Hungry Horse News
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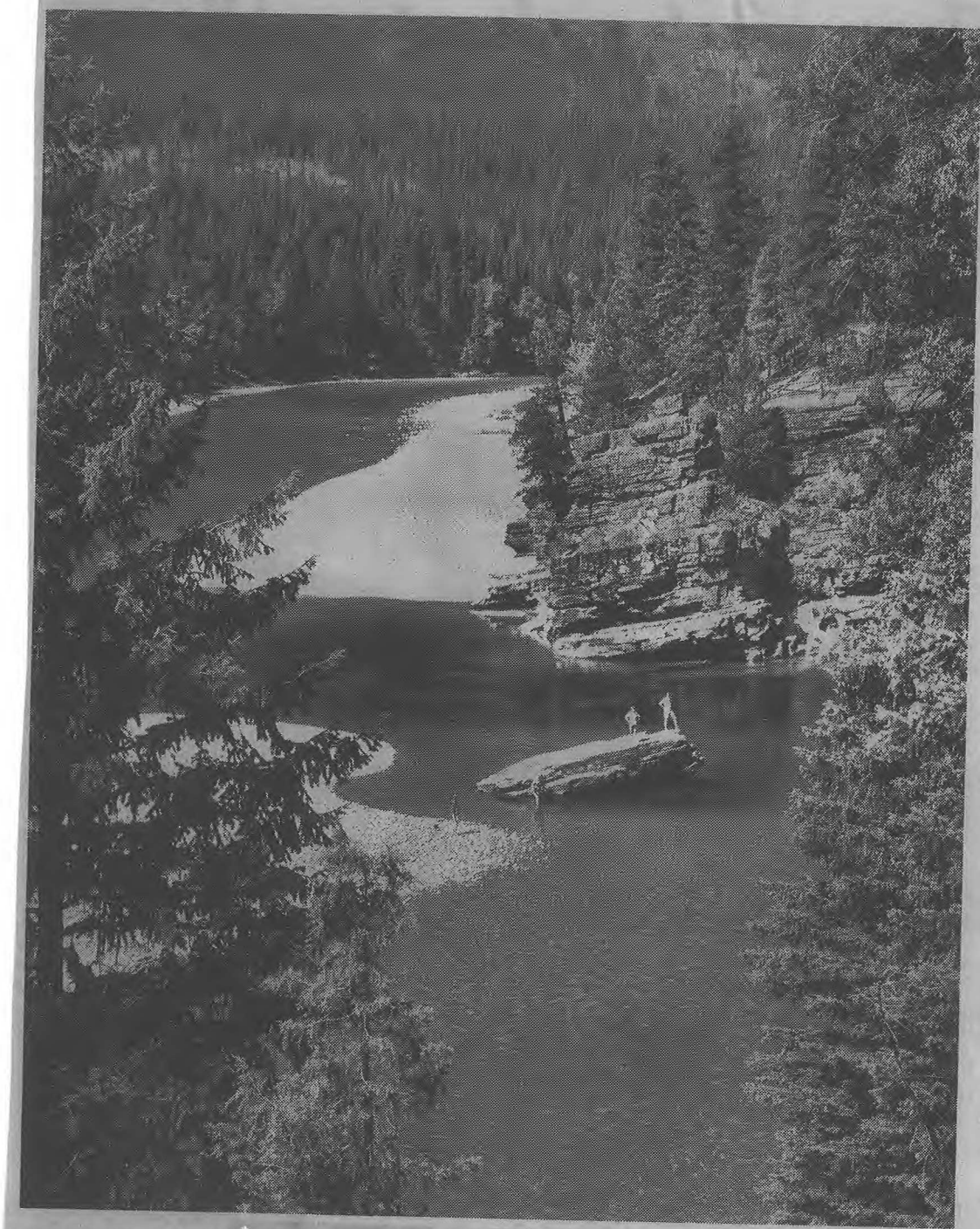

FAMED LANDMARK is where Spotted Bear River joins Flathead's South Fork. It's a favorite fishing spot with clear water. Near point is Flathead National Forest campground.

Warns Against Eating Lettuce Grown Here

Residents of Columbia Falls are advised not to eat lettuce grown here because of high fluoride content from industrial sources.

Dr. Joe C. Elliott, an associate of Dr. Clarence Gordon, professor of botany at the University of Montana, is sampling and studying vegetation. Partial support comes from a federal grant.

Dr. Elliott said that the University of Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation tests found triple the maximum acceptable amounts of fluoride in local vegetation. He referred to State Board of Health acceptable levels of fluoride to the extent of 35 parts per million.

He added that lettuce "grows beautifully," but he doesn't feel it advisable to eat. Other leaf plants such as cabbage are affected, but to less extent, while root crops such as carrots and radishes are safe as are fruits and string beans.

Dr. Elliott said that the Wisconsin tests show Ponderosa Pine with dead needles in Columbia Falls containing "high fluoride" quantities, and added that gladioli are also harmed.

He also told of rodents killed near the Anaconda Aluminum Co. plant having comparatively high amounts of fluoride in their bones. Another comment was that fluorides weaken trees which in turn are more subject to insects.

AAC Scientists Study Claims

Claims of adverse effects on vegetation and cattle by the Anaconda Aluminum Co., Columbia Falls plant, were investigated by a group of scientists this past week.

In the Flathead were: Dr. George Edmonds, antimologist from the University of Utah; Dr. Mike Treschow, plant pathologist, University of Utah; Dr. Leonard Weinstein, Boyce-Thompson Institute; Dr. John Suttie, bio-chemist, University of Wisconsin.

The scientists are in process of compiling their report, and were in the area four days.

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