions to history. One was sufficiently realistic enough - or at least sufficiently appealing to me - that I took 4 pictures of it. Maybe I will turn out well. 50+ Elk in 3 different groups on the way back upriver - 1 spike bull in the whole lot. Saw 1 Ruffed grouse, 1 pile of Mallard feathers, 2-3 piles of Chuckar feathers (though I have yet to see a Chuckar!).

The elk calf carcass up Cougar creek was gone - only hair left - and 1 Golden Eagle primary wing feather. Did some serious Rock/Talus scrambling today also. You know it's "serious" when you look down over what you've just climbed and think - "You idiot! What are you doing up here?" Looking for a view, what else? Maddy, again, proves herself to be 1/2 MTN. GOAT by going everywhere I go and with more ease and grace than I.

Back to the Ranch at 7:00 p.m., just in time for it to start raining. There are more insect moths and otherwise ~~here~~ out in the last 3-4 days than I've seen yet this winter/spring. Bats have found that the front window is a good place to ~~hunt~~ when the lights are on at night.

3-26-93

Friday

10 elk on ~~the~~ EAST bench at 0630 & 5 sheep on 3rd bench. Well. I'm not the most reliable keeper of journals, It's Sunday so I have since forgotten what critters ~~to~~ ^{were} where and how many and all. I spent the day around the cabin writing in my journal, smoking some buckskin I've been working on and playing my mandolin. I think It's the only day I didn't go anywhere but that was ok. I rather enjoyed a six hour mandolin session while tending my hide. I hope to make Moccasins and a couple of "possibles bags" b-4 I leave.

3-27-93

Yesterday. Saturday.

Ray flew in and out today w/ two bottles of propane and some fuel for O.P.F.W. . 1 lg. ~~band~~ (~15-20) band of sheep on west slope of 2nd bench in the A.M. . 5-10 Elk on third bench near its juncture with Timber Rim. Cleaned kitchen Ray brought mail! I spent at least an hr. Reading notes from friends and family and ... yuck ... work. Turns out Jeff was wrong about my not having to fill out forms to "work" here for the University. One letter ~~was~~ contained two forms from UofI bureaucrats - they found me; sadly, in the midst of the wilderness. Ah well, can't escape everything.

After mail call Maddy and I hiked up Big Creek to just past Brown's Basin. It shouldn't have been too far after that to Cabin Creek. I'm sure we found blowdown flat - good work Jim and Archie! 21 head of Sheep on Ridge to NE (EAST generally) of blowdown - west of "Lobear". There were six RAMS amongst them, 5 of the 6 were at least $\frac{3}{4}$ curl, all were very large and had wide Racks. The sixth was about $\frac{1}{2}$ curl. The ♂'s though they generally stuck together (except one who wandered through the bunch) with the rest of the sheep were rather cliqueish (sp?). Around the corner to Browns basin 5 more rams, 1 good size, and ~~1~~ 8 mule deer. 5 piles of Chukar feathers, 2 Ruffed grouse, blue birds, 1 pile of blue grouse feathers, 1 pr. Common Mergansers, and 1 probable otter in river by blowdown flat - it submerged just as it saw it and didn't come back up in sight - maybe a beaver. Magpies are gathering nest material and the flicker calls continually from various points around the Ranch; Greenup has begun - spring is on its way. Big Creek is high - no ice bridges to cross any more - and is the color of ^{split-}pea soup when the sun doesn't

hit it. When the sun does hit it, it has an emerald green glow!

MARCH 28, ~~28~~ Sunday

Took 20 minutes to get the weather ^{called} in this A.M. + phone calls, "when are you coming in?", "oh I thought maybe friday, how's that sound?" "Well if you did then....." ad infinitum. Hope the minimum thermometer isn't getting goofy on me - It read 41° for the minimum and the current temp this A.M. = I'll check it this afternoon to make sure. 10 sheep on 1st bench this A.M. and 10 ~~of~~ elk on 3rd bench near timber rim. Where are all the deer?

Went fishin', can't catch a whitefish fer nuthin'!! One cutthroat (14-15") took my nymph though, she's (?) was pale colored but ^a bright ^{fish} yet. AT least the whole trip won't go down as a skunk. Saw otters ⁽²⁾ again and 1 beaver around Big Creek Gorge. FINALLY I see the moon small sliver yet but with a gorgeous ^{soft} pink tinge tonight.
(5 ELK^{on} South Side of Big Cr. ACROSS FROM COUGAR CR.)

MARCH 29 MONDAY

0700 1 Dozen ~~sheep~~ on the S. facing slope of 2nd bench. 7 ELK VISIBLE - THOUGH I ~~IM~~ IMAGINE THERE ARE MORE ON THE 3rd BENCH. THE STELLARS JAY WILL BE HAPPY TO HAVE PAT RETURN HE ONLY GETS OCCASIONAL BREED CRUMBS FOR ME.

0630 16 ELK Moving across ~~the~~ across (S)W slope of 3rd Bench toward timber rim - probably ~~had~~ had been on 2nd bench earlier.

1400 20 ELK ON 3rd BENCH, ^{CAME} FROM TIMBER RIM. I WOULD IMAGINE THEY BED DOWN UP THERE.

CAROLS OPTIMISM ABOUT SUNNY WEATHER ON

THE RADIO THIS A.M. WAS A BIT MISGUIDED. IT'S BEEN RAINING GOOD SINCE ABOUT 3:00. FEELS GOOD THOUGH; SNOW ON THE RIDGES LOOKS GOOD TOO. MADE AN EFFORT AT FIREWOOD GATHERING TODAY. NOT MUCH AROUND EXCEPT PUNKY ALDER. WILL KEEP ON IT. HIKE UP THE RIDGE EAST THE RANCH - 3 MULEYS (1 DOE, 2 FAWNS) AND A GREAT VIEW.

LIT WOODSTOVE FOR 1ST TIME IN A WEEK, THAT FEELS ESPECIALLY GOOD IN COMBINATION WITH RAIN ON THE ROOF.

I REALIZED LAST NIGHT THAT THE OCCASIONAL THUMP ON THE WINDOWS I HEAR AS I READ BY PROPANE IS NOT ^{THE} A BIG MOTHS COLLIDING ~~THE~~ WITH THE GLASS BUT RATHER THE BATS SCOOPING THEM OFF THE GLASS! THOSE AMAZING ANIMALS!

MARCH 30 TUESDAY

Woke up THIS MORNING A RUFFED GROUSE DRUMMING! THAT IS SUCH A FINE SOUND TOO! IT IS ALSO 95% BLUE SKY! THERE IS SNOW ON THE RIDGETOP ACROSS THE WAY AND THE PASTURE - WITH ITS LONG AIRSTRIP & BRIGHT COLORED FLAGS, AND SHORT, EVEN, GREEN GRASS IS BEGINING TO LOOK LIKE A GOLF COURSE! MUCH BIRDSONG THIS A.M.

15 SHEEP GRAZE IN THE SHADE ^{~100 YDS} ~~100~~ BELOW THE EAST BENCH AND 5 MULE DEER IN THE DRAW BELOW THEM

(Between 2ND & EAST BENCHES). 1 LONE C. elaphus is in the company (< 50 yds.) of 1 LONE MULE DEER ON THE SW SLOPE OF THE SECOND BENCH.

JUST B-4 I LEFT THIS AM HEARD A NOISE AT FRONT DOOR - LIKE SOMEONE ~~HAD~~ ^{HAD} KNOCKED ~~ED~~ ^{ED} AGAINST THE ~~SCREEN~~ SCREEN OF THE SCREEN DOOR. UPON OPENING THE DOOR I SAW A ♂ Ruffed Grouse (- SO OKAY, PROBABLY ♂.)

AT THE JUNIPER HEDGE! HAD HE/SITE KNOCKED?
PROBABLY SO, GROUSE ARE NOTORIOUSLY POOR AT
DING DONG DITCH.

TODAY MADDY & I HIKE UP THE RIDGE EAST OF THE
RANCH. WE PROBABLY GOT 2-3 MILES UP B-4 SNOW GOT TO
BE TOO MUCH. IT ~~WAS~~ HAD THE HOLDING POWER OF
TIN FOIL IN MOST PLACES AND THE CONSISTENCY OF
CEMENT WHEN YOU FEEL THROUGH. SINCE AGAIN, I WAS
W/OUT SNOWSHOES I DECIDED TO TRY ALL FOURS -
MADDY DID PRETTY WELL THAT WAY. THIS WORKED
FINE ACTUALLY BUT WAS A BIT COLD ON THE HANDS
& KNEES. THEN AT A POINT MADDY LAY DOWN AND SLID
RIGHT TO ME LIKE AN OTTER ON A SLIDE. "LOOKS
FUN" THINKS I - "MAYBE I'LL HELP HER". I STOOD
UPRIGHT TO SEND HER DOWN THE 30 YDS OF SNOW
BELOW US BUT NEVER GOT THE CHANCE - WHEN I
STOOD I SUNK UP TO MY WAIST (MAYBE ~~NOT~~ THE
GROUND WASN'T TOO MUCH FURTHER DOWN BUT MY FEET
WEREN'T ON IT!) AND HEARD THAT SHUDDER^{ING} ~~FOUR~~
"FWOOMP" RIPPLE OUT AROUND ME ON ALL SIDES.
THEY HAD TOLD US ABOUT THIS SOUND IN AVALANCHE
SAFETY TRAINING AND I^{VE} HEARD IT BEFORE BUT
NOT QUITE SO DEEP, SO SURROUNDING & SO SCARY.

IT QUITE LITERALLY SENT ME SCRAMBLING,
SWIMMING, SLIDING, AND SCURRYING ON ALL FOURS
TO A BALD PATCH NEAR A TREE 20 YDS PARALLEL
TO ME. MADDY THOUGHT THIS WAS GREAT FUN AND
BOUNDED ALONGSIDE TRYING LICK MY FACE OR
GNAW ON MY ARMS. THEY SAID IN AVALANCHE
CLASS 30% SLOPE IS THE MAGIC # FOR MOST AVALANCHE
ACCIDENTS. * I'M NOT MUCH ON #'S BUT I'D BET
MY LUNCH THAT IT WAS MORE LIKE 45-50!

So we went back down. TRACKED A COYOTE & A SNOWSHOE HARE. SAW 3 DEER TOTAL AND NOT MUCH ELSE FRESH (3 ELK TRACKS TOO - SMALL IN SIZE). GOOD VIEW & MUCH FUN. MADDY FLUSHED 3 BLUE GROUSE - I'm BEGINNING TO THINK IF I COULD EVER CALL HER BACK ONCE SHE'S ON A BIRD THAT SHE MIGHT BE A GOOD HUNTING PARTNER! AND, THANKFULLY, SHE SHOWS NO INTEREST IN CHASING DEER OR ELK! SHE JUST SNIFFS & WATCHES!

ANYWAY, FROM UP ON THE RIDGE I COULD SEE ONTO THE 3RD BENCH - 45 ELK! 8 SHEEP! and 2 DEER! WOW! When I got back to the cabin and looked up there I could only see 5 ELK, 8 SHEEP and 2 DEER! ALSO, 3 GOLDEN EAGLES UP THERE

MARCH 31 WEDNESDAY

0830 25 ELK ON EAST BENCH - AND TWO MULE DEER TOO! I CAN ALSO SEE ~7 ELK AND 5 ~~ELK~~ ^{SHEEP} (THE ELK ARE OBSCURED BY TREES) ~~ON~~ ON THE RIDGE JUST NORTH AND AT SAME ELEVATION AS EAST BENCH. 4 ELK ARE VISIBLE ON THE 3RD BENCH AND SIX UFU'S ARE ON THE WESTERLY MOST KNOB OF THE RIDGE. UFU = UNIDENTIFIED FEEDING UNGULATE, THEY'RE TOO FAR AWAY FOR MY 7X35'S AND THE TELESCOPE HAS PRETTY POOR RESOLUTION THAT FAR AWAY - I THINK THEY ARE ELK.

ALSO THIS A.M. A JUNCO ^{THAT} MORE RESEMBLES A ♂ SLATE COLORED JUNCO THAN ~~THE~~ ANY OF THE OTHERS WAS AMONGST A GROUP OF ^{'NORMAL' (OREGON?)} ~~JUNCOS~~ JUNCOS.

WELL, Wednesday is yesterday now AND yesterday was get clean day, laundry & a SOAP & water shower. Laundry went off without a hitch if took awhile but it was an absolutely gorgeous, sunny spring day. I was impressed at the effectiveness of

the "aerobawash" machine! I was also impressed w/ "Ecover" biodegradable dish soap which does ^{as} well on laundry as it does on dishes (and I'm just a bit embarrassed by this) and hair! 1st real soap up shower in two weeks thanks to the solar shower. Although the "3-4 hours in direct sun that should give you hot H₂O to shower in was not quite long enough - nor was 6 hrs in the sun. The water was 60-65° f max! BRRR... but it felt good when it was over.

Pioneer & Rush creeks are warming up bit by bit. Big Cr. only has a few patches of snow here and there, hiding in the shade from spring. The water level has dropped a good bit in Big Creek - it looks a lot clearer now, more emerald than pea soup. It ~~is~~ could be that someone upstream dropped their leftover St. Paddy's day green jello into the current! OR maybe I've just been here awhile!?

After laundry it was time to pick a moccasin pattern and work out the details - my lack of Tailoring experience made this a long process. And then dinner and read and try and take pictures of bat's scooping moths of the front windows (pretty tough!) and then bed.

At 6:30 PM. The ~~west~~ east slope Cliff Cr. ~~Cafe~~ ^{Cafe} is having a busy ~~night~~ evening! The dinner Rush includes: 21 Elk ~~at~~ the East bench banquet table (convoing with the ~~the~~ Rocky Mtn. ~~royalty~~ are 2 mule deer and 1 bighorn sheep), a small party ⁽⁶⁾ of the H. hemeonus clan are enjoying a fresh green sprout salad at the 1st bench ~~salad~~ salad bar, 19 sheep of the Ovis Canadensis ¹⁹¹³ convention have just left the 1st bench salad bar ~~on their way~~ ^{and} by way of the 2nd benches west slope ~~bar~~ ^{foyer}, are proceeding to ~~the~~ Cliff Creek's "Riparian Room" for cocktails and entertainment (however they may end up at the 2nd bench for a desert to balance out their healthy

dinner faire), A single young bull is enjoying the view from the 3rd bench balcony with two (scandal!?) lady friends - do you think their mother's know where they are? - and lastly, outside of ~~the~~ cliff creek cafe's hustle and bustle two ~~the~~ mother mule deer are enjoying the fresh air while picknicking with their two youngsters on the lower pasture lawn.

April 1st Thursday
Nothing happened today.

April 2nd ~~Wednesday~~ FRIDAY

Did I get ya? I HAD TO SOMETHING FOR APRIL FOOLS! I'm SO OFTEN TRICKING MADDY THAT IT JUST WASN'T FAIR TO LET HER TAKE THE BRUNT OF MORE MISCHIEF. ANYWHO, NOT MUCH REALLY DID HAPPEN YESTERDAY. I WORKED ON CUTTING OUT MOCCASIN PATTERNS AND THEN ^{CUTTING THE} ~~THE~~ BACKSKIN. THAT TOOK TILL NOON. A LAZY LUNCH AND OFF UPSTREAM FOR THE DAY. BY 2:30 OR ^{3:00} ~~THE~~ THE WIND WAS HOWLING DOWN THE CANYON, BY 3:30 IT WAS POURING. IT SOON SETTLED INTO A WONDERFULL SPRING DRIZZLE, ~~AND~~ WHICH HAS CONTINUED UNABATED TILL NOW (9:30pm) AS I WRITE BY THE WOODSTOVE.

~~THE~~ THERE WE 3 ELK ON THE THIRD BENCH AND 8 SHEEP VISIBLE ~~AT THE~~ JUST ABOVE THE 1st BENCH THIS MORNING BUT THAT WAS ALL. MADDY AND I STARTLED 8 MULE DEER ON THE BIG CREEK TRAIL ON THE WAY HOME. WE CAME AROUND THE CORNER AND "SNORT!!". I ~~MADE~~ ^{TOLD} MADDY TO SIT - SHE WAS 15 yds AHEAD OF ME - AND SHE DID! MAKES OL' MASTER PROUD. SHE FUSSED, FIDGETED, WHINED AND TREMBLED BUT NEVER BUDGED! ; THEY HEADED UPSLOPE AND WATCHED US PASS - 16 EARS IN ROW!

OH, WE DID ALSO ENCOUNTER AN OTTER JUST THIS

OF BLOWDOWN FLAT. HE SWAM AROUND FOR ABOUT 5 MINUTES EYEING US MISTRUSTFULLY AND $\frac{1}{2}$ COUGHED; $\frac{1}{2}$ ~~SPAT~~ ^{SPAT}, AND $\frac{1}{2}$ GROWLED AT US BETWEEN DIVES.

AS FOR TODAY - my first glassing of the cliff cr. Cafe revealed that they weren't open for breakfast - not a ungulate anywhere! But as I ate breakfast 23 ELK came around the corner of the Big Creek trail ^{above the bridge}, and are now headed up the west slope of the 1st bench. There is snow down to the 2nd bench - we got 0.52" of Rain last night & yesterday.

(There are 2 yng. bulls in the group, which #'s 26, now that they are in the open. Both bulls have their antlers yet. I can imagine (or see) that a good number of the cows are looking wide and barrel like - can I see that they are pregnant?

27 ELK ON west slope between 1st & 2nd bench most of afternoon - then they moved to Timber Rim ^(at 3:00) and shortly after 20+ had moved onto 3rd bench - not sure if it's the same group. 8 sheep on 2nd bench moved to 1st bench about 3:30. One was collared - collar had a blue dot on right hand ventral surface. 3 mule deer on 1st bench (1 doe, 2 fawns).

April 3 Sat.

10 ELK VISIBLE ON 3rd Bench. 15 sheep moved from 2nd to 1st bench 0830, 4 Sheep on East side of draw that runs down east ^{side} of benches - ~~part of~~ ^{same elevation} w/ 2nd bench.

OFF to Middle fork this A.M. as soon as I call in weather!

Pretty neat hike! It's about as long as I guessed - 6 hrs Round trip (just hiking) - my legs are tired and my feet

are a tad-bit sore - It's been a while since I did much hiking. My legs were "laid off" for the winter.

It's a bit of a different place down there on the m.f. salmon. Pretty nice to have a view of a lot of area. Saw 23 deer and 18 (+1) Bighorn, 5 of which were rams $\frac{1}{2}$ curl or smaller. These sheep were bedded 200-300 yds below me (I hiked the trail ~~down~~ going up in the downriver direction). For quite a while they seemed oblivious to me - they watched but didn't get up or show any sign of alarm. The wind was in my face so I thought I was ok. I would walk 20-30 yds and watch them through the binocs for a minute or two and then watch again. I must have crossed their threshold of comfort line b/c I had watched them and was walking a bit more and when I looked down they were at full tilt + bounding and running below me! Quite a sight - they are much faster than I expected them to be!

We also saw meadowlarks, ~~and~~^A GOLDEN EAGLE, and what I believe to be a flock of (possibly a colony ~~at~~ nearby?) of white throated swifts. The swifts are ~~new~~ a new one for me! The swifts seemed to be congregated above the "campground" on waterfall creek.

Cougar tracks near the Bighorn pack bridge. 4 deer "kills" 3 carcasses fairly in tact, one pile of hair, and 1 elk "kill" between Burnt Cr. and the ~~middle~~ bridge. ~ 10 ELK ^{above} Big Creek between Cougar Cr. Confluence and here (on S. Side of Big Cr.).

April 4 Sunday

A mellow day. I worked on sewing my moccasins till 3:30! I completed one. Thank God I don't live in

some dark age where you had to do what your father did and that my father wasn't. A tailor! Sewing is only tolerable because I'm making something I've always wanted - ~~the~~ Moccasins - because it's with this hide that I've put so much into!

Anyway - Then I worked w/ Maddy, did my non-hiking day exercise routine and took a hike up Rush Cr. a ways. 1 beaver dam has been breached by the high water and another is dumping water into the trail. I've started taking stream temps 2x's a week (Wed. & Sunday) because this is what Jeff asked - b-4 I had conformed to Jim & Pats 1x a week routine. I've got plenty-o-time to check them twice a week.

The daily wildlife update:

1 new character~~s~~ debuted today - a lone Canada Goose - a very grey dusky bird lg. enough to be a great basin. He even stuck around while Maddy & I played fetch w/in 100 yds of him. He seems to be grazing the upper end of the airstrip.

21 Elk on 3rd bench this morning & 14 Sheep on the West Slope of the East Bench. By midafternoon the sheep have moved to the 3rd bench and evening finds them (24 now) grazing above the ridge (just above the knob on the 3rd bench as seen from the front ^{room} windows.

(Also this A.M. 5 mule deer on the 3rd bench just below the elk and 2 on the 2nd bench - I may have missed the deer more than any of the other critters as they are harder to see).

Lastly, The "spring ahead" time change caught me by surprise this morning - Mary ASKED me if I might have forgotten to change my clocks when I called in. -> It was 10:05 AM according to the rest of the world.

April 5 '93 Monday

What is it about Mondays? Even up here! The radio seems to be nonfunctional!!! I can every once in awhile hear Cascade but even then its faint & fuzzy. They certainly cannot hear me - nor can any one else for that matter. It's 2:00 and I'm at my wits end - short it may be. I can't figure it out - The most likely problem I think is that somehow the antennae is messed up (There were some pretty hard winds ~~with~~ the rain last night). The charge on the battery as at its usual spot in the green (not very high - it reads about 20 on the top line of the voltmeter). I'm on channel A (even tried channel B). I've hailed "anyone who can hear me" for a radio check on both channels. The wiring has not been eaten away by mice anywhere, the connections all seem fine - I even climbed the big Doug Fir - lowered the "antennae" and checked the connection above the roof and it seems dry, undamaged and just fine. The connection at the radio is the same as always and I even "cleaned them up a bit in case they'd gotten dusty..."

I must admit - this one hurts! It hits me in one of my weaker areas - electronics! I've ried them, ignored them, and avoided them like the

plague since the electronics section in physics in college (my worst performance ever in academia!). AND if I don't get out soon the ~~ARRAYS~~ et al. are gonna begin to wonder about my safety. If they fly in they might even bring all the groceries on the list I left ~~on~~ with them - only 1/3 of which I need.

I can't help but feel inadequate on this one - very frustrating!! I'm not giving up yet though I'm gonna recheck on everything I've already checked and hope for Divine intervention or at least inspiration! Hopefully by 4:00 I'll have it figured! I sincerely hope it's not some silly thing I'm missing - that would be a major bummer.

At this point there are 6 sheep on the S. Slope ~~just~~¹ ~50 yds. below the 2nd bench and two muledeers $\frac{1}{3}$ ~~of the~~^{of the} way up the West slope of the 3rd bench. ~~At this point~~

Well Halbehuah! I Got through! From what Carol says it was just "bad Radio air". I DIDN'T KNOW THERE WAS SUCH A THING! Hopefully that's all it was and then I won't worry ~~about~~ anymore if I can't get through. I'm especially glad they won't have to come and "see if I'm ok." - I'd be embarrassed!

It's still fuzzy I guess so I'm gonna try to get my grocery list in a little later - maybe it'll go over the 4:00pm Radio show!

And the grocery list went through w/out a hitch. All that worry for Nuthin! Kinda the way it goes 70% of the time. ALOT OF WORRY FOR NOTHIN! And ya' know - It's NO WONDER I COULDN'T FIND ANYTHING WRONG WITH THE RADIO!

1 Golden Eagle (Juv.) Soaring above benches and
20 sheep all over the 1st bench and it's slopes
I think their trying to get to each clump
of grass as it sprouts a new blade. 1 ♂
Red breasted nuthatch on the Doug-Fir outside
the window.

5:30 pm 16 Muleys on 3rd Bench - 27 Elk
approaching them from timber rim

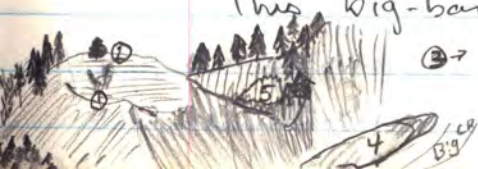
Tuesday April 6

10:15 am. 4 elk on south slope of 2nd bench, there
were 13 ~~just~~ west of the 1st bench (on the slope above the far
pasture) and on the same contour. Three sheep are visible
in draw between 3rd bench and East bench. Snow ~~on~~
down to 3rd and benches has not melted yet. It snowed
for a good 2 hrs last night even down here - I had hoped
it would stick but it was too warm. Clear & sunny today
and chaff in search of firewood.

Firewood around is either rotten, nonexistent or scarce!
Maybe I just need to change my standards. Got some
stuff from a long air strip put it at Cookhouse. Been
writing letters all afternoon and this evening
as Ray is supposed to show up with/for mail

You know, I thought that I'd been watching
the same band of 20-25 sheep all this time. Well,
about 6:00 or so I looked up on the hill and there
were 41 Bighorn visible, all in a bunch too! There were
probably more there that were behind the shoulder of the
2nd bench by the way they were behaving.

This big-band was above what I call "the scab."



- ① 1st bench
- ② 2nd bench
- ③ lambing cliffs
- ④ "far" Pasture
- ⑤ "The Scab"

Sorry about the crudeness of the drawing but I thought it would be easier than trying to describe it - hopefully. The scab is just behind and NE of the shoulder of the 2nd bench. It is a tallus slope near the bottom of the draw. Any way, the sheep seemed to be heading up the hill. (You can't see the scab from the front windows but you can from the front porch.

8 Elk on 3rd bench and 1 muley below 2nd bench.

April 7 Wednesday

11 Elk (cows and calves, 1 spike ♂) grazing in the lower pasture this morning by the hay shed!

21 Elk near the trail on the shoulder of the 1st bench, 5 on the 3rd bench and 8 above the 1st bench knob.

There are 5 sheep ~~also~~ also above the 1st bench knob
7 sheep are on the south ^{acing} slope of the 3rd bench near the trail and the tree.

22 ~~Elk~~ ^{Bighorn} on S. slope of second bench most of afternoon then dipped down to 1st bench this eve. 10-11 mule Deer on S & E slopes of west bench all afternoon and 4 muleys on sage flat. ~20 Elk on 3rd bench ~~to~~, about 3:30-4:00 they filed out of the timber on Timber Rim. They moved East out of sight.

Mail day after 21 days solo is an odd thing. 1st of all I get to looking forward to it. For about 10-12 days (since Ray's surprise fuel drop (actually since I got here) April 7th has been in the back of my mind - "How many days till the 7th?" etc...

Then when it gets here it actually lasts for a very short time and then it's over. ~~The~~ The Buddhists - or

- some wise Easterners, Taoists? - say anticipation is the best part of an experience. Well I forgot about that. I talked with Ray about 20 minutes, which was good - He's even gonna see about getting my truck to the mechanic b-4 I get out! I saw the huge mail bag stuffed to the brim and thought "Wow! Every body wrote me! All my sisters musta sent cookies!" He said something about whether ^{or not} he should hold the Peaks mail or leave it here - then I thought he said oh well, they didn't have much anyway. I said something about cookies. - He said "open it up - but I don't remember any thing like that". So I looked inside Big envelopes, little envelopes, AHA! - A BOX. I pulled it out smiling. "Nope" says Ray "that your max-min thermometer". Shucks! That thing, I'm haunted by a thermometer - a broken one at that!

Oh well, - no cookies & no worries, I got lotsa mail! Ray zips off down the runway. I lug the bag up to the house and then bring up my groceries. Oh yeah - they forgot the Doberman!! Maddy has eaten 40lbs of Food in 3 wks and no dogfood!? The stuff she went through was the expensive kind too - the kind they are supposed to eat 1/2 as much of - Not!

Anyway, I get the groceries put away - the cabin is clean and organized - I had plenty of time since Ray didn't arrive till 4:00 pm. and I wanted to be here. You know that's the other thing, I heard his plane coming in all day! I kept ~~hearing~~ ^{hearing} the far off sound of the engine - go to the door, and nothing. Maybe I need to clean my ears out a bit more vigorously tomorrow!

Finally I open the booty bag - Ach! 907.

of it is for the Peaks or Jeff or anyone but me! 4 L.L. bean catalogues - each for someone different, a myriad of other catalogues, junk mail, and letters for the Peaks. By the time I got to the middle of the pile I'm expecting overdraft notices from my bank and bills from my creditors.

Well I did get 7-8 letters which is really pretty good for me! I was just a little deceived by the size of the bag and the unfortunate misconception that ~~the~~ Ray had flown the Peaks mail back to Cascade. Sigh.

My letters were great though. I must admit though that after reading them I felt a flush of loneliness. That went away with ~~my~~ a walk to check stream temps and ^{now} all is well. Although I do have a secret hope that Carol will tell me on the radio in the morning that Ray mixed up the mail bags and will fly in my 10 lb. sack-o-mail with a forty pound bag of dog food!

April 8 - THURSDAY

Busy morning on the East bench! As of 8:45 AM (which was much the same as 7:45 AM) there 42-head of 4 legged herbivores on and around the East Bench.

19 ELK	} all on the bench proper proper
6 Mule Deer	
11 BIGHORN	

1/2

6 Bighorn moving SE into draw

There ~~are~~ also were 18 ELK moving along the trail between ^{the} West bench and the first bench

at 8:00. Currently (2000), there are 8 Bighorn on the S. slope of the 2nd bench and 5 mule deer on the W. slope of the 2nd bench.

Also 2 cow elk in pasture by Lanham Cabin.

OH: also found an Elk skeleton ~~near~~ yesterday 20 yds. above the "upper" trail to Rust Cq by way of Sage flat - probably this year's, but?

Same day -

It's 9:50 pm AND IT'S RAINING! I just finished dinner cuz Maddy and I didn't get back till 9:15 or so! Good like, middle fork and back - went up river a bit from there, took a very cool swim (~~ok dip~~). Actually it wasn't a swim, it was a quick dip in the middle fork.

I saw some odd creatures today. There were ~4 or 5 of them. They were on the river all different colors and were trapped inside and funny shaped orange tube! I'm not positive, but I believe they were ~~Rattalob~~ Rattalob gwithus, common River Rats. Most others I've seen & were not endowed with such thick and shiny pelts of such bright colors, ^{as many were,} I guess maybe it's their spring plumage! The only other colors I've seen R. gwithus in was bright Red Appendages, ORANGE Nape and belly (occasionally yellow) and blue about the hips.

Any who, I was quite surprised to see these ~~critters~~ ^{critters} and not in a social mood - such RATS are notoriously "friendly" and "curious" creatures so I ducked into the bushes hoping I hadn't been spied. Alas, I had! and when they passed my perch they craned their necks, maneuvered the tube, and looked long and hard for me. Whether they saw me or not I'm not sure, but they certainly heard Maddy (at the time, short for My DAMN Dog!)

Also saw the smaller capped coyote ~~at~~ the salt-lick flat down river. She showed no fear. Maddy saw her but behaved! I'm sure it was the smaller of the local pair because of the "cape" and because at 1st I thought she was a gray-fx! Got w/in 40 yds b-4 I saw her!

when she barked. I imagine I peaked their curiosity by not reappearing and waving but I did not come here to see R. guthriei or to be seen by them. Hopefully I raised no suspicions for them. I'm just glad they didn't catch me swimming in my spring plumage - all white!

Record # of Elk seen, ~~some~~ may well have been repeats, but I saw: 1 group of 23+ at Cougar Cr. this A.M., then 8+ between Goat & Cougar creeks on the way back, ~~8~~ in ~~the~~ ^{Big} Creek^a, 14+ at the flat between Cougar Cr. and the Salt Lick flat, 2 at the salt lick, and 17 in the far pasture. I believe that is 72+ Elk, after I left here (I saw 37 here this A.M.).

The last 4 groups I got very close to because I had a brisk wind in my face and it was that time between dusk and dark. The elk in the far pasture I could only count w/ my binoculars, at 50 yds! The 8 elk in the stream stayed in the stream from just above Cougar creek almost to ^{the} flat between Cougar and salt lick flat! I trailed on land behind them within 30 yds at times. There were 4 spike bulls (1 with only one antler and 3 cows and 1 bull w/ no antlers). Only when I decided to ^{put} ~~put~~ git on home did they notice me and the well mannered Maddy (at this point Maddy was short for Madame Dog!). Also about 6 mule deer and no bighorn. Good Day!

And, I almost forgot, Just as we left the house I spied a Ruffed grouse (♂, "orange" phase) on the Rock behind the fruit tree (pear, apple?) near the garden. He sat there ^{for 15 minutes} and gave us an up close and personal view of Drumming! Tabulous - all wings and feathers! Definitely a royal look to the fellow when he sits up and beats out his song!

April 9, Friday

10:00am

NOT A ELK, DEER, OR BIGHORN ^{anywhere to be seen} yet this morning! The Ruffed grouse is at his drumming ^{again} again braving the rain to broadcast his availability & prowess. Maddy, thankfully, has yet to see or smell him yet - though I think she flushed a ♀ out of the draw this morning after ving the weather.

11:00am

mule deer were all wool

Since about 11:00am there have been a dozen elk on these benches*. They are bedded down now - for the most part for the last 2-3 hrs. 6 Sheep and 3 elk are also visible $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way down the west slope of the 3RD bench.

AT 7:00pm there are 27 Elk on the 3RD bench along with 7 Sheep. 8 mule ~~deer~~ ^{were} ~~gone~~ grazing behind the Cabin, before Maddy I "moved" them up the hill as we went for our evening constitutional.

April 10 Saturday

AT 8:30 There a dozen elk on the snow-covered 3RD bench. 6 Sheep on the west slope of the 3RD bench about $\frac{2}{3}$ of down to Cliff Creek. 2 elk and two mule deer are on the west slope of the 2ND bench; both looking as if they headed to join others of their kind ~~located~~ in the draw between the 2ND and 3RD benches.

AT 8:00 PM. 43 ELK GRAZE the S. & W. slopes of the 3RD bench, 6 mule deer on the knob of the first bench (& two manikuring the 9TH hole greenway of the Taylor Ranch Wilderness Golf Course - the slogan: "live obstacles make golf more fun! fly in today and tee-off on the wild side!")

AND 13 BH. graze below the east bench. (I saw two Bighorn heads on the first bench today at some point - a first in the last few days - maybe they overgrazed ~~it~~ it and left the scrubble for the Muleys!)

Maddy and I hiked the south side of Big Creek to Soldier bar. I think it's much easier to take the trail even with the ford. We saw elk sign all along the Northfaces, 15 ELK ON SOLDIER BAR itself, 18 head of ELK ~~on~~ ^{on} Cougar Creek's Alluvial fan (is that correct? ...hmm...). Sigh. No cougar yet.

And by the way where are the petroglyphs pictured in the Taylor Ranch W.R.S. Booklet?? I hope Jeff calls me on the radio soon so I can ask.

The Creek was thigh deep at the ford - I was too lazy to bushwack back. Lotsa blue grouse on the steeper sections that have many grassy openings.

Took a sauna tonight. WONDERFULL!

APRIL 11 SUNDAY - EASTER.

Such a fine day! An extra big breakfast of Banana Pancakes and eggs with 2 cups of the last of the good coffee. One of the better things about any worthwhile holiday is that the food is usually pretty good. So I did my best! Elk steak, ^{baked} potatoes and a fine green salad for dinner - which I just finished it's 10:30. Maddy & I arrived back from Cabin Creek at 9:30 pm. What a day for seeing critters!

Before leaving here there were (at 10:45 AM)
31 elk ~~and~~ and 6 mule deer on the west slope of

the 3rd bench. (scattered from the bottom to the top), 3 muleys on the west slope of the 2nd bench, 5 elk on the 2nd bench, ~~and~~ 3 sheep moving from 1st bench to the 2nd, and 21 sheep on the southern slope of the east bench.

That totals 68, before I left here. On the way I saw 30±2 or 3 mule deer and 22 Bighorns.

The bighorns were first above blowdown ^{at} (afternoon) ~~to~~ then had moved into Lobauer basin by the time we returned. 5 sheep in that band were ♂ (of the ones that were old enough to tell). One huge ~~large~~ RAM - I think ~~it~~ was looking at the same band I saw 1½-2 wks ago - same area, similar ^{looking} bunch of ♂'s. Another ^{big} full curl, one about ¾ curl and a couple about ½. 1 ♂ adult was collared but I couldn't pick out any ear tag or color marking at that distance.

The total # of Ungulates clicks up to 120. Then I got to the Cabin creek basin area. In about 2 hrs, without out hardly even trying, I saw 230+ elk and deer! I was amazed every little flat and valley had a dozen or so critters on it. If there had been many more I would have set the whole place to panicking just trying to walk around. Most (~2/3) were elk* but I gave up keeping track of how many of each at ~120. That's a total of over 350 ~~one~~ deer, elk, and bighorn! More than I've ever seen in day, by far! For a day usually spent looking for eggs and eating chocolate bunnies I thought that was pretty darn good. I may have to go up there again before I leave!

I can't believe only 3 full days left. I'd like another two weeks! With a bit of company I'd probably never leave! So much to see. Sigh.

* a non scientific and absolutely uncheckable and statistically void estimate of Bull to Cow ratio today was 6/100, that a large grain of salt.

Later Easter night:

Also today, • 3 thousands solitaires

- Cliff swallows ^{seem to} appear ~~only~~ when it begins to snow
- It snowed "corn" snow off and on today
- perhaps if I'd sung "I'm dreaming of a white Easter" with a little more heart yesterday, it would have come true
- old Cougar tracks in the mud near Browns basin
- A pair of common mergansers on Big Creek
- At least 2 Golden Eagles in ~~the~~ ^{Cabin} Creek basin (A. and)
- A flock of bluebirds ~50 or so at ~~the~~ Cabin Cr.
- Robins, Robins, AND MORE ROBINS AT CABIN CR. in the Riparian Areas - A veritable spring choir!
- 12+ Puffed grouse between here and there
- lots of ground squirrels (Columbian?) on the flat
- lots of ant hills
- I wonder, have cattle had much of role in creating cliff creeks present condition?
- I'm going to bed - I'm exhausted!

Happy Easter - All year!

MONDAY APRIL 12

AT 8:50 this morning there were 21 elk ^{near} the trail going up to the 1st bench, 22 elk on the second bench, 8 Bighorn* on the 1st bench and 14 elk on the 3rd Bench, and 6 elk on the ^{low or} West Slope of the 2nd bench.

(* includes radio-collared & yellow ear tag.)

So at 8:45 pm the cross-creek scene involves

50 ELK: 21 on the west slope of the 3rd bench (top $\frac{1}{3}$)

15 on the west slope of the 1st bench

and 14 climbing the south slope of the 1st bench from the Far Pasture (which I now know is officially "the lower pasture")

Also "on the slopes" this evening are 33 Bighorns:

27 mix w/ the elk on the west slope of 3rd bench.
6 on the lower 1/3 of the west slope of 4th bench.

And to round out the evenings ungulate-orama we have
6 mule deer grazing mid-slope on the west flank of 3rd bench.
and 9 mulys on top of the west bench.

4 deer ~~back~~ behind the cabin, 2 coyotes ran
across the "lower pasture" from pioneer creek to the
bridge, which they crossed and then promptly disappeared.
~40-50 magpies in the "lower pasture". Blue birds and
Grosbeaks joined the usual avian complement today.

2 of the 3 last three evenings on the hillside above the airstrip. Probably
the latter ~~is~~ because of its size and call.

It was a firewood day. I haven't done as much of
this as I should have in this regard during my stay.
I feel like I'm a kid whose been left in a candy-store
to "mind-the-shop" for the owner. He is supposed to
be back any minute and all I've done is eat tootsie rolls
since he left! Well, I'll get what I can b-4 Thursday
but I do have one more tootsie roll left to try - Rush Creek
Point lookout. Hopefully a lot of the snow will be gone, but
I'm gonna pack snowshoes just in case. Unless it's pouring here,
then maybe it'll be another firewood day!

Oh yeah, we have water! Even though all the outside
valves seem to be shut off - I'm not exactly sure what box
actually controls what water. This afternoon though I
was surprised to hear water running inside. Sure enough though
the faucet was running and the toilet tank was filling.
So I'll leave the faucets ~~open~~ ^{on} the house open in case it
freezes overnight but I'm taking this as a sign that
the outdoor pipes are thawing out. Hope that's right.

Tues April 13

830am finds only 2 elk on the 2nd bench and 17 on the west slope of 3RD bench most are w/in 100-150 yds. from top, 7 elk bedded on the east bench. That's it. the Ruffed Grouse drumming somewhere in the Pioneer Creek jungle.

Rush Cr. Point or bust!!

Well I made it to the point! A VERY WORTHWHILE HIKE! I DIDN'T NEED THE LEVIATHAN SNOWSHOES EITHER - I'M GLAD I HAD THEM THOUGH AS THEY MAKE FINE DOWNHILL SKIS FOR THE WAY HOME. ONCE I GOT TO SNOWLINE I JUST STAYED TO THE SOUTHERN ASPECTS ~~AND~~ ^{THAT} ONLY HAD PATCHY SNOW. THIS A.M. WAS GORGEOUS - SUNNY, CLEAR, AND COLD! AT NOON THIS WAS STILL THE CASE. BY 2:00 IT WAS COMPLETELY GREY & TRYING TO SNOW. ~~THE~~ THE QUICK CHANGE MADE ME GLAD I'D BROUGHT ALL MY WARM STUFF - I'D FELT FOOLISH IN THE MORNING SUN WITH A RUCKSACK FULL OF WOOLIES AND SNOWSHOES STRAPPED ON!

ANOTHER, YES, YET ANOTHER FINE WILDLIFE DAY! B-4 I GOT OFF THE AIRSTRIP I HAD SEEN A ♀ KESTREL (PROBABLY MY SHARP-SHINNED OF THE LAST FEW DAYS - OOPS!), 6 sm. Ducks which I DIDN'T GET A GREAT LOOK AT BUT THE BEST FIT IN THE BIRD BOOK IS HARLEQUIN ^{ducks} (A FIRST FOR ME!), AND A PAIR OF COMMON MERGANSERS BASKING IN THE SUN ON A ROCK ~~AT~~ ^{ON} THE FAR SIDE OF BIG CREEK (GORGEOUS!).

My MULE DEER COUNT REACHED ABOUT 15-20, ELK 5-6⁺ (excluding those in CLIFF creek). 20+ BLUE GROUSE (1 at 15' feet display and whooping!); Coyote and Bobcat tracks in the snow near the point; 5 Ruffed Grouse in Rush creek bottom (just ask Madely!), ~~and~~ 2 Meadowlarks, 3 evening grossbeaks (at the cabin), and another Magpie convention in the "lower pasture".

all solo, probably 0-3
in Rush creek
drainage -
S. Slopes

To Top of all off I spent a good 2 hrs or so glassing the "south~~ern~~" slopes of Rush for a glimpse of a cougar. No luck with the felines - but I did spy one black bear! He/she was solo and moving down the canyon across from us on our way home. Looked as if a blackhole had fallen like a meteorite and was moving about the opposite side of the canyon - only this one had legs, ~~and~~ stood up on its hind legs, slipped ~~on~~ ^{down} a steep talus slope, and was generally acting very bearish.

I lost track of it after ~~about~~ an hour or so of torturing my eyes peering through the binocs.

Anyway, at ~ 6:30 pm I could see (from ^{Big} ~~Rush~~ Creek Ridge) 28 Elk on 3rd bench, 27 Bighorn on West slope of 3rd bench, 34 Elk between the 1st & 2nd bench, and 4 elk and 4 bighorn on the west slope of the 2nd bench. When I arrived at the cabin and ~~glass~~ glassed just b-4 dark I could only see 4 muleys below the 1st bench. L.H.R. and a perspective shift can certainly change things!

Just before dark ~ 12 sheep bolted from East to west above the 1st bench and continued at high speed until they disappeared ~~into~~ into a fold on the west slope of the 2nd bench. Also, yesterday saw 1 bighorn in with 8 or so elk - looked like a small albino calf until one cow tired of its presumptuousness and chased it off. Lastly saw 10 non-adult males ^{bighorns} do some head butting the other day - kinda fun.

Wed. April 14

Well, today is not going to be the day I thought it would be - at least, maybe not. I just called in the weather and the peaks my fly in today! Weather looks bad tomorrow. If that

is the way it goes the floors will not get waxed and maybe a bunch of other things too! I guess I'll clean the house; pack though!

2 elk on west slope second bench along w/ 4 muleys and there are 11 sheep scattered ~~at~~ ^{along} the ridge above the 3rd bench at about the elevation of the east bench.

Well it's 3:00 I'm packed and ready to go. The house is clean. I'm waiting for a radio call to know if Jim & Pat Peek are coming in today or not. Up in the air describes very aptly what today is like. I suppose that's how it always is here when you have to depend on the weather for a clear spot to fly through!

I feel very lucky to have been able to spend this last month here. It is fine country and I could spend another month and a year beginning to explore it! I also feel lucky to be a small part of Taylor Ranches long history. This is an impressive place for the University as well as the wilderness and its wildlife and flora. It is a good thing to know such places exist and are working to a better ~~of~~ understanding of creation; our role in it! Keep up the good work!

The "Cliff Cr. cafe" is virtually empty. All afternoon there have only been 5 bighorn visible just ~~at~~ below the East bench.

April 14, 1993 (Pat)

Jim + I arrived at 4:30. One day early, for a change! It's overcast, in fact we landed in a rainstorm which was no fun!

The pasture is a lovely green, and even the slopes are tinged with a slight tint.

As soon as we got in, we looked on the benches, and the sheep were high to the right of the 3rd bench, and elk were scattered along the slope up to the ridge top as well as about 12 grazing on the top of the 2nd bench. About 33 elk in all, along with a few deer to complete the scene. A lot different from when we left in March, and although it was tough to tear myself away from home, I'm glad we're back!

April 15, 1993 - Snow today, + fog over the third bench after 10:00, we saw the herd of elk in the meadow behind the bench, however, before the curtain shut.

After lunch we take a walk downstream past the salt lick + as we go around the cliffs there are 7 elk moving up in the timber across the river. When we reach the lick the smell of elk pervades the air. We go around the next knob, + as we get to the terrace, Fady's ears go up + I grab her collar. There are about 12 elk bedded down in the soft grass between the trail and river.

We turn around + see 6 more across the river on the way back.

Heavy rain today about 3:00

At 4:00 about 20 sheep or more clumped up together above meadow behind 3rd bench

Then a group of elk slowly walk over 2nd bench down to lick behind 1st bench.

Jim made a bonfire near sauna to burn up brush & also burned the meat that spoiled while we were gone. ☹️

20 deer along east side of 3rd bench & elk in meadow behind.

April 16 - '93

When we awoke this morning old papa song dog was wiled up down to right of the bridge. It crept down to get a picture, but he noted movement & trotted over the bridge.

An hour later a cow elk spike bull, & calf appeared on east knob near the top, & munched on blue bench grass for awhile, then came down this side & disappeared upriver on the trail.

We had 125" rain yesterday & Lewis Peak is covered with snow to the base.

at 3:30 Ray Arnold flies in with Terry → Halubetz & Phil Jepperson (IDEA). They want to look at Rush Cr. to see where to place a weir. Terry spies a large steelhead spawning just above where we get stream temps.

Up Rush Creek it spooked 8 deer on other side, and in Big Creek at Rush mouth, a nice pair of buffleheads ducks. They are beautiful black & white!

April 17

Early in a.m. a nice pair of Canada Geese along shore.

The sun is pouring into the cabin! at 8:00 a.m. yet! What a change from the winter. This is the first morning

unannounced!

that we haven't had a fire. Water now in Taylor & Zanham cabins, we haven't got the others going yet.

On the slope behind the cabin we have buttercups (*Ranunculus glaberrimus*) yellow bells (*Fritillaria pudica*) and woodland star (*Lithophragma parviflorum*)

Six nimble deer, at least 3 of whom are fawns, healthy adolescents with sleek coats & bright eyes, came out from behind the Zanham cabin and grazed around the wind sock for about an hour about 7:30 this evening as we ate dinner.

April 18, Sunday

We awake this a.m. to the patter of rain on the roof & its fire time once again! There's a sprinkle of snow on the top of the ridge. By 10:00 the rain/snow cloud has settled in in earnest, & snow is down to the 3rd bench and the ridge is invisible. A good day to clean cupboards & wipe down logs!

No critters in sight. All hiding out in their favorite caves & crannies in the mountains.

We walk to Pioneer & along Pioneer Ridge, down to Rush to do stream temps. Two geese on airstrip.

About 5:30, after a terrific wind, the sun comes out and there are 8 deer around 2nd bench, 23 sheep above 3rd bench, and 3 elk to right of 3rd bench. We saw about 10 deer from Rush Cr.

April 19, Monday

A typical April day, we have sun one minute, then hail, then rain, then

snow, back to sun, wind, snow etc. etc.!!

There have been a handful of animals wandering around the slopes. At 6:30 this evening, though, they had a meeting. There was 2 elk, 8 sheep + 4 deer all mingling together in the meadow behind the 3rd bench. It was really funny to observe through the spotting scope. At one point they were all practically touching. With the whole expanse of mountains, it's interesting that they would stay so close!!

Ten minutes later, sheep are gone, all we see are 2 elk + 2-3 deer lying down in the grass. About 30 minutes later, the elk are still lying in the same place, but there's over 20 deer grazing around them!

Thirty minutes more, + the scene changes again - about 16 sheep + 30 deer are all happily grazing in about the same spot. The elk have moved on.

April 20, 1993, Tuesday

Carol called this a.m. to see if we could have mail plane today + we said sure, it's 4:30 + they haven't been here yet??

About noon ^{IDFG} Mike Schlegel, ^{IDFG} Scott Keenecher, ^(Pilot) Gem Pope + Janet Debling flew in to do game count. The men came by helicopter + Janet was flown by Mike Davis. They went out to count in p.m. + Janet stayed to visit. Ray arrived about 5:30 with mail.

There have been 10-15 sheep on benches today. Also saw a pileated woodpecker. A nice day about 60°, with sun.

Bats are hunting moths on windows after dark tonight.

Wed, 21, April, 1993

Jim, Mike & Scott went counting animals, and Jim (Peck), Janet & I walked to the gorge. It was a nice cool day for walking.

Saw 2 kingfishers, about 6 elk before Cougar Creek & near Goat Creek about 12 ran across the river in front of us.

We got home about 3:00 & all of them left about 4:30.

This evening about 15 deer on 1st bench. 5 deer heading upriver on trail & another 5 feeding in the pasture. 15 on airstrip (11 crossed the river)

April 22, 1993

I rolled out of bed, got my camera, backpack and a banana and headed down to the salt lick (even before coffee!!) I wanted to get a picture of the ravens on the elk carcass. How silly! After reading Ravens in Winter, I should have known better. They scattered as soon as I rounded the corner & stayed across the river yelling at me as I crouched behind a rock. I almost got a magpie, but as soon as I raised the camera he was gone, and then it started raining --- no much for ~~my~~ photography etc.!!

It poured rain for good part of p.m.
Deer are on airstrip (about 12-15)

Huge claps of thunder rocked the place about 6:30 and we had hail, lightning and sheets of rain. Throughout the storm the deer grazed on first bench & sheep on 3rd.

At 7:30, all is calm, there are shafts of sunlight angling across the grass & hill and a flock of yellow warblers arrives around the cabin.

At dusk, 8:30, 10 deer on 1st bench, 7 on pasture & 7 more on flat across the river from the airstrip.

April 23, 1993

We walk today up past Zobauer Basin. It was overcast when we started but sunny as we came back. The river was beautiful. Saw a lot of tiny smolts and some cutthroat trout 8-12 inches in the big hole this side of Zobauer.

about 6 sheep were right by the trail near 2nd gate as we left, and we saw about 10 deer on the flat before Zobauer. Also near there, a big tree had fresh cougar claw marks.

Saw a kingfisher on the river.

April 24, 1993 - a red letter day!!

At 7:30 a.m., 14 elk moving down from 1st bench into Cliff Creek, & right below them are 7 deer headed in the same direction.

A few minutes later one lone elk & a yearling deer follow along. The deer hesitates on the way down, then determines to follow the elk to join the herd!!

Soon we see 8 elk leaving the lick & going down the opposite way toward lower pasture.

At 8:30 a.m. we are sitting at the table, eating breakfast when we see five of the

deer, running, liberty split around the side of the west knob & down toward the trail.

"Wow, look at them go!" I exclaim, not bothering to get binoculars.

"What's that? Wait a minute!"

"What is it? What do you see?"

"Yes. Yes it is. It's a cougar, babe!"

He spots ~~them~~ with binoculars, then gets the spotting scope.

"Do you have it? Where is it?" I'm frantically trying to focus my binoculars. "Is it in the middle?"

"Oh, she's beautiful!" Here, come and look". I move over to the scope, & the cat, female we think, is laying down right below the large rock, looking toward the cabin, then down the trail where her prey escaped.

We watched her resting there for about 5 minutes before she leisurely got up, looked around, and slowly angled down to the trail and disappeared upriver.

18 sheep on bench in p.m.

44 robins convening again in the pasture again this p.m.

7 deer right behind the house by the fence the last 2-3 nights, 20 up there tonight, and 22 across from 3rd bench

April 25, 1993 Sunday

Two bears! One deer and twin lambs, playing footsie with a coyote in pasture! (April fool)

Actually there are about 7 deer still in the pasture and an audubons warbler is mixing it up with the robins & magpies.

about noon, Jim Pope flew in with Pat Davis and Shelly. They had lunch with us, then Jim took his helicopter to the Flying B.

about 5:00 Jim Pope, Mike Scott & Mark Hurley came back to refuel, & Ray flew in about 5:30, before they left, to get gas and deliver it.

Monday April 26 -

Well! well! Snow covering ridge down to 3rd bench. So far in April 3.13" precip., the highest since before '87

At least 30-40 deer between 1st & 3rd benches. 17 deer and 6 sheep milling around in greenup near 1st bench lick.

a busy day with people! Ray flew in about noon with Benji Hill and we had lunch. Then about 2:00 Jim Pope, Mark Hurley, Mark Emberton, from fish & game came in for gas & stayed to visit until about 3:30. It's fun to see them but we're so used to solitude. We haven't had time to see where the animals are!

Tuesday April 27

The piercing howl of a coyote woke Lady & us up about 4:00 a.m. this morning.

about 8:30 2 deer came around the west knob, then 10 minutes later a ram, ewe & yearling ram came around & down to outbank.

Sheep & deer on benches. Jim & Benji went up to do plots & Benji got some nice photos of a ram.

I'm sitting out in the yard (a nice sunny day so I washed clothes & at 3:00 they're almost dry!!)

when I hear a loud sound, a high, scratchy
rut tut tut tut. I look down in Pioneer Creek
where it's coming from, but don't see anything.

Betty soon it's there again, louder. It's got to be
right here in the brush below the fir tree. Finally
I see him, it's a pileated woodpecker and he's
walking up the fir tree. With each step he
ducks his head, and every few steps he
lets forth with his raucous call.

Jim + Benji saw herd of 12 elk behind
3rd bench.

I found one Balsam root starting to bloom
today, but most are at least 2 weeks away. Oregon
poppy is really showing now, and along Cliff Creek,
the lovely wild demeter is just starting to bloom.

Wednesday April 28

A lovely, sunny day!

Last evening, just as the sun went
down, there ^{was} a great meeting in the green
fescue bowl to the right of 3rd bench
above 3B plot, 8 elk, 12 sheep, 18 deer all
praying together.

This a.m. Jim + Benji did plots 3A + B then
hiked over Ridge + down Cougar Creek.

Zady + I cleared house + walked up Pioneer
Ridge. We found tiny birds' beaks (Lodocathion
along trail. Then went down to Rush Cr + back
to airstrip. Saw 6 deer on sage bench.

At midday a coyote trots quickly from
the east through the dandelion carpeted pasture
to the bridge. He stops at the end of the bridge,
looks furtively around then runs across. He
runs briefly to the right, as if looking for
something, then comes back + disappears up
Cliff Creek.

In the evening, 15 sheep and about 30 deer on 1st + 2nd bench.

Thursday April ~~28~~²⁹ (I'm losing track of the day - do sanity test??)

X! X! X! rain! Can you believe it?
On the other hand, looking at the bright side, there's a beautiful little gold finch working like crazy to get the last few pieces of thistle from the feeder, and 10 deer beside the lick, and a laguti bunting perched on top of the pear tree.

Benji is to go out late today, so the 3 of us walked up to Sobauer Basin in the snow and again rain. Serviceberry is in bloom on the warmest spots, a few violets and brodia is in bud, also mountain mahogany is in bloom.

Jim & Benji saw a moose a little beyond Sobauer. The first one we have seen all winter. (where they've been a lot)

In p.m. 4 deer between cabin & fence in back, & 10 deer come dashing down in front of duplex, then stop abruptly to graze in middle.

at 6:00 p.m. Carol called to say Ray won't make it. We've had heavy rain showers off & on, so we're not surprised.

Friday April 30

Heavy rain. Ray came in & took Benji about 1:30.

12 elk & about 10 sheep on benches. We're busy getting ready to go tomorrow. Goodbye! It's been really a great experience.

One coyote trotted over the bridge in late afternoon.

Tonight, for our last meal, we had more mushrooms I found near trail just past the fence going to the orchard.

Goodbye again!

May 1, Saturday

Jeff flew in about 10:00 am. Jim, Pat, & Zady left after their winter's stay. Elk on third bench, sheep on 1st bench, & mule deer scattered about as I flew in. Later in day 9 young rams grazed around 1st bench. A ewe-lamb group (2 radio-collars) Unpacked my gear & rediscovered what I left here last fall. Warm sunny day. Very comfortable to be back, my half-forgotten uncensured habitats swooning into eye immediately.

May 2, Sunday

About 25 sheep (2 collar still), ~20+ elk, ~a dozen mule deer grazing on benches this morning. One doe in old hay stack. Can't imagine what's she's finding to eat there.

May 3-5, Monday - Wednesday

Read and graded final exam papers for Big Game class. A few were okay to pretty good (i), a few were very disappointing. I'm dismayed that graduate students producing such abysmal work are surviving graduate school. I expect I'll get their attention with these grades. A couple pileated woodpeckers hanging around. One has spent time around the Taylor Cabin with me watching only 20 feet away. The woodpecker is always peering upward then taking some deliberate pecks at a stump or log, then peering intently upward again. I suppose goshawks might be a problem. It has rained almost constantly from Monday to Wednesday morning. About an inch of rain recorded so far. Got sent in the seeds for the garden on the mail plane today. I forgot to send out 2 bags of cows. I hiked to the 3rd bench after the mail plane

left. (Also, I set up the automated recording system beside the small pools along the south side of the airstrip. We'll see if any frogs are recorded).

I saw about 30 sheep in 3 bands. One collared ewe with a large yellow plastic eartag. Ever since Sunday sheep have been on the steep bank on Big Cr. just above the bridge. This is where I usually dump rattlesnakes. I suppose the sheep are finding salt there. Back to the pileated's. I'm noticing many calling around the ranch. I don't know if I'm just sensitized to their calls at the moment or that there's a lot around. Maybe the large increase of diseased trees has been good for pileated's.

6 May, Thursday

Patty Schwin stopped by about noon with 3 guys on her trail crew. They flew into Cabin Cr yesterday and are taking to the Middlefork. They'll do as much trailwork as they can as they work back towards Cabin Cr. Patty says the Big Cr. road won't be plowed this year so nature will have to open the road this year. I moved the automated recording device to the beaver ponds on lower Rush Cr. Much recent beaver activity - many cuttings & new dam work. Also recorded stream temperatures and tried to download data files from the met station. No success on the latter so I'll try to reprogram that tomorrow. Rain most of today.

7-9 May, Friday-Sunday

Reprogrammed the met station Friday. Surprisingly, it worked. So now all I need do is calibrate all the instruments and I think that after 4 years of doing nothing, the met station will be providing some info, finally. My first coyote at the ranch

This spring. Trotted across lower pasture when I went to check data logger & storage module of wet station. After trotting off it came back quite close and was surprised I was still there. Probably hunting ground squirrel in the pasture. I've run the automated recorder on both the ponds along the arroyo and by the beaver ponds on lower Park Cr. No sign on any frog calling although small spotted frog were much in evidence in the beaver ponds. Called Jette & Matthias on Mother's Day (Sunday). It's hard being away from them for as long each spring and fall. They sounded fine and we eager to get in here as soon as school's out for Matthias. I walked to Robin Cr (oh yes, and spent the morning tussling and tilling the garden by hand.) Sunday afternoon. Walked up to 3 ewes & 3 lambs (last year's) just upstream from Row Basin. One lamb seemed pretty curious and approached to within ~10 feet of me. Then the whole group came together, charged off, then charged right up to me. 'I thought the ewe might butt me!' But they were just being sheeps. - no brains. Saw an incredible sight further upstream. I watched a little brown bat dodging and diving while a monarch butterfly stayed right on its tail. This lasted for at least 5 minutes as it couldn't have been coincidental. That butterfly was chasing that bat.' Found a dead garter snake in the trail as watchout.' The ticks are out & about too. I've pulled several off me so far. At Robin Cr. about 60 elk were grazing & bedded on the flats. Mule deer nearby. An adult golden eagle swooped along the hillside. I couldn't tell whether the eagle next on the cliffs was in use. I'll check again

next time I'll finish planting the garden tomorrow.

10-14 May, Monday - Friday

I'm getting very lazy about this writing business. I never have liked keeping journals. Patti Schwin & the USFS trail crew swung through here on Monday. They'd repaired a large rock slide near Breaching Cr. and cleared one tree across the trail. They planned to finish trail work to Coxy Hole before flying out from Cabin Cr on Thursday. I finished putting the garden in on Monday. Within a few hours of finishing the garden, I lost all water pressure. Just like last year! So I spent Tuesday trying all the semi-mystical approaches for regaining water pressure. I don't think my chants were in the spirit of good fellowship with the water / pipe gods. I emptied the waterbox and replaced the intake pipe. The old one had rusted through and probably what's plugging the line is piece of this pipe. The job took about 5 hours because the old pipe had rusted to the valve gate and I had to delicately file and chisel the rusted threads apart. But after all that still no water so after playing with different combinations of open & closed valves I called in a plumber. Brian Nelson (plumber from McCall) flew in with Lynn Clark (pilot) on Thursday. She spent the day reading & snoozing while Brian and I dug out and tore apart portions of the water system. After 7 hours we got water back to the Taylor Cabin. Lots of water!! We had to blow out the lines with the oxygen bottle from the welding outfit. We discovered the juncture of the line between Taylor Cabin & duplex.

There is probably about 30 lbs pressure at the Taylor Cabin. Plenty to run sprinklers and take the most powerful shower I've ever had in the Taylor shower. Unfortunately, by this morning (Friday) I'd lost water pressure again. So I went through all the synchros again today, & put a new screen around the intake at the water box and dug out the gunk from the bottom of the box. I relayed more games with valves, etc. So finally at about 6:00 p.m. tonight I've got pressure back on, except through the cold water line into the kitchen. I'll take apart that line tomorrow and run a snake up it to clean that. But every other outlet seems good. The sprinkler is sending water about 20 ft. high even while I run faucets in the house. It's been very hot all week (in the high 80's). Big Creek is running very high as are all the other creeks. Pioneer Creek is flooding onto the aratrys with a large pool running off into Big Creek where the aratrys flatten out. Only a few inches higher on Big Creek and it will cover the aratrys. I've been monkeying with the automated recording device Chuck Peterson made for me. So far no frogs singing either along the aratrys or in the beaver ponds on Peach Creek. I've also tried recording bird songs over a 24 hour period. Except for the low lower frequency bird calls (like robins and magpies) the recordings aren't very good. I'm trying a different microphone tonight (uni-directional) so I'll see tomorrow morning how well it did. Many mule deer about the ranch this week. Also a chow very tame. A young buck was at the salt box along

the sunset. He watched me occasionally, while I watched him from 50 feet away but mostly he kept lurching. His ribs were showing starkly and he looked in rough shape. Sheep & elk are still hanging about the benches but I haven't been keeping track of them lately.

15-24 May, Saturday - Monday

Boy! Do I get behind on this journal. Wrote an article for Frankly Speaking newsletter & sent an mail plane last Wednesday. Finally got plumbing supplies to complete the water system repairs and modifications. Hopefully, will finish that this week. Walked out to Meyers Cove last Thursday and Friday. Reached the Mormon Ranch Thursday after 7.5 hours hiking; Meyers Cove the next day in 7 hours. Too fast a pace to really enjoy it. Durham Van, summer intern, met me at Meyers Cove. We rode Miss Tink, Blue Eyes, & Spang back in the next day. Both Brent Meyberg and Mark Ambuster (IDFG CO's) stopped us to talk (haven't seen either in about 15 years). So we didn't get on the Camos Cr. trail until noon. Still about 9 hours to the Mormon Ranch that day, then 11 hours to Taylor Ranch the next. Horses are very slow. Saw a small, dark cinnamon bear near Wilson Cr. They on licks. No big incidents along the way. Spent Monday (24th) working on water system. Multiple breaks in pipe in Arlow Cabin. So this week hope to get water into all cabins and Durham up to agreed on her shores.

25 May - 6 June,

Boy, am I way behind on this journal. As soon

so get the system I'll turn it over to her. I've spent considerably more time on water systems. Cougar Cabin is a disaster. I fixed off a dozen breaks with more to go. I've decided to replace the entire water system there with PVC line. That should alleviate the recurring problem I put the new window in the east wall behind the bathroom and as soon as I get the rest of the supplies I should have the Cougar Cabin in the best shape it's been in in a long time. Then on to the duplex. Water line was clogged between Taylor Cabin and water box in Pioneer Cr. Then broken at water box. Then seven breaks under duplex. So that took three days and considerable loss of blood from lashed knuckles and thumbs. Jason Karl, this summer's wilderness research intern, arrived on Memorial Day. Jason, Susan, & I spent last Thursday afternoon traversing the northmost pass into Big Creek drainage from the ranch. Jason played sharpshinned hawk alarm calls at 100m intervals. Surprisingly, we got a female SSH to respond she called then flew from tree to tree to investigate. Then a male joined her. So pretty exciting for the 1st try. All three of us rode to Cabin Cr. yesterday. Much fresh bear sign along the trail. At Cabin Cr. we saw several groups of elk, probably 20+ in all. One group seen Big Cr. as high as I is with 2 calves, the first I've seen this year. We saw 2 moose, an adult cow & last year's bull calf. Deer mule deer & a golden eagle. The eagle nest

on the cliffs across Big Cr from the Cabin Cr plate appears renewed this year. On the way back we encountered 2 ewes and last years lamb near Tobacco Basin. So 4 of the 6 ungulates in one day! Three kayakers came down Big Cr early in the day. The water is still high and I'm surprised that they'd come down this early. They stopped to chat for awhile. All three from Montana, 2 from near Darby. The horses are doing well and getting some work. Susan & I hauled 6 horse loads of firewood from Rush Cr & Pioneer Cr. We're now getting rain after 3 weeks of hot & dry. Pastures are in good shape. Susan found the skull, some bones, cartilage & radius/collar of one of Gary Koehls' redlined bobcats in lower Rush Cr drainage along the west-facing slope.

Hendee, Reese & Bleak here from 6/8 - 6/11.

June 12, 1993, Saturday

Gette, Mathias & Tim flew in and Dean Hendee, Carey Reese & Claire Bleak flew out. We were scheduled

to fly in on the 11th but wave after wave of intense thunder storms blew through Cascade (apparently there were fewer & less intense storms here). It even snowed for about an hour in the early evening.

Most areas had fresh snow as we flew in. It was still blustery and overcast today. Susan put harness on Blue Eyes to teach him to pull.

Jason saw rattlesnake below 1st bench.

June 13, Sunday

Jason left for Cabin Ck area, looking for nests; plans to attempt coming back on the elusive Horse mtn. trail. Susan saw 2 lambs & ewes playing in the washed out draw above the Gorge. I've been getting garden and flower beds into shape

June 14, Monday

Jeff & Susan up to the timbered bench w/ horses to set up small mammal and bird monitoring. Matthias & I hiked up. We saw a lone ewe on the 1st bench at 1100. She later peered at us from the edge of the 2nd bench as we sat under a tree on our way up the steep trail to the timbered bench. On our way down around 1300 we saw 3 $3/4$ curl rams. They looked beautiful & strong while the ewe looked thin and worn.

June 15, Tuesday

3 cow elk on 1st bench 0700 (probably more not insight) Jeff & Susan back to timbered bench to check & move small mammal traps. Will see how the microphone on bird call recorder survived the early morning rain showers. Jeff & Susan saw 15 elk on 3rd bench including one very recent calf & a spike bull. While they were working on the timbered bench a ewe strolled by. Jason returned today. A sharp-shin returned his recorded call about 5 miles up the W. Fk of Cave Ck.

June 16, Wednesday

Rained most of the day, but cleared off some in the afternoon. Saw 3 elk around 3rd bench 1800; one was a young calf. Rattlesnake on trail to 1st bench. Bull moose (2 yr. old) on airstrip 2100. Jeff worked on plumbing and hung scale to weigh paniers in p.m. Did paperwork in a.m. Susan looked for grouse; last night she and Jason saw a hen w/ 2 chicks that already had feathers & could fly a little near the hay cover. Susan found a cougar carcass with an ear tag on the slope above the Taylor Cabin. Jason went up Pioneer Ck. with his recorded calls.

June 17, Thursday

1 ewe on 1st bench. Jeff & Susan set up Jeff's monitoring equipment in the lower pasture. Jason found a sharpshin nest up Pioneer Ck. ! Jeff & I saw a sharpshin go into a tree after a robin from the Taylor Cabin window.

June 18, Friday

Everyone in lower pasture helping Jeff check small mammal traps this a.m. Blue Eyes broke thru Cliff Ck bridge on right downhill side (apparently wood rotted away & rock debris that were providing support washed out) He leaped forward and saved himself

In p.m. Jeff, Sushar & Jason did plots and sprayed thistle with a saline solution, also moved bird call monitoring equipment. Blue Eyes pulled back on fence around MET station almost destroying it - Jeff, Sushar & Jason rebuilt the fence.

One ewe in sight on 1st bench.
2 grouse hens spotted with young.
One group were very young chicks, the other had feathers. Golden eagle cruising above 3rd bench. Single backpacker passed by.

June 19, Saturday

Jason to Rush Ck. Pt. & Sushar to Duncie Ck. Jeff adjusted solar panels for summer sun angle. Jette inventoried cabins and started grocery list & menus for class. Somehow both the computer file and the hard copy of the lists & menus I came up with last year are missing so I had to start from scratch. 3/4 cure & full cure rams on 1st bench 1600.

June 20, Sunday

"Rattler, alert" by Brewster Ghiseler
Slowly he sways that head that cannot hear
Two jeweled cones of horn the yellow of rust
Pooled on the current of his listening fear.
His length on the tympanum of earth,
And by his tendril tongues tasting the air
He sips, perhaps, a secret of his race
Or feels for the known vibrations, heat, or trace
Of smoother satin than the hillwind's thrust
Through grass: the aspirate of my half-held breath

The crushing of my weight upon the dust,
My pounding heart the bloodleap at my wrist

Sushan saw 30 cows w/ calves at the salt lick on the 1st flat last night. She also spoke with 2 backpackers from Florida camped at Goat Ck who'd come from Stoddard Bridge. She also encountered a rattlesnake.

June 21, Monday Summer Solstice
Jason to Goat Ck. came down when strong thunderstorm started blowing over trees. Jeff & Sushan up Pioneer Ck. to set up Jeff's monitoring. Sharp shir chased by robin and other birds near Taylor Cabin around 1600.

June 22, Tuesday
Jeff & Sushan back up Pioneer Ck to check traps & pick up all monitoring equipment - more mammals this time. Jason up to ridge, then tried his calls on timbered bench. Jette & Matthias saw a Western Toad. Sushan heard what she thinks was a cougar crunching bones and snarling around her cabin last night.

June 23, Wednesday
0/1 ewe on 1st bench. Worked on cleaning up bunk house and cookhouse. Sushan & Jason cleaned traps.

June 24, Thursday

Jason off for Cave Ck - Garden Ck area searching for sharpshins. Jeff & Susan set up small mammal traps up Cliff Ck.

June 25, Friday

Jeff & I picked up traps. ^{Cliff} 15 elk or 1st bench 0600, looked like cows with 1 calf (didn't get a good look) 7 ewes or 1st bench 1800.

June 26, Sat.

Susan left for Crags.

June 27, Sun

Jeff & Matthias hiked to Cabin Ck to meet Jeff's mother & aunt, ages 66 & 62 who hiked from the trailhead at Big Ck. Jason returned. He found a sharpshin nest up Cave Ck. and got a response around Garden Ck. Big wind and thunderstorms the last few nights between 2000-2200.

June 28, Mon

Jeff, Matthias, Alice & Dorothy hiked in from Cabin Ck. Susan returned from the Crags. Jeff got the water going to the cookhouse after much work clearing the line and did some paper work. Susan made it to Barking Fox Lake but ran into snow. Jeff saw a huge gopher snake eat a nest full of baby robins in low mtn. east west of the Taylor cabin.

June 29th, Tues

Jeff, Susan, Jason up Pioneer Ck. to describe sharpshin nest site. Worked on Conyer Cabin in afternoon. Elk have eaten all the thistle sprayed with salt solution in lower pasture. At least 8 elk coming down from 3rd bench around 2100.

June 30th, Wed.

Jeff, Susan & Jason worked on Conyer Cabin water system, bathroom remodeling & set up bunk beds. Susan sprayed the rest of the thistles in lower pasture with saline solution. Mail plane brought big food order for UI class. We got everything working in cookhouse. Jeff delayed his research trip up Cliff Ck to do more work on Conyer Cabin tomorrow. Rubber boe on Pioneer Ck. bridge.

Elk on 1st bench around 2000.

July 1st - July 3rd, Thurs - Sat

Worked on Conyer Cabin and other facilities maintenance projects. Heavy rain July 2 & 3. Jason went to Gardens Ck & Coxy Hole but got rained out and returned.

July 4th, Sun

Jeff left to meet class Big Ck Trail head on 7/6. More rain blew through in waves. Susan pruned bushes, cut grass & organized the lab and so forth.

July 5th Mon

Jason & Susan to Cave Ck to do nest description/plot, then Susan plans to go to Mill Hight and Jason - Garden Ck.

July 6th Tues a day without rain!

Cleaned cookhouse and finished other preparations for class. Susan and Jason returned around 2200. Elk on 3rd bench.

July 7th Wed

Natl Marine Fisheries (Steve Accord & Mark?) in at 0900 with McCall div to scuba for par in Big & Rust Cks. They're camping across Rust Ck on the flats. Steve said the par they pit tagged here last fall had the best survival rate (33%) of any in the Salmon River drainage. They monitored them at lower Granite Dam (the last dam on the Columbia). Today they only saw 30 par compared to around 300 that he saw this time last year. He doesn't think many adults made it this year.

Kerry Reese and Lisa Garret flew in on the mail plane. They worked with Susan to set up 6 grouse traps. The rest of the food order arrived for the class. Weather is still cooler than usual for this time of year.

July 8th Thurs.

Class arrived with Jeff. They all thought the hike was strenuous. One woman, Becky, was way behind. Susan brought her in with

the horses.

July 9th, Friday

Class trapped grouse with Kerry Reese. General orientation to the field station and course. Steve Accord of Nat'l Marine Fisheries spoke with the about his work with salmon in the evening.

July 10, Sat.

Grouse trapping continues. Nat'l Marine Fisheries out w/ McCall air. Class up to timbered bench for Jeff's monitoring.

July 11, Sunday

Chuck Peterson & his grad student Ray Clark in with Bob's air 0730. Elk & sheep on benches. Susan & some of class up to timbered bench to collect small mammal traps (only 4 deer mice this time).

Kerry Reese continued trapping grouse. Chuck lectured class on amphibians & reptiles and inventoried Rust Ck ponds. Cow moose on airstrip around 1300. Class was amazed to see her.

July 12, Monday

Class off to inventory Calix Ck. sites with Peterson & Geo. Reese & Han continue grouse trapping with the help of Moraches Lab, duplex, Taylor frig & Arlow Store all out of propane. Nine ewes on 1st bench 11030. Three cow elk

on 2nd bench 2130. Watched 2 beavers at the pond across from the end of the air strip. Jason returned around 1000 - he found another sharp shin nest near the mouth of Coxy Ck.

July 13, Tuesday

Trout trapping continues. Kerry has now designed a fishing pole moose after limited success with traps and nets.

Class back from Cabin Ck around 1500. Chuck Peterson and Ray Clark out with Bob's air at 1930. Class saw 5 moose at Cabin Ck and many snakes. They caught a 6' gopher snake. Chuck & Jeff are full of ideas for amphibian & reptile monitoring studies. 2 ewes on 1st bench 1 with radio collar. Susan found a black headed gross beak and a lazuli bunting nest in the area above the cougar pens.

July 14, Wednesday

A day of freedom for the class. A group walked to the Gorge with Jeff. Two continued on to the Middle Fk. One hiked to Rush Ck Pt. Everyone else stayed around the field station. Kerry Reese & Lisa Barret out on the mail plane. Lisa saw 12 elk on the salt lick on the lower flat early this morning. Weather is still cooler than usual.

July 15, 1993, Thursday

Class on Horse mtn & benches doing veg. plots. 6 ewes on 1st bench; 1 w/ collar.

July 16, Friday

Oral exam, course evaluation and pot luck dinner. The class has been successful. Jason back - says he'll head out Sunday again.

July 17, Saturday

Class flew out to Big Ch with Arnolds. An hour on so after the last load left a storm hit dumping .09 rain. Weather remains cool.

July 18, Sunday

Jason left for Canyon Ck. Grouse are coming out on the airstrip in bigger groups. Susan continues trapping. Jette & Mathias hiked to Rush Ck Pt. Weather is warming some. Susan hiked up ridge between Pioneer & Rush Ck drainages & found Jess Taylors old camp.

July 19, Monday

Finished cleaning up cook house. Worked on the Cliff Creek bridge. Managed to jack it up some and filled in some washed out rock. Put up new wind sock at the end of the air strip. Susan caught 3 grouse; total is now 14. Weather continued cool. Picked the first peas for supper - peas, beans & lillies all started blooming last week - squash too.

July 20, Tuesday

Jeff Bennets in with Bob's air to shoe horses. A 2 yr old bull moose walked down the air strip at 1100.

7/21 Ollie Olson of Nat'l Weather Bureau flew in to check the station without giving us notice of landing.

Gette & Mathias are flying out on mail plane 7/21.

July 31, 1993, Saturday

Gette & Mathias returned hiking in from Crags Campground; Jeff met us there on the 28th. The Crags are beautiful, high country with swarms of mosquitoes. Shooting stars are just now blooming around the lakes. Also saw bear grass and columbine further down. The moose like Terrace Lakes & the boggy area below it. Lower down (just below the boggy area & somewhat in it, we found huckle berries and 'wortle berries' (small ones).

To catch up on Taylor Ranch news, this is what I've been told: they fixed the bridge (Cliff Ck.) on Sat. July 25 with gabions & rock - looks sturdy now though it settle'd more than planned when lowered down on the gabions. The limits of Acceptable Change Task Force were in here on the 25th & 26th. Rainy weather resulted in some changes from the plans we'd been given. 11 plane landings.

I think 30 people were here coming in by plane, raft (middle fork & tubing up), and horse.

Sushan has now tagged 31 grouse and found the legs of one eaten by a predator. The weather finally warmed up on the 28th. This has been the coldest July in recorded history. We had over 2" of rain here. The garden is finally coming on with peas, beans, and tiny zucchini. Tomatoes are starting to ripen.

Mountain ash berries are bright orange.
A group of sheep hanging out on slope above
3rd bench 6 rams - 1 full ewe.

Sushan has been seeing lots of rattlers
with the warm weather including
one curled up on the front step
of the Taylor cabin which she
moved in a grouse net to the
area below the strawberries.
Mathias fractured his wrist on the
20th when he fell off the hitching
rail and is wearing a fiberglass
cast for 3 weeks. Sushan has
continued small mammal trapping
on Cliff Ck Ridge burn, Pioneer Ck
and Rush Ck. Jason left Thursday
7/29 to hike Monumental
looking for sharp shins. Before
leaving he did more work
on the Conyer Cabin. 30 boy
scouts rode by on horses.

August 2, Monday

Jason returned - no luck finding
sharp shins in the Monumental
drainage. Guy & Terri Wagner
arrived, hiking from Big Ck. Guy
hopes to do a big horn sheep carrying
capacity study there under Jim
Peak for his dissertation. Sushan
worked on repairing hitching rail
and gathering wood. We used the
cross cut saw to cut up the split off
tree they pulled down with the
come along last week. I pondered

landscaping the lab grounds. Did some digging but found the soil to be very rocky close to the building. Will try to transplant some daisies, day Lillies and possibly one of the poppies from the Conyer Cabin before leaving, but this is a job better done in early spring. Jeff fixed the wind sock by the lab and did paper work.

August 3, Tuesday

We hiked up Pioneer Ck looking for lost binoculars & small mammal trap - no luck. Jason climbed up adjacent tree & photographed the sharp shier nest up Pioneer Ck. Worked on airstrip, cutting rose bushes, leveling.

August 4, Wednesday

Jim Peak called to say he can't come in because Pat needs to go to the medical center in Seattle for testing. Jeff will need to work with Guy to do the veg work etc.

Terry flew out on mail plane.

Sushan, Guy & I cut firewood, then I helped Jeff rebuild the hitching rail. It looks good with the rail bolted to the posts & rings for tying ropes. Jason found the old nest by Soldier Bar and a current nest with active fledglings near the west end of the dirt strip. He now

has found 6 nests & Sushan has banded 23 grouse.

August 5, Thursday

Robert Vannote ~~and~~ & Scott Revalli (sp) arrived via Arnold Aviation and Wayne Minshall & Chris Robinson rode in Wayne's horses. They'll work out of here for 2 days, then go to Cave Ck. Jason & Guy did the vegetation around the 2 Soldier Bar nests. Sushan trapped grouse, then she & Guy worked on firewood. Jeff, Jette & Mathias rode the horses to Goat Basin. A fellow named Brian who took Jeff's predator class hiked in and is camping on the flat below the station. He's been working for Greg Hayward around McCall monitoring Sawhet & Boreal owls. A ram group of 6 with 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ curls and 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ curls were hanging around on the 1st bench from 1800 - 2000.

August 6, Friday

Wayne and crew did Goat and Cougar Cks. Goat was tough with hawthorne, stinging nettle and rose. Jeff and Guy did Jim's work on 2nd bench and Pioneer Ck. Sushan now has 25 grouse - found 2 in one trap & 3 in another this a.m., but some were already banded. Sushan & Jason rode Glory & Blues Eyes to Canyon Ck (via Rush Ck) to do the veg

work on that nest. I transplanted the "historic" oriental poppies from the shade of the Conger Cabin to the lab & Taylor Cabin garden. Hope they do better in their new locations.

August 7, Saturday

Lots of low flying planes touring today. Susan's parents & sister hiked in from Cabin Ck. Four guys with 5 mules & a horse rode across the ranch then camped in the lower pasture before we knew they'd done it. They say they're going up Pioneer Ck tomorrow scouting for hunting. Wayne and crew did Rush & Cliff Cks. Wayne's horses kept getting loose and racing around the pastures. Guy & Jeff did Jim's work on the face above the airstrip, Rush Ck bench and Ram Basin. Susan has banded 29 grouse.

August 8, Sunday

Wayne's crew took off for Cave Ck with Wayne's horses & 2 of ours. Chris & Wayne will continue to ride out while Robin & Scott returned at dusk & will fly out Tuesday. Guy did sheep veg. plots after Jeff got him started. Jason worked with his Sharp Shin data last night's big thunderstorm brought rain and general coolness, thus the grouse weren't as active today.

August 9, Monday

Susan caught her 30th grouse yesterday, thus both she & Jason met the goals

Jeff set for them - Jason with 6 sharp-shin nests. Susan had a busy day with the help of her family, packing up the grouse traps, washing & packing Sherman traps, oiling the duplex and cutting firewood. Jason hiked to Dave Lewis Peak & saw a bear & cub on Pioneer Ck about 1 1/2 miles from here. I painted a "no stock" sign for the Cliff Ck foot bridge since the rude fellows who trespassed in the lower pasture rode their stock over it, despite the sign on the other side. 6 ewes hung out on the 1st bench from 1600-1800.

August 10, 1993

Robin & Scott flew out with Arnolds to continue their work in Rapid River. Guy, Jason & I cut & split wood across Rush Ck while Susan & Jeff hauled the wood from across Big Ck & some of the Rush Ck wood on the horses.

August 11, 1993

Everyone flew out today. Susan & Jason have both been excellent interns. 6 ewes on the 1st bench 1000-1100. A kingfisher flew hard into the Taylor cabin window & fell with a terrible sound of pain & surprise. He lay awkwardly on the ground, beak gaping & one wing seemingly at an odd angle, but after 5 minutes

he flew off in fine form. I was amazed by his beauty and size. The backpackers hiked by without stopping but 3 people on horses & mules stopped. One man is a rancher from Nevada who owns a place at Big Ck. An older man with him said he'd known "Cougar Dave Lewis" when he lived in a rest home in Emmett. As far as we know Dave Lewis never lived in a rest home anywhere, but died in Cascade after riding from here to Big Ck in a storm. Anyway this Emmett "Cougar Dave" told this fellow that he'd buried some sort of "treasure" up Pioneer Ck. (they wouldn't say what) They went up there looking for it with a metal detector, but appeared to come back empty handed. They said they were surprised that Jeff was polite & friendly, according to them starting with Jess Taylor on their present day Taylor Ranch has had a reputation of being unfriendly. I wonder if we'll be able to change that misperception - probably not if people think being friendly means letting everyone stay on camp here,
August 12, 1993

2 rams on cut bank across from bridge. A day of cleaning & packing. Big thunderstorm with lots of rain all afternoon. We discussed what names we would give this summer and the past 2 summers. This summer

would be the Summer of Rain Storms, 1992
would be the Summer of No Grass and
1991 would be the Summer of the Rush
Ck. Fire.

August 14, 1993

Mathias & I fly out today. The weather
continues to be cool with afternoon thunder
storms. This summer has passed in a flash.
Yesterday a group of veterinarians from
Preston hiked in from Calih Ck.
They are UI alumni & enjoyed seeing
this place & talking to Jeff.

August 15-24

Jeff, Mathias, & Tim flew out on 15th. Dr Clifford Johnson,
long time friend of Jess & Dorothy Taylor, flew in on same
plane. He's been coming in here since 1953. Told
me in on some of the history & did some fishing.
Reported that Jess found a rattlesnake den on
the south aspect along Big Creek above flat
just below our beaver pasture. Also mentioned that
Jess Taylor's ashes buried near here. Dr Johnson
left on Sunday, 16th. State Superintendent of Schools,
Jerry Evans, UI Provost Tom Bell, & John Bendler came
in on 18th-19th. Good discussions about the
future of the field station and options for primary
education & research here. When I wasn't entertaining
folks, I accomplished some odd jobs: rec'd wood
sock at west end of airstrip so that it swings freely,
fixed met. station after bear chewed cables and
reprogrammed, fixed gate & fences, put up new
field station signs along Big Creek trail at either
end of property, worked on horses, etc. Nat'l Marine
Fisheries Service crew arrived Sunday, 22th. They
leave tomorrow. Caught 197 chinook parr which

is less than last year (302). Used pit-trapped
stubbard in Rush Cr. I hiked to mile high to
dry grasses for production estimates. Encountered
6 bears in Garden Cr. Bear sign is prevalent
for past few weeks. Besides chewing the mt. station,
laundry hanging both at the Taylor Cabin and
Coyne Cabin was chewed up on the same night.
I've seen no bighorn lambs this summer.

Sunday evening (8/22) I saw 19 elk coming down from 3rd
bench (3 spikes, 4 calves, 12 cows). Watching them from below
the east bench were 3 rams & 5 ewes. A cow moose
has been hanging about the field station since at
least 8/18. She laid her ears back & trotted towards me
when I emerged from Rush Cr. trail at end of airstrip.

8/25-27

NMFS folks left 20th. Saw dead salmon by large rock &
cabled logs at end of airstrip. Medium-sized black bear
below 1st bench on 8/27 ~ 1420 hrs

8/28, 1958

Chinook salmon digging redd in Big Creek along airstrip. First
redd I've seen this year. NMFS told me that salmon had
been spawning in upper Big Cr. for weeks so salmon
that spawn down here are much later. I experimented
with squirrels on the airstrip today. All pastures
are still very green which is amazing but then there
was more a continuation of spring weather this year
rather than a summer. A couple small pack sheep
have gone by in the past 2 weeks; single rider leading 2.
Pack stock went up Cliffer last week and a single rider
leading 2 pack mules went by headed upstream today.

8/29-Sept 6

Guy Wagner & Brian Holbrook, both new UI grad students
to study sheep, came in on Friday, Sept 3, to cut
firwood. We hauled 14 horseback loads from
mouth of Rush Cr. Blue Eyes is a plug but Miss
Tink moves out at least at a normal walking pace

Sept 8-12 Two USFS stream Technicians flew in. They'll continue charting Kuck Cr. stream morphology where Robin Armstrong left off last year. Their plan is to finish the main channel of Kuck Cr. this year. Art Rourke, UI Biology, Head, and Art Smith, UI Assoc. Dean of Tech, flew in also, on 8th. Both are on WRC Advisory Committee and neither had been here. We talked about research & teaching program here. We hiked to Cabin Cr. on 10th and Art & Art hiked to Middle Fork on 11th. They thoroughly enjoyed their visit. I tried a new caretaker on 10th. Paul Clarke & his fiancee Joan Jandis will be staying here through the winter. Paul will come in on Sept 24. The last salmon died on 11th.

Sept 13-21 Weather has been warm & dry since late August. Grass turning to golden. Pastures are still green which is the longest I've seen. I've seen no lambs this year. Apparently, the cold, wet spring did them in. Jeff Bennett came in to shoe horses on 21st. Only one obvious salmon redd along runway. Two sheep hunters came in about 11 p.m. on 8th. One had sliced open his arm while coping out the other's ram. Needed stitches so I radioed a plane in the next morning. Then 2 nights later, another sheep hunter knocked on my door after I was in bed. He'd hiked out of Pioneer Cr carrying all his gear plus a ram on his back. I took him across Big Creek (carried half the ram) to a campsite

off the field station. Elk hunters started showing
up on the 15th. Plenty of plane traffic. Everyone
wants to use the radio. Apparently pilots are
telling hunters to come here to radio out for a
plane. So I've started telling everyone that
the radio is only for field station use
emergencies.

Jan-27. Paul Clarke, new caretaker, flew in on 24th. I showed
him around, acquainted him with water boxes,
stream thermometer, weather station, etc. We
winterized cookhouse, Conyer Cabin, Arlow Cabin, and
Duplex on 25th. On evening of 26th Travis McCoy
came by looking for a lost mule off his pack
string. He later found her along our west
fence at 3 a.m. Then today (27th) a loose
mare shows up. She'd broken her rope
in Goat Basin and drifted this way. I put her
in the corral & Travis picked her up about
dinner time. Tomorrow, I trail the three
heats to Mormon Ranch then on to
Meyer's Cove the next day. This was the
coldest summer weather-wise but the
best as far as students & getting stuff done.
I hope each summer just gets better.

Oct 1

I've been here for about a week and needless to say I'm thoroughly delighted. After some organizing and straightening up, I'm more and more feeling at home. It has taken (and will take) more adjusting than I thought. I've been putting around scrubbing floors, mending tools, hunting mice, etc, as well as taking bikes, but I'm just having lots of time on my hands. This is a weird feeling but I'm quickly getting used to the idea and trying to take advantage of the luxury (Some great reading is both underway & planned)

The biggest adjustment is not having Joan around. I'm anxiously awaiting mid-November when I'll see her again - consequently, I'll marry her and will leave the station until the first of May. But until then, it's just me and the partyers in the attic.

I've read most of this journal (from Les + Nov - present) and it sounds like everyone is seeing/encountering lots of Elk, Sheep, etc - As of the previous week here I've only observed 3 ewes, 1 male deer and 2 fishermen. I attribute this to the still warm weather and not necessarily to my observation skills - but possibly.

Anyway, 2 archeologists have been around all week and told me of a site up the gorge so I'm headed there right after I check in with Cascade.

10/6

It has been an interesting week. Getting the worst out of the way, I lost H₂O on Monday morning. I proceeded to clean the spring box of leaves and brushed the screens. Tried the blow-by valves but nothing. After 5 hours I had used every tool in the tool shop that weighed over 5 lbs and I had taken the entire thing apart. Nothing worked. I agonized all night.

while trying to sleep but obviously I had depleted my plumbing know-how. I got up early the next morning and combed the banks of Pioneer creek hoping to find another blow-by valve or anything to investigate. Nothing! I was drawing nothing but blanks. I knew it had to be something simple and I hated to call Jeff for help but I finally gave in and left a message. After I got off the radio, I headed back up Pioneer to stare at the thing. While I was walking up I was concentrating on possible problems and I missed the crossing of the spring box I had been working with the whole time. Now having walked only a short ways up I saw the second box. I couldn't believe it. I had spent the last 24 hours busting knuckles, searching for problems, getting frustrated and finally admitted defeat & called Jeff. All I had to do was remember the second box and clean the leaves out! Ahhh...! Anyway, I probably now have a better understanding of the Taylor Ranch Water System than anyone.

On a more positive note, the other day I hiked down to the gorge to see what there was to see - mainly petroglyphs. In talking to Mark & Renee, the archeologist, I found out about a few places. Very enlightening. I am curious as to what the big fire hydrant thing is? And at the same site, there is a Ram with a donkey's tail. Why is this? Did rams have long tails then? Did the artist in the group just not know any better? Did the paint run?

Anyway, as I got home (as I'm calling the cabin now), I came up the trail above the garden. When I got there, between the tomatoes & spinach, were two black bears. All three of us stood motionless and dumbfounded. There they

ran west over the hills. They circled and about an hour later they were wandering through the lower pasture. Since then they (or their friends) have been around every afternoon and/or night. Mark & René saw a mother with 2 ^{young} cubs and I was seeing a mother with one older cub. I had enjoyed them being around until Tuesday morning I found they had gorged themselves on the apple trees. Not only did they take every apple they could get but they stayed around long enough afterward to deposit huge piles of fecalized apples. Of these, there were several in the immediate area. And to top this they broke several limbs out of the tree by the cabin. Then this afternoon they were again just outside the cabin. This time it was 2 young cubs in the elderberry tree. (Even got pictures this time)

All in all today was a lazy one. Mark & René left early on the mailplane (9:00 is early for mailplane I believe) and then 2 sheep hunters & Taylor Outfitters came by.

Then it finally rained a wee little bit. Now it's to the guitar & a bit o' reading before the bears & mice come back to keep me up.

10/8 Woke this morning at 5:00 am to the now familiar sounds of wha-wha-wha. Once again they were thrashing in the apple tree. I really felt like I should go out to them about destroying the apple tree so it stood on the porch and see a few words with them. I think they understood the problem and politely climbed down and left.

Also this morning there was a muley doe wandering (sheepishly?) in the pasture. She has been the only ungulate in over a week. 2 hunters also wandered by and I cut a bit of firewood. Considering how little

Firewood is around I felt rather average sized. (Jeff, the new one-man crosscut is sweet! One can only handle but so much of a crosscut in one sitting but it certainly helps to have said equipment. Thanks!)

I hope to have my handmade vest completed either tonight or tomorrow evening. Other than darning socks and mending buttons, this is my first tailoring job and I have never done the project. I am worried about the button holes. How do I make the button holes?

10/9

Not much to report today. I experienced one of the notorious 'bad air days'. Had to call in the weather in the afternoon. I almost finished my vest and it looks great. The only thing left are the button holes and I don't know where to start. Hiked around White Snow on Lewis Peak and looking East from the airstrip, Puddin mt⁽²⁾ is also white. Beautiful. I'm ready for the snow! Still no other ungulates around. I promise I've been looking. The pilot that's been hanging around the Lewis cabin seems to be flying around more frequently. Finally the bears did not show up yesterday or last night. I've enjoyed their company but a few days (nights) without them would be appreciated. I do hope they'll be around for Joan to experience and appreciate. She will enjoy them.

10/10

Cleaning day. Everything got clean but me. At least one coyote was about last night. Hiked to Goat basin and ran into the mother with her cub again. She gave the most intimidating show I've ever seen from a black bear. She ran to her cub barking and the cub was up a dog-fir with two hops. Then the mother squared off and inhaled at me. I had

been frozen since I first saw them but at this point I decided that I had walked far enough and came back home. Also called Dad & Mom. It was good to hear about wedding plans and just the general goings-on back in Virginia.

5

Wed. 10/13 Joan is flying in today on the mailplane! Wasn't sure until a few days ago that she would, but have looked forward to her presence. Taylor Park will be inevitable!

Yesterday the sheep finally showed themselves. Heading East across the first bench were 10 ewes and 2, $\frac{1}{2}$ ewe, rams. I've also been seeing the Piliated every day.

- Just got back from checking the weather. As normal, the guardian of the sheep, the rabbit, greeted me. Then as I was measuring prec a spiked moose came around the low side of the duplex. He stopped with apprehensions after spotting me. After I greeted him with ^(lies) pleasantries of a fine morning he relaxed and walked up between the shop & myself at the weather station. I told him he should hang around and meet my eternal love, but he politely dismissed himself and trotted across Pioneer creek heading up the trail.

- Wed evening - 2 black bears sniffing and snooping around hay barn and shed

Thurs 10/14: Coyote, fairly big coyote, in main pasture, trotted off when we saw each other - Paul gave Joan a delightful tour of the ranch - Joan very impressed and pleased w/ the prospect of wintering here - Paul saved one feature as a "surprise" and kept Joan guessing 'til after dinner then took her up to the sauna - absolutely wonderful!

10/15: Shortly after collecting weather data, an unexpected guest arrived - Monty - he had been sheep hunting for some time, hadn't killed anything but did have some great videos of the sheep, esp. some rams interacting, which he shared with us in exchange for some coffee and pancakes - he was an enjoyable breakfast guest - Paul and Joan busy collecting & cutting firewood, Paul made 2 beautiful candleholders out of a fallen birch - Saw 3 ewes on hillside across Big Creek -

10/17 Cinnamon bear on hill behind Conyer cabin this am. Largest I've seen around yet. Busy day sorting and wood gathering. Also put composter together and feasted on glorious meal. Patty, wilderness Ranger from Big Creek stopped by to say hello.

10/23 A bit behind in the journal, with no wildlife to report at all. Have not seen the piliated for a few days and also seen (or heard) very few grouse. Last Tuesday a hunter, Bret, took a tumble over the rock ledge near the Big Creek Bridge. He was closely followed by one of his pack horses, Lilly. They were both shook up quite a bit and Lilly was cut up in several places. She was in no condition to head up the benches so we offered to let her rest up here for a few days. It was nice having her around and she healed up quickly. Bret was down to check on her twice since then, and then he stopped by yesterday to pick her up. He had his father, Wayne with him and we visited for a while.

still slowly gaining on the firewood but also still wondering if we'll run out by mid-Feb.

10/25

I'm looking but still no elk, deer or sheep. Even the bears haven't come around in a while. Only the rabbits show themselves. Last night was great. I took out ole leupold and even with the $\frac{1}{2}$ moon out I examined the rings of Saturn. They had turn 13° - best viewing possible as far as I know - It was worth fighting the dew.

10/26

Wrote letters and cut wood. Lots of action towards Soldiers Bar + saw two Backpackers heading up the benches. Weather is still fantastic.

10/31

Several male deer in the pasture the past few days. They've been digging where the salt block had been sitting. Seems like the cooler weather is here for a while. I had been looking forward to learning how to sharpen the crosscuts and finally did so today. It's not quite as complex as people and the manuals make it out to be but it does take time and careful work. Today is also Halloween. There's just not as many kids out trick-or-treating like there use to be. I'll oblige the saints with a little wine and some of Edgar Allan Poe's more malevolent writings.

11-6

Two days of hail and snow. It's still too warm and it melted but it was nice to see a little of the white stuff. Saw a $\frac{1}{2}$ curl + ewe on 1st bench yesterday and packer with 8 in string heading down creek. No one has been around other than the packer - very quiet. Still laboring with the firewood. Yesterday I finally finished cutting and hauling up a log that had washed up on the bank. It was bleached white with a knot of steel,

and it proved to be a real beast. It took 4 days to get it done. I felt like Captain Ahab in my pursuit of the great white wood. I may have fared a bit better.

11/11 I don't write in the journal for 1 day and somehow, almost a week flies by. The big event of the past few days was breaking up ice. Monday night temp. dropped to 15° + ice built up in the irrigation ditch and dammed itself enough to spill out onto the airstrip. It made a great ride down to the bottom of the hills. I was actually worried about the plane coming in so I called + warned Cascade + then proceeded to spend hours chipping away at the ice. Roy couldn't have cared less about all the ice + my efforts were for naught.

But then today Pioneer was partly dammed up with ice + then flooded the irrigation ditch which only added to the ice on the airstrip. Again I broke ice + sent the H_2O on its original course.

Ice has also been building up at the spring box inlet. It froze enough to cut the intake + decrease pressure. I broke the ice up and rigged up a simple but effective diverter/dam(?) in order to get more water flowing. It has greatly aided the system + I feel a little better about it. With temps in the teens each night I'm checking it + twice a day - so far so good.

Lots of good mail yesterday. I've grown to really enjoy Wednesdays. I couldn't believe it when I realized that not even one LL Bean Catalogue comes. Usually there are 2 or 3 (and once 4 came). I did get my train ticket. Sounds like I'm really leaving next Wednesday + getting married. Reality is setting in. I'm really excited. Looking forward to getting back with Joan. I also wonder who is filling in. I know someone but who? I guess I only need to know if they've been here + know the

few eggs. Hopefully they have, and they can show me some eggs. We'll see.

11/15 Been hanging around home for the past few days, no hikes. Still picking the woods for fire supply and finally some snow but hardly worth mentioning. Washed cloths + sheets today. The washing is not quite the same when it's 20°. Next washday will see the machine in the cabin. Coyotes have been serenading me at night. I think this is one of my favorite sounds - love to sit on the porch + listen to them in the pasture. Hope they visit again tonight.

11/17 Heading out shortly, Janet will be here for about 2 1/2 weeks. 4 ewes and 1 1/4 curl ram are on the 1st bench to welcome her.

11/17 9pm
WEDS.

JANET HOHMANN SIGNING IN TO THE TAYLOR RANCH LOGBOOK. RAY FLEW ME IN AT ABOUT 2 THIS AFTERNOON, A SOMEWHAT BUMPY RIDE THIS TIME. PAUL METHODICALLY & THOROUGHLY SHOWS ME "THE ROPES" (ALAS, I WAS NOT ABLE TO GIVE HIM ANY INSIDE INFO. ON THIS PLACE AS HE HAD HOPED!). WE DISCOVER THAT ONE OF THE TOILETS IN THE LAB IS FROZEN & HE SAYS THE PIPES TO (OR FROM) THE WATER HEATER ARE ALSO FROZEN - SOMEWHAT DISTURBING NEWS BUT I'LL WORK ON THE PROBLEM THIS AFTERNOON. THE SHEEP ARE STILL VISIBLE ON THE FIRST BENCH. PAUL & RAY FLY OUT AROUND 3. I READ THE THERMOMETER IN RUSH CREEK (AFTER USING A RIVER COBBLE TO BUST IT OUT OF 2" THICK ICE! NEXT TIME I'LL BRING A HANDIER TOOL...) & THEN SET TO ON THE LAB WATER SITUATION. LUCKILY THE FROZEN TOILET HAS NOT CRACKED. I THAW THE ICE WITH WARM WATER THEN FLUSH BOTH TOILETS & IT APPEARS THEY STILL DRAIN (ALTHOUGH THE FROZEN ONE SEEMS SLOW). THEN I SHUT OFF THE VALVE AT EACH TOILET, DRAIN BOWLS & TANKS

BOILING OF WHAT??

• PUT IN RV ANTIFREEZE IN BOWLS AS PAUL ADVISED. I ALSO DISCOVER THE SHOWERS ARE FROZEN. NOT GOOD! I'M NOT SURE WHAT THE BEST TACK WILL BE BUT AM INCLINED TO TRY + THAW WHAT I CAN • DRAIN THE WHOLE LAB SYSTEM • SHUT IT DOWN FOR WINTER. WHAT ELSE WILL PREVENT THIS FROM RECURRING, SHORT OF CONSTANT HEAT IN THE LIVING QUARTERS • DEPLETING THE LIMITED WOOD SUPPLY? WILL CALL FOR ADVICE TOMORROW MORNING. I FINALLY PUT THE SCOPE ON THE SHEEP ACROSS THE RIVER • SEE 4 EWES ONLY. I THOUGHT I'D HEARD THE SHARP CRACK OF TWO RAMS COLLIDING HORNS EARLIER, BUT WAS BUSY WITH PLUMBING • DIDN'T CHECK IT OUT. I'D SAY I MIGHT NEED TO READJUST MY PRIORITIES. THE TEMP. AT 9:30 OUTSIDE HAS RISEN, TO 46° • THERE HAS BEEN A STRONG GUSTY WEST WIND FOR THE PAST HOUR. NO RAIN.

118
WDS.

WAKE UP AT 6 • LOOK OUT TO SEE EVERYTHING WHITE! LAST NIGHT'S WIND + WARMTH ARE GONE • FLAKES ARE FALLING. IT'S STILL PRETTY DARK EVEN AT 7. SNOW HAS STOPPED, LEAVING ONLY '1/2" ON THE GROUND. I SPEND THE DAY WORKING ON THAWING THE LAB'S WATER SYSTEM • GATHERING WOOD. BY AFTERNOON I HAVE RESTORED COLD WATER TO THE SHOWERS • FIGURED OUT THAT THE HOT WATER HEATER SEEMS EMPTY • SHUT OFF, WHICH IS FINE WITH ME SO I LEAVE IT. I BUILT UP A GOOD FIRE IN THE LAB KITCHEN • USED A PROPANE TORCH UNDER THE HOUSE ON THE PIPES • THAT SEEMS TO HAVE DONE THE TRICK. I MOSTLY SCOUT AROUND FOR WOOD IN THE HARDWOOD BRUSH NEAR THE COOKHOUSE • UP PIONEER CREEK, • BEGIN HAULING SOME IN (IN CASE MORE SNOW COMES). I THINK MY UPPER LIMIT ON SIZE WILL BE 8" OR SO, NOT TOO BIG BUT AT LEAST IT'S EASY TO MOVE • BUCK UP. IN THE MORNING I ALSO BAKE BREAD + COOKIES, • FINISH THE DAYLIGHT WITH A WALK ON THE SLOPE SOUTH OF THE CABINS. 12 BIGHORNS HAVE BEEN GRAZING BELOW THE 1ST BENCH SINCE ABOUT 2 PM: 1 RAM WITH JUST UNDER 1/2 CORN, 3 LAMBS + 8 EWES. ONE OF THE EWES HAS A

WHITE COLLAR BUT I CAN'T MAKE OUT ANY NUMBERS OR OTHER MARKS. (OTHER THAN A BLUE SECTION). THEY GRADUALLY MOVE DOWNSLOPE TOWARDS THE HAYFIELD JUST DOWNSTREAM FROM THE BRIDGE, WHERE THEY STILL ARE AT DUSK. A PAIR OF COYOTES LOPES ACROSS THE FIELD BELOW THE LAB RIGHT BEFORE DARK, & 4 MORE SHEEP ARE SEEN WAY UP NEAR THE 3RD BENCH BUT THEY'RE TOO FAR AWAY TO SEX.

ALSO 2 RUFFED GROUSE HANGING AROUND IN BUSHES NEAR TAYLOR CABIN. ^(I HEARD ONE DRUM YESTERDAY) MOSTLY CLOUDY TODAY WITH OCCASIONAL SNOW FLURRIES.

11/19

FRIDAY

IT CLEARED UP SOMETIME IN THE NIGHT. THE BIG DIPPER DOMINATES THE SKY JUST ABOVE THE RIDGE ACROSS THE RIVER. I SEE WHAT APPEARS TO BE THE "COLLARED" HEAD OF 12 SHEEP AROUND 10 AM BELOW THE FIRST BENCH. - AM BUSY THIS MORNING & EARLY AFTERNOON FINISHING THE JOB OF SHUTTING DOWN THE LAB'S WATER SYSTEM AS PER JEFF'S INSTRUCTIONS. NICE TO GET THAT OUT OF THE WAY. ALSO I SCROUNGE FOR WOOD UP PIONEER CREEK. THERE'S LOTS OF OTHER CHORES TO BE DONE BUT I TAKE OFF THE AFTERNOON & HIKE UP TO THE RIDGE ABOVE 3RD BENCH. REALLY A LOVELY DAY. THE RANCH GETS THE SUN ONLY FROM ABOUT 11 AM - 2 PM, BUT UP HERE THE SUNSHINE LASTS MUCH LONGER. I'M SURPRISED NOT TO SEE ANY KNAPWEED, AS IT IS SO PREDOMINANT ON THE SELWAY (NOT THAT FAR FROM HERE). I SEE 3 EWES & A YOUNG RAM (< 1/2 CURL) BELOW 3RD BENCH. HEARD A PILEATED WOODPECKER CALL & FORAGE IN DEAD STAND OF TREES BELOW THE RIM ABOVE 3RD BENCH. ^{ALSO HEARD CHUKARS IN ROCKS TO THE EAST} ✓ 2 PACKERS, EACH LEADING 4 MULES, RIDE BY TAYLOR HEADED UP BIG CREEK AT 4 PM. I SPLIT WOOD + FIRE UP THE MONARCH STOVE TO TEST IT IN CASE I NEED EXTRA HEAT TO KEEP THE KITCHEN PIPES OPEN. I FIRST CLEANED THE SURFACE, BUT THE FIRE BURNS OFF A BUNCH OF ACCUMULATED GRIME & SCENTS THE HOUSE WITH A RICH HISTORY OF EGGS, PANCAKES, ETC! BUT AT LEAST

IT SEEMS TO BE IN GOOD WORKING ORDER • REALLY PUTS OUT THE HEAT. NICE TO HAVE FOR FUTURE REFERENCE, IF NEEDED!

11/20

SATURDAY

ANOTHER BRIGHT, CLEAR DAY; DOWN TO ABOUT 12° LAST NIGHT. I'M SETTLING INTO A MORNING ROUTINE OF STARTING THE FIRE, READING WEATHER, CHOPPING ICE AT THE SPRING BOXES. KIND OF LIKE AT HOME, BUT NO ANIMALS TO FEED • WATER. THE HERD OF 12 IS ON THE SLOPE BELOW 1ST BENCH AT FIRST LIGHT, 7:30 (AT LEAST THAT'S THE EARLIEST I CAN SEE THEM). I AGAIN ASSUME IT'S THE SAME BUNCH (I SEE THE COLLARED EWIE • AT LEAST 2 LAMBS) BUT I WONDER HOW STATIC HERD COMPOSITION REALLY IS. ONE OF THE EWES HAS A MAGPIE RIDING ON HER RUMP! COYOTE TRACKS ON TOP OF MINE ON THE TRAIL UP PIONEER; SO FAR I HAVEN'T HEARD ANY HOWL. KEEP BUSY AROUND THE PLACE 'TIL NOON, THEN START DOWN BIG CREEK TOWARDS COUGAR CREEK. JUDGING FROM TRACKS ON THE TRAIL, AT LEAST 1 STRING OF HORSES IS AHEAD OF ME HEADED DOWNSTREAM. I DON'T QUITE REACH COUGAR CREEK BUT DECIDE TO HEAD BACK TO THE SUNSHINE UP BIG CREEK. 4 PACKERS (2 OF THEM THE GUYS FROM YESTERDAY) PASS ME GOING DOWNSTREAM LEADING 16-20 HORSES + MULES - HEADED HOME, THEY SAY. I EXPLORE ALONG BIG CREEK, HOPING TO SEE THE OTTERS THAT MANY JOURNAL ENTRIES REFER TO. NO LUCK, THERE IS A DIPPER WORKING THE CREEK NEAR THE BRIDGE. SPEND REMAINING DAYLIGHT SEWING • MOSTLY WORKING INDOORS - I FEEL A BIT UNDER THE WEATHER • BET I PICKED UP THE BUG THAT EVERYONE SEEMED TO HAVE AT ARNOLD AVIATION! MAKE THE EVENING ROUNDS • HEAD TO BED EARLY. I FORGOT TO MENTION THE BUSY AIRSPACE OVERHEAD YESTERDAY - MUST'VE BEEN 20 FLIGHTS AT LEAST. DC STOPPED BY WITH 2 FULL PROPANE TANKS. TODAY THE CANYON HAS BEEN MUCH QUIETER.

11/21
SUNDAY

ANOTHER CLEAR MORNING. IT DOESN'T FEEL AS COLD, ALTHOUGH THE THERMOMETER SAYS 11° - THE COLDEST YET. MAKE THE MORNING ROUNDS AS SUNLIGHT JUST HITS THE RIDGETOP ACROSS THE RIVER AT 8 a.m. TONY GIVES ME A CALL ON THE RADIO WHEN I TURN IN THE WEATHER & WE ARRANGE TO TRY A CALL AT 7:15 TONIGHT. A SINGLE $\frac{1}{2}$ CURL RAM CROSSES FROM BELOW 1ST BENCH WEST TOWARDS CLIFF CR. AT AROUND 9:15, NO OTHER ACTION VISIBLE ON SLOPE. 3 RUFFED GROUSE SCRATCHING ABOUT IN BRUSH ALONG PIONEER CR. JUST BELOW CABIN, PWS A WINTER WREN SCOLDS AT ME NEAR LEWIS CABIN. BETWEEN 9:30 & 10 THERE IS MUCH TO BE SEEN UP ON THE SHEEP SLOPE. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ - CURL RAMS ARE GRAZING TOGETHER & DISPLAYING AT EACH OTHER, SOMETIMES BUTTING HEADS BUT MORE USUALLY IT STOPS BEFORE THAT, NEAR SALT LICK ON 1ST BENCH. HALF THE TIME I CAN'T SEE THEM AS THEY GET IN THE BASIN BEHIND THE BENCH. THEN I SEE 2 EWES & 3 BIGGER RAMS, $\frac{3}{4}$ - FULL CURL, IN SUNLIT E. EDGE OF 2ND BENCH. THE RAMS ARE DISPLAYING & THEY SNIFF AFTER THE EWES, WHO DON'T STAND FOR THEM SO THEY MUST NOT BE IN HEAT. BOTH SEXES ACT SIMILAR TO MY GOATS IN PRE-BREEDING SITUATIONS. THIS LITTLE BUNCH MOVES IN & OUT OF SIGHT AT 2ND BASIN; I'M NOT ABLE TO KEEP THE SCOPE ON THEM FOR LONG. I HOPE TO GET BETTER VIEWS LATER. 11:45 - 10 EWES & LAMBS LEAVE 1ST BENCH SALT LICK & HEAD TOWARDS CLIFF CR.; THE 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ - CURL RAMS HEAD TO N.E., THEN 1 FOLLOWS AFTER EWES. I HEAR THE CRASH OF HORNS SEVERAL TIMES BUT CAN'T SEE THE BIG RAMS - I ASSUME THEY'RE STILL BEHIND SECOND BENCH. 2 MORE EWES FOLLOW 20 MINUTES AFTER FIRST BUNCH UP TOWARDS CLIFF CREEK. BY 12:30 THE COLLARED EWE PWS ABOUT 6 MORE EWES/LAMBS & 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ - CURL RAMS MOVE FROM BEHIND BENCH #1 TOWARDS CLIFF CREEK. I THINK THE QUESTION ABOUT HEAD STABILITY HAS JUST BEEN ANSWERED!

I HEARD REPEATED CRASHES OF RAMS' HEADS FROM ABOUT 9:30 - 11:30 OR SO; WISH I FELT BETTER SO I COULD GO WATCH. BUT HOPEFULLY I'LL GET ANOTHER CHANCE. SPEND THE DAY SAWING WOOD, SEWING, READING, WRITING. CLOUDS UP & WARMS UP IN MID-AFTERNOON. SHORT WALKS AROUND THE PLACE ARE ALL I FEEL UP TO. NO OTTERS AT RIVER. CAN'T RAISE TONY ON RADIO TONIGHT - WILL TRY AGAIN.

11/22 MONDAY
LOW CLOUDS & A FEW SNOWFLAKES THIS MORNING, BUT WARM (32°). THE BIGHORNS ARE VISIBLE, SCATTERED FROM THIRD BENCH DOWN TO FIRST BENCH. ABOUT 15 EWES / LAMBS (NO COLLARS THIS MORNING), PLUS A FULL-CURL & 3/4-CURL RAM. NO BREEDING ACTION. A PACKER LEADING 2 SADDLE HORSES & 7 MULES HEADS DOWN BIG CREEK AROUND 10 am. I'M STILL FEELING A LITTLE LAZY (THIS IS SOME COLD, THAT'S FOR SURE) SO DON'T PLAN ON MUCH ACTIVITY TODAY. ABOUT HALF-HOUR LATER 2 MORE PACKERS, WITH 19 HEAD OF STOCK, HEAD DOWNSTREAM. ALL ARE UNLOADED. THEY MUST FLY THEIR GEAR OUT? UPPER BIG CREEK WAS A BUSY PLACE DURING HUNTING SEASON, I'D GUESS. ANOTHER PAIR OF PACKERS & 16 MORE HORSES / MULES, HEADING EAST: IN THE PAST 3 DAYS I'VE WATCHED AT LEAST 60 HORSES & MULES GO BY! I WONDER IF THEY'RE ALL WITH THE SAME OUTFIT? I WONDER WHAT THEIR CAMPS LOOK LIKE. I CAN TELL I SORT OF SURPRISE THE FEW GUYS WHO I SEE UP-CLOSE, OR MAYBE THEY'RE ALL JUST ANXIOUS TO GET OUT. I'M SAWING WOOD AROUND NOON WHEN A STRONG, GUSTY WEST WIND BLOWS UP & BRINGS WITH IT DRIVING, STINGING SMALL SNOW SPECKS LIKE A WYOMING BLIZZARD. AFTER ABOUT A 1/2 HOUR, THE WIND LETS UP SOME & THE FLAKES GET BIGGER. IT SNOWS PRETTY STEADILY UNTIL 2:30 OR SO & ABOUT AN INCH ACCUMULATES. I TAKE A SHORT WALK FOR THE FINAL HOUR OF DAYLIGHT, LOOKING FOR TRACKS & OTTERS. I ONLY FIND RABBIT, MOLE, & SQUIRREL TRACKS.

BIG CREEK HAS WINDROWED UP GREAT BANKS OF 4-8" THICK ICE "PLATES" ALONG ITS BANKS, FROM THE THAW. MOST OF THE RIVER IS ICE-FREE NOW. PIONEER CREEK IS STILL ICY BUT I FIND THE EVER-CHANGING FREEZE PATTERNS A DAILY SURPRISE. WARM WEATHER MEANS NO ICE-CHOPPING AT THE SPRING BOXES!

11/23
TUESDAY

HOORAY! I WAKE UP FEELING BETTER. A FEW LIGHT FLAKES FALLING FROM A LOW CLOUD CEILING. A CANADA GOOSE MONKS DOWN BY THE AIRSTRIP; I DON'T SEE IT BUT DO SEE ABOUT 16 MALLARDS (MORE OR LESS EVEN SPLIT ON ♂ + ♀) & 1 GOLDENEYE ♂. A SMALL BAND OF 8-10 SHEEP MOVES ACROSS SECOND BENCH, THEN OUT OF SIGHT, AROUND 7:45. I CAN BARELY MAKE OUT SEVERAL MORE SHEEP SCATTERED AROUND 3RD BENCH & UP, BUT LOW CLOUDS MAKE FOR POOR VIEWING. NO NEW TRACKS OVERNIGHT, EXCEPT FOR SMALL MAMMALS, ON MY MORNING ROUNDS. KIND OF SPITS SNOW ALL DAY. I SAW UP MORE WOOD, WRITE, & SEW. AFTER LUNCH GO FOR A WALK ABOUT 1½ MILES UP PIONEER CR. & THEN DOWN TO BIG CR. TO LOOK FOR OTTERS. NO TRACKS OF ANYTHING BIGGER THAN A RABBIT. I SUPPOSE PREDATORS MIGHT BE UP HIGHER, CLEANING UP AFTER THE HUNTERS? UP PIONEER THE FOREST IS SO QUIET. EVEN THE STELLER JAYS ARE SILENT. BACK DOWN BY BIG CR., NO OTTERS BUT AN ADULT BAND EAGLE FLIES UPSTREAM PAST AIRSTRIP AROUND 2:30 pm. IT SPOOKS 13 (MALLARDS?) DUCKS FROM NEAR AIRSTRIP & THEY SPEND THE NEXT 10 MINUTES FLYING DOWNSTREAM, THEN UP. THE EAGLE DOES A DOUBLE-TAKE WHEN IT SEES ME & MAKES A SHORT LOOP TO CIRCLE BACK BEFORE CONTINUING ON. REJECTED! BACK UP TO CABIN TO SHEEP-WATCH. 3:30 - I SEE 13 EWES (2 WITH WHITE COLLARS), 1 LAMB, 2 ½-CURL RAMS & 1 ¾+-CURL RAM MOVING AROUND BETWEEN BENCHES # 1 & 2. I'VE GIVEN UP TRYING TO ID INDIVIDUAL EWES NOW THAT

I KNOW THERE ARE AT LEAST 2 COLLARS. THE BIG RAM CUTS A EWIE OUT OF THE HERD & CHASES HER ALL THE WAY UP TO BEHIND 2ND BENCH. I DON'T SEE THEM AGAIN THAT I KNOW OF. MAKE THE ROUNDS AT DARK, CREEKS STAYING OPEN THESE LAST FEW DAYS.

11/24
WEDS. CLEAR WHEN I GET UP AT 7 BUT IT QUICKLY CLOUDS UP & EVEN SPITS SNOW MUCH OF THE DAY, SPRING BOXES ICING UP AGAIN. LOTS OF COYOTE TRACKS THIS MORNING, ALL OVER - AROUND CABIN, IN COMPOST PILE, IN PASTURE, AIRSTRIP, UP PIONEER CR. AT LEAST 2 SETS OF TRACKS. DO THE USUAL MORNING ROUNDS, PLUS READ TEMPS. IN STREAMS. THE WALK TO RUSH CR. ACROSS THE AIRSTRIP IS COLD DUE TO A STIFF WEST BREEZE. NO DUCKS TODAY. RADIO MAKING WEIRD SOUNDS BUT I GET THROUGH TO CASCADE WOOD - GETTING IS ON THE MORNING AGENDA (I COULD GET COMPULSIVE ABOUT THIS?!). ONCE AGAIN I HAUL DOWN FROM PIONEER CR. WATCH SOME RUFFED GROUSE & GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS IN THE BRUSH. GET QUITE A STACK BEFORE I FAG OUT AROUND 1. HAVE LUNCH & WALK UPPER TRAIL TO RUSH CREEK. NICE VIEWS FROM SAGE FLAT. COYOTES HAVE BEEN BUSY UP HERE, TOO - LOTS OF TRACKS ALL OVER. NO ANIMALS ON OPEN SLOPES VISIBLE FROM THE FLAT. BACK TO CABIN, CHECK CREEK FOR OTTERS. BIG CREEK TRYING TO ICE UP AGAIN. SPEND ABOUT AN HOUR FROM 3-4 STUDYING JAPANESE (WITHOUT MUCH ENTHUSIASM, I MUST ADMIT! IT'S BEEN TOO LONG DORMANT...) THEN GO BACK OUT AS THE SKIES CLEAR UP. THE BIGHORN BENCHES ARE IN SUN & I'M A LITTLE JEALOUS! FROM THE CABIN I CAN SEE AROUND 30 SHEEP IN MOSTLY 2 GROUPS NEAR THE 3RD BENCH. OF THESE, 3 ARE $\frac{3}{4}$ -OR BETTER - CURL RAMS, 1 IS A $\frac{1}{2}$ CURL RAM, 1 A LAMB, THE REST EWES AS FAR AS I CAN TELL (I COULD BE MISSING LAMBS; I'M NOT ALWAYS CAREFUL WHEN I CHECK). 3 EWES WITH COLLARS TODAY! I WONDER IF ANY

OF THE TRANSMITTERS WORK YET? TURN ON PAUL'S
RADIO TO BOISE & CATCH THE FORECAST: CLEAR + COLD -
PREDICTING MINUS 10 IN McCALL & MINUS 20 IN FAIRFIELD
BIRDS SEEN ^(OR HEARD) IN LAST WEEK HERE:

BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE

PILESATED WOODPECKER

STELLER JAY

BALD EAGLE

MTN. CHICKADEE

MALLARD

GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLET

GOLDENEYE (COMMON?)

WINTER WREN

RUFFED GROUSE

DIPPER

CHUKAR

HERMIT THROAT (IS THIS POSSIBLE? IT SURE LOOKED &
ACTED LIKE ONE, HAD A REAL RUSTY TAIL, IN BRUSH OF
LOWER CLIFF CR.)

BELTED KINGFISHER

PINE SISKIN

CANADA GOOSE

HAIRY WOODPECKER

DARK-EYED JUNCO

11/25

THANKSGIVING

HAPPY THANKSGIVING! IT WAS A CRYSTAL-CLEAR NIGHT, WITH
A BRIGHT $\frac{3}{4}$ MOON THE FIRST $\frac{1}{2}$ OF THE NIGHT. YOU COULD
EASILY SEE WITHOUT ARTIFICIAL LIGHT. GOT DOWN TO -3° .
BRA! ICE ON THE CABIN WINDOWS THIS MORNING.

PROMISES TO BE A CLEAR DAY. HOUSE WATER SEEMS FINE,
BUT LOWER SPRING BOX IS FILLING SLOWLY - I'M
HEATING UP SOME WATER TO TAKE UP WITH ME TO AID IN
THAWING INTAKE. HOPE IT WORKS! MORNING SHEEP REPORT -
ALL I SEE IS A SINGLE EWE MOVING FROM 2ND BENCH TO
SWALE BEHIND 1ST BENCH, BY 9 THERE ARE ABOUT A DOZEN
EWES MOVING FROM TIMBER TO THE EAST OF SECOND BENCH
DOWN TOWARDS 1ST BENCH, PLUS 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ CURL RAM AT
1ST BENCH. AFTER CALLING IN WEATHER, I HIKE UP BIG CR,
TO JUST PAST LOBAUER BASIN, COYOTE TRACKS ON ALMOST
ENTIRE TRAIL DISTANCE; ALSO LOTS OF VOLE, DEER MOUSE
TRACKS, 1 ELK (I THINK) ~ SEVERAL SHEEP TRACKS
CLOSE TO BRIDGE. THE TRAIL IS IN THE SHADE YET. BIG
CREEK IS VERY INTERESTING TO WATCH & LISTEN TO, AS IT

CREAKS + POPS IN THE ALREADY-ICED SECTIONS, & IT LITERALLY RUSTLES + WHISPERS WHERE SLUSH IS FORMING. SOME OF THE BIGGER HOLES + WHIRLPOOLS STAY ICE-FREE BUT THEY GURGLE + SUCK LOUDLY EVERY FEW SECONDS. NO CAT TRACKS. A $3/4$ CURL RAM PLUS SINGLE COLLARED EWES ON SLOPE IN SUN AT LOBAUER BASIN. WHEN I RETURN, I WATCH 4 BIG RAMS ($3/4$ CURL OR BETTER) CROSS BIG CREEK MIDWAY DOWN AIRSTRIP (FROM N \rightarrow S). WHY LEAVE THEIR SUNNY BENCH SLOPE FOR A FRIGID DIP? WHO CAN SAY. THEY ARE NEAT TO SEE UP CLOSE. BACK TO CABIN FOR A SNACK, CHECK SPRINGBOXES (LOWER ONE STILL NOT FILLING AT THE RATE IT USED TO; INLET END LOOKS OK & I CAN'T CLEAN OUT THE MIDDLE SECTION WHERE IT MIGHT BE FREEZING UP. UPPER ONE IS O.K.), CUT WOOD, WALK AROUND SUNNY SPOTS; BEFORE I KNOW IT THE MOON IS RISING AT 4:30 pm RIGHT THROUGH THE BIG CREEK VALLEY TO EAST. ABOUT 13 EWES, 1 LAMB + 3 RAMS ABOVE 1ST BENCH AS I HAVE A QUIET THANKSGIVING DINNER. IT'S TRUE, HOLIDAYS WITHOUT COMPANY ARE PRETTY UNREMARKABLE. IT'S FUN TO THINK ABOUT ALL MY FRIENDS + FAMILY GATHERING ALL OVER THE U.S. + ABROAD FOR THANKSGIVING DINNER. NONE OF THEM COULD BE LOOKING OUT ON BETTER SCENERY THAN I AM, THOUGH!

11/26
WEDNESDAY
ANOTHER CLEAR NIGHT + CLEAR DAY. I HOPE IT STAYS CLEAR FOR THE FULL MOON IN A FEW DAYS. BAD NEWS UP AT THE SPRINGBOXES - THE INLET TO THE LOWER ONE HAS COMPLETELY DRIED UP. I IMAGINE IT'S FROZEN IN THE MIDDLE WHERE THE PIPE JUST RUNS ALONG THE GROUND, & THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO ABOUT IT. UPPER ONE IS STILL FINE. THE WATER PRESSURE AT THE HOUSE IS FINE. OH WELL, I HOPE THE UPPER BOX STAYS OPEN. WRITE A FEW CARDS WHILE I WAIT FOR IT TO WARM UP ENOUGH TO GO HIKING, THEN OOPS! I DISCOVER THAT PIONEER CR. HAS REALLY FLOODED OUT INTO ONE OF THE DITCHES OVERNIGHT + IT IS ALL OVER THE UPPER PART

OF THE AIRSTRIP, A MESS! SO NO HIKING; INSTEAD I SPEND SEVERAL HOURS HACKING AT THE ICE TO DIVERT THE FLOW BACK INTO THE CREEK. SEEMS LIKE ANOTHER PREVENTABLE PROBLEM, IF ONLY A PERSON COULD ANTICIPATE & TAKE PREVENTIVE ACTION. I QUIT AT 1:30 TO GO IN FOR A BITE & SUDDENLY RAY IS ON THE LANDING STRIP. OBVIOUSLY THE ICE DOESN'T BOTHER THE PLANE! ALTHOUGH IT WILL MAKE LOADING & UNLOADING A REAL HAZARDOUS OPERATION.

I'M SURPRISED TO SEE HIM BUT HAPPY TO SHARE A PIECE OF PUMPKIN PIE. THEN I HANG UP ALL MY ICY CLOTHES BY THE FIRE TO THAW + DRY. I HAVEN'T SEEN A SHEEP ALL DAY ON THE HILL ACROSS THE CREEK. AFTER I DRY OUT, GO OUT FOR ANOTHER HOUR + JUST BEFORE DARK TO CUT WOOD, INSPECT SPRINGBOXES, CHECK OUT MY CREEK DITCHING, & CRUISE AROUND THE RANCH. BIG CREEK PRETTY ICY.

4-6 SHEEP NOW VISIBLE BELOW 2ND BENCH. THE T.R., BUNNIES & GROUSE ARE GETTING USED TO ME ... I APPROACHED 3 " TODAY TO WITHIN 4' & WALKED RIGHT UNDER A RUFFED GROUSE IN THE MTN. ASH ON WEST END OF CABIN WITHOUT FLUSHING IT.

11/27
SATURDAY
NOT SO COLD LAST NIGHT, & A FEW CLOUDS THIS MORNING ALL POINT TO AN END TO THAT ARCTIC BLAST. THERE WERE DRUMMING RUFFED GROUSE OUTSIDE THE HOUSE ALL NIGHT LONG! LOST A LOT OF WATER PRESSURE AT THE HOUSE OVERNIGHT. UPPER SPRINGBOX LOOKS FINE, LOWER ONE STILL DRY. I TRY THE BLOWOUT VALVE IN ORCHARD BUT THAT HAS NO NOTICEABLE EFFECT. I'M NOT SURE ALL THIS HASSLE IS WORTH RUNNING WATER! I RECHOP MY CREEK DIVERSION & DO THE USUAL MORNING CHORES, THEN HEAD DOWN BIG CREEK. ABOUT 30 SHEEP (4 RAMS) GRAZING ON SLOPE ABOVE LOWER PASTURE. ALSO ABOUT 15 MAGPIES IN THAT AREA. BIG CREEK IS MOSTLY FROZEN WITH FEW OPEN LEADS. IN PLACES IT IS LIKE

THE TRAVERTINE STEPS AT MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS IN YELLOWSTONE, EXCEPT NOT AS BIG & A BEAUTIFUL BLUE-GREEN COLOR, NOT WHITISH-YELLOWISH. SKY IS ALL CLOUDY NOW & LOOKS THREATENING. THROUGH THE GORGE & OVER THE DEBRIS SLIDE RIGHT IN FRONT OF "PICTOGRAPH COVE". I WONDER HOW MANY OTHER PICTOS, ARE HIDDEN AROUND ON THESE ROCKS. JUST PAST DUNCE CREEK I SEE 2 OTTERS IN BIG CREEK & SIT TO WATCH. BOTH HAVE 15" OR SO LONG FISH & PULL OUT ON THE ICE & MUNCH DOWN. THEY START AT THE HEAD END & ABSOLUTELY DON'T PAUSE UNTIL THEY HAVE CHEWED DOWN THE LAST BIT OF TAIL, MUST HAVE REALLY STRONG JAWS. 1 OTTER IS ABOUT 1/4 AGAIN AS BIG AS THE OTHER, (A ♂ + A ♀?) REALLY HANDSOME ANIMALS. THE BIGGER ONE DIVES BACK INTO THE WATER ALMOST AS SOON AS HE FINISHES HIS FISH & QUICKLY CATCHES ANOTHER! EATS IT AS BEFORE. THE SMALLER (♀?) FINISHES HER FISH & THEN APPEARS TO SWIM BACK & FORTH IN THE NARROW OPEN CHANNEL, GETTING OUT ON ICE NOW & THEN. NEITHER LOOKS THE LEAST BIT COUD, THOUGH I GET CHILLED JUST WATCHING. WHAT A TREAT. STARTS TO SNOW SO I DECIDE TO RETURN. COYOTE TRACKS ALL OVER TRAIL, & I GIMPSE 1 BRIEFLY AS IT ZIPS AHEAD OF ME. SHEEP STILL ON SLOPE ABOVE PASTURE. WHEN I PASS BELOW. BACK TO CABIN AT 2:30. SNOW STOPPED. I FIDDLE SOME MORE WITH SPRING BOXES BUT DON'T IMPROVE THE WATER PRESSURE SITUATION. THEN FORAGE UP PIONEER CA. FOR FIREWOOD UNTIL DARK. AT 5 I HEAR LOUD NOISES FROM BIG CREEK & DISCOVER THE ICE HAS GONE (IS GOING) OUT IN A MAD MUDDY RUSH + TUMBLE. CREEK IS ROARING; YOU WOULDN'T WANT TO FALL IN NOW! THE CREEK SURE HAS SHOWN ME A LOT OF DIFFERENT FACES OVER THE PAST WEEK. NO MOON TONIGHT, TOO MANY CLOUDS. CONGRATULATIONS TODAY TO PAUL & JOAN 😊! TALKED TO TONY TONIGHT ON RADIO.

11/28 WAKE UP TO A QUIET HOUSE - NO WATER RUNNING.

SUNDAY WELL, I GUESS I'M NOT SURPRISED. THE UPPER SPRING BOX IS STILL WORKING SO THE PIPES BETWEEN THERE & THE HOUSE MUST'VE FROZE UP OVER THE COLD SPELL. NOT MUCH TO BE DONE ABOUT IT. I SPEND THE MORNING HACKING HOLES IN PIONEER CREEK ICE TO MINIMIZE FLOODING PROBLEMS (THIS ICE BUILDUP IS REALLY AMAZING) & MESSING WITH THE SPRING BOXES. HOPELESS! I TURN THE GAS OFF AT THE HOT WATER HEATER, JUST IN CASE IT DRAINS SOMEHOW, BUT LEAVE ALL COLD FAUCETS IN HOUSE TURNED ON. THEN I HAUL & CUT UP MORE WOOD FROM ALONG PIONEER CREEK. ALSO SAND DOORS OF LAB + CARTS IN PREPARATION FOR OILING THEM. TAKE A BREAK FOR ABOUT 1 1/2 HOURS IN AFTERNOON, THEN GO OUT FOR THE FINAL DAILY ROUNDS. BIG CREEK IS CLEAR AGAIN & MOSTLY ICE-FREE. I HEARD A FEW RAM HEAD CRASHES TODAY & SAW ABOUT 25 SHEEP ON HILLSIDE. SAW 1 EWIE WITH WHAT LOOKED LIKE A VERY SMALL LAMB, AT BENCH #1. THEY SLIPPED INTO THE SWALE BEFORE I COULD SEE THEM WITH THE SCOPE. I'M HAPPY IT WARMED UP; IT'S A LOT PLEASANTER OUTDOORS NOW THAN IT WAS. T.R. BUNNIES BECOMING EXTREMELY INCAUTIOUS AROUND ME. LOOKS LIKE A FULL MOON TONIGHT THROUGH LIGHT CLOUDS. THERE'S SUPPOSED TO BE A LUNAR ECLIPSE TONIGHT STARTING AROUND 10:45, BUT THE CLOUDS THICKEN BY THEN & I CAN'T EVEN SEE THE MOON.

11/29 A WARM, PARTLY CLOUDY MORNING. 21° AT 8 a.m., ALMOST BAWMY! DO THE MORNING ROUNDS, THEN WRITE A FEW LETTERS BEFORE GOING OUT TO STAIN THE CARTS & DOORS AS PAUL REQUESTED. SPEND MORNING AT THAT & THEN HIKE FOR A COUPLE HOURS ON THE RIDGE BETWEEN PIONEER & RUSH CREEKS. STEEP! FINALLY I SEE 2 MULE DEER DOES, PLUS A SET OF COUGAR TRACKS. NICE VIEWS EAST INTO WHAT I TAKE TO BE THE BIGHORN CREEKS. THEY APPEAR

MONDAY

WATCH A GOLDEN EAGLE SOAR
FROM MY RIDGE NORTH ACROSS
BIG CREEK.

TO BE GETTING SOME SNOW NOW. "BACK DOWN, FOLLOWING (BACK-TRACKING) THE COUGAR TRACKS TO SAGE FLAT ON RUSH CREEK, THEN HOME. SAW UP THE LATEST COLLECTION OF FIREWOOD. A COYOTE YAPS + BARKS REPEATEDLY FOR ABOUT 10 MINUTES ACROSS BIG CREEK - I LOOK + WALK TO CREEK BUT CAN'T FIND THE YAPPER, IT SOUNDS LIKE IT'S TREADING SOMETHING! FINALLY IT QUITS. PIONEER CREEK HAS DROPPED ABOUT 12-18" - IS NO LONGER RUSHING OUT OF ITS BANKS. UPPER SPRINGBOX STILL FLOWING WELL.

11/30 WAKE UP TO WHITE THIS MORNING! ABOUT 2-3" OF SNOW FELL
TUESDAY OVERNIGHT BUT AT 7 a.m. IT'S 34° + RAINING LIGHTLY, SETTLING THE SNOW INTO A SOGGY MUSH. CLOUDS DOWN TO ABOUT 4500'. EVERYTHING DRIPPING OUTSIDE. I'M INSPIRED BY THE GREY SKIES TO DO A LITTLE HOUSECLEANING. (I MUST BE DESPERATE?!) BY NOON THE CLOUDS ARE BREAKING UP + BY 2 SKIES ARE BLUE. I SPEND THE AFTERNOON WALKING AROUND RANCH + HIKING UP CLIFF CREEK. A BEAUTIFUL DAY. WATCH DIPPER BY BRIDGE. SCARE 2 DOE + 3 FAWN MULE DEER OUT OF CORRAL. OTTER TRACKS ON ICE BELOW BRIDGE. UP CLIFF CREEK AWAYS + WHEN IT GETS TOO THICK WITH BRUSH I CUT UP TO THE 2ND BENCH. NO SHEEP OR TRACKS. SEE WHAT I THINK IS A GOSHAWK PERCHED IN A SNAG ON RIDGE TO EAST. SEVERAL RAMS + EWES GRAZING AT EDGE OF TIMBER N.E. OF BENCH #3. I STAY UP ON THE SUNNY BENCH 'TIL 4. SEE COLLARED EWE PLUS 3 OTHER EWES + THE LITTLE LAMB IN SWALE OF 1ST BENCH; THEY SEE ME TOO + SINGAK AWAY UPHILL. THAT LAMB MUST'VE BEEN BORN REALLY LATE; THE TOP OF ITS HEAD HITS ITS MOTHER ABOUT MID-FLANK. RETURN TO CABIN AT 4:30, CHECK CREEK + SPRING BOXES (NO CHANGE). THE AIRSTRIP ICE FLOE IS NOW COVERED WITH AN INCH OF WET SNOW, GIVING MUCH BETTER TRACTION THAN BEFORE.

2/1 WAKE UP TO SNOW FALLING; AGAIN IT IS HEAVY + WET + SINKS
WEDNESDAY DOWN W/O BUILDING UP MUCH HEIGHT. ABOUT 2-3" ON GROUND. DOESN'T LOOK LIKE MAIL PLANE WILL COME TODAY. I SPEND

THE MORNING WRITING MORE CHRISTMAS CARDS (AM MAKING GREAT PROGRESS ON MY LIST) & WALKING UP RUSH CR. TO CHECK THERMOMETER. HAVE QUITE A TIME CHOPPING IT OUT OF ABOUT 8" OF ICE! HEAR A PILGATED WOODPECKER, WATCH MTN. CHICKADEES + A BROWN CREEPER FEEDING IN THE TREES. NOT A BREEZE; + SNOW HAS QUIT. EVERYTHING IS SO QUIET. NO TRACKS EXCEPT FOR RABBITS + SQUIRRELS & VOLE. NO SHEEP SEEN ALL DAY ON BONCHIES; THEY SEEM TO HAVE MOVED SOMEPLACE ELSE FOR AWHILE. NO FRESH TRACKS UP PIONEER, ON AIRSTRIP, PASTURES, ETC. WORK ON INSIDE THINGS MUCH OF THE AFTERNOON, THEN GO OUT FOR A COUPLE HOURS TO WALK, CHECK SPRING BOXES, CUT WOOD, ETC. WITH THESE WARM DAYS (MID-30'S) I AM USING MUCH LESS WOOD THAN LAST WEEK. I HOPE THE WATER PIPE THAWS WITH THESE WARMER TEMPS, BUT SO FAR IT HASN'T. AS NIGHT FALLS THE CLOUDS LOWER BACK ONTO THE RIDGETOPS.

12/2
THURSDAY

IT RAINED PRETTY HARD LAST NIGHT AROUND 11 & SETTLED THE SNOW. ONLY ABOUT 2" ON THE GROUND. FRESH DEER TRACKS UP PIONEER CR. WHEN I CALL IN WEATHER, CAROL SAYS THEY HAVE 6" OF SNOW THERE. A WARM, MOSTLY CLOUDY DAY. I DECIDE TO HIKE DOWN BIG CREEK AGAIN. THE TRAIL WAS BUSY LAST NIGHT: A SET OF SMALL COUGAR TRACKS NEAR LOWER PASTURE (SMALLER THAN THE ONES I SAW ABOVE CABIN SEVERAL DAYS AGO), LOTS OF COYOTE TRACKS ALL ALONG, 1 SET OF BOBCAT TRACKS NEAR GOAT CREEK, & ANOTHER SET OF LARGE COUGAR TRACKS JUST ABOVE GORGE. ALSO VARIOUS DEER (I THINK) & VOLE TRACKS. SEE A COUPLE RUFFED GROUBS, + 1 GOLDEN EAGLE HIGH ABOVE DUNCE CREEK. FOLLOW DOWN PAST BREECHING CREEK, THEN HAVE A BITE TO EAT + COME BACK. SNOWS LIGHTLY OFF & ON BUT CLOUDS PRETTY BROKEN UP BY 3 P.M. NO SHEEP SEEN ALL DAY - I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW SPOILED I GOT WATCHING ALL THOSE SHEEP MY FIRST DAYS HERE. JUST BEFORE DARK I CAN

SEE ABOUT 10 SHEEP AT EDGE OF TIMBER ABOVE 4TH BENCH (NE OF 3RD BENCH) - THEY'RE TOO FAR OFF TO SEE IN DETAIL.

12/3
FRIDAY

OVERCAST & CALM THIS MORNING. FOR SOME REASON I'M AWAKE AT 6:30, EVEN THOUGH IT WON'T BE LIGHT FOR ANOTHER HOUR. ANOTHER FAIRLY WARM NIGHT. A BIG SURPRISE UP ON THE BENCH SLOPE TODAY - MY FIRST ELK! THEY ARE WAY AT THE VERY TOP OF THE SLOPE, IN THE TIMBER. EVEN AT THIS DISTANCE THEY REALLY STAND OUT AGAINST THE SNOW. I SEE ABOUT 8 (COWS) BUT BET THEY ARE ALL OVER UP THERE. FARTHER EAST BUT ALMOST AS HIGH ARE ABOUT 15 EWES (1 COLLARED) & 2 RAMS. SURE SEEMS ODD THAT THEY ARE STAYING UP IN THE SNOW, WHEN LAST WEEK THEY WERE OFTEN BELOW THE FIRST BENCH. I WONDER IF THE COUGAR TRACKS I SAW YESTERDAY IN THE LOWER PASTURE HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE SHEEP BEING UP SO HIGH. SPEND THE MORNING WRITING & BAKING, THEN GO UP PIONEER CREEK ON THE TRAIL FOR A COUPLE HOURS. VERY QUIET UP THAT WAY - 1 SNOWSHOE HARE TRACK ON TRAIL, SOME GOLDEN-CROWNED KINGLETS & MTN. CHICKADEES, 1 STELLER JAY. LOTS OF MISTLETOE CLUMPS IN BIG DOUG. FIR LOOK LIKE GOOD LONG-EARED OWL NEST SITES. (I FOUND WHAT APPEARED TO BE A FRESH LONG-EARED OWL PELLETT THIS MORNING ON PATH TO PIONEER CREEK, 20' FROM FRONT DOOR). SEEMS KIND OF ODD I HAVEN'T SEEN ANY GREAT HORNED OWL SIGN - WITH ALL THE VOLES & MICE AROUND, PLUS THE HAY BARN TO ROOST IN, I'D EXPECT THERE TO BE A RESIDENT. TRAIL UP PIONEER ISN'T USED MUCH, & IS QUITE BRUSHY. BACK DOWN, WALK ALONG BIG CREEK UNTIL DUSK. SPEND MOST OF EVENING READING HARTUNG'S "HISTORICAL RESOURCES OF BIG CREEK DRAINAGE" PAPER; REALLY INTERESTING. WISH I'D HAVE SEEN IT EARLIER & CHECKED OUT SOME OF THE CLOSER SITES. OH WELL, I CAN TELL THAT IT WOULD TAKE YEARS TO REALLY GET TO KNOW THIS COUNTRY. COYOTES HOWLING TONIGHT.

12/4
SATURDAY

IT'S SOCKED IN & SNOWING THIS MORNING, LIGHTLY AT FIRST BUT AROUND 10 THE SKIES REALLY DROP, THE WIND COMES UP, & FOR ABOUT AN HOUR SNOW IS SWIRLING EVERYWHERE. BEFORE THE VISIBILITY GOT BAD I COULD SEE 2 MEDIUM-SIZED RAMS MOVING NE FROM 2ND BENCH, ABOUT 15 SHEEP WAY UP AT EDGE OF TIMBER BELOW RIDGELINE (YESTERDAY'S LOCATION) & NO ELK. WORK MOSTLY INDOORS UNTIL NOON WHEN IT LETS UP, & OUT I GO. SHOVEL SNOW FROM CABINS' STEPS & PORCHES, ALSO CLEAN GUTTERS AT LEWIS, CONYERS, & TAYLOR CABINS. HEAR NUTHATCHES FOR THE FIRST TIME HERE (LATER I SEE ONE, A RED-BREADED, IN A FLOCK OF KINGLETS & CHICKADEES). ABOUT 2" OF NEW SNOW FELL, BUT IT'S WET & RAPIDLY COMPRESSING. WALK ALONG BIG CREEK FOR AWHILE; WATCH 1 OTTER IN THE SECTION ALONG AIRSTRIP. NO NEW TRACKS YET. SEEMS KIND OF STRANGE THAT I HAVEN'T SEEN OR HEARD ANY RAVENS HERE. ^{WATCH A PILEATED WOODPECKER ON SNAG ABOVE AIRSTRIP.} GO BACK IN AROUND 5, CLEAN FIREPLACE BUT NOT FINE. 1 1/2-CURL RAM TROTS S.E. FROM FIRST BENCH TOWARDS LOWER PASTURE - THIS IS THE CLOSEST I'VE SEEN ANY SHEEP FOR DAYS. BAKE A "WEDDING CAKE" FOR PAUL & JOAN, WHO ARE DUE BACK TOMORROW. FINISH UP SEWING & READ HORNOCKERS' & SEIDENSTICKERS' COUGAR RESEARCH. CHAT AGAIN WITH TONY AT RUNNING CREEK ON RADIO.

12/5
SUNDAY

MY WISH WAS GRANTED - LOOKS LIKE GOOD FLYING WEATHER TODAY. AT 8 IT IS CALM WITH SCATTERED CLOUDS, BY 10 IT'S CLEAR & STILL CALM. BEAUTIFUL. I SPEND THE MORNING WALKING AROUND & TAKING PICTURES. ABOUT 8 SHEEP ARE BEDDED ON 4TH (HIGHEST) BENCH, AND 4 ELK ARE ON THE RIDGELINE ABOVE THEM. I WATCH A COYOTE WORK THE SLOPE ABOVE THE AIRSTRIP. THERE HAVEN'T BEEN TOO MANY DAYS LIKE THIS DURING MY STAY - SUNNY & YET WARM ENOUGH TO SIT STILL. I'LL BE HAPPY TO GET BACK HOME AGAIN BUT WILL

MISS THE QUIET + THE WILDLIFE SHOW HERE. MAYBE IF I'M
LUCKY I'LL GET INVITED BACK! THE PLANE IS DUE IN AROUND
3, SO I GUESS I'LL JUST SIT BACK + ENJOY MY LAST HOURS HERE.

12/5 Very glad to be back! ~~S~~ Worlds apart
from Richmond, VA. Wedding was wonderful
and we're excited about our five month
honeymoon in the wilderness. Arrived late
in the afternoon, brought lots of groceries
in and a few wedding presents to spruce
up the cabin. Great to see all the snow
here.

12/6 Lots to do to get settled in. living room
is a mess with all of our boxes and bags.
Went for a short hike to Cougar Creek.
It's going to take awhile to adjust to the
cold, high today of 25°F. Saw one
ram up on the benches. Also, the
resident bunny was out today, nice
to see him again. No water to the cabin
so we're carrying it from the creek,
no big deal really.

12/7 Spent much of the day organizing the
cabin. Watched a large (~50) herd of elk
work their way down from the ridges (benches).
Heard them calling when went to get water
in the early evening. Sounds like they made
it all the way down to the pasture on the
far side of the creek. Great sound.

12/8

First thing after weather reporting we hiked up on the bluff above the Conyer cabin to look for the elk in the pastures below, didn't see them at first but figured they had to be close, kept on going a little more and saw them in the pasture w/ the mineral lick, counted 55+ elk. Mostly cows, one big bull who looked to be in charge and a couple young bulls. Later in the day saw 12 sheep up on top (3rd) bench. Warmed up a lot today with quite a bit of rain at times.

12/9

Continues to be warmer than we expected. Trails slippery but manageable. Elk are still with us in the nearby pastures. We hear them whenever we're outside and sometimes even in the cabin, a great sound. Three deer came trotting up by the hay barn this morning, didn't hang around long but were fun to see.

12/10

Saw two coyotes go by the cabin this morning while we were eating breakfast. The elk are back up on the benches. Finally started working on our Christmas mail that needs to get out on Wednesday and ~~wrote~~ a few thank-you cards. Most of the thank-yus will have to wait 'til next mail though. A few rams by themselves up on ~~the~~ the middle bench.

12/11 Continuing to watch the elk moving around the benches. Saw one ewe, collared, on middle bench, later saw 24 sheep, ewes & rams, the most we've seen at one time. The big ram was with them, almost full curl.

12/12 This morning a cow elk was down at the hay barn. She actually did hop the fence and went in for a few minutes. At same time saw a coyote running along Big Creek, ^{the} elk also saw & watched the coyote. She then hopped out, crossed the creek and went to join her friends. The rest of the herd is well on its way down again. By evening they were back in the lower pasture and we could hear them again.

12/13 Busy day today and its cold again. Trails were really slippery yesterday and no better today. The trail to the water hole at the creek is the worst and the most important. Washed clothes today. Big project, 3 loads and many, many trips to the creek for water. Filled up the clothes line and the clothes were freezing even before we got them up. Nice clear day though. Strange thing, while we were eating supper, after dark, \approx 6:00 we heard a small plane go over. Didn't think anybody would be flying out here after dark in a small plane. It was headed east along Big Creek. Curious.