



Peaks, let the trees grow back, let the forest heal ..." remembered Ms. Asplund. "Of course that was all a hoax." This was not a part of the indictment.

In October of the next year, 1988, the group went back to the mountain during the night of the 25th for what would be known as "Snowbowl #2."

"The bolts supporting the pylons (the towers) were cut again, this time it was the one that supports the upper terminal. This was done basically to disable the cable.

"There was a slightly different mix of people on this outing," recalled Ms. Asplund. "The group had to take the longer Weatherford Trail because they knew there would be a lot of security."

According to the testimony given by Snowbowl's manager **JR Murray**, the resort had about \$26,000 worth of actual repairs, but spent over \$30,000 in additional security for that year. The resort also offered a reward of \$25,000 to anyone with information leading to the arrest of those responsible for the damages.

To more fully understand why Ms. Asplund and EMETIC engaged in the actions they did, it is important to get a sense of the context. Tactics employed in defense of the mountain in the 1970s were taken in the court room.

It's hard to talk about the San Francisco Peaks controversy during this time without talking about **Richard** and **Jean Wilson**. The couple had sued the Forest Service and effectively prevented a land developer, Summit Properties from building a version of Aspen, Colorado in what is now the **Heart Prairie Wildlife Preserve** owned by the Nature Conservancy. For one public hearing on January 29, 1974, over 1,400 people showed up and gave 12 hours of testimony in defense of the Peaks.

In the summer of 2010, Mr. Wilson recalled the climate at the hearing. "It was at the high school auditorium and a lot of people were sitting up in the balcony, and there were drums being beaten and people were marching too."

Mr. Wilson also pointed out that in those days, college students from Northern Arizona University were noticeably more involved in marches and rallies than they are today. You see them, but "nowhere near to the extent that they were," he said. After the hundreds of hours of testimony from native people, environmentalists, and others calling for the Peaks to be protected, the case was ruled in the Wilsons' favor for details related to property rights laws.

Mr. Wilson recently passed away. It should be documented that he gave public comments on Peaks-related issues up until his last days. If it weren't for the efforts of the Wilsons in the 1970s, there is a good chance gated communities and golf courses would preside over the striking aspen grove people flock to from all over the state this time of year.

If the actions taken by the Wilsons are realized as a tactic, one can conclude that in this case, they were successful in using the law as one of many employed in defense of the Peaks. As all successful attempts at protecting the Peaks from development have been, this victory was short lived. It wasn't more than a few years before Fairfield Snowbowl, who operated what is now Arizona Snowbowl Limited Partnership, were successful in getting expansion plans approved.

Accompanying these expansions, which included the Hart Prairie chair lift in 1982, and the following year, construction of the **Hart Prairie Lodge, the Sunset chairlift, and the transfer of the rope tow back to Hart Prairie.**

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**T**he number of ways people have resisted development on the San Francisco Peaks is as wide and varied as the people themselves. Lately such actions have been characterized by human blockades, diverse lockbox configurations, and creative ways in which people either chained themselves to machinery or to themselves — like the women who chose to lock together by the neck in June, and sit back-to-back on the ground of a 6-foot deep wastewater pipe trench.

There have also been decades of protests, rallies, vigils, street art, Peaks related awareness events such as those who recently organized the "We Eat Snow" group, and many other responses to development on the mountain. The actions that took place this summer call for a reflection on the diversity of tactics employed to protect the Peaks since the 1970s.

Notably, the actions taken in the fall of 1987, when **Ilse Asplund** and a small group of environmental activists who called themselves **EMETIC** caused \$26,000 in damages to Fairfield's Snowbowl property, stands perhaps as one of the most cited, yet least understood actions taken in defense of the mountain.

"That came straight from our hearts. We acted out of respect for the mountain and respect for cultures who have a stake in the physical integrity of the mountain, and as citizens of Arizona who wanted to see that mountain left as it was for the next generation," said Ms. Asplund, reflecting on an action that cost

her a year and a day of her life in a federal prison. "We acted out of a desire to not have the mountain further desecrated."

EMETIC, or the Evan Mecham Eco-Tea-sippers International Conspiracy was a group of close-knit friends from Prescott who were inspired by folks like **Edward Abbey** and **Dave Foreman** — who himself was indicted with the group (not the leader of the group as has been written) for giving one of them a copy of his book, which explained in generalities how to do some of the eco-sabotage work they were engaged in.

The name EMETIC is a sort of tongue-in-cheek acronym. Evan Mecham was governor of Arizona at the time. "He was really racist. He got Arizona boycotted because he wouldn't permit there to be a day to recognize Martin Luther King Jr., he called black children aborigines and he was totally homophobic. In one of Mark's [an EMETIC affiliate] letters, he wrote, 'Evan Mecham has done more to slow down the influx of people into Arizona than we could ever hope to do, so we want to name this group in his honor,'" Ms. Asplund explained. "I mean, Mecham was impeached, indicted and recalled. By the time we were arrested, he wasn't even in office anymore."

Actually the "T" in the name originally stood for "terrorist." Of course this is the 80s, a time before the word "terrorist" took on the political life that it has in the post 9/11 world. "We just thought it was kind of funny. We were anything but terrorists." In nearly every citation online or

in books, the group is characterized as terrorists. Three actions are associated with EMETIC on the San Francisco Peaks, "Well, one of them was actually a hoax," said Ms. Asplund.

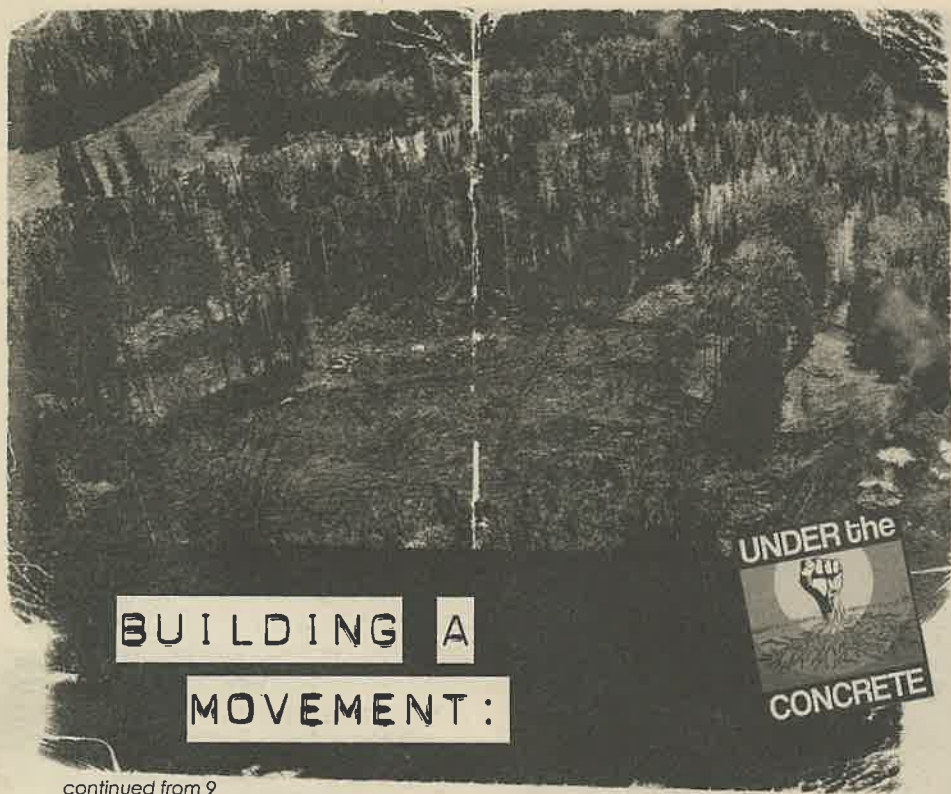
On a frosty evening in October of 1987, the group worked together to cut the bolts that supported the towers, which ran the cables for the Agassiz ski lift. "Also, the top terminal that supports the wheel that runs the cable — those things were cut too," recalled Ms. Asplund. "We had a look-out, a cutter, and someone shielding the light from the torch.

"A letter had been sent out already to the media all around Arizona. When we came down off the mountain, there were some calls made to a couple radio stations just to alert them immediately."

In the subsequent trial this was referred to as "Snowbowl #1."

Given that the lifts run in both the summer for scenic views, and winter for skiing, October was chosen for the time of action because they knew the lifts would be closed. "All these events took place during this period of no use. People get worried about actions like this, claiming people could have been hurt, but we took great deliberation to make sure people were safe," said Ms. Asplund. "I mean the point is to draw attention to a dire situation and not make people feel afraid."

About a month later, there was a letter sent to Snowbowl and the media explaining how the cables had been heated and they were not safe to use. "We said, 'get this ski area off the



## BUILDING A MOVEMENT:

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"Resistance against development on that mountain has such a long history," said Ms. Asplund. "Combined with what was happening with the Canyon Mine at Red Butte [uranium mining on site held sacred to the Havasupai] and what was going on the mountain, there was a feeling that we were under siege. On top of all this, they were in the midst of paving Forest Service Road 551 when we chose to take action," Ms. Asplund recalled. "It's now referred to as Snowbowl Road, as if it has always been there."

"It looked similar to how it looks up there right now as they construct the pipeline. Trees were cut to widen it, piping was installed; a lot of disruptive construction was going on to pave this road."

It was a two-year paving project. On the first year, they tore into the earth; the next year came the asphalt. On top of the construction, another aspect of the construction of the road that upset Ms Asplund was the slippery way in which the Forest Service essentially paved the road for the benefit of Snowbowl, and pushed the cost to tax payers.

"Funding for that huge paving project was attached to another unrelated bill that went through Congress. Essentially taxpayers paid for that road. This was done purely as a project of the federal government, it clearly benefited Snowbowl, but the road was done by the Forest service," Ms. Asplund paused. "Things like that really bother me."

Since June of this year, 28 people have been arrested in various actions to protect the Peaks. **Nadia Del Callejo**, who was arrested three times this summer, understands her actions in the context of the many tactics that have been employed throughout the last 40 years or more.

"I'm super proud of them for doing what they did back then," she said of Ms. Asplund and EMETIC. Similarly, when asked about the actions over the summer, Ms. Asplund couldn't help but get emotional. "Oh my God, I was so happy to see that! All these years later, there is this whole other generation that is courageous and smart. They know what to do for their future; they understand. I felt like it was a long time coming. It was very inspiring."

Ms. Asplund was reflective in her comparing the actions of EMETIC to the nonviolent civil disobedient direct actions of today, both on the Peaks and within the budding Occupy

Movement. "There has to be movement building. You can't have acts alone. That's where we fell down. At the time there wasn't much movement for stopping development on the mountain. There needs to be more of a movement around those actions and there wasn't. That's why it's so great to see — it has to be linked to the bigger picture."

But one cannot simply compare the two actions and the tactics employed in order to draw conclusions that are useful.

"It's more important to compare the effectiveness of those tactics," said **Klee Benally**, one of many people who took action and were arrested over the summer. "A diversity of tactics are fully respected when the goals are the same," said Ms. Del Callejo.

However, for folks like Mr. Benally and Ms. Del Callejo, the threat of desecration is viewed as a threat to cultural survival, the goals seem a little more visceral. **Leroy Shingoitewa**, Chairman of the Hopi Tribe recently noted, "Protection of the environment on the San Francisco Peaks is central to the Tribe's existence."

It's not about simply maintaining the natural integrity of the mountain for aesthetic reasons. For some, it is a matter of life and death. "I'm not advocating for anything illegal," said Ms. Del Callejo. "For us, it's self defense and everybody has that right. We have the right to defend ourselves."

Further relating the history of resistance to development on the Peaks to the larger Occupy Movement sweeping the nation, Ms. Asplund calls out majority owner of Snowbowl, **Eric Borowsky**. "He and Snowbowl. They are the 1%. He has gone through these channels and at this point he seems to have prevailed, but it seems like in some ways it was not a fair contest because of all the pre-suppositions in the law that make it so hard to recognize claims of sacredness and culture in the landscape. There is a kind of historical access to power that white business people have that is unequal," she says. "Why is it that they have so much political clout compared to the hundreds of thousands of activists and indigent nations? It really is the same issue. Why is it that so few people have so much power and so many others don't?"

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arts & news



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Readership: 48,000

Distribution: 350 locations in Northern Ariz.  
Flagstaff, Sedona, Cottonwood, Clarkdale,  
Prescott, Prescott Valley & Jerome.

Cover Art: *Frida de los Muertos*, photo & styling by Holly Brundage;  
art direction by Ona Ziegler; illustration by Avey; modeling by Eva

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a publication of

**weavel inc**

an Arizona 501c3 nonprofit organization

## A Letter from the Publisher



Even though our terrestrial bodies now lie within the realm of the Gregorian eleventh month, it is kind of a kick in the teeth to reflect that *novem* is actually the Latin word for the number Nine. How strange, it seems, that our ancestors construed this calculation of time, presumably in a way so we could all perceive it unanimously — extracting the number of days, hours, and minutes until a new month could be revealed when a sun's passage is divided by 12 — only to leave the same darn names for a year made of 10 points of demarcation.

Since when does the prefix Dec- mean twelfth, Oct- ring true to ten, Sept- begin to denote the number 9? No wonder our kids are all screwed up and the metric system is

still in a legislator's filing cabinet, buried beneath used bottles of white-out.

What may be even stranger is that we've let these agitators of time, if I dare use such strong language in a letter like this, get away with it for so long! Why, they've duped every five-year old in the Western Hemisphere with a false sense of knowing Latin prefixes! These same five year olds will eventually attend a junior high school, in which they will have to flush away precious (and hard to flush) primary knowledge in order to fully recognize the simple deciphering of words like "decimal," "octagon," and "septennial."

Oh, the wretched deception for which these children were unwillingly born into!

With all the hodgepodge special interest groups and rallies for political fortitude, why is there not an organization lobbying for the correct Latin root in the names of the months, or at least a reasonable facsimile? Where are the time keepers, the time bandits, the time wasters when you need them? What of our inalienable right to the correct perception of time?

Here's to good reading!  
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